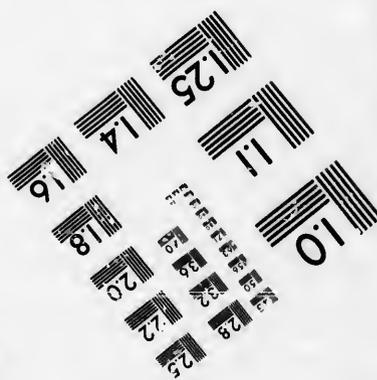
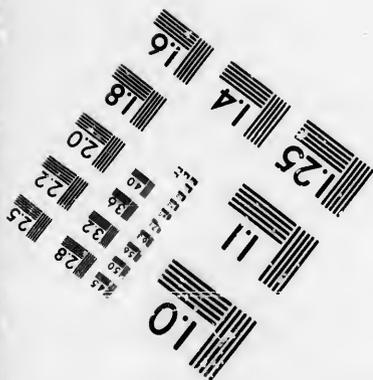
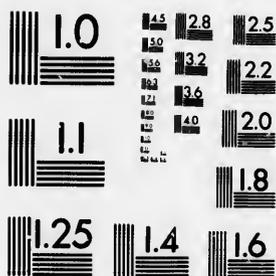
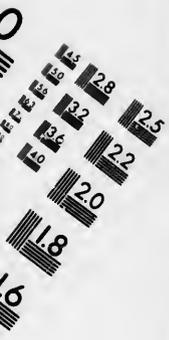


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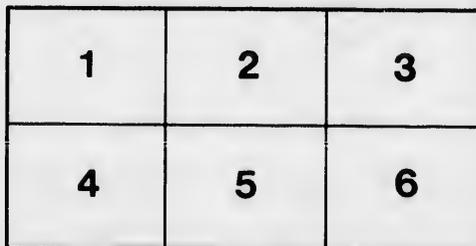
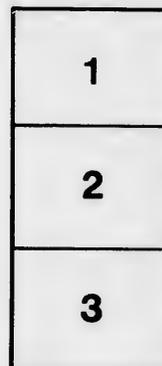
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1876
L. B. A. M. D.

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The author of this Work
died June 20. 1876 aged 83

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BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

Second Edition enlarged.

WITH OTHER POEMS

BY

JOHN NEAL.



BALTIMORE,

Published by V. G. Maxwell.

B Edes, Printer.

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And

THE
BATTLE OF NIAGARA:

SECOND EDITION—ENLARGED:

WITH

OTHER POEMS.

Where the sun travels low in his chariot of light;
And the stars and the hills are together at night.

BY JOHN NEAL.

BALTIMORE:

PUBLISHED BY N. G. MAXWELL.

B. EDES, PRINTER.

.....
1819.

21190

DISTRICT OF MARYLAND—TO WIT:

BE IT REMEMBERED, That on the first day of July, in the forty-third year of the Independence of the United States of America, JOHN NEAL, of the said district, hath deposited in this office, the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author, in the words following, to wit:—



"The Battle of Niagara: Second Edition—enlarged: with other Poems.

"Where the sun travels low in his chariot of light;

"And the stars and the hills are together at night.

"By John Neal."

In conformity to an act of the Congress of the United States, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and also to the act, entitled "An act supplementary to the act, entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;' and extending the benefits thereof to the art of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints."

PHILIP MOORE,

Clerk of the District of Maryland.

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DEDICATION.

'PERMIT me, my earliest and best friend, to offer you this small acknowledgment of my indebtedness; not merely with feelings of affection, gratitude, and friendship, but of veneration.

Your's, indeed,

JOHN NEAL.

Rev. JOHN PIERPONT,

Pastor of Hollis-street Church, Boston.

A

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ADVERTISEMENT

To the Second Edition.

THIS volume contains several small poems, entirely new—one larger, of a character peculiar to itself:—part of another, which was begun, as introductory to a regular epick, and abandoned, perhaps forever, from a dread of its interference with numerous and indispensable obligations:—It contains, moreover, enlarged and corrected copies of NIAGARA, GOLDAU, and a few lighter pieces, that have already been before the publick in different shapes.

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TO THE READER.

IT is customary, after passing the ordeal of criticism—no matter how, in the second edition of any book, to make a few civil speeches to the publick. I like the custom—and shall avail myself of it. It will give me an opportunity of telling a long, and I have the conscience to believe, a tolerably interesting story, in a manner, the least embarrassing of any to the *modesty* of an author.

That I should have an opportunity to publish a second edition of my mutilated poems—*Niagara* and *Goldau*, is a subject of considerable interest to me,—I will not deny it,—of more interest probably, than I shall ever again experience for its fate—be that fate what it may. I speak as I feel—I care but little, very little, whether it ever reach a third edition, but I will not conceal, that I have waited in almost feverish anxiety for a decent excuse to publish a second:—by a second, I do not mean such second editions as we sometimes see, struck off simultaneously with the first,*—correspond-

* There is a ridiculous story on this subject, which I must tell—not out of malice to any human being—but because I have some reason to believe it. One of our greatest booksellers, and, by the by, no ordinary writer, having published a book, which—some how or other—reached the tenth or twentieth edition—in his

ing with it in every particular, (even to the table of errata)—but I mean a second edition—revised—corrected—and *following* the first.

These were my reasons. The *first* was crowded and disfigured with innumerable errors—chiefly typographical, however; though in some cases, whole lines were left out, by myself, I dare say, in copying my manuscript for the press; and, from a long process of continual interpolation and refinement, whenever the whim seized me, the repetitions and extravagancies were about as numerous, as all the rest of the blunders together. I have, therefore, waited with impatience for an opportunity to do myself, and my poem, justice.

Again—I wanted to dedicate it, to Mr. Pierpont; author of "*The airs of Palestine.*" This was not done at first, though a long and intimate friendship would have justified it, even without asking his permission, because I was rather apprehensive for its destiny, and felt unwilling, by a foolish and precipitate compliment, to involve his reputation at all in its fate: and even now, though the book has passed the worst of all trials, that of criticism upon a mutilated edition, yet I thank heaven that, for once, I had so much discretion;—that I had forbearance enough to await the decision of the publick, before I hazarded the character of such a man, by a declaration of my feelings. If that decision had been unfavourable, with the countenance of such a poet

first consignment to a distant trader—sent the fourth edition:—the books were scarcely housed, when the first edition arrived! The wrong bundle, it appears, was shipped first.

in my favour, I should never have forgiven myself, or the world.

It was not dedicated to him, at first, for another reason; a trifling one, I grant, but entitled to some consideration. Like every young author, who fancies himself a genius, and where is the author, young or old, that does not?—I felt inclined to be tried exclusively upon my own merits. But that, I have since found, is impossible. A book cannot be judged without a trial. It can have no trial, unless it be read. And who will read a nameless production?—a poem too, of all things on earth! *to which and for which, a name is every thing.* For example, how many volumes of spurious trash have been sold under great names; and how many valuable books have re-appeared from their obscurity, after a lapse of booksellers' ages, consecrated and glittering with the name of some author, whom it has just become fashionable to admire? How many others, at this moment, are awaiting a similar call to a similar resurrection? Every bookstore has within it some unknown author, who is silently, but surely, working himself upward to the elevation, for which he was created.

I do not complain of this. I should be ungrateful if I did. It is in the nature of things; it must exist everywhere; and it would continue to exist in America long after it had ceased—if it were possible for it to cease—in every other country. We have too little national pride; too little of that lofty vanity which rivets the heart of an Englishman, or Frenchman, upon the productions of his own country. For myself, I do confess, that I should not be very forward to encounter a vo-

lume of poetry—*American* poetry too, of two hundred pages, like this, without some respectable guarantee: and if I would not, I do not believe there are many others in this world, that would.

And a third reason for not dedicating it, at *first*, to Mr. Pierpont, was this. I did not like subjecting myself to the imputation of aping the coquetish, dandy-like sentimentality of Byron, and Moore and Hunt, who have lately been playing off their dedications at each other, under a silent pretence of wiping away the old reproach, that "two of a trade can never agree;" but in reality, as I believe, in a sort of speculating courtesy, to see who would make the most by an interchange of compliments, and pretty speeches—to see who would be the finest fellow, and the "*greatest poet in the world*," when the account was balanced. At least, so the thing appeared to me. And I felt no inclination to trifle in the same way. It was always easier for me to be hearty than civil. But *there* I have changed my opinion again; subdued my reluctance, and shall not be deterred from doing a duty, merely because others have done it before me.

Another, and a most important cause of my desire to see a *second* edition, was this—the *title page* of the first. It has been universally, indignantly, and I must say, *justly* censured. The plain truth of the matter is this. I *am* ashamed of it: I *was* ashamed of it, from the first moment it was written; but having been much excited, where I had no business to be, under circumstances, which cannot be explained in this place,*

* The reader, however, may form some idea of them by this little fact. The work had been nearly completed

—I abandoned my first purpose, which was to print it with a modest title, under a fictitious name; and adopted the rascally burlesque, which now disgraces the volume. It was severely censured when I began to blush for it; but *then* I had too much obstinacy to acknowledge my folly, or to atone for it.

I have been baited too, for disingenuousness, as others have chosen to call it—but, as it really is, for falsehood—lying—in the preface.—I deserved it. I did wrong. Yet, as it was anonymous, mostly true, and, as I then thought, though I now think differently, *innocent*, because not malicious, my conscience did not reproach me—or I would have burnt the book, and the

in secrecy. I had good reason to believe that nobody knew of it. It was to have appeared, as I have already said, under an assumed name. One evening—in a literary club—a friend of mine pulled out a sheet, purporting to be poetry—'twas the *Battle of Niagara!*—it was an imperfect proof—and the form was folded wrong—the beginning of the *third canto* too, which has been so praised! He wanted my opinion of it. I—of course—praised it. Some agreed with me. One person half suspected me—the others did not. One declared it to be "*a swash of magnificence!*" &c. And in that way, I was roasted, in a manner perfectly delightful to an author, for about half an hour. After that—I knew the only way to protect the poem from the consequences of this precipitate judgment—was to acknowledge it, so far as that these gentlemen should know the author—while the world would not. For that reason, I printed it under a "clubicular" name, which had been mischievously assigned me. The motto was chosen in the same spirit. The coupling of "stars and rainbows" appeared too fair a mark for criticism, to escape it, and therefore, I thought it best to set it at defiance.

hand that wrote it too, before I would have been guilty of such a thing. To show the sincerity of my compunction, with the hope that the former preface will be forgotten, I shall put my real name, in black and white, at the bottom of this, and thereby, hold myself responsible for its truth.

I have been villanously criticised too, for having omitted "names—dates, &c." To which I reply thus—the *battle* in the last canto is faithfully represented, according to the long-talk of our best official letter writers—in the army: and, as I have before said, I undertook to make a poem, of an event, within arms length of every body. The question was, shall I give an artificial distance to the scenery, or only versify the orderly book, and battalion returns? I chose the former—and left out names because, as yet, we have no *names*, except that of Washington, that can give dignity to any poem.

It is very possible, and though I would not apologize, yet I would throw by my pen for ever, if I thought it *probable*, (because I am rarely in the humour to keep on apologizing and sinning)—that this preface may be very tiresome and uninteresting. Others may care very little about the number, or magnitude of these "*reasons*," which I so ostentatiously exhibit; but as I do not believe this, and am quite weary of saying, merely out of civility and custom, what I do not believe—I shall continue the recapitulation. The reasons, I think I have now done with; but I have a tale to tell—of myself, that most delightful of all themes to an author, which, whatever others may think of it, I find to be one of considerable interest. I only beg the forbearance of the reader for

a few moments; if he complies, it will be for his advantage, I trust; and if he will not, he has only to shut up the book; for he can do as he pleases about *reading* it. It is not so with me. I am under the *necessity of writing it*. There is very little of free agency in this part of my business. There is a story connected with this poem. I have promised to tell it—and I will tell it, whatever be the consequences.

But first, it may be well enough to give a sort of biographical sketch—a parentage—birth, &c. &c. of the book, according to the practice of most people about to acknowledge their bantlings—or “as the French call” illegitimates—their *jeux d’esprit*.* I shall do this—and as I think, from a good motive. Perhaps I am mistaken—it may be nothing but vanity: and I dare say it *is*, although I choose to call it something else—and do not think it is; because I should call it vanity in another, let him make ever so many protestations to the contrary. Well then—be it vanity: such vanity, if the reader pleases, as led Rousseau into a réiteration of his sins, under pretence of confessing them; and yet I do not despair of convincing him; by my manner, for I shall make no more professions on the subject, that I am actuated by a nobler motive, and an honest impulse, in making *my* confession.

I wish it were possible that my readers could forget for a moment, that the *author* is addressing them; it would make a vast difference in the value and appearance of his reflections. But that is impossible. I have,

* Lady Morgan.

then, only one favour to ask—when the reader is about to exclaim at my intolerable egotism—that he would first be so kind as to assure himself that it *is* egotism. Let him first ask himself, if the observation eliciting his censure would have been *judicious* from another? and if it would—he is welcome to call it egotism. It is no disgrace to be accused of making judicious observations, though ourselves *be* the subject of them:—at least, such is my doctrine: and if it would *not* have been judicious in another, why, then he is welcome to curse me, my vanity, the poem, and whoever and whatever he pleases—if such be his practice towards those who differ from him in opinion—and turn to others who have more respect than I have, for the maxims of hypocrisy.

To make a long story short, then, my motive is this; the hope of being useful to others; to all who are affected with this itch for scribbling. But to proceed methodically.—My poem has met with a very tolerable reception; yet it has not had *justice* done to it. It has more faults, more vices, and more beauties, than have been pointed out. You are welcome to laugh, reader, and I dare say you will laugh; yet I will answer for it, that you agree with one *half* of my criticism, while you are laughing at the other; and why is this? Is not my judgment as good when I *praise*, as when I *condemn* my own work? The truth is, *Niagara* has not been read, as it ought to be, I do not mean *praised*, but *read*.—For, honestly, I would not give sixpence to choose between having it universally praised, and universally damned:—provided it were done *heartily*. One amounts to about as much as the other. A work of real merit never was universally, and

sincerely, and rationally admired. If it had any genius, it must be eccentric, and must find enemies, of course.

The examples of Homer and Virgil are nothing to the point. Not one in a thousand of those, who affect to be transported out of their senses at the mention of their names, has ever read either—even in the translation. What then can they understand of the subject? It is all moonshine; their very *unanimity* proves that they speak without judgment or understanding. It is impossible for many persons to agree on a subject that they *understand*. It is impossible for men of judgment to have the same opinions on any subject of mere taste; therefore, it is impossible, because all mankind are *unanimous* in their admiration of Virgil and Homer—that they should *understand* them; or indeed, have *any* opinions at all upon the subject. In truth, such popularity is always disgraceful. There are persons, whose approbation would be, and ought to be, death to a poet.

But the fact is, we have inherited the prejudices, with the property of our forefathers. All our opinions—so unanimous—and so inflexible, of the Greeks and Romans, can be traced through a long course of tyranny, during which, this veneration has been whipped into us at school; and laughed, or declaimed, or talked into us, during the remainder of our lives; up to the time, when Rome overran the world with her armies and criticisms.

This uniform extravagance and enthusiasm for the ancient classicks, is not the result of judgment—reasoning, or conviction; but of tyranny, conquest, and education. For example; there are only two poets, whom the world are *unanimous* in admiring—Homer and

Virgil. All the others, who are Homers in their own country; the Milton of England, and Tasso of Italy for example, are, though admired, very feebly admired by other nations. Mr. Jefferson mentions this, I remember, in a course of generous, American reasoning, in refutation of the blasphemous doctrine, that the image of God Almighty had degenerated in the country of rivers and mountains. He argues that, as no other poems have ever been *universally* admired, all other poems must be *inferior* to the Illiad and Æneid. But he was wrong. Poems, as *great* as either, have been produced; but they are *unlike* them, as *they* are unlike each other. Ariosto, for example, has more imagination than Homer and Virgil together:—and Milton has pages—notwithstanding his horrible blasphemy and folly, and madness—and absurdity—that neither ever equalled. Even the Henriade has one battle in it, that Homer never excelled. Shakspeare, too though rather a dramatist, like Byron, than a poet, often out-blazes, and out-travels the most hurried charioting of Homer; and as for Virgil, his abominable, universal—and outrageous plagiarism, (sometimes of a whole book) from beginning to end—and his finishing his poem as Milton did his, in the middle—(occupying the remainder in groaning out its obsequies) would be enough—in justice—to blast all the merits of his original composition, were it not, that he is consecrated—hal- lowed, and embalmed, by the flattery and worship of centuries.* But, this is the measure of intellect, and cha-

* This is a subject on which I am not particularly orthodox; I confess it—and glory in it.

racter; the vices and virtues of both, are always in the same proportion. It is true, by the by, that I am no Greek scholar. I cannot read Homer in the original; and if I could, it is probable that a translator, who has spent whole years in studying him, would render him more faithfully and vigorously than any mere reader could—but I have read him in translations; one by Pope, who, they say, is a poet; and one by Cowper, whom I *know* to be one. By these translations, therefore, I shall take the liberty to judge him. The true reason then, of this universal suffrage, is this. The most distinguished Romans adopted the opinions, with the language of Greece. And we have worn the opinions of her criticism on all subjects—as we have worn her chains—the trappings of our subjection. Had Milton been a Greek, or Tasso a Roman; had Homer been an Englishman, and Virgil an Italian; the reputation of each would have been entirely different from what it now is. The whole world would have worshipped and trembled at, the name of Milton and Tasso: while England would have clung in solitude to her Homer: and the sepulchre of Virgil would have been consecrated to the adoration of Italy alone.

But to return—on such themes my feelings are ungovernable; and I must be pardoned, if they sometimes hurry me away from the subject.—All I ask then—speaking of my book—is to have it *read*. Praise it, or damn it, as you please. Judge as you please of it—for yourselves; say what you please of it, and do what you please with it. I have no disposition to avert your severity. I shall frequently deserve it; and I shall like

you the better for expressing it—but do it like men; plump, and to the point. Don't fritter away your souls in metaphysical jargon. Put it under the forestick, if you don't like it; and speak boldly, if you *do*, whatever others may say of it. You are to judge for yourselves. I know its faults; they are innumerable, and great. It has no calm, tranquil prettiness of character. It is no neutral, no hermaphrodite. Such as "you cannot blame 'tis true, but you may sleep" over, in reading. It is *poetry—or—it is the most outrageous nonsense; one or the other, it must be. There is no medium. Of course, if you have one spark of poetry within you, you must either lay your hand on your heart and exclaim—"well, in spite of all its faults, it is poetry;" or you must tear it peacemeal, and scatter it to the four winds of heaven.*

In sober, honest truth then, I would influence nobody's opinion. I pray—I entreat every reader to judge for himself. If he decide favourably, I shall think his judgment very creditable to him, without doubt; if otherwise, I shall content myself with saying, (what all authors, in the same case would *think*,—but never *say*)—that—*he is no poet!*

I have taken the trouble to revise such of these poems, as have been before the publick. I have cut off some parts, and should have cut off more; but, unfortunately, the parts I did *not* like, others *did*; some that I liked the *least*, they liked the *most*. In such a case, what was I to do? If I cut off what I liked, I abused the publick, and rejected the only standard upon which they have a right to fasten an au-

thor, as to the bed of Procerustes, and lop him into correspondent proportions. I mean, by that standard, the conscience and taste of the poet. He is bound to follow his own, be they what they may. Otherwise—if he accommodate himself to the taste and judgment of others—if he succeeds, *they* get all the credit—and if he *fails*, he gets all the disgrace. No—I choose to follow my own opinions, right or wrong, and be responsible, as a Christian is—to *my own* conscience, not to that of any other man.

And truly, it would not be expected, that I should lop off the very part that my criticks liked!—it would be an insult. They never would forgive me! And yet reader, (though you see by this, what I *could* say in my own defence if I had kept “all and more too”)—yet—after all—*that* is exactly what I have done. Where I have omitted any thing—it has been what *some* criticks have particularly admired. And two or three other passages, tolerably be-praised—I have ventured to play the devil with, “on my own account and risk.” Besides all this, however, I have struck out not a few parts that, at different times, I have tolerated—but never liked.

After Niagara and Goldau, you will find a number of odes, songs “and things”—that were manufactured a long while ago, and published in the Portico. Some of them have fire, and spirit: and others are remarkable only, for a kind of lady-like sentiment—something a-la-Moore—a sort of she-poetry. My reason for publishing them is this: I want a copy for myself—in a more portable shape. This is the true reason. I

could give others—the common property of authors in such a case—to be appropriated at pleasure—such as, the “urgency of friends”—“admiration of the publick” and all that;—but they are old reasons—and *this* is a new one, and therefore, in my opinion, the best.

To these, are added some half a dozen short pieces, of which the reader is requested to form his own opinion. He should have mine, but that I have not yet got over the fever of composition, and should be rather fearful of my own judgment, just at this time.

Next, he will encounter an ode—or rather a *poem*—for though it be lyrical, it is out of all proportion for admeasurement, upon the scale of any thing, denominated an ode in modern ages. The Delphians, before whom it was recited—are an association of literary men. They had the civility to be particularly pleased with it: others, and *poets* too, have gone to enthusiasm;—for myself; I have no great opinion of it—it is fiery, intrepid and fanciful—but I do not think half so highly of it, as of some others, upon which some of my very best friends have not yet made up their minds, whether to call them—“exceedingly fine” or—exceedingly crazy.

And finally—he will meet with part of a poem—of which I can only say this—were I to be assured that I could finish it—as I have begun it—I should ask no other reward for wasting my life on it. But I cannot—I feel I cannot: There were some magnificent conceptions in my brain—respecting the CONQUEST OF PERU, the fate of our *genuine* Americans—the Indians of our country—which I once intended to embody—but now, I *cannot*—and hereafter, I *must* not.

And now, I am about making some remarks, for which I expect to be generally and heartily quizzed, roasted, and what is infinitely worse—criticised.* But—no matter—so the *book* only is abused, I have no fears for my peace of mind. I could abuse it as heartily as another; and with much more reason too, I am sure, than any body else has done, to my knowledge. And as for myself—personally—the reviewers have no terrors for me. What they can do in decency; I know they will do—and they may do it, in welcome. What they do beyond that—they are responsible for, not to me—for I don't care a fig for the whole "boiling of them"—but to the publick.

To business then.—I give the history of this poem—for the advantage of others—not for myself. I have now done with poetry. My ambition is now of a different character. It *was* a passion with me; but one, however, which I made subservient to my necessities. I have written enough to show what I *could* do, if I pleased. I have no idea of mincing the matter—there is poetry in my veins—I know there is. I believe that I *could* contribute to the reputation of my country—and what is more, I think I have proved it. I say all this the more freely, because I have now bidden adieu to poetry—because I have other, and more commanding duties to fulfil. And probably, I do not say *certainly*—I do not *promise* absolutely, because if I did I should adhere to it, at all events, and under all temp-

* Perhaps too—by some thick-headed Boston lawyer.

tations—*probably*, this is the last work of mine* that will ever appear before the publick, until I am where a literary reputation will be of no use to me.

That I shall abandon the *writing* of poetry, I do not promise—nay, I do not even insinuate—for I conscientiously believe that I shall not. But this I do believe—that this little volume contains all that will ever be *published* of mine, while I live. Some may smile at this—and some may sneer at it. But the smile of the benevolent and kind, has always been like sunshine to me, whatever were its cause—though I were the subject of it. And as for the sneer—I am perfectly tranquil on that point. I have heard of such things—but I never saw one. According to my opinion—they must be very harmless. No man can be happy till he be beyond the reach of sarcasm—and though he were a blockhead, I should advise him to outface derision. He must be miserable—be his talents what they may—who has a quick sensibility to puppyism, acrimony, or satire. If I did feel, therefore, the world would never know it.

Reader—remember my caution in the beginning. Forget the author, if you would do him justice. You may not know me. If you *do*, however, you will believe me. If you do not, I entreat you for your sake, not to be precipitate in your judgment. You have more to lose by it, than I have.

Why am I thus tedious? It is my privilege. Some will not find it tedious—those, who do, have a remedy within their reach. It is the last time that I shall be

* Except a tragedy—already written—and in the way of publication—when others say so.

id for talking of myself, and I am willing to make the most of it. I have just spoken my farewell as an author; and, somewhat ludicrously I confess, hinted that though I should not *publish*, yet I should continue to *write*. And so I shall—but it will be subordinate to my duties—I shall write, as others drink—for exhilaration. I feel that I can contribute something to my home—and my country: For sometimes, I feel—what I cannot readily describe—a trembling and glowing through the whole system—and have been heated in composition, till the page grew luminous before me—and—but a Philadelphian may observe that, these are exactly the qualifications required in a candidate for the Pennsylvania Hospital;—I should forgive him, if he did—and, therefore, I hold it to be my duty, when I can afford it, to leave some proofs of the illumination that an American can experience, when gazing upon the wonders of American history. I think it is my duty—because I think I have the power. Others have it also—I pretend to no exclusive property in these virtues. No—I know that we have poets—poets full of the fire and sublimity of genius—poets, whose harps shall yet be heard, like that of Ariel in the pauses of the storm:—poets whose trumpets and steeds will be louder than the uproar of the elements. We have had battles worthy of such bards—and we shall have bards worthy of our battles. The genii of painting and poetry always appear—and always vanish, together. Our painters are already brightening to the touch of inspiration—and the treasures of American poesy have been discovered, and will yet prove boundless and inexhaustible as our mines.

But all this may be an illusion—I may neither know, nor understand poetry. And though others, who do not think as I do, may look to my awakening from such opinions, as from a long trance; yet I have the same confidence in this *sense* of poetry, for to me it is a *sense*—as I have in the sense of hearing or seeing. And therefore, did I even expect the termination of the dream—and a restoration to the sober opinions of mankind, I must, from necessity, continue to judge by such *senses* as I have. They are my only ministers. Such are my opinions—and they are almost religious—conscientious, they certainly are; and therefore, I am *bound* to act in conformity to them, however they may contradict the plainest maxims of the world. It may be a delusion—it may. I feel it is *possible*—but when I awaken from it—it will be under the expectation that all I hear, and see, and feel, is but a dream—that Berkley and Hume are right; that the blessed firmament, the sun, the moon, the everlasting and the infinite, all, all! are but a dream, and a vision.

Patience reader; blessed are the patient, you know. I have now come to the history of this poem. It is amusing. I shall relate it, because it may be an advantage to others, whose young blood is tingling with the same disease. May they be enabled to turn away from the fascinations of *POESY*, with as much composure as I do at this moment! She has her enchantments; they are subtle and dangerous. But for certain rules which adopted, at the first initiation into her mysteries, and which I have adhered to, inflexibly and constantly from that hour, instead of being enabled, as I now am, to

throw off her trappings, and bid defiance to her witcheries, I should be one of the veriest of her slaves. Do ye so likewise—make poetry—whatever be your talent—whatever be your powers—whatever be your fondness for it—make poetry subordinate to your plans of life, as you would make pleasure subordinate to duty: Otherwise—when too late—you will crown yourself, like Lear, with withered flowerets—and ragged thorns—hug the ruin that is embracing you—and walk—the mere maniac—a monarch perhaps, in your own dominions—but a mere maniac among the men of this world.

About three years ago, Mr. Pierpont, the gentleman to whom this is dedicated, a man, to whom I am indebted, not only for all the reason there is in my rhyme, but for all the reason there is in me, I believe, was conversing with me about the battle of Bridgewater. He thought it a fine subject for a poem. So did I—but then, I had no more idea of writing a poem, than I have now, of revolutionizing China. I had never written any thing—prose or poetry—for the publick: and had nothing to boast of, but a natural, sprightly manner of writing letters; a manner, which I caught by reading every thing that came in my way—very rapidly—and with very little reflection.

Some time after this—I betrayed to him—and he never will forget how I trembled when I did it—it was like a school boy in his first exercise—some brief poetical “trifles,” as poets call their most laborious attempts. The consequence was—a recommendation to attempt this battle for a poem. I was flattered—yet

even then, regarded it as a compliment; not an unmeaning one, for he is never guilty of such things—but as the consequence of over-excitement—enthusiasm—and deep interest.

Not long afterwards—we were sitting together in his study, and he was reading a sermon of the accomplished and amiable Dr. Buckminster. He had invited me for the purpose, he said, and dwelt particularly upon his account of the destruction of Goldau:—and finally advised me to try my hand at that. By the way—it may be well enough to observe that, between these events, I had written most of the small pieces which will be found in this volume. I was pleased with the subject;—it seemed giant-like and tumultuous—one that would require no *plot*—and very little catastrophe;—for to such things I have a mortal aversion: I should as soon look for a plot in a song, as in a descriptive poem. The very next day after this, I undertook the business; and in the course of the afternoon, wrote, as near as I can recollect, about two hundred, or two hundred and fifty lines. They are still to be seen—being all except the eight syllable lines—and a portion of them.

Subsequently to this—or, after the manner of another* of Apollo's worshippers, (who has been as precise in keeping a calendar of his poetical attacks, and intermissions—fevers and agues—cold and hot fits, as was Robinson Crusoe, in registering his almanack upon a stick)—to be more particular;—on the 17th of June,

* Coleridge.

1817, I heard that a friend of mine was going to England. I was, at that very moment, publishing a book here—and it struck me, that if I could manage to publish another there, I should have two chances, instead of one, of escaping what the criticks, very properly, call “*damnation*.” So—though I had not thought of the battle of Bridgewater for months—and my friend was expected to sail every day, I sat myself down to the job. By noon of the twentieth, having employed three days upon it, I had written, over and over again, enough to count, reckoning broken-backed ones and all, nearly eight hundred lines. I then had a short reprieve—the vessel would not go for three days—or rather, my friend would not arrive for three days. So—I undertook to revise it. On the twenty-third, at noon, having employed six days upon the whole business, the *Battle of Niagara* was completed, scoring eight hundred and fifty-four lines, superficial measure; two copies were taken of it—Goldau was thrown into another shape, augmented to about four hundred and fifty lines; and a large number of small poems were copied from manuscript, and revised for the London press. In that state, the book went to London. My friend was authorized to sell it—*if he could*. He could not sell it—one of the trade offered to print it, and I suppose he would have printed any thing else on the same terms—could he have a guarantee against loss. That, of course, was not acceded to. Some criticks saw it there, and spoke warmly of it, but recommended, very judiciously, a revision.

The poem was brought back; and thrown aside for sometime. When I had nothing else to do, however,

I sometimes took it up—in the winter of 1817—18, after a day of the most intense and horrible application, to a work, in which I was then engaged, (compared to which learning to read with your eyes shut, or harnessing fleas to invisible chariots, would have been pastime)—and added some few lines here and there. Of those first written, about four hundred I imagine, on looking them over, are still preserved; but without the same relation to each other. This rapidity of execution, must, whatever may be said by criticks, *must* and will plead strongly—not for indulgence, I despise *that*—but for justice. It is no merit in me to compose rapidly; I claim no praise for it. I wish I could move more slowly, less capriciously, but I cannot. Had I a dozen hands, I could keep them all employed, when I am writing poetry. I know such things only expose me to the reiterated charge of vanity, and perhaps folly—but I cannot help saying that, when fairly absorbed in the contemplation of a subject, my whole soul is in a tumult; I feel myself shut out from the world, a strange kindling comes over me—a kind of mental exhilaration: a “drunkenness of heart”—that I cannot describe, scarcely wish to experience again, but hope I shall never lose the memory of.—Such visitations—but no—I must leave this subject.

Among some facts connected with the history of this poem, there is one not a little ridiculous, and yet, I think not without example since. The reader will observe that I begin with a ten syllable* but not heroick mea-

* In preparing this edition, however, I have altered nearly the whole of that part.

sure; and that, after several struggles, I get fairly from the gallop of that, into the majestick jog of the Heroick. The truth is, I thought I was writing heroick at first! I knew twelve syllables were not heroick, but I did *not* know and *do* not know what a twelve-syllable measure is. But I *did* know that an heroick line should have ten syllables. I knew too, that if two be taken from twelve, ten is left: So, I clipped all my twelve syllable lines, as I thought, into very pretty heroick, by cropping off two syllables. The reader may smile at this, but I'll be hanged if Tom Moore has'nt done the same thing. He wrote the Veiled Prophet, not by ear, but by counting his fingers and thumbs. Like me, he had his ear tuned to the fine, quick, varied harmonies of the lyrical measure. How else shall we account for the "slovenly versification" of that poem;* coming too, from the most delicious, and harmonious weaver of verse, that ever trilled a guitar under a rose bush. Count the syllables; every line is perfect in number. Read the lines, they are so ragged, that even the rich flowing harmony of the poet's thought is cramped by the measure—much as a graceful boy would be, by a suit of armour, buskins, and a dagger. And this is what one would expect—Mr. Moore has no business with heroick verse. He is unequalled in the melodious shiftings of his favorite measure; he is all sweetness, voluptuousness, and

* A hundred lines can be found in it more barbarous than these of Pope—"Awake my St. John—leave all meaner things;"—"So schismaticks the plain believers prest"—or this "Expatriate free—o'er this scene of men."

finish. There is no dignity, no sublimity, no grandeur in him, and therefore, he is out of his element, when he attempts to bluster in heroick. It is like a Cupid attempting to blow a trumpet. Moore is altogether a poet, but he is nothing else; he is no dramatist. He knows nothing of any passion but that of love, yet there he is unrivalled. His soul is on fire, but it is a well tempered fire, like that from a censer; all frankincense, light and vapour. It is not that which consumes a man, searches his marrow, and crumbles every thing it blazes upon.

For my part, I am satisfied, it was not for want of labour, that his Veiled Prophet, was not as harmonious as his other beautiful poems; but for want of ear and practice. He dealt out the inspiration of the muse by fives and tens, as people score salt.

My case was much the same. It was by accident that I discovered what an heroick line was, and then I found no more difficulty in writing it, than so many words of prose. I made it rugged intentionally—because I do, from my soul, hate the sing song of Pope, “two up and two down.” It is, as Cowper says, serving poetry as cooks do turkeys, that is, tying them to a *post*, (meaning a *critick*, I suppose,) and pulling their sinews out.

But to return. One night, after having worn myself into a state of comfortable stupidity, over the work I have once before alluded to, I had taken out my poem as I often did, (for I suppose I have written it over thirty times at least) to weave in a few more lines; when a thought struck me. I was poor. I had a scheme

in view at the time, which might place me in a situation to pursue a course of severe and laborious study, to which I had devoted myself; but if it failed, I determined upon this: to finish Niagara and Goldau—commit them to memory—prepare myself for the purpose—go to Philadelphia (that being the “Athens of America”) assume some other name, to hide my mortification if I was discomfited—and *there recite it publickly.*

It was a wild scheme, I grant; and though carried into execution, so far as it depended upon me, yet I will venture to say that, till within a few days, there were not three persons in the world, who knew me at all in the business.

I did all this—I was disappointed in my first scheme; had nothing to depend upon, to keep me from starving; except I chose to write myself to death. This determined me. I went to Philadelphia; assumed the name of George E. Percival; and with the utmost difficulty, succeeded in procuring a room, after a week of disappointment and delay, during which I found but two men, (and delicacy alone prevents me from mentioning their names, on this occasion,) who seemed justly sensible of the elevated rank to which Philadelphia is entitled in the republick. One of these gentlemen offered me his influence in obtaining a hall, then, and now, I believe, appropriated to the Lancasterian school: the other offered me a very large room then at his disposal. I *felt* the kindness of both, and trust in heaven that I shall have an opportunity to return it. At length however, I was persuaded to hire Mr. Renshaw’s room, although an accident had recently happened at the Washington Hall, while Mrs. French

was singing, which, it was supposed, *might* prevent the timid and misinformed from attending. But of the contrary, I was assured by the proprietor of the house; he informed me that he had since let it to Mr. Inledon, or the musical-glass man, I forget which—I only remember that he told me the latter performed every night—night after night—to “crowded rooms;” and I knew that a fire-eater had fitted up the Mechanick’s Hall, where he exhibited every night, as I had reason to suppose too, to “overflowing houses.” Indeed, the reason why I could not get a place, was because they were all taken up by rope-dancers, jugglers and vaulters, &c. &c. who were all “crowded” I suppose, to suffocation, by the *Athenians*.

I was advised to print bills and stick them up at the corners of the street—but poor as I was, I was a little too proud for that. I would as soon have mounted a stage and tumbled about, like a mountebank, with labels on my hat. It won’t take, said a gentleman to me, unless you make a show with the bills. I did not believe him—I had too good an opinion of the Philadelphians; but he knew them better, I have found out *that*. Well, I advertised in all the papers—gave *extracts* in some three or four (perhaps, however, that is the reason of the catastrophe)—had my tickets printed—and distributed among several highly respectable booksellers:—went to my lodgings (after having been promised that the room should be seasonably illuminated)—and having nothing else to do, threw myself upon the bed—fell asleep—don’t laugh reader.—I awoke exactly at the moment—hurried, in the full pos-

session of all my faculties, I verily believe; for though I wonder now how I could have had the assurance to appear before a Philadelphia audience, creatures of such refined taste—such exquisite sentiment, and all that—*then* I felt about as easy, (though I never so much as “spoke a piece” in publick,) as I should *now* in haranguing my own grandmother: And so, to end this narrative, I arrived at the room—How many of these literati—these Philadelphians—these American Athenians, think you, I found assembled?—Not one, not one! by Julius Cæsar!—not one! though I had sent a ticket to two of the chief criticks in the city, in charity; and two others to the gentlemen above-mentioned, gentlemen, by the by, whom I shall never mention but with respect, though they would not come to hear me spout, free of expense. The truth is, it is too ridiculous a subject for my composure. Such expectations as I had formed! I even advertised, on the strength of Mr. Renshaw’s assurances that I should have a crowded house; that he could sell “nearly a hundred tickets in his own family;” that the room could accommodate three hundred persons—I even advertised, heaven forgive me! that “*no more than two hundred tickets would be sold!*” —and faith! I *believe* the terms of agreement were religiously complied with: though I do not *know*, for the very next day, I left Philadelphia; have not been there since, and never mean to go, if there be any way on earth to get round it.* From that day to this, I have never

* Unless it be to pay Mr. Duane, who would not take Baltimore money for *advertising*, something like a dollar that I owe him.

been to inquire how many, or how few tickets were sold. It is true, I owe an apology to the gentlemen who received them, for I dare say they have long regarded it as a quiz. They will be good enough, therefore, to consider this an *apology*—it is all they'll get; they had better take it, and make the most of it.

I had determined to recite it, if there should be a single man to hear me—and sanguine as I am, I did not calculate on having for "*the first night!*"—more than enough to pay the expenses, and then I meant to repeat it, "*by particular request.*" But, thank heaven! I was prevented. One thing, however, I have omitted. The reader must not suppose that I intended boring the Philadelphians with the *whole* of my poem. No, no! not so bad as that neither:—I had selected the parts best calculated for recitation, and connected, or rather *entangled* them for the purpose.

There is another thing too, for I would do justice even to the "*Athenians,*" that ought not to be omitted. —When I arrived at Mr. Renshaw's—instead of finding the room illuminated, and prepared, I found it in total darkness; not a candle lighted; some half a dozen remarkably genteel young men appeared arranged about it, as if to stare at me: but they were genteel enough to stop that business, without a particular request; for I was in no very agreeable humour. I spoke to one of the servants: "Why is not the room prepared?"—No body come sir, no tickets sold, said he, with a delightful grin—I shall remember it to my dying day. Where is your master? "Gone out sir." I was very angry, I must confess, and am not sorry now that his master had

"gone out." I meant to have seen him the next day, but the next day I left the city, I hope forever. Since then, I have thought it possible that among so many admirers of wild beasts, philosophy, conjurers, etc. etc. as Philadelphia is crowded with, some persons might have been disposed to see a *poet*; and that, each supposed it a *quizz*, when he arrived at the mansion house and saw no room prepared. Each, therefore, kept the bite a secret, and never acknowledged what he came for. But honestly, and sincerely, it was not a quizz. I would have recited my poem to any body I could have caught, had I been compelled to hold him by the button during the operation.

And further, though Mr. R. is certainly very much to blame for not lighting the room as he had contracted to do, yet I attribute it to his want of courage; he dared not outface publick opinion. He was familiar, probably, with the cultivated taste of his fellow citizens, and knew exactly how far they would go in tolerating exhibitions at his tavern. Well! I forgive him: many and many a time since, has my sides ached at the recollection of the catastrophe, and many a time have I waked myself by my own laughing. All I have to say is, that the Philadelphians are a very polished and refined, high-minded, elegant, publick spirited, *rational* sort of people: and much good-may their fire-eaters and mountebanks do them. And, brother poets, if you have a mind "to pick up a penny" in the way of your profession; heaven help you! you had better turn taylors or shoemakers, and do your own mending at least; shun the American Athens, as you would shun a poor-house, or else

dress yourself up like a harlequin—rehearse your own rhymes in the market, or ride backwards to the sound of a trumpet, proclaiming ribands to be swallowed, glasses gingled—with a thing called a poem between the acts.

To conclude then—I left Philadelphia, returned to Baltimore, published the poem, and during its publication, managed to interweave something like three or four hundred lines; (in one instance, I remember—a long passage, something like two pages, at the beginning of the third canto, which has been universally and extravagantly applauded, notwithstanding its contradictions,) while a boy was waiting for the proof. It was written in about the same time, that one would take to write a letter.

It remains now, according to the received practice of authors, to say something about the success my book has met with: and, in truth, any other subject on earth would be quite as agreeable to me; for though I am assured that, all things considered, I have had an “unparalleled run,”—yet I am far from being satisfied with it.

It has been reviewed, ably reviewed, by some half a dozen persons; most of whom, though they spoke occasionally of it, in terms of unqualified admiration, I verily believe, have read it precisely as they would have read a novel. And to read any *poem* so, is to murder it. I think this is the case. because none—*none* have observed the omission of whole lines—leaving words without a rhyme; a thing that could not have escaped their notice, had they read the poem as it deserves to be read: and one, a Boston man, has plumed

himself prodigiously in criticising a printer's blunder; "light of musick," for "light and musick."

The Analectic, and the Port Folio, for reasons best known to themselves, have carefully avoided mentioning the work at all. The former, perhaps, on account of a very foolish and very extravagant thing, (though, by the way, it has a good deal of force in it) that I scribbled some time ago, and REVIEWED myself, in the preface, after the manner of those exceedingly learned, and exceedingly incomprehensible gentlemen, who manage that work. And the latter, has not, I take it, because, something like twelve months ago, it announced, in a very mysterious manner, one of the most whimsical and ludicrous purposes that ever characterized a critical journal. It was this—on the cover, written like an incantation, for none but the initiated could understand it, appeared a notice to authors, saying, that if they wished their works to be taken notice of, they must send the editor "the price of a year's subscription;" that is, in plain English, a five dollar note to pay for a review! Cheap enough! In Edinburgh and London they are not so modest. If you want a work damned or praised there, you must *outbid* a host of competitors. This singular proposition is worth our notice: Did the editor mean, that, for *five dollars* he would speak *favourably* of every thing; if so, I am ashamed of his principles, and blush to see him the conductor of so able an American paper; if not, if only when a work *deserved* it, he meant to abuse it, he must take us authors to be great jackasses, (to say nothing of his *conscience* in doing it,) to pay *five dollars* for being abused. The plain fact is,

probably, that for *five dollars*, the editor of the Port-Folio would undertake to insert any thing that was sent him, though he might not write it himself.

So, not thinking his opinion worth a five dollar note, though I were sure of having it—all that an author could wish, I did not send him the price of a review, and of course, he did not review it. On the subject of poetry, I wouldn't give a fig for his opinion. He is a good lawyer; his Law Journal is an invaluable book; the chief departments of his Port Folio are ably conducted; but the question of, poetry or no poetry? he is miserably incompetent to determine. On other subjects, I do respect his opinion, and should advise him to cut belles-lettres: it is scarcely worth any man's while to be distinguished in lighter literature, and he had better be content with the reputation he has. By reaching at the shadow, like the *editor* in the fable, he may lose the substance. For example, I would ask him to turn back to one of his old numbers, say nearly two years ago, and look at a long catalogue of rhymes, under a "notice to correspondents." They are, in truth, abominably flat, and so evidently *got up* for the occasion, that the most stupid would discover the trick. It is certain, that he hunted up the poetical quotations; and then accommodated his prose to it, in proportion as the chance of *making* prose is to the chance of remembering apt poetry, at any time. It was, to speak plainly, a very foolish way of saying very foolish things.

There is an editor in New York also, to whom I have a word or two to say. The reason why he has not reviewed Niagara; I take it, is, because he was afraid,

felt his incapacity, or was too lazy. And yet, these are the guardians of American literature, the high priests of our national temple! Their papers are continually crowded with foreign trash, and extracts from foreign reviews, as if we had no opinions of our own, or were incapable of expressing them in our own language. To import our literature—and such literature too!—it is enough to kindle the indignation of the veriest wretch in America. Are we so abject, so contemptible? must we import our opinions? and this too, while the American press is teeming with native productions, upon which the pall of oblivion is immediately spread, by the very hands that should be foremost in the support and vindication of American character. Of what consequence to us, comparatively speaking, is the reputation of cotemporary *British* writers. Our fame must depend not upon *reading*, but upon *writing*. It is your duty, gentlemen editors, your duty to your subscribers; you are pledged to it, as American journalists, to take some notice of every American publication that appears. If it deserve condemnation, condemn it—tear it piecemeal, — give a loose to your indignation like men, like Americans. If, on the contrary, it have any merit, say so: speak boldly—speak as if you have confidence in your own opinion. Don't talk *about* the subject, talk *at* it. Speak to the point. That is your duty. Do you know this? If you would see the literature of your country take a stand worthy of her reputation—*you must watch it—encourage it—pray for it*. You are not asked to *praise* it, no, no;—there is little, at present, that deserves praise—*but take notice of it*. That you can do. The

greatest genius that ever blazed, would go out in his own darkness, if he *were not taken notice of*. Don't mistake me: I speak for others, not for myself.

And now reader, to give you an evidence of the manner in which our publick journals are conducted, I will tell you something of this New York editor.—When I published “Keep Cool”—a thing that I am not even yet ashamed of; there are parts of which I never think without blushing, and there are others, of which I shall be proud, while I am able to feel emotion, or to excite it in others, but I was a boy then, and I wrote too hastily, that must be my apology for it:—well then, when I wrote *KEEP COOL*, the editors of the New York Magazine, then just established, wrote a villanous little article upon it—in which, after making two or three very severe, yet very just observations—they acknowledged that they had not read it!—aye reader, they had “run over about eighty pages”—which eighty pages, as I hadn't got fairly a going, I have always thought contained the greatest trash in the book. To atone for this affront to the publick, after having had the impudence to pronounce an opinion, on a work that they had never read—they promised “if they thought it worth their notice—to renew the subject.”

The moment I saw the paragraph, I wrote them a letter. I expected they might publish it. But they hadn't the courage. A *part of it*, I dare say they would,—but I had so managed it, that they couldn't expose me, without exposing themselves; for I took the liberty to point out some most ridiculous blunders in their own work—and to request them, *not to spare me*. I asked

no favour—I scorn favours—I wouldn't raise my hand to change the opinion of the world on such subjects—I bade them *do their duty to the publick*. They were not the men to do it—they neither acknowledged their errors, nor atoned for them.

Since then, when Niagara was published, I looked for some of their magnanimity. I was disappointed. A friend of mine, some time afterwards, told me that he had been directed to deliver a message, from the gentleman to whom I have dedicated this volume—to the surviving editor of that Magazine. Fearful of the interference of a friend, so warm, so enthusiastick a friend—on such a subject, and anxious, if I was reviewed, to be reviewed fairly, without influence—I was fool enough to write again to the editor, with the hope of counteracting that influence. And that is the last I have heard of it. Now, the fact is, that all these gentlemen together, cannot stamp a character of insignificance upon these poems. They may be as silent as they please—every man that reads them will say that they are, at least, worth cursing. But most of them have the good will, tho' not the ability to damn them effectually—the others, with more ability - have less courage. They are afraid to do injustice, because their own reputation would be involved—and they have not the magnanimity to do justice.

All these men, therefore, say I—and I hold myself responsible for the consequences—the editors of the *Analectic*, *Port Folio*, and *New York Magazines*, have violated their obligations to the American publick. The "*North American Review*" has not—though it

has treated me severely. It has done its duty—so far as it could do it.

I shall soon be done, now, I hope; though I have already made this three times as long as I intended at first; and cannot, therefore, speak very certainly upon the prospect.

Before I talk of the opinion manifested by critics—and most of them are *poets*;^{*} some strangers, total strangers to me; I shall take the liberty to say what my own is. I care not what others may think of such a proceeding; I am accustomed to express my sentiments, firmly, on all subjects with which I am acquainted; (and I *never* found those sentiments treated with disrespect,) and I see no reason why I should be excluded from speaking on that subject with which I am *best acquainted*—as confidently, and as freely. I shall not be very particular, for really, I am not quite barefaced enough for that; but this I say—these poems are full of faults, great faults; obscurity, extravagance, and entanglement of metaphor and imagery, heaps upon heaps; and yet, there are pages that I never saw excelled; never wish to excel—and never hope to reach again in this world. These passages; except by one man, and he is entitled to the first rank among the writers of *intelligible* poetry, the beautiful, and the chaste, have been generally condemned, as cloudy and vague; sometimes oppressive and magnificent, but indistinct, not touchable, not tangible. Yet other passages, and some that have been ex-

* Not poets, *because* they have spoken highly of Niagara, but because they *were* poets, they have spoken highly of it.

ceedingly admired, upon my soul, I would strike out of this edition, were I not unwilling to insult some of my best friends. To me, they are insufferably tame, cold—motionless, and passionless;—mere rhyming advertisements.

Several persons, as I have said before, have reviewed the first edition; and really, I have a mind to review them in return. It is the only way to keep these criticks straight. Their heads will be turned else, by their elevation. They, of all scribblers, are the only ones beyond the reach of criticism: and that gives them an appearance of self-complacency, which is infinitely amusing to one who has the patience to read their speculations.

The first review that I saw, was written by a total stranger to me. I am assured however, that he was a *poet*. And his style of composition justifies the belief. It appeared in the Boston Centinel—and is not only the ablest, but the best criticism, the most faithful criticism, that I have yet seen on Niagara. It is eloquent, warm, and discriminating. It has been attributed to Mr. Pierpont. It was not his. Mr. Pierpont has never written any thing on the subject, for the publick.

To this succeeded a fine article in the Journal of the Times, written by the editor.* He too—is a poet—a beautiful poet. A feeling of friendship probably led him into the business—and we can discover, though the criticism be very just, and sometimes very favourable—that the writer did not feel that freedom, which gene-

* Paul Allen.

rally warms and enriches his writing. I understood it—there was the struggle of partiality and opinion; where he censured, and where he praised, he was sincere, so far as he went. He spoke the truth—but not the whole truth. Had I been a stranger to him, he would have written better; and the poem would have been more censured, and more applauded—than it was. This I know. It is the consequence of a frank, hearty disposition. Such men, distrusting the influence of friendship; in their effort to become perpendicular, and avoid an inclination to partiality, generally acquire a contrary propensity.

Soon after this, appeared a most extraordinary sort of a metaphysical notice of it, in the "North American Review." It was able, and I dare say honest—but very stupid. It was able, because evidently written by one of your "thinking people;" one who would mount his spectacles, and grasp a guaging rod, or six inch rule, whether he were to measure the altitude of Cleopatra's needle, or the dimensions of a madrigal. It was honest, I hope, because the man certainly says what he thinks; he was undoubtedly bewildered, completely bewildered, in reading the poem: found it incapable of any classification; and, as it resembled none of the school-boy standards, he of course, took it for granted, that it was—what—for his soul, he couldn't tell, and wouldn't undertake to say positively. Such is the character of his review. He may be a sensible fellow enough in his way, but his ideas of poetry are—his own; I cannot—if I would, say any thing more severe.* I

* But let me give an example. "This," says the cri-

would defy any man on earth, to understand what he is driving at, or what his opinion of the poem is. He

tick, "is too much in Leigh Hunt's childish way, where he says,

"There is something at work in the moon-shiny air."

And that he calls *childish*:—that! why Shakspeare himself, never touched out a more exquisite insinuation of magick—in the happiest moment of his poesy, when Ariel was at her most delicious spiritings. But see how he applies it—these are the lines which he says are after Leigh Hunt's *childish* manner:—

"Land of white bosoms—and blue laughing eyes,

"Like miniature pictures of transparent skies,

"Where young thoughts like the blessed are seen."

And this, comparing the passage of thin vapours over a motionless water:—

"They pass like thoughts o'er a clear blue eye."

And these, *he says*, are childish!—I pray heaven, if they be, that I may never be cursed with maturity. But I have another authority against him—besides my own opinion, and positively, those three first lines, I once determined to adopt for a motto to my title page:—such was *my* opinion of them. The author of the review, which appeared in the Boston Centinel—told a person, who told me—that he would give a joint of his little finger to have written those very lines!—They must be very *childish* indeed—for *he* is a *poet*. For myself, I think them very pretty—perfectly pretty—but nothing more;—there is nothing *great* in them. In one word, this man is about as well qualified to review poetry, as I should be to review a Hebrew grammar, a work in anatomy, or mathematicks:—that is—utterly incompetent. Any body may feel heat and movement in a poem—but a poet only can measure the latitude and longitude of a poet's conceptions. It is a pity that people—criticks—would not confine themselves to what they understand. And it is quite as preposterous for a

is wavering—indeterminate—and contradictory.* Yet to give the gentleman his due, there are some very judicious, though not very palatable remarks; one witty one, if I recollect right; two or three wretched miscarriages;

mere mathematician, or the merest lawyer, to review a poem, as it would be for a mere poet to review Rees' Cyclopedia. Yet a judgment of poetry, some how or other, seems to be one of those *intuitive* qualifications, that any blockhead may possess; for though he might pause, ere he expressed himself on any other subject—with nothing but intuitive knowledge to guide him—yet in this—poetry—he speaks at once—with the most intrepid—swaggering confidence:—But—“fools rush in—where angels fear to tread.”

* Example. It may be well enough to give one. Says this critick, with that modest kind of lispng superciliousness, which distinguish men who are not absolutely certain what their own opinions are—“*There is strange musick every where, whether of the air or earth—whether in the ear or fancy, it is not easy to determine;*” ah! is that true?—if he knows enough to keep himself out of fire and water, one would think he could tell, if he burnt his fingers, that the fire wasn't in his fancy or his touch—or if he heard musick, that it wasn't in his ears, merely, unless, like Jammy Burns, he is affected with a “singing noddle.” But he proceeds—“*This is not meant for praise,*” (no! I'll be bound it wasn't! but how are we to understand it?)—“*and as a proof of the author's powers, for he creates no illusion, &c.*” Such is the present state of criticism in North America! probably about what it was at the first visit of the Europeans—on the whole, the gentleman is, certainly, very severe; and might be more so, if he were intelligible. On one or two occasions, however, I am indebted to him, as I have said—and have availed myself of what I take to be his blundering—for, in no other way, on such a subject, can I account for his having said any thing tolerable; and that he *has*, I hereby acknowledge under hand and seal.

in other accouplements; and some observations, so profoundly erudite and metaphysical, that, from that hour to this, I have been unable to determine whether he was writing a review of a *poem*; whether, by some accident, the title had not been misplaced; or whether he was, what the vulgar call "poking fun" at reviewers. And I am not alone in this; others are equally bothered to this hour.

Now, reader, this is the most severe of all the criticisms; yet among its observations are to be ranked some of the most discriminating censures that have yet appeared! And though the writer is so puzzled that, after railing through several pages, and "damning with faint praise," some other things that he could not understand, (and meaning no offence; if he *had understood* them I should certainly have left them out of this edition) he winds up with telling me to persevere; that the way to be permanently in favour with the publick, is not to humour them, &c. &c.—Yet reader, after all, I *really like his review*. It has been of use to me. I *could* have had in that very work too, I have every reason to believe, a review, beyond all comparison more flattering to me, than any I have yet had. I *could* have had it written by a *poet*—a friend—and the most enthusiastick admirer of Niagara—but that friend (and I allude to the gentleman to whom I have dedicated this) had too much delicacy to obtrude an offer, of what the world might think a puff—upon me: and I had too much respect for him, and for myself, to request it. Yet, I *know* that he would have done it at the slightest hint. Nor is this all—others *have* offered to puff me, good writers too; but I

have either refused directly, or discouraged them by my coldness;—always saying no; let strangers judge of me, and my poem. I ask *justice*—and justice I will have.

To this succeeded, a second review, as it was called, by the editor of the Journal of the Times, purporting to be a reply to the North American—one of the most beautiful articles that ever came from the pen of man—but having very little to do with the subject*—it was a

* One remark however, I must except. It is correct and new. I have not quite vanity enough to accept the complimentary part as *true*; but the reason given why Niagara is fatiguing, is a just one—the imagery is too high wrought, crowded, and thronging. “Now we cheerfully concur with the reviewer,” says Mr. Allen, “that these visions, glorious and beautiful as they individually are, when combined, are fatiguing; and fatiguing because they have not been distributed or arranged and dispersed in proper order; they are fatiguing on the same principle as a view of the statues and paintings of the Louvre would formerly have been; the eye wants repose when surrounded by brilliant forms and dazzling splendour.” And Mr. Allen is right, such criticism, right or wrong, is something more than respectable; we feel it, it comes warm to the heart. It is the language of generosity. The remainder of the article is much more flattering than this; and as I am not very adroit at blushing on paper, I shall make no more extracts.

Yes, I must, I have altered my mind. I give it for the sake of the writer, and the reader, not for myself,—it is so wonderfully beautiful. “What then, it may be asked, is it that renders the page of this author (meaning his humble servant) so fascinating, when abounding with such cardinal blemishes?” These he has eloquently described in this manner:—“When he (the author) presents before us, for example, a panoramic view of the

poem, not a criticism. And this is the last—I give you joy, reader. Many brief, and highly flattering notices

battle of Niagara, we almost lose the spectacle, here and there we discover groups of warriors engaged in mortal combat; but these forms are so inconsiderable and so casually represented, that we almost wonder why they should occupy that place."—He proceeds in answer to his own question. "We will say it is poetry, poetry in the most rigid sense of the term. The mist, for example," (now reader you are coming to it)—"gathers around the hill, and we expect, on its dispersion, to see the hostile squadrons arrayed in order of battle—nay! be not impatient gentle reader, gaze for a few moments in this mist—it is kindled with softened and delicate light, and rolls along in fleeting masses to the top of the mountain—now the warriors will suddenly emerge—hush—did you not see that white foot of a descending spirit, as it touched its cloudy pedestal—the cloud mantles over it—it is gone! Again, look at that radiant arm as it reposes itself upon that pillow of vapour—(borrowed, I fear, from Hunt's Foliage:)—where? it is gone! what a countenance is there displayed—in all the glow of immortal youth—what a neck; soft and beautiful as the bosom of mercy—where, where? sure enough—where? for the cloud with all its glorious tenantry has departed; and we see nothing but the mountain in his naked majesty. We gaze again, and an eagle that seems dropped from the sun, and is now struggling to regain his native element, presents himself to our vision—with what grandeur he stretches along the solar track of the firmament! and then vanishes from the eye!

"While we are gazing upward for his re-appearance, we find ourselves, *without having stirred an inch from the ground*, on the borders of an interminable lake: (The greatest compliment that was ever paid to a poet. My aim was to exhibit the capricious changes of a magic lantern, without disturbing the spectator,) the brown Indian in his canoe, skins along the surface, and

have appeared in the newspapers of the day, but I have nothing to do with them—it is not their duty to watch over the literary reputation of their country.

By the by, it is very strange, that so little notice has been taken of Goldau. Only one reviewer has mentioned it. In my opinion, though of a different character from Niagara—it is fully equal to it, for poetry, strength, and action—and calculated to be much more popular. That one reviewer has this sweeping remark—which is false, absolutely false; or to use a genteel synonyme—it, is downright modern *criticism*. He says, speaking of Goldau—"At the close, he describes the fall of

his oar twinkles in the *solar*, (not solar—it is night—in the poem:) beam as he disturbs the bosom of the liquid element. Where? The shadow has passed away.—But how polished, how resplendent, is the glassy surface of this lake! A subterranean sun burns in the centre, surrounded by overhanging rocks, mountains and venerable woods. It appears like a creation about to emerge from the surface of the waters—it seems as if we were standing on the edge of a frightful precipice ready to plunge into the firmament below. But methinks, the winds, eries the spectator, blow too rudely by us—let us begone. What sound was that? it was the harp of an invisible spirit almost drowned in the roar of the tempest—we feel the flutter of his wings upon the face, as he rides upon the winds—we listen again—the blast has subsided, and this invisible tenant is now reposing upon his pillow of clouds."

There! by heaven, I would consent to be abused, for ever and ever, by such a writer: let him write, I should say, let him write; no matter what he says, be his opinions favourable or unfavourable,—let him write! There is fever and genius in every line—above, beyond—infinately beyond the utmost gasconading of mere criticism.

the hill in the following terms—the language indeed fails now and then, but two or three particulars, *which may be found in the accounts published at the time*, are given with some spirit.” Now—those words in italicks, are every *syllable false*; and the critick knew it, or ought to have known it, before he dabbled in criticism. I defy him or any other man to point out a single *particular* in the poem—in any accounts that were ever written of the event. That a mountain fell, is true. The rest is all invention. But this is the fact—criticks like others, may be ignorant, but they are not willing to appear so. For the purpose then, of showing his familiarity with an unknown subject, he hazards a remark which proves to be diametrically opposite to the truth.

In another place he says—“The second poem, Goldau, with a little *invention* and good management, might have been made attractive. Of the good management, I shall say nothing. But of the invention, I *will* say this,—it is all invention. Every line, every thought, every combination, even to the *particulars* and *description* of the event, is entirely and exclusively my own; and is *invention*.”

I have been charged, but by one person only—with *imitation*. Others have vindicated me, indignantly. And yet I think, he, though wrong, is nearer right than they are. It is *resemblance*, not *imitation*. I used to imitate.—Moore was my first standard, as he is with all boys, when they first begin to fancy they can make rhymes, and fall in love; and I have even imitated others, but never, *never* without acknowledging it.

I would as soon be an ape in every thing as in any

thing. Reader, try the question for yourself; compare any two poets together that the world ever saw, and if you do not find more *resemblances* between them, than between my poem and that of any other human being, then call me an *imitator* and welcome: then let me go down to my grave, loaded with the sneaking, abject, pusillanimous reputation of a pilferer and a plagiarist.

Resemblances there certainly are—but *imitation* I never yet could stoop to. As I know my own soul, I would not *imitate* the greatest poet that ever breathed, were I sure of never being discovered, and equally sure of immortality for doing it. No—I had rather be damned for originality, than worshipped for imitation.*

So scrupulous, moreover, have I been in this revisal,

* It is not a little extraordinary, however, that in two cases, entirely accidental, I am exposed to a more serious indictment for plagiarism, wholesale plagiarism. I should not mention the fact, had I not this moment, (12th April) seen a poem (the OCEAN HARP) just published in Philadelphia, with a preliminary discourse on *agriculture*, and *emigration*, &c. &c. &c. with dedications and confessions, not exceedingly unlike this very scheme of mine. The coincidence is remarkable; more remarkable than any which has led to the charge of *imitation*. The first case, however, is still more whimsical; when I wrote KEEP COOL, I reviewed it in the preface, with some very erudite and profound criticisms; the work was yet in the press, when Moore's Lallah Rookh appeared, in which he had made Fadladeen equally conspicuous for the same purpose. In both cases, and it is worth mentioning, I can prove that both whims were exclusively my own, and completed before I either saw Lallah Rookh or the HARP OF THE OCEAN, and that nobody on earth had part or lot therein:—this, by the by; for the reputation of all suspected.

to avoid all imitation, that, whenever I have perceived a *resemblance—resembling imitation*—whether in epithet, manner or language, even to a single word, I have struck it out. The fact is, whatever be the consequence, I am determined to be original, though it lead to absurdity and extravagance.

The plain truth is, however, that I am infinitely indebted to Byron, Moore, and Hunt. To others, foreigners, I acknowledge no indebtedness, for I have read very little of what the world calls “English classicks”* since I was able to judge for myself. Above all, am I indebted to the friendship and kindness of Mr. Pierpont—his “Airs” first excited my ambition, and he first ministered to the workings of my heart. These poets have *educated* me. I do not imitate them—I have only learnt my trade of them—and now I have set up for myself.

It is somewhat amusing too, that this very critick, who has made such discoveries in mousing for my *imitations*, is himself a downright, wholesale plagiarist. Let us begin with a little thing—we must accommodate ourselves to the vision of those who examine firmaments with a microscope. He (the critick) calls a certain picture in Niagara a *refreshing* one:—yes, reader, a *refreshing* description. Where did he get that remarkable epithet, and how had he the courage to use it? I’ll tell

* As an example, I never read Collins’ Ode to the Passions, till I saw the article in which I was charged with imitating one of his lines—and then I was amazed to see, how he had imitated me! the Lyre of the Winds *resembles* that great ode exceedingly—in its structure.

you. He stole it from Leigh Hunt. Leigh Hunt, reader, is the first man that ever applied the word refreshing to any thing but water, turf, wind, &c. But he dared beyond that. He applied it to painting, musick, poetry. It was hazarding much, but Leigh Hunt, the "*childish*" Leigh Hunt, has a nicer perception of propriety in terms; a richer and more captivating simplicity in applying epithets, than any man that ever breathed. And such is his witchery, that this man, he who, if there should be another Feast of the Poets, might find himself of some consequence—I should delight to point out his station, in the poetry of Hunt—has absorbed one of the most delightful and peculiar of his epithets.

One word more—and then I shall point out his wholesale plagiarism. I am condemned for hazarding every thing new and strange. Be it so. Every thing that ever deserved the name of poetry, was once new and strange. It is not familiar language—old epithets, common-place similes, and itinerant metaphors, the patch-work of poetry, the habiliments that once were new and strange, but having passed through many generations, have, at last, become old and common—it is not this that constitutes poetry. For that reason, there is nothing that I more heartily despise, than the school-boy imagery, metaphor, allegory, and allusion to ancient mythology. All poets are guilty of it. Every man that has blundered through his Latin classicks, must contrive, be it in prose or poetry, to tell of it, by repeating some of their foolish and extravagant fables. It is disgraceful, yet all are guilty of it. And where is the merit? Any body can do it. It is only necessary to read transla-

tions, and you are completely qualified. You have a magazine of thunderbolts, and gods and goddesses, and Phœbuses, and Jupiters, and the devil knows what. But what merit is there in it? The reader knows it as well as you do, or he does not. If he does, your labour is wasted, and he is angry. If he does not, he despises you. Can't you invent, he says—must you *repeat*?

So it is with epithet and imagery. What is new, is condemned as strange. Yet all that is now old, was once new. Nothing shows the character of a poet so conclusively as his epithets. You can see at once whether he means any thing by them, or has only put them in, as words of course.

This then is the process of reasoning, with most criticks, but particularly with mine. You do not write poetry. Why? Because it is new and strange. It doesn't resemble any of the old standard works. Ergo—it is not poetry. But, suppose it is *not* new and strange—suppose it does *resemble* the old standard poets—is it poetry then? Oh no! no—says the critick, with a profound shake of the head—no, if you *resemble* them, you must *imitate* them. Ergo, you are no poet either way. Thus, whether I do, or do not resemble the consecrated idols of poesy, I am no poet.

But now for the plagiarism which I charge upon *him*. Critick, I arraign thee! Thou hast been guilty of most incorrigible, injudicious, awkward, and ridiculous pilfering from the sentiment, language, and even manner of a predecessor. Reader, judge thou, for thyself. Turn to the criticism of Lallah Rookh, in the North American Review for Nov. 1817. It is indeed a beautiful article.

That critick was a poet. He had the right touch—he had seen what he describes, “the green leaves rustling and glittering in the winds and moonlight.” Compare the discriminating criticism of that poem, in pages 5, 6, 7, and 25, with the censures past upon Niagara, in the same work for Dec. 1818—pages 142, 153, 156. Look at them. Is it not ridiculous? Men should have judgment as well as adroitness when they steal: and circumspection, as well as flippancy in *criticism*. Little did the latter critick think, when he was condemning me for the very same faults that the former critick found in Moore—little did he think that others might have admired the same article—and possibly might remember enough to detect his lubberly thieving.

The former critick says what is exactly true of his subject. But what is true of Moore—I am willing to abide by what I say—must be entirely untrue, when applied to me. No two creatures on earth resemble each other less. Much as I admire Moore, I should be sorry to resemble him, in his most felicitous inspiration. The faults of Moore are those of delicacy, and finish, not of negligence, passion, or tumult—and mine, I know, are exactly the reverse. Moore never felt a hurrying, uncontrollable emotion in his life. And I—I claim no merit from it, it is a constitutional infirmity—I never felt any other than hurrying uncontrollable emotions. Moore is the most beautiful of poets—As a song writer he is beyond the reach of emulation—he is altogether a musician; he thinks, breathes, sings, and writes melody: but with all this, Moore is not a *great* poet. The grandest imagery that he ever ventured up-

on, becomes beautiful under the operation of his enchantment. Moore might be terrible, if what is naturally terrible in some of his conceptions, were less artfully—more nakedly exhibited. Read his songs—old Ireland leaps up in her armour at the call of his harp; but, instead of couching her lance as we should anticipate, the apparition performs a few graceful evolutions before us, and vanishes. I remember one of his thoughts, that is without a parallel in the English language. He describes an old harp, neglected, hung up in the deserted apartment of some ruin—breaking, string after string, in midnight and solitude. He compares it—but too poetically, that is, in language too beautiful and rich, to the bursting of hearts, one after another, among the defenders of Ireland. And in this little passage, the whole character of Moore may be seen. He has conceived one of the most terriffick, as well as the most felicitous illustrations, that ever came into the head of a poet—but see how he has mellowed and softened it away. You feel, in dwelling on it, no other emotion than delight at his consummate art. He describes a man, or rather a devil, defeated in battle, and dying as Cooke did in Richard, at bay, retreating and “murdering as he goes.”

“As a grim tiger, whom the torrent’s might
Surprises, in some parched ravine at night,
Turns, e’en in drowning on the wretched flocks,
Swept with him in that snow-flood from the rocks;
And to the last, devouring on his way,
Bloodies the stream he hath not power to stay.”
How infinitely unworthy of the conception is that

language. The two last lines are the only decent ones in the picture; but they *are* beautiful.

But if I were to select the grandest—the noblest painting that Moore ever gave to the world, it would be this. *Here*—for once, he speaks like one full of terrible and circumstantial inspiration:—

—————“The labyrinth led
Through damp and gloom—’mid crash of boughs,
And fall of loosened crags, that rouse
The leopard from his hungry sleep;
Who, starting, thinks each crag a prey,
And long is heard, *from steep to steep*,
Chasing them down their thundering way!”

Having ventured so far, even without putting off my shoes, within the prohibited dominions of criticism, I shall take the liberty to amuse myself a few moments longer, in looking about me, before the dragons are awake.

In the reviews of Lallah Rookh and Niagara, both criticks—(may I be pardoned for associating them for a moment,) complain that the *thoughts* are made subordinate to the imagery. Have they (I say *they*, out of complaisance)—have *they* considered the subject? What is poetry but imagery? and what is imagery but the thought—or rather the *manner* of thinking. No matter how a poetical thought is expressed, be it in prose or rhyme; it has an air of its own, it is still poetry, whatever may be its dress. But remember, it is not poetry without *metaphor, hyperbole, allusion, or imagery*. Passion is never poetical. One must have leisure, self-possession, as well as genius to think poetically. His

mind must be enriched, trained to the contemplation of all objects under different lights and evolutions. He must serve an apprenticeship, before he can even *think* poetically. But even then, when filled with *thought*, he has another course of discipline to undergo, before he can express himself poetically. He may be full of music—full!—yet he must learn the fingering, before he can play on a flute or a harpsichord. Poets acquire a mechanical habit of finding, or conjuring up resemblances, and illustrations, that to themselves may be very obvious, while others, unaccustomed to the rapidity of poetical combinations, will consider them as far-fetched. The operations of a poetical mind are, to the mere critick, as unintelligible, and to the poet himself as inexplicable, as the phenomena of Zera Colbourn's were to the sober mathematicians of this world. Poets, like that boy, when asked how they do such things, can only say as he did—we know not, there is a noise and a flame about us—we see and hear things with other senses during these visitations; we are encompassed with a fiery influence, and tremble as in the presence of Divinity.

But let me give an illustration of this doctrine respecting poetry. Job was a poet. He describes a horse, The *thought* he would express at the bottom, in its nakedness, is no more than any man might have, though he were no poet—but the *manner* is peculiar to the poet. The thought, we will suppose to be this. I saw a horse.—He reared and plunged, threw up his head, and neighed, and struggled to get at the enemy. Such is the language of nature and passion. It is the lan-

guage too, of the critick and the savage. They both describe the event, as they saw it. They perceive no resemblances, for they have never been accustomed to look for them. They cannot be poetical in their description, because they have no experience in poetical thought or poetical association. But how does Job do it? Something in this way, if I recollect right. HIS NECK WAS CLOTHED WITH THUNDER. THE GLORY OF HIS NOSTRILS WAS TERRIBLE. HE SWALLOWETH THE GROUND WITH FEROCENESS AND RAGE. *That* now is poetry. It is not the language of passion. Nor is it the language of nature. Men do not talk about necks being *clothed with thunder*, the *glory* of nostrils, nor of swallowing the ground, unless they are on the very verge of madness. If such language had never been used, who would dare to use it now? who would dare to speak of floods "clapping their hands," and mountains skipping about like young lambs? nobody—nobody, on earth. When that poetry was written, Criticism had not yet uttered her blasphemies.

Let us take another example—the most overwhelming and omnipotent energy in description that the whole Bible contains. LET THERE BE LIGHT—AND THERE WAS LIGHT. Is that poetry? No. *Could* Job have spoken as Moses did, had he, like Moses, bowed himself down to the revelations of the Eternal?—no, he could not. He would have made the whole creation,—the coming forth of oceans, and mountains, and stars—but a poem. The Deity might have been heard, and seen, thundering over the firmament, whirlwinds and darkness encompassing him round about—but after all,

it would have been *only* poetry. Awful, sublime, and terrible, it might have been—but it would have borne about the same proportion to this one line, *let there be light, and there was light*—that the language of man, in its utmost elevation, would bear to the language of the Everlasting God.

This then is my conclusion. Poetry is not the highest reaching of language: yet it is the highest that can be measured by the generality of men. In *descriptive* poetry, the thought, as it is in Job's description of the horse, must be subordinate to the imagery. In the *drama*, in tragedy, in passionate poetry, the language of suffering, adoration, or rejoicing—the imagery must be subordinate to the thought:—indeed there should be very little, if any imagery at all, employed then. The legitimate language of passion is a terrible simplicity. The thought must be unencumbered—naked. Poetical language, to a thought of genuine passion—is what a Roman toga would be the dying gladiator. It hides the action of the muscles, and the mighty working of agony.

In description, however, it is directly the reverse. You might as well place a naked man on the boards of an opera, to tell a story; as to describe any thing—for example—a battle—a landscape—or a horse—in *natural* language. *There* we look for spectacle—colouring and pageantry.

The language of poetry—the descriptions of poetry—are *not* those of nature, I say again. It is all hyperbole—more highly coloured—and better grouped than Nature. So it is in painting. So in statuary. A

perfectly *natural* man—sculptured—however perfect the model might be—would excite no such feeling as the Apollo does. To make one Venus, the *beauties* of many women were assembled—and embodied—their imperfections were left out. Is that *nature* then?

In one word—to prove that poetical description—whether by painting—sculpture—or poetry—(for each is capable of poetical description)—to *prove* that it is not faithfully natural—I would ask you this question. Did you ever see a great painting of a horse? Did you ever see a fine poetical description of a horse? Did you ever see a good representation of a horse, in marble? To one of these you may probably reply in the affirmative. Then I ask you this question. Did you ever feel such enthusiasm at the sight of any *living horse*? I leave you to make the reply—one word will decide, whether you admire these masterpieces of sculpture, and painting, and poetry for their *nature*.

And now one word more of these criticks and reviewers. Who are they? It has been my fortune to know many of them—some intimately; and I have always found them—out of their studies—a very harmless, inoffensive sort of gentry. None that I know, are *remarkable* for talents, or science, or taste. Most of them would tremble—in publick, before the very men, whose reputation they attack, tooth and nail, with the most vehement intrepidity, under the cloak of their profession.

The truth is—they escape criticism from the very nature of their writings—not from their superiority;—for they are often—in decency be it spoken—the vendors of a flat, vapid, sluggish kind of solemnity; or of

lively, vehement nonsense—busy—bustling and insignificant. Every where—I say it not of American journalists alone—for some of them are respectable, independent and decorous in their criticisms—the editors are generally a hireling set—mere bookseller's hacks, alike destitute of principle, character, and feeling. Generally—the most licentious, rancorous, and abusive criticisms that appear, are the production of mere boys; ambitious of notoriety, and seeking it, like the young Romans, by fastening upon established reputation in the way of impeachment; virulent, unprincipled, and boisterous:—Using words without knowing their power, and pronouncing with the most determined composure, sentences that have been matured without reflection—strengthened without experience—and formed, nine times out of ten, without their having ever read the book which they curse, or acquit. The devil take such writers!—I say.—It is the heartiest prayer I ever uttered. Manly, frank criticism—I love—I venerate. The more severe, the better. But for the drivelling, despicable, sneaking cant of the trade, I have the most unquerable aversion and contempt.

And now reader, farewell! we are about to part—for ever. A few words more, and I shall have done. I began to scribble from necessity—I continued it from necessity—that necessity no longer exists, and I abandon it—from duty. I began the business for my bread—to support myself during a course of severe, unprofitable, and discouraging study—and if bread was all that I now cared for, I should continue it—for I am one among the few scribblers in America, who can keep

their chins out of water by making books. I have now, as I have before said—another ambition; and to its impulses I shall exclusively devote myself—till other seasons—and other days, and so—*farewell to poetry.*

As Wordsworth says—and it is the best thing he ever did say—“reader, *judge for yourself.*” Don’t trouble your head about what your neighbours think of this poem—if you like it—if you feel any dizziness, any lifting of the heart, any tingling or thrilling in your veins; if you feel your pulsation quickened or suspended; or your sight grow dim for a single moment; or your countenance breaking into smiles, before you know it; never stop to search out the cause—give a loose to your feeling, indulge it, it is innocent, and, like the first kiss of love—never to be experienced but once. You never feel a second time, such emotions in contemplating any thing—no matter what it is:—in hearing or reading any thing, no matter what it is—as you did at first. You cannot—it is impossible—you may affect it, but you only make yourself ridiculous. The first gush of the heart is spontaneous:—the longer it runs—the feebler it is—until it dies away in drops and tricklings.

If you feel any thing of this—reader—*it is poetry.* Nothing but poetry can excite it. Poetry is the language of genius—the expression of divinity. Poetry may be revealed in statuary—musick—architecture—and painting—as well as in language. It is in thought—conception.

On the contrary, if you do not like these poems—do not attempt to analyze your feelings:—after reading

them as they ought to be read—in solitude—or with those you love—on a still, moon-light night—if you feel nothing of this—no working of the heart—no knitting of the sinews—put them in the fire at once—burn them—burn them! Whatever they may be to others—to *you* they are not poetry.

Did you ever see a beautiful woman—and stand 'till your sight grew dim in wondering at her?—That was poetry. The language of heaven—of HIM who embroidered the firmament—and fashioned the loveliness of woman—is poetry. You felt, in looking at her—an indefinable, thick-coming luxury—a bewildering, and religious delight. You saw her again:—did you feel the same emotion? No!—the feeling of man—of the critick, was awake: You proceeded—from wishing a little more freshness in her cheek—a glossier lustre to her hair—to the discovery, that not one limb was properly modelled—one feature properly fashioned—or a single atom of flesh properly coloured. In this way, creatures of fine feeling, by listening to others, become so coldly phlegmatick—as to stand before her without emotion, and watch the play of her countenance in conversation; the unfettered enchantment of her limbs in the dance;—aye, without one blessing—one quick breath—or one pulsation, more or less, than they would have felt in contemplating a rope-dancer. In short—to say all in one word—you *were* human creatures—you became criticks.

It is always so. We are never enthusiasts after the first rapid, fiery, tumultuous trancing of the spirit, in the fever of its first excitement—whether in religion—love

—poetry—or any thing else:—when you *feel*, you cannot criticise. At first, we stand breathless—our arms involuntarily lifted—and our lips unclosed—when we see any thing worth our astonishment. Then—we cannot talk—our feelings are indescribable—and we have no opinions. Soon after, we begin to chatter right sensibly—but then—the blessed feeling of the subject has departed from us.

Honest criticism—at best, though a noble, is but a cruel art. It is a necessary, but mortifying exercise of our powers. It sobers away all our delusions—tames us into nothingness—and compels us to turn away from the thickening visions of our fancy—like new breeched boys from go-carts and rag-babies—and for what?—To grasp a kite-string, and play at marbles. And, after all, what do we gain? Are we the happier, for having these delusions stripped to their skeleton deformity? Is not happiness itself a dream—enjoyment a delirium? Ought we to thank the officious hand that scatters a sudden enchantment, even while it is breaking upon us—while the sky is all one rainbow—and heaven itself seems nearer earth?—no—no. It is fanaticism—it is cruelty. I thank no such meddlers. A delicious dream is better than a weary reality. And I should never forgive the wretch that could awaken a lovely girl, for example, from her dreams—at the very moment when her looks were brightening—her colour coming and going—her bosom heaving—and her whole form illuminated:—though it *were* all—*all* delusion:—no—never—never!—were that girl even my sister—or my child.

Reader, the blessing of heaven be upon you!—Of
 this poem—I only ask you to judge as you *feel*. And
 now—farewell!—farewell for ever! Hearken to no cri-
 ticism but that of your heart.

JOHN NEAL.

Baltimore, June, 1819.

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PRELIMINARY POEM.

'TWAS night, and the breath of the tempest was near;
And her plumes were unfolded abroad o'er the sky;
The lightnings were held in their struggling career;
And the song of the waters went patiently by.

A heaviness was in the air,
As if some hovering shape were there,
With languid wing, and floating hair;
Some cloudy one, whose sluggish flight,
Was stooping to a dreary home;
And hung beneath the vault of night,
As if to intercept the light,
That, bursting wide, and flashing bright,
Rolled o'er the clouds in pulpy foam:

All were as still, in heaven and earth,
As they that watch'd Creation's birth—
When O!—a sudden trumpet-blast,
Burst loudly on the ear!—and past—
Then came the roll of drums!—and high
The cannon's voice went thundering by!—
And then—the thrilling bugle cry!

And then—amid the clouds—were heard
 Strange—fearful echoes to the song;
 And o'er the skies there shrieked some bird,
 That went on viewless wing along!

And then—a far tumultuous sound,
 Beyond the hills, went rolling out;
 As if a sleeping host had found
 A sudden resurrection there—
 And burst the ground—
 And starting up the midnight air
 Pealed all at once their battle-shout!

As if a multitude had risen,
 The giants of our warring race,
 Amid the solitudes of space,
 And heaved their everlasting prison—
 Some mountain!—from its base!
 And countless wings arose—and by
 They swept with warrior-minstrelsy—
 Like that ye hear amid the sky,
 While, in the pauses of the storm,
 Some air-blown trump—is laughing clear
 In distant worlds!—and harps are near,
 And pipes are breathing in your ear;
 When the strong wind comes out again—
 Bearing away the wondrous strain:
 Sweeping from earth the minstrel-form.

And then—oh then!—there went a cry
 Just like the song of victory,

When dying men rise up, and peal
Their last triumphant shout,
With all the strength, that warriors feel,
When life is ebbing out:

When—on the air, and up the sky,
A crowded—thick—far whispering goes;
And vapoury hosts appear on high,
Sweeping and jostling giddily;
As if some sudden trump had blown;
And answering quick, had upward flown
The thronging dead!—and each had found
His mortal enemy again—
Just as upon the battle ground,
They parted last—among the slain!

As if an angry world arose—
On shadowy steeds, amid the sky
And heaven itself were filled with foes—
That fought them battles o'er on high—
In warring immortality.

As if the earth—as if the main—
The crimson wave—the crimson plain
Had yielded up their dead again—
In blood and foam—just as they died—
Upon the earth—upon the tide!

Then a minstrel was seen, and a vision came forth,
Like a cold troubled light, o'er the clouds of the north,

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

And the look of the minstrel was lifted and high:
 And the lights of the storm and the lights of the sky,
 While his robe was abroad on the breeze that went by,
 Were flashing and wild in the dark of his eye:

A moment he paused—and his look was upraised:
 Then he started—and shook—like a creature amazed—

For lo!—all the strength of his soul was revealed—
 The thunder rolled out!—and the near lightning blazed,
 And he turned him away from the vault where he gazed,

As if he had seen—what its darkness concealed!
 The thunder rolled out!—yet he stood all alone—
 Exulting—like one that's recovered a throne.—

A harp was before him—his hand in the air,
 Yet it paused e'er it fell on his echoing lyre,
 And trembled and dwelt, as uplifted in prayer—
 Niagara roll'd!—and the battle was there!

The pealing of thunder—and rushing of fire!
 The future in pomp was assembled before him—
 He felt as the pinions of prophecy bore him;
 And yet, for the dreams of his morning had flown,
 His heart was oppressed with a terror unknown.

The chill of the night on his spirit was shed,
 Like the damps that abide on the brow of the dead:
 But more than the murmurs of night were around,
 When he stooped o'er his harp and awakened a sound;
 For voices were heard in the air!
 Like the stirring that comes from the tenanted ground
 When revelry wanders there!

Yet thrice he smote the palsied strings,
 And thrice he heard the rush of wings,
 And feeble murmurings rose!
 As if some startled spirit fled—
 Some soldier's guard—where he had bled—
 Disturbed in her repose!
 As if some warrior raised his head,
 And listened from his bloody bed,
 To requiems o'er his foes!

The minstrel left the field of blood;
 And stood above the mighty flood;
 And listened to his stormy voice;
 And heard it on the winds rejoice;
 And there—he would have sung—but there,
 The awe he felt was in the air—
 Was all about—was every where:

Then he stood on a cliff, when the Morning unrolled
 Her banners of crimson, and purple, and gold;
 Her plumage, and robe with its changeable fold;
 And felt, as he saw all these splendours outspread,
 As if he had gone where some mighty-one slumbers,
 With the ruins of song, and the relics of numbers;
 Who 'woke as he heard the unhallowed tread!

Yet—yet 'twas an impulse may never be quenched:
 The fountains that burst where the light hath its
 source—
 Or cherubim wings, may be stayed in their course,

When they lighten along where the storm is entrenched;
 Her spear, from the Angel of night, may be wrenched;
 Or the plumage of Peace in the battle be drenched,—
 When it bends o'er the strife, like the bow of the sky,
 Or the light that is seen in a martyr'd-one's eye;—
 Before you may still the tumultuous voice
 Of a heart that is heaving with song;
 Before ye may silence the lyres that rejoice,
 Where the wind from the water comes sweeping along;
 And the chorus of mountain and cavern is strong.

The minstrel smote his harp once more;
 And loudly then, there went this strain,
 Unsteadily, from shore to shore,
 And died along the distant main.

My country! my home! sunny land of my fathers!
 Where empires unknown in bright solitudes lie;
 Where Nature, august in serenity, gathers
 The wonders of mountain, and ocean, and sky:
 Where the blue dome of heaven scarce bounds her
 dominion;
 Where man is as free as the creatures of air;
 As thine Eagle—of fleet, uncontrollable pinion;
 The gallant gray Bird of the winds! that is there.

That eagle, whose spirit each morning renews,
 As her 'god thro' unquenchable light she pursues,
 And tosses her plumes to the trumpet acclaim:—
 To the rushing of wings, and the screaming of praise,
 That her starry-eyed nurslings in ecstasy raise,

As they mount, with their bosoms all bare, in the blaze
Of their idol, whose temple is curtained with flame!

My country! my home! in whose hallowed retreats,
An horizon of blue, with a blue water meets,
'Till the whole like one ocean appears!
'Till the eye that dwells long on the faint, distant verge,
Bewildered to see the fresh islets emerge,
Like evergreen grottoes redeemed from the surge,
Overflows—in the worship of tears!

Where the sun travels low in his chariot of light;
And the stars and the hills are together at night:

Where the lustre that Day at his parting hath shed,
In one blush, o'er the land and the water is spread:
And swims like a wreath on each mountain's proud head;

And dwells on the night,

Of each cliff's stormy height—

Whose foliage hangs loosely and wildly in air,
Like a meteor-diadem,—dropped in the flight
Of those, who are forth in the storm and the fight,
O'er the plumage of ravens that warrior-helms wear.

There the Thunderers stand! in their fortress of shade;
Like a guard that some god in his might hath arrayed:

Where the foam-mantled tides, as they rush from each
pole,

Whose warrings have shaken the thrones of the deep,

E

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

Embrace in one lasting and measureless roll,
And sink—with the lulling of tempests, to sleep:

Where Dominion is stayed by a cliff-guarded shore;
Where Empire looks out from her heights o'er the sea:
Where Peace is at home—and the thunders that roar,
And not the dread voices that nations deplore,
But—the bounding of water that's free!

Where all that moves in storm along:
The earthquake's voice—the torrent's song,
The uproar of the skies, when Night
Leads forth her champions to the fight:
The elemental chant—and roll
Of thunders—crowding to the pole—
Or—when the heaven is cloudless—bright;
And hearts are swelling with delight,
And eyes are lifted cheerfully;
That—o'er the blue and boundless sky—
Like some archangel's trump on high!
Break suddenly, and fearfully!

The ocean—when it rolls aloud—
The tempest—bursting from her cloud,
In one uninterrupted peal!
When darkness sits amid the sky;
And shadowy forms go trooping by;
And everlasting mountains reel—
All—all of this is Freedom's song—
'Tis pealed—'tis pealed eternally!
And all, that winds and waves prolong,
Are anthems rolled to LIBERTY!

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

77

Land of the mountain—and the wood—
The wonders of their giant race;
Creation's barrier! Thou hast stood
Upon thy lofty dwelling place—
Unshaken by contending mains,
That thundered in thy rocky chains:

Immoveably—thy hills arise,
Above the clouds that gather there—
Like islands in the empty skies—
Green spots, revealed to gifted eyes—
Amid the pale blue air:

Just like the blessed islets seen—
By Indians—in the trance of death;
Peopled with naked girls, and green
With fresh and waving grass—and bright
With never-ending sunny light—
Where all the wind is like the breath
Of Indian girls in chase:
Where all the leaves are glossy;
And all the seats are mossy—
And all about the brooks, are thrown
Ten thousand wild flowers, newly blown:

Unyielding still, though oceans wage
One loud—perpetual war with thee:
And all the elements engage
For ever—round thy royalty;
Enthroned, thou sittest still,
Upon thy loftiest hill,

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

Columbia!—child of heaven!
 While all the world is thundering round—
 To thee 'tis given, .
 To sit secure—and hear the sound
 Of earthquakes—oceans—in their rage—
 Within their secret hiding place,
 Toiling at thine eternal base.

Home of the waters! where their strength
 Rolls in immeasurable length:
 Or, tumbling from their cloudy thrones,
 As thundering from a battlement,
 With martial hymning, like the tones
 Of battle-shout, by warriors sent—
 Go rioting in foam and spray,
 With rainbow-streamers o'er their way,
 Beneath the precipice they've rent,
 Exulting—as they burst their cloud—
 As high—as dazzling—and as loud—
 As sheets of light! in their descent
 Thro' midnight's parting firmament!

Where such the measure of the sky,
 That storms may pass unheeded by;
 And such the pillar'd strength of earth,
 So strong its adamantine chain,
 That when convulsion finds a birth,
 That birth is ever found in vain:
 The tumult in its weakness dies,
 Unheeded by the earth or skies.

Land of the hero, the patriot, and sage!
Of warriors, whose deeds have unfettered the wave,
Whose standard looks forth where the whirlwinds
engage,

And battles aloft—in the realms of the brave!
Whose Genius came forth from the home of the flood,
And strove with the pirate's red banner on high,
'Till the foam of the ocean was tinged with his blood—
Filled the air with her rainbows!—and fearlessly stood,
And loosened her eaglets abroad o'er the sky!

Of men, who have fought with the high Briton too,
As he sat on his throne in his empire of blue;]
'Till the scarlet-crossed banner that majesty bent,
Had faded and fled from its home in the sky:
'Till its terrors went off, as its splendours were rent,
Like meteors that over the firmament fly,
And threw, as they passed o'er the free-rolling tide,
A deep ruddy tint—'twas the last blush of pride.

Land of white bosoms, and blue laughing-eyes!
Like miniature pictures of transparent skies,
Where young thoughts, like the blessed, are seen;
May those eyes brighten quick at the tale that I tell
And O, if it wake but one white bosom's swell,
One heart where dear feeling hath been;
One pulse that has throbb'd in the still of the night,
In the dream of its soldier afar in the fight,
I'm repaid for it over and over:
And Columbia may wake when she hears the loud strain,

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

And stoop o'er the graves of her children again,
And weep o'er the garlands they wove her:

And many a bard of my country, who slumbers,
Neglected—forgotten—oppressed or unknown—
May arise in his strength, in the grandeur of numbers,
Sublime on the height of a star-lighted throne—
And pour out his musick aloft and alone—
On the wind of the sky!—and assert his high claim
With those who are up for the chaplet of Fame.

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CANTO I.

Eagle.....troop of mounted Americans appear.....dis-
appear.....leader.....sunset.....imagery.....seen again on the
summit of the hill.....indistinctly.....descend and pass the
spectator.....reflections.....night.....cut their way through
a small encampment of the British.....American camp....
midnight expedition.....The time employed is three days.

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BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

CANTO I.

THERE'S a fierce gray Bird—with a sharpened beak;
With an angry eye, and a startling shriek:
That nurses her brood where the cliff-flowers blow,
On the precipice-top—in perpetual snow—
Where the fountains are mute, or in secrecy flow—
That sits—where the air is shrill and bleak,
On the splintered point of a shivered peak—
Where the weeds lie close—and the grass sings sharp,
To a comfortless tune—like a wintry harp—
Bald-headed and stripped!—like a vulture torn
In wind and strife!—with her feathers worn,
And ruffled and stained—while scattering—bright,
Round her serpent-neck—that is writhing, bare—
Is a crimson collar of gleaming hair!—
Like the crest of a warrior thinned in the fight,
And shorn—and bristling—see her! where
She sits in the glow of the sun-bright air!
With wing half-poised—and talons bleeding—
And kindling eye—as if her prey
Had—suddenly—been snatched away—
While she was tearing it, and feeding!

A BIRD that is first to worship the sun,
 When he gallops in flame—'till the cloud tides run
 In billows of fire—as his course is done:
 Above where the fountain is gushing in light;
 Above where the torrent is forth in its might—
 Like an imprisoned blaze that is bursting from night!
 Or a lion that springs—with a roar—from his lair!
 Bounding off—all in foam—from the echoing height—
 Like a rank of young war-horses—terribly bright,
 Their manes all erect!—and their hoofs in the air!
 The earth shaking under them—trumpets on high—
 And banners unfurling away in the sky—
 With the neighing of steeds! and the streaming of hair!

Above where the silvery flashing is seen—
 The striping of waters, that skip o'er the green,
 And soft, spongy moss, where the fairies have been,
 Bending lovely and bright in the young Morning's eye
 Like ribands of flame on the bow of the sky:

Above that dark torrent—above the bright stream—
 The gay ruddy fount, with the changeable gleam,
 Where the lustre of heaven eternally plays—
 The voice may be heard—of the Thunderer's bird,
 Calling out to her god in a clear, wild scream,
 As she mounts to his throne and unfolds in his beam;
 While her young are laid out in his rich red blaze;
 And their winglets are fledged in his hottest rays:

Proud BIRD OF THE CLIFF! where the barren-yew
 springs—
 Where the sun shine stays—and the wind harp sings,

Where the heralds of battle sit—pluming their wings—
 A scream!—she's awake!—over hill-top and flood;
 A crimson light runs!—like the gushing of blood—
 Over valley and rock!—over mountain and wood!
 That Bird is abroad—in the van of her brood!

O ye, that afar in the blue-air, have heard—
 As out of the sky—the approach of that Bird—
 Have ye seen her—half-famished—and up—and away—
 Her wings in a blaze, with the shedding of day—
 Like a vulture on fire!—in the track of her prey—
 When aloft—what is that?—light footsteps near us!
 And whispers—and breathing!—they may o'erhear us.

Ah—now let us gaze:—what a wonderful sky!—
 How the robe of the god, in its flame-coloured dye—
 Goes ruddily—flushingly—sweepingly by.
 The spots that you see?—they are tents—and the air—
 All alive with the rustling of flags that are there—
 Nay speak—did you ever behold such a night—
 While the winds blew about—and the waters were
 bright—

The sun rolling home in an ocean of light—
 But hush!—there is musick away in the sky—
 Some creatures of magick are charioting by—
 Now it comes!—what a sound—'tis as cheerful and
 wild,
 As the echo of caves to the laugh of a child:
 Ah yes!—they are here—see away to your left,
 Where the sun has gone down—where the mountains
 are cleft—

A troop of tall horsemen!—how fearless they ride!
 'Tis a perilous path o'er that steep mountain's side,
 Careering they come, like a band of young knights,
 That the trumpet of morn to the tilting invites;
 With high-nodding plumes, and with sun-shiny vests;
 With wide-tossing manes, and with mail-covered breasts;
 With arching of necks, and the plunge and the pride
 Of their high mettled steeds, as they galloping ride
 In glitter and pomp:—with their housings of gold—
 With their scarlet and blue, as their squadrons unfold,
 Flashing changeable light—like a banner unrolled.
 Now they burst on the eye in their martial array!
 And now they have gone!—like a vision of day:
 In a streaming of splendour they came—but they
 wheeled;

And instantly all the bright show was concealed!
 As if 'twere a tournament held in the sky,
 Betrayed by some light passing suddenly by;
 Some band by the flashing of torches revealed,
 As it fell o'er the boss of an uplifted shield,
 Or banners and blades in the darkness concealed.
 They came like a cloud that is passing the light,
 That brightens and blazes—and fades from the sight:
 They came like a dream—and as swiftly they fled,
 As the shadows that pass o'er the sun's dying red—
 And one has returned! 'twas the first of the band;
 On the top of the cliff he has taken his stand,
 And the tread of his barb, as he leans in his strength,
 And loosens his mane in the flow of its length,
 Declares he is reined by a masterly hand!
 While he rears o'er the rich-rolling clouds of that height

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BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

87

Like a pageant upraised by the wonders of light:
 A warrior of flame!—on a courser of night!
 See his helm feathers glance in the clear setting sun,
 While his sabre is forth, o'er the cliff he has won,
 With a waving of strength, and an air of command!

He is gone—and the brown, where the sunset reposes,
 Grows warm as the bloom on the bosom of roses;
 The herbage is crimson'd, and sprinkled with light;
 And purple and yellow are busy and bright:
 On the precipice-crown, and the sceptre of green,
 That the forest-tree heaves, a red lustre is seen,
 In a wreathing of fire: 'tis a garland that they,
 Whose blossoms are plucked at the closing of day,
 Have dropp'd from their laps in their rioting play:
 The summer leaf reddens and deepens its dyes:
 Its scarlet and green all unite, as it lies
 In the breath of the vapour, and hue of the skies:
 The young gushing fount ripples tenderly red;
 And a blush, like the sighing of blossoms is shed,
 O'er the green shiny moss, that around it is spread:
 A glow like enchantment is seen o'er the lake,
 Like the flush of the sky, when the day heralds wake,
 And o'er its dull-bosom their soft plumage shake:
 Now the warmth of the heaven is fading away.
 Young Evening comes up in pursuit of the Day:
 The richness and mist of the tints that were there
 Are melting away like the bow of the air:
 The blue-bosom'd water heaves darker and bluer:
 The cliffs and the trees are seen bolder and truer,

'The landscape has less of enchantment and light,
 But it lies the more steady and firm in the sight:
 The lustre-crown'd peaks, while they dazzled the eye,
 Seemed loosened and passing away in the sky,
 And the far-distant hills, in their tremulous blue,
 Like the violet that's melting away in its dew,
 But baffled the eye, as it dwelt on their hue.
 The light of the hill, and the wave, and the sky
 Grow fainter, and fainter;—the wonders all die.

The visions have gone! they have vanished away,
 Unobserved in their change, like the bliss of a day.
 The rainbows of heaven were bent in our sight:
 And fountains were gushing like wine in its light:
 And seraphs were wheeling around in their flight—
 A moment—and all was enveloped in night!
 'Tis thus with the dreams of the high-heaving heart,
 They come but to blaze—and they blaze to depart:
 Their gossamer wings are too thin to abide
 The chilling of sorrow, or burning of pride:
 They come, but to brush o'er its young gallant swells,
 Like bright birds over ocean—but never to dwell.

Observed ye the cloud on that mountain's dim green?
 So heavily hanging?—as if it had been
 The tent of the Thunderer—the chariot of one,
 Who dare not appear in the blaze of the sun?
 'Tis descending to earth! and some horsemen are now,
 In a line of dark mist, coming down from its brow:
 'Tis a helmeted band! from the hills they descend,
 Like the monarchs of storm, when the forest trees bend,

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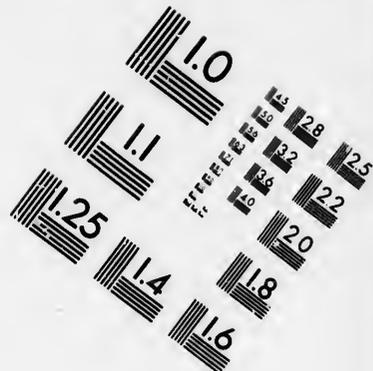
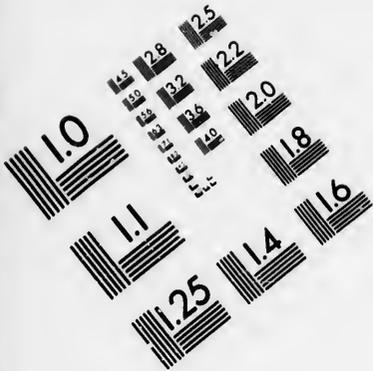
No scimitars swing as they gallop along:
 No clattering hoof falls sudden and strong:
 No trumpet is filled, and no bugle is blown:
 No banners abroad on the wind are thrown:
 No shoutings are heard—and no cheerings are given:
 No waving of red-flowing plumage to heaven:
 No flashing of blades, and no loosening of reins:
 No neighing of steeds, and no tossing of manes:
 No furniture trailing, or warrior helms bowing—
 Or crimson and gold-spotted drapery flowing:
 But they speed like coursers, whose hoofs are shod
 With a silent shoe from the loosened sod:
 Like the steeds that career o'er the billowy surf,
 Or stretch like the winds o'er the untrodden turf,
 Where the willow and yew in their darkness are weep-
 ing,

And young, gallant hearts in their sepulchres sleeping:
 Like the squadrons, that on the pale light of the moon,
 While the Nights muffled horn plays a low windy tune,
 Are seen to come down from the height of the skies,
 By the warrior, that on the red battle-field lies,
 And wave their cloud-helmets, and charge o'er the field,
 And career o'er the tracks where the living had wheel'd;
 When the dying half raise themselves up in a trance,
 And gaze on the show, as their thin banners glance,
 And wonder to see the dread battle renewed,
 On the turf, where themselves and their comrades had
 stood.

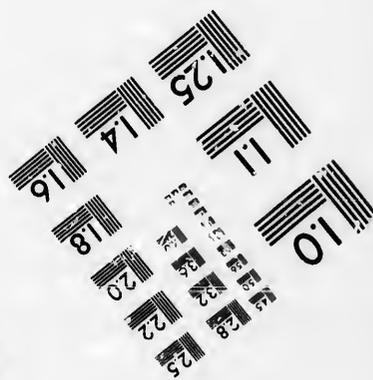
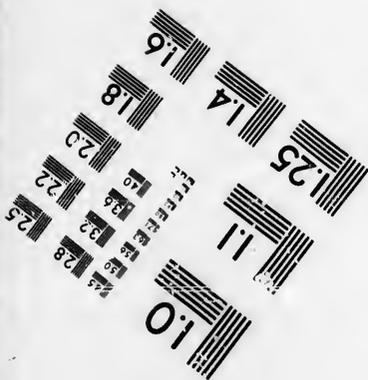
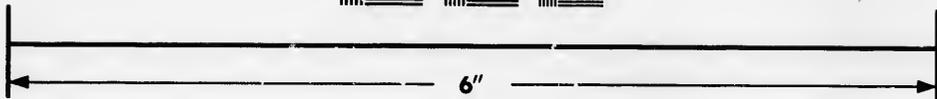
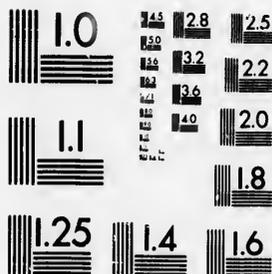
Like these shadows, in swiftness and darkness they ride
 O'er the thunder-reft mount—on its ruggedest side:







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From the precipice top, they circle and leap,
 Like the warriors of air, that are seen in our sleep:
 Like the creatures that pass where a bleeding man lies,
 Their heads muffled up to their white filmy eyes,—
 With gestures more threatening and fierce 'till he dies:
 And away they have gone, with a motionless speed,
 Like Demons abroad on some dreadful deed.
 The last one hath gone: they have all disappear'd;
 Their dull-echoed trampings no longer are heard:
 For still, tho' they passed like no steeds of the earth,
 The fall of their tread gave some hollow-sounds birth;
 Your heart would lie still 'till it numbered the last;
 And your breath would be held till the rear horsemen
 past:

So swiftly—so mutely—so darkly they went,
 Like the spectres of air to the sorcerer sent,
 That ye *felt* their approach, and might guess their intent;
 Your hero's stern-bosom will oftentimes quake,
 Your gallant young warrior-plume oftentimes shake,
 Before the cool marching that comes in the night—
 Passing by, like a cloud in the dim troubled light;
 Subduing the heart with a nameless affright—
 When *that* would swell strongly, and *this* would appear,
 If the sound of one trumpet saluted the ear,
 Like some scarlet-wing'd bird, that is nurs'd in the day,
 When she shakes her red plumage in wrath o'er her
 prey.

For be they the horsemen of earth, or of heaven,
 No blast that the trumpet of Slaughter hath given;

No roll of the drum—and no cry of the fife;
 No neighing of steeds in the bloodiest strife—
 Is half so terriffick to full swelling hearts,
 As the still, pulseless tramp of a band that departs,
 With echoless armour—with motionless plume:
 With ensigns all furled—in the trappings of gloom—
 Parading, like those who came up from the tomb,
 In silence and darkness—determined and slow;
 And dreadfully calm—as the murderer's brow,
 When his dagger is forth!—and ye see not the blow,
 'Till the gleam of the blade shows your heart in its flow!

O, say what ye will!—the dull sound that awakes,
 When the night breeze is down, and the chill spirit
 aches

With its measureless thought, is more dreadful by far,
 Than the burst of the trump, when it peals for the war.
 It is the cold summons that comes from the ground,
 When a sepulchre answers pour light, youthful bound,
 And loud joyous laugh, with its chill fearful sound,
 Compared to the challenge that leaps on the ear,
 When the banners of death in their splendours appear,
 And the free golden bugle sings freshly and clear!
 The low, sullen moans, that so feebly awake,
 At midnight—when one is alone—on some lake,
 Compar'd to the Thunderer's voice, when it rolls,
 From the bosom of space, to the uttermost poles!
 Like something that stirs in the weight of a shroud—
 The talking of those who go by in a cloud;
 To the cannon's full voice, when it wanders aloud!

'Tis the light that is seen to burst under the wave—
 The pale, fitful omen, that plays o'er a grave,
 To the rushing of flame, where the turf is all red,
 And farewells are discharg'd o'er a young soldier's bed!
 To the lightnings that blaze o'er the mariner's way,
 When the storm is in pomp, and the ocean in spray!

Dark and chill is the sky; and the clouds gather round;
 There's nought to be seen, yet there comes a low sound;
 As if something were near, that would pass unobserved,
 O, if 'tis that band—may their right-arms be nerved!
 Hark!—a challenge is given!—a rash charger neighs!
 And a trumpet is blown!—and lo, there's a blaze!
 And a clashing of sabres is heard—and a shout,
 Like a hurried order—goes passing about!
 And unfurling banners are tossed to the sky,
 As struggling to float on the wind passing by—
 And unharness'd war-steeds are crowding together;
 The horseman's thick plume—and the foot soldier's
 feather—

The battle is up! and the thunder is pealing!
 And squadrons of cavalry coursing and wheeling!
 And line after line, in their light are revealing!
 One troop of high helms thro' the fight urge their way,
 Unbroken and stern—like 'lip thro' the spray:
 Their pistols speak quick—and their blades are all bare,
 And the sparkles of steely encounter are there.

Away they still speed!—with one impulse they bound;
 With one impulse alike, as their foes gather round.

Undismayed—undisturbed—and above all the rest,
 One rides o'er the strife, like a mane o'er its crest;
 And holds on his way thro' the scimitars there,
 All plunging in light!—while the slumbering air
 Shakes wide with the rolling artillery-peal—
 The tall one is first, and his followers deal
 Around, and around, their desperate blows,
 Like the army of shadows above, when it goes
 With the smiting of shields, and the clapping of wings;
 When the red-crests shake—and the storm-pipe sings:
 When the cloud-flag unfurls—and the death-bugles
 sound—
 When the monarchs of space on their dark-chargers
 bound—
 And the shock of their cavalry comes in the night,
 With furniture flashing!—and weapons of light!—
 So travelled this band in its pomp and its might.

Away they have gone!—and their path is all red,
 Hedged in by two lines of the dying and dead;
 By bosoms, that burst unrevenged in the strife—
 By swords, that yet shake in the passing of life—
 For so swift had that pageant of darkness sped—
 So like a trooping of cloud-mounted dead—
 That the flashing reply of the foe that was cleft,
 But fell on the shadows those troopers had left:
 Far and away, they are coursing again,
 O'er the clouded hill, and the darkened plain,
 Now choosing the turf for their noiseless route;
 Now, where the wet sand is strown thickest about,

Streams their long line!—like a mist troop they ride,
 In a winding cloud, o'er the near mountain's side;
 While a struggling moon throws a lustre as dim
 As a sepulchre's lamp, and the vapours that swim,
 O'er the hills and the heavens, divide as they fly:—
 The videttes of winds that are stationed on high!

Speak—would you know why woke that desperate
 fray?

Why battle moved in night, and shunned the day?
 And who the leader of that sullen band,
 Whose march was destiny?—whose stern command
 Went thrilling to the heart:—while not a word
 He uttered in his march—and nought was heard,
 But the deep, dreadful sound, of hearts that burst—
 Of arms that smote in death, and lips that cursed?
 Who gave no cheering to his troops—as they
 Wheeled—charged—and smote—and galloped in ar-
 ray!

But shook his naked falchion in his might,
 And scattered o'er his path its meteor light?
 Then, like the bolt of heaven, it flash'd, and fell
 On blades and helms, that shattered in their knell!
 How firm and high he sat!—all bone—all strength—
 His charger stretching at his utmost length!

'Tis lighter now; the troops are seen again,
 Passing at length before a tented plain:
 The moon is up, and brightening o'er their road;
 Their steeds come bravely round beneath their load,
 And slacken to a trot—and snorting loudly,
 Strain their dark necks, with far manes floating proudly:

Thickening their tramps approach---they near the blaze
 Of Freedom's camp, where her loose drapery plays--
 Breaking in lustre---thick with starry light;
 And crimson stripes opposed to gleamy white:
 Symbols of battle and of peace---the dye
 Of blood---and flash of lilled purity:

The leader halts---the broad red light shows well
 His stately outline, and his charger's swell.
 How like a shade the horse and rider seem!
 Like the dark trooper of a troubled dream.
 His sabre is abroad---they gather round---
 Back!---back it waves!---and hark!---the bugles sound:
 Swiftly he wheels!---his arm is stretched again---
 Some gather round, and some behind remain:
 Forth, and all free! a chosen escort spring;
 Unsheath their hangers, while their scabbards ring:
 Leap to their places, and at speed depart,
 While the rough trumpets on the night-wind start:
 Away they stretch at length! as when they've met
 In chase upon the mountain-tops, while yet
 The morning gems are thick, and all the turf is wet.

Again they stay their march---and one's ahead;
 His fire-eyed charger halts with angry tread;
 His black limbs bathed in foam---his reaching mane,
 Rising and sinking, as he feels the rein:
 Now rings the harness!---from the saddle, bounds
 The red-plumed chief---erect, and lightly sounds
 A free-toned bugle to the distant hills;
 Singing and pealing clear---like horn that Echo fills:

And oh!—an answer!—how it faintly dies
In sweet, calm melody along the skies,
As if it were a challenge lightly given,
From golden trumpets on a summer even!
Now springing merrily upon the ear,
As if some infant trumpeter were near—
Like songs ye hear at evening o'er the main—
Like bells upon the wind—that come and go again.

'Halt here!' the chieftain said—'halt here awhile:
His cheek burned deeper—and a soldier smile
Played sternly o'er his features, as he laid,
His martial hand upon his rattling blade,
And gathered up his cloak, and strode amid the shade.

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CANTO II.

The first night continues through the whole of this canto.....Ontario described.....Appearances.....Reflections.....Apostrophe.....Resemblances..... American Indian..... Apollo.....Corruption and refinement.....Hero appears..... Indian.....Both surprised.....Combat.....Hero visits his family.....description.

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BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

CANTO II.

COME, sit thou with me!--what a heavenly night!
The winds blowing fresh--and the beautiful light
Shedding out such a luminous dampness above!--
So respectful and still!--and the scenery there--
How it moves up and down in the dim, holy air!
'Tis a midnight of awe--and a sabbath of love.
O lift up thine eyes-- see the firmament spreading
A moveable vault of the deepest of blue--
Rolling on--rolling on--through infinity--shedding
For ever--its oceans of lustre and dew.

Come, sit thou with me!--we shall both learn to feel,
Like the men of old times--when Jehovah was near--
Come, sit thou with me!--and together we'll kneel,
And pour out our hearts to the God that is here.
And the breezes that come--and the branches that bow--
To the clouds trailing by--they shall all teach us how,
In past years, when these woods started green from the
earth;
And that shore--and this hill--and that water had birth,
Their inhabitants held their communion with heaven--
In worship and trembling--like children forgiven--

How they knelt down alone, while the whole world slept,
Their hearts overburthened with pleasure—and wept.

Here sleeps ONTARIO. Old Ontario, hail!
Unawed by conquering prow, or pirate sail:
Still heaving in thy freedom—still unchained—
Still swelling to the skies—still unprofaned—
As when thy earliest, freest children flew
Like hawks to battle—when the swift canoe—
From every shore, went dipping o'er the tide—
Like birds, that stooping from the far cliff ride—
A moment on the billow—shriek and rise,
With loaded talons wheeling to the skies.
The heaven's blue counterpart!—the murmuring home
Of spirits shipwrecked in the ocean-foam—
Reflector of the arch that's o'er thee bent;
Thou watery sky!—thou liquid firmament!
Mirror of garland-weaving Solitude—
The wild festoon—the cliff—the hanging wood—
The soaring eagle—and the wing of light—
The sunny plumage—and the starry flight
Of dazzling myriads in a cloudless night.

Peace to thy bosom, dark Ontario!
For ever thus, may thy free waters flow,
In their rude loveliness!—thy lonely shore
For ever echo to the sullen roar
Of thine own deep! thy cliffs for ever ring
With calling wild men, in their journeying—
The savage chant—the panther's smothered cry—
That, from her airy height, goes thrilling by!
Be ever thus—as now—magnificent—

In savage Nature's pomp—unbowed—unbent,
And thou wilt ever be omnipotent!

Be ever unapproachable—and free:

The home of Indians and of Liberty.—

But let thy woods be bowed—their sceptres shorn;

Thy blooming streamers from thy ramparts torn;

Thy fountains hushed—and the luxuriant green

Of oozy turf, that o'er thy haunt is seen,

Be trampled on and opened to the sun—

And all thy rich exuberance is done:

Let but the white man's summons once be heard,

And gone, for ever, is thy guardian Bird:

Be once thy torrents stilled—the shiny moss,

Thy grotto-hangings, that the dews emboss;

Thy glittering halls laid open to the light—

Thy mysteries revealed to the unholy sight:

Thy secret places to the sun betrayed;

And, in thy temples, men of blood arrayed;

The curtain of thy sanctuary rent—

Thy dwellings opened to the firmament:

Thy solitudes disturbed—thine altars stained:

Thy heights polluted, and thy depths profaned

With Indian blood, and thy dark offspring chained:

Thy battlements of rocks, and cliffs, and clouds—

Stripped of their garland flags, and hung with shrouds,

And bright with glittering spires: thine altars down—

Then what art thou? and where thy thrones? and crown?

Thy sceptres? and thy hosts?—for ever gone!

And thou—a savage in the world!—alone:

A naked monarch—sullen, stern, and rude,

Amid a robed and plumed multitude:

Sublime and motionless—but impotent—
 Stripped of his arrows, and with bow unbent,
 Who feels that terror of the Indian then,
 Such as he felt in night and darkness, when
 That Indian walked alone, the conqueror of men?

True, he may walk with his own fearless tread;
 With out-stretched arm, and high uplifted head,
 Of one familiar with the pathless wood,
 The caverned chase, the haunts of solitude—
 The midnight storm—the thunder-clap—and sleep
 On jutting cliff—above a tumbling deep:
 But where will be that reverential dread,
 That hung upon the wild man, in his tread
 Within his own dominions?—it is gone!—
 And he stands there undreaded and alone.

Such were thy children—Indian princes—now
 Each stands subdued—with yet a monarch's brow.
 But rend him from his home, and place him where
 The heaven's bright blue is hidden—and the air
 Breathes thick with pestilence—and there he dies,
 With few to fear and none to sympathize.

Rest like the midnight, Mighty One!—and throw—
 Thy shadow o'er thy children of the bow:
 Who, in the wilderness, can calmly go
 To do their worship in a lonely place,
 By altars reeking with the she-wolf's trace:
 And gaze intrepidly upon the skies,
 While the red lightning in its anger flies—

When white men, in their terror, close their eyes:
 For man is there sublime—he is a god!
 Great Nature's master-piece! like him who trod
 The banks of paradise, and stood alone,
 The wonder of the skies—erect upon his throne.

Not like the airy god of moulded light,
 Just stepping from his chariot on the sight;
 Poising his beauties on a rolling cloud,
 With arm outstretched and bow-string twanging loud:
 And arrows singing as they pierce the air,
 With tinkling sandals, and with flaming hair;
 As if he paused upon his bounding way,
 And loosened his fierce arrows—all in play;
 But like that angry god, in blazing light
 Bursting from space! and standing in his might:
 Revealed in his omnipotent array—
 Apollo of the skies! and Deity of Day!
 In god-like wrath! piercing his myriad-foe
 With quenchless shafts, that lighten as they go:
 Not like that god, when up in air he springs,
 With brightening mantle, and with sunny wings,
 When heavenly musick murmurs from his strings—
 A buoyant vision—an embodied dream
 Of dainty Poesy—and boyishly supreme:

Not the thin spirit waked by young Desire,
 Gazing o'er heaven till her thoughts take fire:
 Panting and breathless in her heart's wild trance—
 Bright, shapeless forms—the godlings of Romance:
 Not that Apollo—not resembling him,
 Of silver bow, and woman's nerveless limb:

But man!—all man!—the monarch of the wild!
 Not the faint spirit that corrupting smil'd
 On soft, lascivious Greece—but Nature's child,
 Arrested in the chase! with piercing eye
 Fix'd in its airy lightning on the sky,
 Where some red Bird goes languid, eddying, drooping,
 Pierced by his arrows in her swiftest stooping!
 Thus springing to the skies!—a boy will stand
 With arms uplifted and unconscious hand
 Tracing his arrow in its loftiest flight—
 And watch it kindling, as it cleaves the light
 Of worlds unseen, but by the Indian sight;
 His robe and hair upon the wind at length,
 A creature of the hills!—all grace and strength;
 All muscle and all flame—his eager eye
 Fixed on one-spot, as if he could descry
 His bleeding victim nestling in the sky.
 Not that Apollo!—not the heavenly one,
 Voluptuous spirit of a setting sun,—
 But this—the offspring of young Solitude,
 Child of the holy spot, where none intrude
 But genii of the torrent—cliff, and wood—
 Nurslings of cloud and storm—the desert's fiery brood.

Great Nature's man!—and not a thing—all light:
 Etherial vision of distemper'd sight;
 But mingled cloud and sunshine—flame and night.
 With arrows—not like his of sport—that go
 In light and musick from a silver bow:
 But barbed with flint—with feather—reeking red,
 The heart-blood that some famished wolf hath shed!

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Thou home of gallant men—Ontario—
I would, but cannot leave thee—I would go,
But thy great spirit holds me—may no sial
Ever unfold against thy mountain gale!
Thy waters were thus spread in cloudy blue,
But for thy white fowl and the light canoe.
Should once the smooth dark lustre of thy breast
With mightier burthens, ever be oppressed—
Farewell to thee! and all thy loveliness!
Commerce will rear her arks—and Nature's dress
Be scattered to the winds: thy shores will bloom,
Like dying flow'rets sprinkled o'er a tomb:
The feverish, fleeting lustre of the flowers,
Burnt into life in Art's unnatural bowers;
Not the green—graceful—wild luxuriance
Of Nature's garlands, in their negligence:
The clambering jasmine, and the flushing rose
That in the wilderness their hearts disclose;
The dewy violet, and the bud of gold,
Where drooping lilies on the wave unfold;
Where nameless flowers hang fainting on the air,
As if they breathed their lovely spirits there;
Where heaven itself is bluer, and the light
Is but a coloured fragrance—floating—bright;
Where the sharp note—and whistling song is heard,
Of many a golden beak, and sunny sparkling bird:

There the tame honeysuckle will arise;
The gaudy hot-house plant will spread its dyes,
In flaunting boldness to the sunny skies:

And sickly buds, as soon as blown, will shed
 Their fainting leaves o'er their untimely bed;
 Unnatural violets in the blaze appear—
 With hearts unwet by youthful Flora's tear;
 And the loose poppy with its sleepy death,
 And flashy leaf: the warm and torpid breath
 Of lazy garlands, over crawling vines;
 The tawdry wreath that Fashion intertwines,
 To deck her languid brow: the streamy gold,
 And purple flushing of the tulip's fold;
 And velvet buds, of crimson, and of blue,
 Unchangeable and lifeless, as the hue
 Of Fashion's gaudy wreaths, that ne'er were wet with
 dew.

Such flowers as travellers would not stop to bless,
 Tho' seen by fountains in the wilderness:
 Such heartless flowers, as Love would disavow;
 And blooming Flora, if upon her brow
 Their leaves had once been dropped, would feel as tho'
 Pollution's lips were pressed upon its snow;
 Not the white blossom, that beneath its green
 And glossy shelter, like a star is seen;
 Shrinking and closing from the beam of day—
 A virgin flow'ret for the twilight ray:
 Not the blue hare-bell, swelling o'er the ground,
 And thinly echoing to the fairy bound
 Of tripping feet, within its silky round:
 Not the wild snow-leaf trembling to the moon,
 But the tame sun-flower basking in the noon.

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Where now red Summer, in her sporting, weaves
Her brightest blossoms with her greenest leaves;
Where the wild grape hangs dropping in the shade,
O'er unfledged minstrels, that beneath are laid:
Where all is fragrant, breathing negligence;
And Nature's budding child, sweet Innocence;
Where now her treasures, and her mysteries—
Like shrouded diamonds—or like sleeping eyes,
Are only seen by those, who kneel and take
Their first bright beaming, when they first awake:
Where now, fresh streamlets answer to the hues
Of passing seraph-wings—and fiery dews,
Hang thick on every bush, when morning wakes,
Like sprinkled flame; and all the green-wood shakes
With liquid jewelry, that Night hath flung
Open her favourite tresses, while they swung,
And wantoned in the wind—henceforth will be
No lighted dimness, such as that you see,
In yonder faint, mysterious scenery,
Where all the woods keep festival—and seem
Beneath the midnight sky—and mellow beam
Of yonder breathing light—as if they were
Branches and leaves of unembodied air:
Where fountains sing and sparkle to the skies,
In all their sweetest desert melodies—
The prisoned water will be made to play
In one eternal glitter to the day:
Unnatural freshness—arbours will be seen—
And tortured festoons of fantastick green:
The heavy grotto—and the loaded bower:

The green and tepid pond; the pale wall-flower;
 The tasteless mingling of the savage pine,
 With the bright tendrils of the garden vine:
 The stooping willow, with its braided light,
 And feathery tresses, changeable and bright:—
 The airy mountain ash—the elm—and oak
 Rising triumphant from the Thunderer's stroke;—
 In all their rich exuberance, shooting out
 Their restless sceptres, to the winds about,
 The lordly monarchs of the vigorous wood!
 Placed by the towering—upstart—poplar brood—
 And all the foppery of silly Taste,
 That grieves to see wild Nature so unchaste,
 That—in her modesty—would barely hint
 'That such and such a shade, and such a tint
 'Might mingle better, if a little care—
 'A little grouping here—and contrast there,
 'Were just to—but no matter,'—they all know
 Better than Nature, how her flowers should blow;
 How her sweet birds should sing and fountains flow—
 And where her trees should stand—her cliffs should
 rise,

In scattered pointings to the glorious skies.
 Leave such cold bosoms, Nature! to their fate;
 And be thou grand—luxuriant—desolate—
 As it best pleaseth thee. These wretched fools
 Would have Creation work by lines and rules.
 Theirs is the destiny—be theirs the curse,
 In their improvements still—to mount from bad to
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Be ever thus thou Wilderness! be wild
 In thine own nakedness—young Nature's child!
 Still hang her festoons o'er thy glittering caves:
 Still far from thee the pageantry of slaves!
 The dull cold blooming of the lifeless wreaths,
 Plucked from the garden where Oppression breathes:
 The misty poison of the sultry flowers,
 That shed their sleep in artificial bowers:
 May Architecture never rear her spires,
 Or swell her domes to thy warm sunset fires;
 Where now, o'er verdant pyramids and pines,
 And dark green crowns, the crimson lustre shines!
 Enough has now been done—thou art but free:
 Art *but* a refuge now for Liberty—
 E'en now the wakening thunder sometimes roars
 Above thy prostrate oaks—the guardians of thy shores.

Roll not thy waves in light, Ontario!!
 For ever darkly may thy waters flow!—
 Through thy tall shores and blooming solitudes,
 Sacred to loneliness—and caves—and woods:—
 Roll not thy waves in light—or thou wilt see
 Their bosoms heave no longer darkly free:
 But whitening into foam beneath their load,
 While Commerce ploughs upon her flashing road;
 And thou mayest stand, and hearken to the cry
 Of thy young genii mounting to the sky:
 And feel the fanning of the last free wing,
 That's shaken o'er thy brow, as it goes wandering:
 And listen to the loud, tumultuous roar
 Of martial thunders echoing from thy shore;

And thou—thy ramparts, cliffs, and citadels,
 Where now Sublimity, with Freedom, dwells,
 Will see thy conquerors on thy mountains rise,
 With glittering banners rustling in the skies;
 And see their streamers flash, and hear the song
 Of victory o'er thee, go pealingly along.

Hail, sleepless monarch! Old Ontario!
 Thou, of the woods, and of the Indian bow,
 I see thy glories in their dark blue flow!
 A lake of wonders!—where the stars appear
 In the fair deep, more luminous and clear;
 For their confusion! All thy dim shores lie
 In moonlight's sleepy, soft tranquillity.
 The air is cool, but motionless; about
 Is something of enchantment, awe and doubt—
 As in the fleeting scenery of a dream,
 When landscapes come—and vanish!—like the beam
 That blue voluptuous eyes emit in tears,
 That trembles—brightens—fades, and disappears!
 Something mysterious—holy—like the air
 Of caverns, when some spirit has been there;
 While yet the breathing' incense that was shed,
 Is faint and floating round, like sighings o'er the dead.

No sound is on the ear: no boatman's oar
 Drops its dull signal to the watchful shore:
 But all is listening, as it were, to hear
 Some seraph harper stooping from her sphere,
 And calling on the desert to express,
 Its sense of Silence in her loveliness.

What holy dreaming comes in nights like these!
 When, like yon wave—unruffled by a breeze,
 The mirrors of the memory all are spread,
 And fanning pinions sail around your head:
 When all that man may love—alive or dead,
 Come murmuring sweet, unutterable things,
 And nestle on his heart with their young wings:
 And all perchance may come, that he may fear,
 And mutter doubtful curses in his ear;
 Hang on his loaded soul, and fill his brain
 With indistinct forbodings, dim—and vain—
 Who has not felt the unexpected tear?
 Who has not shaken with an awful fear,
 When, in the wilderness—alone—he trod—
 Where, since there walked the Everlasting God—
 No living foot hath been? where boundless woods—
 Where sanctuaries—waters—solitudes—
 In dreadful stillness—vaulted round—are spread,
 Like some appointed place—for judgment on the dead.

The moon goes lightly up her thronging way,
 And shadowy things are brightening into day;
 And cliff, and shrub, and bank, and tree, and stone,
 Now move upon the eye—and now are gone!
 A dazzling tapestry is hung around:
 A gorgeous carpeting bestrews the ground;
 The willows glitter in the passing beam,
 And shake their tangling lustres o'er the stream:
 And all the full, rich foliage of the shore,
 Seems with a quick enchantment frosted o'er;

And dances at the faintest breath of night,
And trembles like a plume of spangles in the light.

Far o'er the slumbering wave, amid the shade,
Millions of dancing lights are thick arrayed;
And interposing forms are seen to go,
With ceaseless step, unwearied, firm and slow—
In measured walking, like a cavalcade—
As if a band were marshalled for parade—
Before a line of fire, that redly throws
A glimmering richness, where that billow flows,
And some yet feebler lights are o'er the turf,
Like sea foam brightening faintly o'er the surf.
There, Pestilence hath breathed! within each tent
The midnight bow, with quenchless shaft—is bent;
And many a youthful hero wastes away,
In that—the worst of deaths—the death of slow decay.

This dark, cool wave is bluer than the deep,
Where sailors—children of the tempest!—sleep;
And dropped with lights as pure—as still as those—
The wide-drawn hangings of the skies disclose,
Far lovelier than the dim and broken ray,
That Ocean's flashing surges send astray;
And when the foam comes loosely o'er its breast,
The sea-maid's bosom with its studded vest,
That mightier billows bear, is dark—is dull,
To this light silvery spray, so beautiful!
This is the mirror of dim Solitude,
On which unholy things may ne'er intrude;
That frowns and ruffles when the clouds appear,
Refusing to reflect their shapes of fear;

Ontario's deeps are spread to multiply
But sunshine—stars—the moon—and clear-blue sky,
The ocean—when at peace—is but the place
Where those who rule the tempest—dwell in space—
Direct the thunder—rock the established hill—
And steadfast shore;—whose countless myriads fill
All heaven and earth—and air—are wont to dwell,
And calm themselves to sleep upon its boundless swell.

No pirate barque was ever seen to ride,
With blood-red streamer, chasing o'er that tide;
'Till late, no bugle o'er those waters sang
With aught but huntsman's orisons, that rang
Their clear—exulting—bold—triumphant strain,
'Till all the mountain echoes laughed again!
'Till caverns, depths, and hills, would all reply,
And heav'n's blue dome ring out the sprightly melody.

Within those depths no shipwrecked sailor lies,
Upon his foaming couch; whose dying eyes
Were closed amid the storm—with no one near,
To grasp his hand, or drop the manly tear:
With not one friend—one shipmate left to tell,
As 'tis in strife—how gallantly he fell.
Not one to tell the melancholy tale,
To her whose heart is on the rising gale.
Within that peaceful sanctuary sleep
No victim wanderers of the mighty deep;
No ocean-wreaths are there—no diadems,
Of bloody sea-weed, sprinkled o'er with gems,
That vanish when ye touch them, like the pearl
That glitters on the sea-maid's shining curl;

No wrecks of slaughter:—flags in battle rent,
 By Victory scattered in the firmament:
 Not one of all those trophies of the flood,
 When ship encounters ship, and foams along in blood,

August amid this scene, unclouded, stand
 The everlasting hills that guard our land:
 And rear their rocky helmets, where the sky
 Hath pitched their tent upon immensity.
 These are our forts! our battlements! our holds!
 Our bulwarks! our entrenchments! Here unfolds
 The rainbow-banner, and its lights are forth
 In sudden splendours, like the streaming north:
 An outspread eaglet o'er each standard stoops,
 With unclosed beak, and wing that never droops:
 And stars are busy there—and through the night,
 A constellation blazes on the sight—
 Eagles! and stars! and rainbows!—all abroad,
 Beneath a boundless sky, upon a mountain road!

And LIBERTY, from whose imperial eye,
 Unfettered limb, and step of majesty,
 Perpetual sunshine brightens all the air,
 When undisturbed by man—in wrath is there!
 And prostrate armies now, are kneeling round:
 They see the rolling clouds! they hear the sound
 Of pealing thunders! While her martial form
 Lightens tremendous in the gathering storm!
 They breathe that buoyant mountain atmosphere,
 And kindling in their eyes those lights appear,—
 Those quenchless lights!—that despots, tyrants dread,
 When man comes forth in might, and lifts his head

Sublime in desperation; when they hear
 The song of trumpets bursting on their ear!
 The shock of armies! and, afar, behold
 Rebellion's crimson standard all unrolled!
 When slaves are men—are monarchs—and their tread
 Comes like the resurrection of the dead!
 Man bursts his fetters! shakes his sheathless sword—
 Stands on his grave, and battles with his lord
 For sepulture or freedom—eye to eye—
 And swears to live his equal, or to die,
 In glorious martyrdom—to glorious LIBERTY.

Then let the trumpet of the battle sound!
 Then let the shuddering challenge peal around!
 'Till all our ruffled eaglets start and wake—
 And scream aloud—and whet their beaks—and shake
 Their guardian wings, o'er mountain, wood, and lake!
 The blast will but disturb the spirit there;
 But rouse the she-wolf from her bloody lair;
 But wake the fiery-harnessed multitudes;
 The dark battalions of untrod den woods;
 Whose viewless chiefs shall gird their armour on,
 And lighten o'er the fields their valour won:
 'Twill 'waken echoes in that solitude,
 Less welcome than the panther's cry for food:
 Less earthly—than the voices heard, when Night
 Collects her angels on some stormy height,
 And airy trumps are blown! and o'er the heaven
 Ten thousand fearful challenges are given!

Those star-crowned hills! the gathering will be there,
 Of heaven's dim hordes, the squadrons of air!

Erect and high, upon their stormy cars—
 In meteor armour—rushing 'mid the stars,
 The dusky champions of the earth and sky
 Will seem encountering in their chivalry.
 Yon moon-light tents, so gallantly, outspread
 By living hands, will then be filled with dead:
 Whose home is space: the habitation, too,
 Of yon perpetual host, that walk in blue:
 That endless multitude! eternal source!
 Of wonder and of worship in their course;
 O, whither is your march? ye stars! and whence?
 Ye blazing myriads of Omnipotence!
 Ye suns! who burst from darkness with our earth,
 Still coming forth in one continual birth!
 Almighty miracles! who fill the air
 With melody and light, as if ye were
 A host of living harmonies,—ye roll,
 Systems and worlds—all intellect and soul!
 Interpreters of God! who've called to man,
 From yon eternal vault, since time began:
 Ye midnight travellers, who, nightly move
 In everlasting pilgrimage above!
 Ye blazonry of power! ye heraldry of love!

There's one who stands to see that deep blue fold
 Of glories—suns—and systems, all unrolled,*

* This was stolen—I confess it,—from the “unrolling
 glory” in the *Airs of Palestine*, I do not strike it out—
 because I conceive it to be the noblest compliment that
 I can pay any man, to let it remain.

In speechless adoration,—with an eye
 Of dampened light uplifted to the sky;
 Who half forgets the signal that he gave,
 And echoing answer o'er the distant wave:
 For he is all alone upon the shore—
 Alone—at night—what could he think of more?
 He speaks not—moves not: his uncovered brow,
 If one might see—perchance is gathered now;
 His attitude, so fixed, is that of thought—
 Something of stern composure; as if wrought
 With dangerous purpose to be done with speed,
 Some quick-matured—but full-determined deed:
 Now—o'er the dim blue waters you may see
 His eye go flashing and impatiently:
 And now his helm is shaken—and his hand
 Is partly raised as if 'twere in command:
 The dipping of an oar is heard—a boat so light,
 It scarcely touched the wave, is now in sight:
 Around the cliff it came, like some keen bird—
 That passes by you 'ere her wing is heard;
 Like the enchanted skiff that dreamers see,
 Self-moved in moonlight breeze—light, swift, and
 cheerfully:

An Indian springs on shore: his light canoe
 Hath vanished like a spectre from the view:
 Something he murmurs in the sullen tone
 Of one who is abandoned: all alone—
 Left to contend with many; and his eye,
 So rooted—deadly, bodes some danger nigh:

Hush! hush—a rustling—and a fearful pause—
 A sword is half unsheathed—the Indians draws
 His arrow to the head; but why?—no sound—
 Of thundering tread, is echoing on the ground:
 No footstep comes—no cautious—stealing foe—
 The garland-float is heard, and watery-flow—
 And nothing else, o'er blue Ontario.
 One rapid glance! his soul is all revealed;
 Battle is near—his swarthy brow is sealed
 With Indian-meaning, and his serpent eye
 Is black and glittering with a changeless dye;
 The stranger too—as if he scarcely breathed,
 Stands stooping—listening—with his blade unsheathed;
 Silent as death they are; one glance—a single glance
 Was but exchanged—in their deep, pulseless trance—
 One glance! it was enough—and each was sure
 Of all his fellow would perform—endure.
 Yet—none of that of companionship is here,
 The union of the vulgar, when in fear:
 No talk—no whisper—but the steady eye
 Of dangerous-boding—stern tranquillity:
 The strong, cool brow—the upright, martial tread
 Of planted strength—the boldly lifted head.
 One glance! a white man's glance—the Indian feels
 What none but Nature's savage man conceals—
 The swell of sympathy—of brotherhood,
 In danger and in death—in solitude.

Now—o'er the waters ye may faintly see
 A shadowy vision coming silently:

A rushing now is heard—and spreading large
 With sail upon the wind—there comes a barge:
 And yet, methinks, its lightly lifted prow,
 Upon its glossy path, goes wondrous slow;
 It comes—as drifting from the guarded strand,
 And looks as tho' in peace—unarmed—unmanned:
 This has a quite aspect—but that sail
 Is sharply trimmed, as if it might prevail,
 In ruder nights than this, against a fiercer gale.

A bird of prey, perhaps—that folds its wing—
 And sits upon the wave in slumbering;
 That stoops at night—but stay! she goes about—
 Is that a signal?—there!—that light thrown out?
 By heaven 'tis answered!—answered from the land!
 From yonder beetling steep is stretched a brand!
 The waters foam—up comes the boat in pride!
 Leaving a path of light along the tide;
 And 'ere the soldier can put forth his blade,
 He is a prisoner!—Round him are arrayed
 A hidden band, that started from their shade:
 A band with bayonets levelled at his breast—
 The circle narrows—nods each threatening crest:
 Contracting slowly, they approach—as they
 Still feared a single warrior, when at bay:
 'Yield,' cries the foremost, loudly,—fiercely.—'yield!
 The stranger would reply—but sees concealed
 Beneath a stooping oak, his dark ally,
 With bended bow—and cool, and patient eye,—
 He waves his hand—the arrow's point is dropp'd—
 The death shaft of a foe, upon its flight, is stopp'd;

The summons is repeated: 'Yield!' he cries,
 With anger flashing from his youthful eyes:
 A pause—a change of attitude betrays
 A naked blade to his imperious gaze.
 A backward step—'a dagger—thus revealed'—
 What could he think?—'Stranger!—that point con-
 cealed!'

'Concealed!' the stranger echoed—and it came,
 With startling emphasis, and kindling flame;
 Then—turning silently, he shook his head
 In calm disdain, and with his lordly tread,
 And gathered cloak, he stood—as one who feels
 That every spirit round him, prostrate kneels:
 He grasps his trusty hilt:—he moves away:
 The circle widens:—all who meet, obey
 The calm command—firm step—intrepid eye
 Of one familiar with such victory:
 Amid the working of that mighty spell
 He had escaped—but some low murmurs fell,
 And each arose in heart: their wandering eyes
 Now lowered in silent threat—now sought their prize:
 The charm was broken, and their strength returned;
 And each reproached his comrade, while he burned
 To wipe away, for ever, this disgrace,
 And meet his foe, once more!—but face to face.
 'Tis done—their prayer is granted—their pursuit
 Is short indeed. Again they all are mute;
 He stands too proudly—and is found too near,
 To leave them their last hope—that he had fled in fear.

Their angry leader is the first to break
 The sullen loneliness; the first to wake

Some sound—he cares not what—so it be life;
 Something less awful—be it even strife.
 ‘Stranger!’ he cries again, ‘your arms! your sword!—
 ‘Or’—pausing faintly-- ‘or’—the evening word.
 The stranger smiled—advanced his foot,—and said;
 While all stood awe-struck at his martial tread,
 And something rustled in the neighbouring shade—
 ‘Where is your leader?—let him take my blade!’
 ‘I am the leader!’—

‘You! and by what right
 ‘Arrest ye thus a traveller at night?’
 They marked his port—his keen, unshifting eye;
 His half-raised lip, and stand of majesty---
 His calm—serene—and almost taunting tone—
 And yet—they knew their prize!—he was alone.
 ‘A traveller!’—yes—and ‘ere to-morrow’s light
 He will be hanged for travelling thus at night.’
 The stranger’s hand fell sudden on his hip,
 ‘Hanged!’ he replied, and higher curled his lip,
 And lightnings left his eye!—and forth he stood
 Like something raised within that solitude
 By some unholy rite—upraised in wrath,
 By some unhallowed step upon his path;
 He struggled—heaved as if he gasped for breath—
 And all was silent then, as in the hour of death.

At last the swelling of his chest subsides—
 The lightnings pass away—a cold smile rides
 Upon the writhing of his mighty brow,
 And glittering breast—from which his mantle’s flow

Is opening in the tumult of his heart,—
 Like the last splendours of the storm, that part,
 And o'er the rolling clouds in softness sleep—
 Or tender moon-light on the troubled deep;
 'Hanged!' he repeated—'hang a soldier—no!—
 Soldiers are never hanged.'—Forth stepped his foe:—
 'No more—your arms!—a dastard midnight spy
 Should never—never—like a soldier die!
 'A spy!—enough'—and forth his faulchion flew;
 A shrill, quick summons to his band he blew—
 Threw off his cloak—against the high rock stood,
 And bade him take his sword, who 'dared and would!'
 'Charge!' cried the leader, 'charge!' and drew his brand;
 Already they encounter, hand to hand—
 But pause—for lo!—they meet with men and steeds—
 An arrow from the distant shade proceeds—
 The foremost falls—an Indian rushes out,
 And mingles with the horsemen's furious shout,
 And sabres streaming clash—his thrilling cries:
 Short is the conflict—half the foot band dies.
 'Secure them,' cried the chief—I must away—
 'Speed to the camp—return by break of day.

The barge hath fled—the Indian, where is he?
 The savage man—the naked—he is free!
 Again appears the skimming light canoe—
 Forth from its covert, o'er the watery blue,
 With wondrous impulse now, it swiftly flies,
 Like some young spirit o'er the wintry skies:
 Now underneath the cliff—now up a stream
 Of ruffled shade, it passes like a dream:

Now shooting 'thwart a tranquil, lovely sheet
 Of shining light, as it goes as still and fleet,
 As that ethereal bark that sails on high,
 Amid the lustre of a dark blue sky:
 Now on the flowery bank a light appears—
 A cottage nestles:—and an oak uprears,
 With all its giant branches, wide outspread,
 Above the lonely cot—its thunder-blasted head.
 And there the stranger stays: beneath that oak,
 Whose shattered majesty hath felt the stroke
 Of heaven's own thunder—yet it proudly heaves
 A giant sceptre wreathed with blasted leaves—
 As though it dared the elements, and stood
 The guardian of that cot—the monarch of that wood.

Beneath its venerable vault he stands:
 And one might think, who saw his out-stretched hands,
 That something more than soldiers e'er may feel,
 Had touched him with its holy, calm appeal:
 That yonder wave—the heaven—the earth—the air
 Had called upon his spirit for her prayer.
 His eye goes dimly o'er the midnight scene:
 The oak—the cot—the wood—the faded green—
 The moon—the sky—the distant moving light—
 All—all are gathering on his dampened sight.
 His warrior-helm and plume, his fresh-dyed blade
 Beneath a window, on the turf are laid:
 The panes are ruddy thro' the clambering vines
 And blushing leaves, that Summer intertwines
 In warmer tints than e'er luxuriant Spring,
 O'er flower-embosomed roof led wandering.

His pulses quicken--for a rude old door
 Is opened by the wind: he sees the floor
 Strewed with white sand, on which he used to trace
 His boyhood's battles---and assign a place
 To charging hosts---and give the Indian yell---
 And shout to hear his hoary grandsire tell,
 How he had fought with savages, whose breath
 He felt upon his cheek like mildew till his death.

Hark!---that sweet song!---how full of tenderness!
 O, who would breathe in 'his voluptuous press
 Of lulling thoughts!---so soothing and so low;
 Like singing fountains in their faintest flow---
 It is as if some holy---lovely thing,
 Within our very hearts were murmuring,
 The soldier listens, and his arms are prest
 In thankfulness, and trembling on his breast:
 Now---on the very window where he stands,
 Are seen a clambering infant's rosy hands:
 And now--ah heaven!---blessings on that smile!---
 Stay, soldier stay---O, linger yet awhile!
 An airy vision now appears, with eyes---
 As tender as the blue of weeping skies:
 Yet sunny in their radiance, as that blue,
 When sunset glitters on its falling dew;
 With form---all joy and dance---as bright and free
 As youthful nymph of mountain Liberty:
 Or naked angels dreamt by poesy:
 A blooming infant to her heart is prest;
 And ah---a mother's song is lulling it to rest!

A youthful mother! God of heaven! is there
A thing beneath the skies, so holy or so fair!

A single bound!—our chief is standing by,
Trembling from head to foot with ecstasy--
'Bless thee!'—at length he murmured--'bless thee, love!
'My wife!--my boy:'--Their eyes are raised above.
His soldier's tread of sounding strength is gone:
A choking transport drowns his manly tone:
He sees the closing of a mild, blue eye,
His bosom echoes to a faint low cry:
His glorious boy springs freshly from its sleep;
Shakes his thin sun-curls, while his eye-beams leap,
As half in fear--along the stranger's dress--
'Then--half advancing--yields to his caress:--
Then--peers beneath his locks, and seeks his eye,
With the clear look of radiant infancy,
The cherub smile of love, the azure of the sky.

The stranger now, is kneeling by the side
Of that young mother;--watching for the tide
Of her returning life:--it comes--a glow
Goes--faintly--slowly--o'er her cheek and brow:
A rising of the gauze that lightly shrouds
A snowy breast--like twilight's melting clouds--
In nature's pure, still eloquence, betrays
The feelings of the heart that reels beneath his gaze.

She lives! she lives--see how her feelings speak,
Thro' what transparency of eye and cheek!

Her colour comes and goes, like that faint ray,
 That flits o'er lilies at the close of day.
 O, nature, how omnipotent!-- that sigh---
 That youthful mother, in her ecstasy,
 Feels but the wandering of a husband's eye.
 Her lip now ripens, and her heaving breast
 Throbs wildly in its light, and now subsides to rest.

And now a father grasps his martial hand;
 A mother and a sister leaning stand---
 A mother--in her adoration--there!--
 With clasped hands and wildly streaming hair:
 A sister--with a lip of pulpy red,
 Swelling and trembling at his martial tread;
 A father--and a soldier! one who feels
 All that a father may--and yet his heart conceals.

There they all stand! and thro' their gathering tears,
 The smile of gratitude and pride appears;
 While o'er his manly form their glances fall;
 To see his lordly height---so full---so tall;
 The gallant bearing of his swelling chest;
 The lofty brow---commanding--and at rest!
 His springing port--his strong, determined tread,
 That sounded like a threat--the colour spread,
 In health's effulgent brownness, o'er his cheek;
 The glance of fire, in which there seemed to speak
 The tamelessness of one, who'd spend his life
 In battle and in storm--in tempest and in strife.

There stands the man of blood! now search his eye;
 See ye aught there of that cool mastery,
 That dwells on danger with untroubled look?
 Aught of that deadly calmness, that will brook
 No flame of challenge in another's gaze?
 Aught of that desperate meaning, which betrays
 The eye that is familiar with the deed
 Of midnight battle, where the mighty bleed?
 When valour—manhood—perish by the blow
 From unseen hands, that lay the coward low?
 No—ye may not. That youthful glance, less tame
 Than the quick flashing of a meteor flame—
 Is yet of generous omen—not the light
 That burns vindictive on the blasted sight:
 That streams from bloody falchions—lights the field
 Of midnight slaughter, where the mighty yield
 Their spirits to their God, in silent fight—
 The war of murderers—wakened but in night!
 His is the flashing eye that courts the day—
 The pawing steed—the horn—the full display
 Of columns—banners—marcial minstrelsy—
 The drums of earth—the echoes of the sky—
 The trumpet-song of Death and cannon pealing high!

'My son,' the old man said, 'to-morrow night—
 I learn ye mingle in a glorious fight.
 Remember then my words. This form, so old,
 Once moved in blood, where mighty Battle tolled
 The warrior-knell in storm. In that dread hour
 My heart was always sad. The sinewy power

That strung my arm, was not the gallant tide
 That leaps at the far trump in rushing pride.
 The blaze that wrapped my eye, was not the fire
 That kindles redly at the battle quire.
 Religion, and my country nerved my arm,
 Fed my young heart, and kept my eye-beam warm.
 My gallant boy—I know thou art full brave,
 That evening battle ground--may be thy bloody grave!

'Oh no!' the mother cries:—and now they weep
 And pray—as we will pray when we're asleep,
 With ashy lip—a suffocating prayer—that dies
 In broken murmurs, and in struggling sighs:
 As we will pray, when thro' the brooding shade
 Unholy sights, by Terror's torch betrayed,
 Come thronging, darkly, in delirium—
 With heavy wing—with cloudy breath—and hum
 Of one unceasing knell: in lonely woe—
 In sullen boding--like the heavy flow
 Of far, far waves, where one we love is sleeping--
 When we are set--we know not how--a-weeping.

The young wife stoops,---as she would hide her tears;
 And smile with hope, while bowing down with fears:
 With heart that pants and flutters to be free,
 Like some young nestling, stolen from its tree,
 That heaves its bosom---shakes its dazzling plume,
 A pulse of light and life, entrapped within a tomb!

Hark!---from the distant shore far trumpets sweep!
 One last embrace: once more they meet and weep:

Around that dear, loved group, once more is shed
A farewell smile—a parting tear: then sped
The husband to the war! With unhung brand,
And helmeted for strife, he joins his band!

H

CANTO IIL

Same night continues.....general appearances of night
at all seasons assembled.....midnight.....daylight.....sun-
rise.....second day.....Americans parade on the heights....
British on the march.....Canadians.....British chief....inci-
dents.....associations.....evening.....Niagara.

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

CANTO III.

THERE are harps that complain to the presence of night,
To the presence of night alone---
In a near and unchangeable tone---
Like winds, full of sound, that go whispering by---
As if some immortal had stooped from the sky---
And breathed out a blessing---and flown!

Yes!----harps that complain to the breezes of night;
To the breezes of night alone---
Growing fainter and fainter, as ruddy and bright,
The sun rolls aloft, in his drapery of light---
Like a conqueror, shaking his brilliant hair,
And flourishing robe, on the edge of the air:
Burning crimson and gold,
On the clouds that unfold---
Breaking onward in flame!----while an ocean divides
On his right and his left---So the Thunderer rides!
When he cuts a bright path through the heaving tides;
Rolling on---and erect---in a charioting throne!

Yes!---strings that lie still in the gushing of day;
That awake, all alive!----to the breezes of night---

There are hautboys and flutes too, for ever at play,
 When the evening is near, and the sun is away---
 Breathing out the still hymn of delight.
 These strings by invisible fingers are played:---
 By spirits---unseen---and unknown---
 But thick as the stars!---all this musick is made---
 And these flutes, alone,
 In one sweet dreamy tone---
 Are ever blown
 For ever and for ever;
 The live-long night ye hear the sound,
 Like distant waters flowing round,
 In ringing caves---while heaven is sweet
 With crowding tunes, like halls
 Where fountain-musick falls,
 And rival minstrels meet!

'Tis dark abroad. The majesty of Night
 Bows down superbly from her utmost height:
 Stretches her starless plumes across the world;
 And all the banners of the wind are furled.
 How heavily we breathe amid such gloom!
 As if we slumbered in creation's tomb.
 It is the noon of that tremendous hour,
 When life is helpless, and the dead have power:
 When solitudes are peopled: when the sky
 Is swept by shady wings that, sailing by,
 Proclaim their watch is set; when hidden rills
 Are chirping on their course; and all the hills
 Are bright with armour:---when the starry vests
 And glittering plumes, and fiery twinkling crests

Of moon-light sentinels, are sparkling round,
And all the air is one rich floating sound:
When countless voices, in the day unheard,
Are piping from their haunts: and every bird
That loves the leafy wood, and blooming bower;
And echoing cave, is singing to her flower:
When every lovely---every lonely place,
Is ringing to the light and sandaled pace
Of twinkling feet; and all about, the flow
Of new-born fountains murmuring as they go:
When watery tunes are richest---and the call
Of wandering streamlets, as they part and fall
In foaming melody, is all around;
Like fairy harps beneath enchanted ground.
Sweet drowsy distant musick! like the breath
Of airy flutes that blow before an infant's death.

It is that hour when listening ones will weep
And know not why: when we would gladly sleep
Our last---last sleep; and feel no touch of fear,---
Unconscious where we are---or what is near,
'Till we are startled by a falling tear,
That unexpected gathered in our eye,
While we were panting for yon blessed sky:
That hour of gratitude---of whispering prayer,
When we can hear a worship in the air:
When we are lifted from the earth, and feel
Light fanning wings around us faintly wheel,
And o'er our lids and brow a blessing steal:
And then---as if our sins were all forgiven---
And all our tears were wiped---and we in heaven!

It is that hour of quiet ecstasy,
When every ruffling wind, that passes by
The sleeping leaf, makes busiest minstrelsy;
When all at once! amid the quivering shade,
Millions of diamond sparklers are betrayed!
When dry leaves rustle, and the whistling song
Of keen-tuned grass, comes piercingly along:
When windy pipes are heard—and many a lute
Is touched amid the skies, and then is mute:
When even the foliage on the glittering steep,
Of feathery bloom—is whispering in its sleep:
When all the garlands of the precipice,
Shedding their blossoms, in their moonlight bliss,
Are floating loosely on the eddying air,
And breathing out their fragrant spirits there:
And all their braided tresses fluttering—bright,
Are sighing faintly to the shadowy light:
When every cave and grot—and bower and lake,
And drooping floweret-bell, are all awake:
When starry eyes are burning on the cliff
Of many a crouching tyrant too, as if
Such melodies were grateful even to him:
When life is loveliest—and the blue skies swim
In lustre, warm as sunshine—but more dim:
When all the holy sentinels of night
Step forth to watch in turn, and worship by their light.

Such is the hour!—the holy, breathless hour,
When such sweet minstrelsy hath mightiest power:
When sights are seen, that all the blaze of day
Can never rival, in its fierce display:

Such is the hour—yet not a sound is heard;
 No sights are seen—no melancholy bird
 Sings tenderly and sweet; but all the air
 Is thick and motionless—as if it were
 A prelude to some dreadful tragedy;
 Some midnight drama of an opening sky!

The Genius of the mountain, and the wood;
 The stormy Eagle, and her rushing brood;
 The fire-eyed tenant of the desert cave;
 The gallant spirit of the roaring wave;
 The star-crowned messengers that ride the air;
 The meteor watch-light, with its streamy hair,
 Threatening and sweeping redly from the hill;
 The shaking cascade—and the merry rill
 Are hushed to slumber now—and heaven and earth are
 still.

And now the daylight comes!—slowly it rides,
 In ridgy lustre o'er the cloudy tides,
 Like the soft foam upon the billow's breast;
 Or feathery light upon a shadowy crest;
 The morning Breezes from their slumbers wake,
 And o'er the distant hill-tops cheerly shake
 Their dewy locks, and plume themselves, and poise
 Their rosy wings, and listen to the noise
 Of echoes wandering from the world below:
 The distant lake, rejoicing in its flow:
 The bugles ready cry: the labouring drum:
 The neigh of steeds—and the incessant hum

That the bright tenants of the forest send:
 The sunrise gun: the heave—the wave—and bend
 Of everlasting trees, whose busy leaves
 Rustle their song of praise, while Ruin weaves
 A robe of verdure for their yielding bark;
 While mossy garlands—dark and full, and dark,
 Creep slowly round them—monarchs of the wood!
 Whose mighty sceptres sway the mountain brood!
 Whose aged bosoms, in their last decay,
 Shelter the winged idolaters of day:
 Who, 'mid the desert wild, sublimely stand,
 And grapple with the storm-god hand to hand!
 Then drop like weary pyramids away;
 Stupendous monuments of calm decay!
 As yet the warring thunders have not rent
 The swimming clouds, the brightening firmament,
 The lovely mists that float around the sky—
 Ruddy and rich with fresh and glorious dye,
 Like hovering seraph wings—or robe of Poesy!

Now comes the sun forth! not in blaze of fire:
 With rain-bow-harnessed coursers, that respire
 An atmosphere of flame: No chariot whirls
 O'er reddening clouds. No sunny flag unfurls
 O'er rushing smoke. No chargers in array
 Scatter thro' heaven and earth their fiery spray:
 No shouting charioteer, in transport flings
 Ten thousand anthems, from tumultuous strings:
 And round and round, no fresh-plumed echoes dance:
 No airy minstrels in the flush light glance:

No rushing melody comes strong and deep:
 And far away no fading winglets sweep:
 No boundless hymning o'er the blue-sky rings,
 In hallelujahs to the King of Kings:
 No youthful hours are seen. No riband lash,
 Flings its gay stripings like a rainbow flash,
 While starry crowns, and constellations fade
 Before the glories of that cavalcade,
 Whose trappings are the jewelry of heaven,
 Embroidered thickly on the clouds of even.

No!—no!—he comes not thus in pomp, and light!
 A new creation bursting out of night!
 But he comes darkly forth! in storm arrayed—
 Like the red Tempest marshalled in her shade,
 When mountains rock; and thunders travelling round,
 Hold counsel in the sky--and midnight trumps resound.

Hark! the deep drums again;--the echoing drums!
 Their rousing loudly through the clear air comes.
 And trumpets dread hurra! -- its plunging blast
 Left every heart—a-heaving—as it past.
 In that wild threatening cry, how much of life!
 Of martial song:—the minstrelsy of strife.
 A flash!—a vapour! from yon fading cloud
 The cannon's voice comes suddenly aloud:
 Now bursts the smothered war! and proudly rise
 Fresh plumes and banners, blazing to the skies!
 And further still, the loud artillery rolls
 Uninterrupted thunder to the poles!

That morning sun uprose o'er swelling hearts,
That e'er the evening sun once more departs,
Shall cease to swell on earth. That trumpet's voice
For the last time hath called them to rejoice:
Yes—many a pulse now fiercely throbbing there,
Hath heard its requiem in the morning air.

A horseman!—surely we have seen that steed—
His reaching step—his flowing mane—his speed:
The rein is loosened—upward to the heaven,
He leaps, as if the battle blast were given!
That youthful rider—what an awful brow!—
How calm and grand!—and now he nods—and now—
Faith,—'tis a glorious vision! how his hair
Is blown about his cheek, as if it were
A living richness clustering in the air!
His chest is heaving, and his sunny eye
Goes bright and fearless o'er the clear blue sky:
That lip—that brow, that ardent, piercing look
In battle's wildest uproar never shook:
No frowning—and no effort—always bright,
And always careless—always—even in fight:
And yet that smile of his, that waving hand,
And nodding plume, among his chosen band,
Have a determined and despotick sway,
O'er hearts and souls,—that never would obey
The lordliest frown that ever sat in cloud;
The stormiest voice that ever raged aloud:
The darkest helm that ever nodded proud:
His is a spirit of that mighty power,
That moves the calmest in the troubled hour:

An eye that, even in danger, threatens not,
Calm—frank and generous—ne'er to be forgot,
That, even in strife, looks forth with beams of peace,
And brightens as the thunders of the battle cease.

His march was victory—and his charger's tread
Hath been familiar with the warrior's bed—
The battle field! His brow was always bare,
His head thrown-back—his right arm in the air!
His charger leaping—plunging—as he came,
And went amid the battle wrapped in flame;
While o'er him waved the star-flag, thick with smoke;
Unharm'd he sat—and like the thunder spoke:
Nodding' his tall plumes to the trumpet-blast
The fiercest in the strife, but when 'twas past,
The first to sheathe his blade—to leave the battle, last.

The drum is rolled again. The bugle sings;
And far upon the wind the cross flag flings
A radiant challenge to its starry foe,
That floats—a sheet of light!—away—below,
Where troops are forming—slowly in the night
Of mighty waters; where an angry light
Bounds from the cataract, and fills the skies
With visions—rainbows—and the foamy dyes,
That one may see at morn in youthful poet's eyes.

NIAGARA! NIAGARA! I hear
Thy tumbling waters. And I see thee rear
Thy thundering sceptre to the clouded skies:
I see it wave—I hear the ocean rise,

And roll obedient to thy call. I hear
 The tempest-hymning of thy floods in fear:
 The quaking mountains and the nodding trees—
 The reeling birds—and the careering breeze—
 The tottering hills, unsteadied in thy roar:
 Niagara! as thy dark waters pour,
 One everlasting earthquake rocks thy lofty shore!

There spreads the red cross-banner, far and wide,
 Flapping its dark blue, as 'tis wont to ride
 O'er the red tempest, on the mountain-tide.
 The troops of Wellington are there; a band—
 Nursed by stern Glory in her favourite land:
 The guardians of the Spaniard, when subdued,
 And trampled in the dust: a band that stood
 Forth with that banner, floating like a shroud,
 And battled on the mountain—in a cloud—
 With high—stupendous Gaul, until her genius bowed.

Stern eyes are lifted to it, as it leans
 Away upon the breeze: and long past scenes
 Of home and country, o'er the heaving main—
 Of fire-side peace, are conjured up again:
 Parents—and wife—and children—and young eyes
 Of weeping love, are looking from the skies:
 And murmuring prayers are near again: and dreams
 Of parting lips: and many a dark eye beams
 Upon its soldier's heart, as it had done,
 When they had parted—parted!—all alone;
 And every friend he had, was going one by one.

From the horizon now, a gathering cloud
Comes darkly o'er the hills; and now a crowd
Of mothers, fathers, sisters, lovers, friends,
Come forth to pray for those whom Glory sends,
In pomp and fever to the field of death;
A throng, who came to pour their erring breath,
To him—the GOD OF PEACE!—who sits on high;
To pray that he will bless the fiery eye;
And bloody hand, that smites in iron wrath
A brother to the dust!—and light the path
Of him who rides in battle and in blood,
Carving that brother for the shrieking brood,
That snuff the coming war, and drink the vital flood.

Yonder on snow-white charger, treading proud,
A red-cross chieftain goes to meet that crowd:
An aged warrior, and a valiant one:
A hero of the battles that are done.
The fife sounds cheerly! and their steady tread,
And long, firm steppings, as their columns spread;
Their glancing splendours o'er the distant hill:
Their flapping banners—and their horns that fill
All heaven, and earth, and air with martial song,
As their proud foot-line winds its length along,
Would seem the pageantry of Peace, instead
Of battle cavalcade by Slaughter led.

Who is that drooping one with snowy breast;
Shrinking like virgins when they're first carest;
With full, dark eye, and melancholy smile,
And glistening lash, that's standing there the while

That aged man comes up? How pale that cheek!
And yet how eloquent! O, she can speak,
With that dark lash and that slow dropping tear,
Unutterable thoughts—when one is near,
In solitude and silence—that is dear.
But see!—she moves—and now her wild, dark eye
Is flashing—lifted: something passes by:
A youth in armour! what a glorious face!
And now he reins his barb: with what a grace—
He waves his snowy helmet—and his hand—
How full of noble spirit and command!
A gallant glorious form—but yet a boy:
An eye of terror and a lip of joy;
Sure he has lost the rein!—his fiery steed
Goes plunging so, with such a fearful speed:
He has! he has!—a shriek! he has indeed!
That waving of his helm—that loosened rein—
O God—the precipice!—it is in vain—
Yet stay—what death-like silence—now he wheels!
And every heart breathes out: and every bosom feels
The cool air coming freshly—can it be!
Is that the fiery steed? can this be he?
The rider—-that was bending o'er the mane?
This the fierce steed that caught the loosened rein?
Foaming he comes, with glossy neck arched high,
And stately step, and wildly rolling eye—
Rattling his bits, and reaching with his head—
This that fierce steed? why, how composed his tread.
The horseman too, how steady, light and high
Sits the young spirit with his lightning eye,

And smiling lip. See how his panting breast
Is heaving yet beneath his studded vest:
The gathered rein--the firm, elastick seat
Of airy grace: how young--yet how complete!
Forth flies his blade--the aged warrior comes--
Bow the high banners! roll the answering drums!

And now amid a throng of sparkling eyes
In terror lifted to the bright blue skies,
Slow tears of thankfulness and joy are flowing;
And round about a languid cheek are flowing,
Rich silkiness and shade: and faintly--slow,
A lovely hand goes o'er a brow of snow--
In woman's meekest--loveliest helplessness--
The lifeless grace of beauty in distress:
But see! she wakes--and forth with glittering eye,
And burning cheek--and form erect and high,
She steps in light! That melancholy maid
Stands like Minerva for the war arrayed!
How altered! yet how lovely in her change!
How sudden and complete--indeed 'tis strange
That such a transformation should be wrought
So instantaneously--'twas brief as thought.
Now banners float, and 'mid the tented plain
She and the warrior meet: and o'er the mane
Of his white steed, he bows and smiles--and now,
Presses his old lip to her snowy brow;
'Farewell, my child--farewell!' the warrior says,
His high plume shaking in the sunny blaze:
And glancing to her heart its cheerful dye,
As hurrying--faltering--with averted eye--

That tells for whom the silent prayer is made—
 While on her heart one trembling hand is laid,
 She waves the other as they speed away,
 Where the keen streamers of the Briton play.
 A tear came slowly in her wandering eye;
 The parting seemed so sad---shè knew not why---
 As far upon the wind the white steed flew,
 Like grey hound brushing off the heather's morning
 dew.

Yon sick man, bending to the earth, hath been
 In the red strife himself--hath often seen
 In other days, a flashing helm laid low,
 While yet it shook in triumph o'er its foe:
 In that gay band whose tramp is passing far,
 That go in revelry and song to war,
 That sick man has a brother---young and brave;
 That brother!---he is riding to his grave.
 A farewell swinging of his martial band
 Tells to his heart---what soldiers understand---
 That he will conquer!---or will bravely lie
 With cloven crest and bosom to the sky,
 And never tinge his cheek, altho' he dim his eye.

'My last---last hope!' a mother cries, and kneels,
 While o'er the hills a sound of tumult reels;
 Is it the war-song rushing in the breeze?
 Parents and friends, it is the bending trees.
 Go speed ye home, and spend your day in prayer;
 To-morrow's sun may wake ye to despair.

Go kneel ye on some desert rock, and pray,
 Unceasingly and deep, the live-long day,
 To HIM whose angels calm the stormy fray:
 The time is coming when your troubled sleep
 Shall throng with bloody ghosts; when ye shall weep
 Whene'er the thunders roll---or lightnings stream;
 Whene'er the storm is loud---or panthers scream;
 And fancy 'tis the strife, and feel the battle dream.

The cavalcade went by. The day hath gone!
 And yet the soldier lives: his cheerful tone
 Rises in boisterous song: while slowly calls
 The monarch spirit of the mighty falls.
 Soldiers be firm!--and mind your watch fires well:
 Sleep not to-night--there comes a distant swell,
 Like the approaching step of toiling steeds,
 Encountering on the hills: and far behind us speeds.

Low stooping from his arch, the glorious sun
 Hath left the storm with which his course begun;
 And now, in rolling cloud, goes calmly home,
 In heavenly pomp--a-down the far blue dome.
 In sweet-toned minstrelsy is heard the cry,
 All clear and smooth, along the echoing sky,
 Of many a fresh blown bugle, full and strong,
 The soldier's instrument! the soldier's song!
 NIAGARA too, is heard: his thunder comes
 Like far-off battle---hosts of rolling drums.
 All o'er the western heaven, the flaming clouds
 Detach themselves, and float like hovering shrouds:

Loosely unwoven, and far unfurled,
A sunset canopy enwraps the world.
The vesper hymn grows soft. In parting day
Wings flit about. The warblings die away,
The shores are dizzy, and the hills look dim,
The cataract falls deeper and the landscapes swim.

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CANTO IV.

Evening continued.....preparations for battle.....British occupy an eminence.....Americans approach.....battle on the wings.....Americans carry the British artillery at the point of the bayonet.....three successive attempts made by the British to dislodge the Americans, and regain the height.....Americans remain in possession.....Niagara.

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

CANTO IV.

AWAY, away,—to the winds away!
With your banners of flame, and give them play!
 The battle, in wrath, is coming!
A flock of young vultures are poisoning their wings;
And the untrodden solitude rings,
 With voices—and trumpets—and drumming!
From away in the cloudless air,
 Where all is so soft and serene—
 That never a speck can be seen,
 There comes a cry,
 As if it were
Some unseen eaglet in the sky,
Stooping down on her shrieking, invisible prey;
 And the dim arch of heaven is bright
 With the luminous flight,
Of birds—flocking upward—all red
With the bloodiest tint that the sun ever shed:
 Swarming out from the mist—where the water rolls
 white—
And scaling away in the changeable light,
 As if warmed into life by the sun-setting ray:

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BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

Coming out from the clouds---they emerge--
 Like the birds of the sea from the surge,
 When they trim their bright wings on the billow
 verge;
 And dashing their plumes in the brilliant foam---
 Arch their necks in the sun, as he stoops to his home---
 All lovely in light---and sublime in display!

Now the rising air brings
 The faint touching of strings,
 From caverns---where harpers have never been heard;
 As if---in each green silent place,
 Where ancient bards had been interred,
 Their spirits rose again to trace,
 In low---prophetic murmurings,
 Just like the soft approach of wings,
 The fate of yonder host, that come---
 Unhallowed---to intrude---
 With banner--blade---and horn and drum---
 Upon their charmed solitude:

As if--each seated on his tomb,
 And stooping o'er his shadowy lyre---
 With trembling fingers tore away
 The tendrils that ran wild in bloom,
 Encumbering each golden wire---
 And faltering---touched the awful lay--
 All energy, and fire---
 That visions of the war inspire:--
 When all the heaven is opening round,
 And battles dimly seen---

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

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Like clouds—in passing o'er the ground—
 Are shadowed on its green.
 When all the future trembles—when—
 Unseen but by the gifted eye—
 Tumultuous air sweeps o'er the sky—
 Wheeling like coursers giddily—
 When every holy spot on earth,
 Is heaving with some awful birth,
 And every grot and hermitage,
 And every lonely place, again—
 Is filled with shapes of armed men—
 And echoes to their stormy rage—
 Reproachful sounds—while they engage.

When all their ancient spirits hear
 The neigh of steeds encountering near;
 The uproar of the battle—and
 The sweep of the unsparing brand,
 Dealt whistling with immortal force—
 Unchannelling the blood of those
 That nature never meant for foes—
 E'en at the fountain of its course:—
 Of men—who if they met at all—
 Should meet in places, such as these—
 Embracing heart and soul—and fall
 In worship on their bended knees—
 And speak—not with the battle shout—
 As if their souls were bursting out—
 But faint—and whispering—as they were
 Assembled by their God in prayer;

Oh yes—and they should ever come,
When in such holy spots they meet—
Not with the horn—not with the drum—
And not with mailed—but naked feet!
But if they come in armour—they
Should lose the very wish to slay—
And dash their helmets down, and kneel
Unharnessed to the influence there—
Not stain and crush its spongy green
With crimson tracks, like what are seen,
Where panthers and where wolves have been,
Tainting the cool and holy air—
Not with the warrior step—but tread
Of men—intruding on the dead,
Not helmeted and mailed around—
But with their gallant hair unbound,
And fiery eye upon the ground—
Like pilgrims when they bow—alone
Upon some consecrated stone—
With tufted mossing all overgrown—
And washed with tears of men unknown—
By altars—rocky—hung in green,
With shelly, bright entablatures,
Enduring on, while time endures,
And brightening every hour,
Still thickening—clustering—more and more—
All pillared, and enamelled o'er;
With arched roof and glimmering floor,
Bestrewed with every brilliant flower,
That ever bloomed in secret, where
The sunset shows the golden path
That leads you to the sea-maid's bath,

Where they—all naked—glittering—bright,
 With radiant tresses—limbs as white,
 As they were shaped of moulded light,
 Stand combing out their glorious hair;
 Or, on the oily billows play—
 And one by one then disappear,
 Like creatures vanishing away—
 And melting in the hues of day—
 When—some dim earthly thing is near.

But away!—away!—to the winds away!
 With your banners of flame, and give them play!
 The battle in wrath is coming!
 See how their moving tents arise—
 With a snowy gleam, in the purple skies,
 Like pavilions of glittering light—
 Those tents are struck!—the signal given!
 And now—along the verge of heaven
 With trumpeting and drumming,
 They're harnessing for fight!
 And now their opening flags arise,
 Unfurling bravely to the skies:

And now!—against the red orb spreading
 Their broad, dark banners—they appear,
 All tinged with blood—their distant rear,
 Against the light, the sun is shedding,
 Along the blue-edged heaven, stand,
 In flaming armour—like a band
 Of giants, downward treading.

While all the moving forest trees,
Upon yon hilly summits seem
Approaching in the misty breeze,---
And o'er the burning clouds that gleam
 Away behind---as if they were
A swinging fret-work---rich---and rare
Embroidered on the flaming air;
 A light, fantastick edging give
 By magick to the clouds of heaven.

But away!---away!---to the winds away!
With your banners of flame---in their red display---
 The battle in pomp is coming!
 The trumpet plays,
 And the drums are rolled;
 The war-horse neighs,
 And the flags unfold;
And the distant hills are bright
With warriors---up in their might---
 The crimson mane of their helmets stream,
 Like fiery steeds, when their long hairs gleam,
 In the fearful light
 Of a reddening fight,
In flakes and folds!---like the awful beam
 Of broadswords---ground in blood;
They are up!---they are up!---'tis a thrilling sight;
 With their chargers reined---
 Each muscle strained---
Tossing their foam on the winds away,
As the waves of the ocean fling their spray---

With their heads in air,
 Like steeds that bear
 Young warriors thro' a flood;
 While their voices break—
 (And their nostrils shake,
 And the loud horns blow,
 And the banners flow---)
 Like a trumpet heard at night!
 With a thrilling neigh—as if to cheer,
 The warriors that are thundering near:

Then away!---away!---to the winds away!
 Through the cloud of battle rouse your prey!

Fresher and fresher comes the air. The blue
 Of yonder high pavilion swims in dew.
 The boundless hum that sunset waked in glee;
 The dark wood's vesper-hymn to Liberty—
 Hath died away. A deep outspreading hush
 Is on the air---the heavy watery rush
 Of far off lake-tides, and the weighty roll
 Of tumbling deeps, that fall upon the soul
 Like the strong lulling of the ocean wave,
 In dying thunder o'er the sailor's grave:
 And now and then a blueish flare is spread
 Faint o'er the western heaven, as if 'twere shed
 In dreadful omen to the coming dead.
 As if—amid the skies, some warrior form
 Revealed his armour thro' a robe of storm!

The shadows deepen. Now the leaden tramp
 Of stationed sentry—far—and flat—and damp—

Sounds like the measured death-step, when it comes
 With the deep minstrelsy of unstrung drums:
 In heavy pomp—with pauses—o'er the grave
 Where soldiers bury soldiers: where the wave
 Of sable plumes—and darkened flags are seen—
 And trailing-steeds—with funeral lights between:—
 And folded arms—and boding horns—and tread
 Of martial feet, descending to the bed,
 Where Glory—Fame—Ambition lie in state,
 To give the nuptial clasp, and wreath that Fate
 Wove in the battle-storm, their brows to decorate.

Listen!—O, listen!—there's a wandering shout,
 A sound, as if a challenge passed about:
 A gun is heard! O, can it be indeed
 That on a night, like this, brave men may bleed!
 Now comes,—all rushing—with a fiery start—
 The struggling neigh of steeds, as if they part,
 Upon the mountain tops, where cloud-tides break,
 And rear upon the winds! and plunge, and shake
 Their voices proudly o'er a sleeping lake.
 A heavy walk is heard. They come, indeed;
 They come, the Star-troops! while the Eagle-breed
 Flap loudly o'er each helm, and o'er each foaming
 steed.

Here, by our side, the red-cross troop is placed:
 A lordly banner, never yet disgraced
 By that young gallant troop. Beneath its fold
 Of blue magnificence, so wide unrolled,

They've bowed, and sworn upon a naked blade,
 That banner, there! shall never be betrayed.
 They've sworn to bathe it in their heart's best blood:
 To loosen 'neath its fold their reddest flood.
 No threats escape their lips---that blue flag flies
 O'er the dark lowering of young British eyes.
 They know the post they hold. they know the hour
 Is sternly coming that shall try their power:
 They know the Eagle troops: they hear their tread:
 And each more proudly heaves his youthful head:
 They see the starry banner floating wide:
 And fiercer shines their meteor in its pride:
 Each plants his foot: and each with steady eye
 And hard drawn breath---and forehead to the sky---
 Looks on the coming host for life or death---
 The glittering laurel crown, or weeping cypress wreath.

They come! they come!--the starry flag is bright;
 Shaking its splendours in the parting light:
 Right martial is their step. Their heads are high.
 Their chests heave full. Their look is on the sky.
 Before his column with a brow serene,
 Upon his stately barb, a chief is seen:
 His head uncovered;---while his flashing eye,
 And echoed word, along the far ranks fly,
 With flash and sound as brief as counted musketry.

Now roar the joyous drums! the trumpet-song
 Comes swelling---rending---bursting---all along!
 Like the dread summons by the Whirlwind cast,
 When she sings fiercely in the coming blast.

The leader waves his sword! the standards bow,
 And now unrol upon the wind---and now,
 Borne silently aloft, they flash away,
 Upon the distant wings, like heralds of the day.

Their columns now unfold. Their martial tread
 Is firm and steady as they wheel and spread.
 Now one deep phalanx in their strength advance;
 Silent as death. Dimmed is the banner glance:
 The ringing harness and the sabre's swing---
 No shouting stirs the blood---no waving plume
 Gives Glory's signal in the thickening gloom:
 But forward---forward!---with unshaken tread,
 With Battle's earthquake march, when shuddering dead
 Feel every step that falls above their head.

The soldiers of the red-cross, on the hill
 Wave high their matches!---And they stand as still
 As if they knew they stood upon their tomb:
 And some deep lips and cheeks now lose their bloom
 But not from fear---or if they did---what then?
 Their courage is the soul's!---they are the men
 That ye may trust to in the hour of need:
 Their lips may fade 'tis true, but they will bleed,
 Where'er they set their foot, until their souls are freed.

Now peals the thronged artillery!--Far and wide,
 Beyond the starry flag its thunders ride!
 No answer from the foe-----

His steady tread
 Paused not a moment as that volley sped.

Again the tempest pours! In rushing fire,
Again the thunders roll!

But all the higher

Floats the striped flag—in triumph and in pride;
Like the red rainbow o'er the glimmering tide.

Still onward come its guards: determined—slow:
Mounting as if to grapple with their foe
Within his cloud: While their battalions spread,
And close, and open with the same strong tread,
Revealed in light. That tempest light!—it strays
In one wide sheet: uninterrupted blaze!

Still onward come this band. Still no reply:
Withholding all their might till, eye to eye,
They tread the summit of that quaking mount,
To quench that stormy light—that Ætnean fount:
Then will the clouds depart, and ye will see
The Eagle-standard floating far and free;
And gallant warriors, on the naked ground,
In prostrate adoration---to the sound
Of bursting trumpets, and of neighing steeds:
And waving helms, whose reeking plumage bleeds
With life of gallant hearts, that heave around
In agony to hear the brazen trumpet's sound.

Now comes the bursting strife. The answer peals!
Forth, in a blaze of fire, their squadron wheels!
Now rolls the battle! Fades the lightning sheet!
The charge is given! Bayonets with bayonets meet:
And struggling hearts with hearts: and fiercely rise
Contending shouts and spirits to the skies.

Neighings grow faint. The cannon's thunder dies:
Red Slaughter shakes her storm-plumes o'er the slain,
And flaps her reeking flag—but all in vain—
For standards bow!—and steeds fly o'er the plain!
'Tis done: the strife is o'er. The clouds are gone—
The stárry flag is floating there, alone.

And is the battle won? the struggle o'er?
O, no!—the trumpet song and cannon-roar
Have but begun;—the night shall wear away
E'er banners blazing in their red display,
And flashing plumes, and helmets glancing bright,
Reveal the conquerors to the dazzled sight.
Then ye shall see the shattered warrior-blade—
The banner rent;—quenched plume—and steed, that
neighed,

Like the fierce trumpet, when the battle pealed,
With all his furniture upon the field,
Bedimmed in gallant blood! Then ye may know
Who were the conquered;—they will all lie low.

Far now the wet folds of the red-cross wave;
Still leaning towards the strife—full, high, and brave;
Still rolls the wide artillery;—still the light
Rushes in boding thickness from that height---
But other hands direct its thunder now;
The rainbow flag is there, with sheeted flow,
And they with silent tread, and cool, determined brow.

Amid the fading light on that red ground,
An aged warrior lies, and pours a sound

That tells of battle yet; and feebly tries
 To staunch his ebbing wound; to clear his eyes;
 And think once more, distinctly, of his home:
 But all in vain! a dark, and darker foam
 Comes from his heart; and now his dying hand
 Is once more stretched—but not as in command—
 No!—not as if it dealt a warrior's brand—
 And lightened thro' the war!—but more in prayer—
 As if some child, that he would bless, were there:
 Convulsive—sudden—grasping!—towards the heaven
 'Tis reached—like one—whose last, last stay is riven:
 Not waving—no!—but closing as it goes,
 As if it sought another's—not a foe's!
 And now it feebler drops—and now, again,—
 'Tis lifted as in prayer; but all in vain;
 He cannot bless his child!—his strength is gone—
 The damps of death are on his brow;—his tone
 Of murmuring supplication—dies away—
 And both his bloody hands are in his locks of grey.

And near him—planted—with the glittering eye,
 Of sudden madness—rolling awfully,—
 A youthful form is seen—with hands that press
 Upon his bosom—fixed and motionless!
 Now staring on the armour strown around,
 As in a trance: now listening to the sound
 Of ruffling banners, as they loosely wave,
 Like one that rises—armed—from his grave
 In fierce rebuke. And now—have mercy heaven!
 He staggers—waves his arm—his white brow riven,

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

And streaming with his blood! And oh, that nod!—
 He moves again in light, as if he trod
 Upon the battle's verge---and heaves his brow
 Of bleeding nakedness, as if e'en now,
 It wore the meteor signal for the fight:
 The tall plume nodding in its snowy white!
 And now he stands as if he would express
 Some princely thought, and feit his helplessness:
 And hark!--a shout!--a sudden, thrilling cry---
 Of fearful energy---they fly! they fly!
 Again he waves his arm---and shouts!--again
 He stands as if he grasped some charger's mane,
 Some struggling barb---and strove to mount in vain:---
 Again he shouts!--again he feebly tries
 To look once more upon the passing skies---
 Claps his young hands, and reels, and falls, and dies.

There flutters round him many a gallant soul---
 For the last time too, many dim eyes roll;---
 And gasping—swelling—in the sulphurous air
 Sobs many a broken cry, and many a prayer.
 Soldiers, and great ones—are around him laid,
 Who dealt their broad swords, like the gleaming blade
 That the Destroyer wields, when heaven is wrapped in
 shade.

The battle comes again. The charging host
 Are Britons—chosen ones—their army's boast.
 Reddening they come, in martyrdom to Fame;
 Shaking their snowy plumes in cloud and flame.
 ravelly their banner is abroad outspread—
 Alive their meteor, and their shroud when dead.

The tumult deepens. Swell conflicting cries--
 Neigh the loud steeds, and hurried sobs arise.
 Shakes the dark hill with cataracts of fire:
 Up go that army to their blazing pyre!
 The cannon's voice is mute. The lightning sheet
 Grows dim again. Warriors with warriors meet;
 And wrestle fiercely in their rolling cloud.
 Again the mountain shakes! again the light
 Comes thundering loudly down—the starry flight
 Of spotted drapery is abroad again,
 And neighing—plunging—o'er the clouded plain,
 Goes many a fiery barb with crimson reeking mane:
 Again the meteors of the war are bowed:
 Again the mountain heaves beneath its shroud:
 Gushes with quenchless light, and shakes and storms
 aloud.

So darkly clouded was that hill with smoke,
 Save when the vast artillery-day-light broke,
 It seemed a midnight altar. From its gloom
 There came the noise of strife—as from a tomb.
 And then, distinct, amid the spreading light,
 Were seen the struggling champions of the fight,
 In silent—desperate—dreadful bayonet strife;
 The midnight slaughter! when the hero's life—
 The high—stern summons that he gives his band—
 His waving falchion—and extended hand—
 His towering plume—his charger's bloody mane—
 The battle-anthem and the bugle strain—
 Are beamless—lifeless! heard and seen no more:
 Thus 'tis when bayonets hush the cannon's roar,

The blazing would be gone! and with it, lo!
These darkly wrestling groups would come and go,
Like wizard shapes at night---upon the snow---
That glitters to the moon, upon some mountain's brow.

So stood the battle. Bravely it was fought.
Lions and Eagles met. That hill was bought,
And sold, in desperate combat. Wrapped in flame,
Died these idolaters of bannered Fame.
Three times that meteor hill was bravely lost---
Three times 'twas bravely won; while madly tost,
Encountering red plumes in the dusky air---
While Slaughter shouted in her bloody lair---
And spectres blew their horns, and shook their whistling
hair.

A long and dreadful pause. No sound is heard
But the fresh rustling of a mighty Bird,
That sat upon the banner of that host:
That Eagle of the strife!--when tempest tost,
The boy, that rides sublime the mountain waves,
Looks on that Bird in prayer. The Bird that laves
Her sounding pinions in the sun's first gush---
Drinks his meridian blaze and sunset flush:
Worships her idol in his fiercest hour:
Bathes her full bosom in his hottest shower:
Sits amid stirring stars, and bends her beak,
Like the slipped falcon--when her piercing shriek
Tells that she stoops upon her cleaving wing,
To drink anew some victim's clear-red spring.
That monarch Bird! that slumbers in the night
Upon the lofty air-peak's utmost height:

With it, lo!
 Would come and go,
 The snow—
 The mountain's brow.

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Or sleeps upon the wing—amid the ray
 Of steady—cloudless—everlasting day!
 Rides with the Thunderer in his blazing march:
 And bears his lightnings o'er yon boundless arch:
 Soars wheeling thro' the storm, and screams away
 Where the young pinions of the morning play:
 Broods with her arrows in the hurricane:
 Bears her green laurel o'er the starry plain—
 And sails around the skies, and o'er the rolling deeps,
 With still unwearied wing, and eye that never sleeps.

The rustling of the silk alone is heard,
 Where burns that soldier idol—mountain Bird!
 And the deep groans of dying men, who heave
 Their last sad prayer; of those who bleed and grieve,
 In shattered manhood, on the bloody path,
 That led where Glory sat in stormy wrath:
 The faint, low watchword—and the thronging tramp—
 The ringing harness of the distant camp:
 And the flood anthem on the night winds blown,
 Sullen and heavy as the Thunderer's tone,
 When far amid the Alps his chariot rolls,
 And the high mountain quakes: and the far poles
 Rock in their outspread canopy of cloud—
 When seas heave darkly in their tempest shroud,
 And everlasting hills are echoing aloud.

CANTO V.

Morning....appearance of the field....funeral hon-
ours....parade....interment....camp....death of the Hero
.....his father and wife.

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

CANTO V.

THE battle is o'er!—and the night is past—

The battle is o'er!

The clouds that were rolling away on the blast,
With the warrior-helm, and the steed's red mane;

Have vanished away,

With the coming of day,

Or lie all along on the verge of the plain,

And are seen no more.

The battle is o'er!

The battle is o'er!

And the men—and the steeds—and the banners there—

Crowding and thronging in the blazing air,

Have all disappeared in its crimson glare—

The battle is o'er!

And the morning comes,

With the cannon roar,

And the roll of drums;

With the furling of flags—and the stooping of helms—

With weltering manes—like steeds that have

past

A torrent at night—exhausted—cast

ell....funeral hon-
death of the Hero

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

On the shore—with those—that the night overwhelms,
 With floating reins,
 And clotted manes,
 And harness stained—and dark with blood;
 With a ridge of foam—on each courser's chest—
 As if—in the fight—they had plunged to the breast,
 In some crimson foaming flood.
 But the war is o'er!
 On that silent shore,
 And the vulture that shrieked in the night is gone—
 And gluttoned—hath fled
 From the banquet of dead—
 The trumpets are hushed—and the battle is done.
 No more ye'll hear the furious drum
 Rolling aloud delirium—
 But the steeds that have neighed through the night—
 That stand with their sinews quivering yet,
 Their trappings entangled—and wet—
 Shall go forth undisturbed—
 Unharnessed—uncurbed—
 For ever and aye to the fight!

Young Morning comes again! with garments blown
 Abroad upon the wind; and flow'rets thrown
 In garland tresses o'er her opening breast;
 With diamonds dropping from her airy crest.
 Young Morning comes again! with laughing eye,
 With bustling cherubs thronging up the sky;
 And pulling thro' the air by braided flowers
 Sweet Nature's wicker work! her wild-wood bowers!
 Young Morning comes again! in floating car
 Of tangled roses: o'er the hill of war

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BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

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She throws her mantle, kindling on the sight,
With all the hues of heaven's own rainbow-light:
Of woven jasper—threaded sapphire—gold:
And sunshine—pearls—embossed upon its fold—
And thickening gems: a diamond flag unrolled!

The sheathless weapon glimmers on the sight:
Pale cheeks and sunken eyes once more are bright—
But not with life, O, no!—their souls have flown:
Their last dread trump amid the fight was blown.
Their feathers glance again; an idle red
Burns o'er their prostrate forms and bloody bed.
Here was the deadliest strife! this youthful group
Are the last remnants of a martyred troop.
Here their young banner waved! and here—they fell!
There lies that banner!—let its fragments tell,
Yet grasped in death—if 'twas defended well.
The rich, green sward is scarred with leaping hoofs;
And all along the field are seen the proofs
Of soldier rivalry. And where ye tread
Along the hill, the very turf turns red,
As 'twere surcharged with blood;—while all about—
As from an o'er-pressed sponge, there issues out
A thickening purple—settling—eddy where
The print of charging hoofs have laid the green all bare,
Filling the footsteps of unwounded men
With blood—dark blood—that's ne'er absorbed again,
And round about—opposing plumes and crests
Of snow and crimson lie—the reeking tests,
That prove where soldiers met—and strove—and died!
In pairs they lie—embracing—side by side.

BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

A strong, strong death is in their hard-clenched hands;
 Their mingled trappings, and their hitless brands:---
 The desperate grasp---the half raised form!---and eye
 Yet glaring with the threat of agony:
 The bleeding banner and the dripping crest:
 The dying war-horse, with his heaving chest,
 Yet struggling to arise, and o'er the plain
 Blaze forth in dimmed caparisons again---
 And loosen to the wind his crimson streaming mane!

O, there's no mockery like the morning light,
 Smiling o'er relicks of a bloody night;
 Like a red lustre on a barren mount:
 Like the rich moon-beam o'er a silent fount,
 Swimming in feverish splendour, while it tells,
 But the more certain, where the turf-home swells---
 Where Hope is stretched in death, and Desolation
 dwells.

As on a mountain altar, thick are laid,
 These midnight victims to the Battle-shade:
 Slain in the darkness, by an unseen hand---
 With eye half closed---dead hair---and shivered brand:
 In solitude they lie!---with no friend near:
 Not stretched in soldier pomp upon the bier,
 With the high casque---and crimson plume---and sword,
 With blow of trumpets---roll of drums---and word
 Of slow command---and dragging tramp of steeds---
 And all the pageantry the dead man needs---
 The banner stretching dark, and float of dusky weeds.

Hear ye that sound? 'twould make the stoutest quail:
 It is the morning—lamentation—wail
 Of outbreathed hearts, that load the morning air;
 Of those who kneel among the dead in prayer,—
 Collecting relics—locks of bloody hair.
 Who thinks of battle now? The stirring sounds
 Spring lightly from the trumpet, yet who bounds
 On this sad---still---and melancholy morn,
 As he was wont to bound, when the fresh horn
 Came dancing on the winds; and pealed to heaven!
 In gone-by hours, before the battle—even?
 The very horses move with halting pace:
 No more they heave their manes with fiery grace---
 With plunge---and reach---and step that leaves no trace:
 No more they spurn the bit, and sudden fling
 Their light hoofs on the air! The bugles sing;
 And yet the meteor mane, and rolling eye
 Lighten no longer at their minstrelsy.
 No more their housings blaze: no more the gold,
 Or purple, flashes from the opening fold:
 No rich-wrought stars are glittering in their pride
 Of changing hues: all---all!---is crimson-dyed.
 They move with slow---far step: they hear the tread
 That measures out the tombing of the dead:
 The cannon speaks: but now, no longer rolls
 In heavy thunders to the answering poles.
 But bursting suddenly, it calls, and flies---
 At breathless intervals along the skies,---
 As if some viewless sentinel were there,
 Whose challenge peals at midnight thru' the air:

Each sullen steed goes on---nor heeds its roar:
Nor pauses when its voice is heard no more:
But snuffs the tainted breeze, and lifts his head---
And slowly wheeling---with a cautious tread---
Shuns---as in reverence---the mighty dead:
Or---rearing suddenly!---with flashing eye,
Where some young war-horse lies--he passes by.
Then, with unequal step, he smites the ground,
Utters a startling neigh---and gazes round---
And wonders that he hears no answering sound.
This!---while his rider can go by the bier
Of slaughtered men, and never drop a tear.
And only---when he meets a comrade there---
Stretched calmly out---with brow and bosom bare---
And stiffened hand uplifted in the air,---
With lip still curled---and open, glassy eye,
Fixed on the pageant that is passing by;---
And only then---in decency will ride
Less stately in his strength---less lordly in his pride.

Now shouts the trump again! The muskets ring!
Drums travel loud!---and merry bugles sing!
And once more, in the breeze, the rainbow banners
swing!

Such sounds are wanted, when the morning red
Comes warm and richly o'er unburied dead:
The brawling drum must roll: the keen-toned fife,
Must sting the sluggish pulses into life;
Or all that had survived would kneel in prayer;
And pour their hearts out in the morning air:

And consecrate their bloody swords to peace;
 And call for mercy, loud; and never cease
 Their supplications, till the God of Heaven
 Had offered them some sign that murder was forgiven.

Come, Glory, come! Let's chant the soldier's dirge:
 Step from thy thrones, and from thy clouds emerge!
 Bring thy black cypress clotted in the shade:
 Of weeping-willow let a wreath be made,
 To crown the warrior-brow, that lately sought
 Thy battle-laurel: him who lately fought
 Reddest and fiercest, where the war-god sung:
 Where the loud death-sobs came, and falchions rung;
 Twine him a heavy garland! steep it well;
 And mutter o'er its gloom thy darkest spell;
 With broken heart-strings, be it twisted round;
 Tread it in wrath upon the soaking ground;
 And where the stagnant blood lies deepest, there
 Complete thy curse—the chaplet of despair!
 Call back his spirit from the eternal bar:
 Show him that clotted foliage—talk of war;
 Wake thy swift bugle, let it sing away
 Freshly and clear, like clarion of the day!
 Loosen thy banners on the mountain wind:
 Call up thy thunders!—while thy hot hand binds,
 That wreath around his mad, consuming brain—
 Tell him 'tis his reward!—will he complain
 Of wasted life—of bloody hand arrayed
 In sacrifice for thee?—when blade met blade;
 And man met man, and like the desert beast,

That bleeds and battles 'till his breath has ceased;
Toiled dark upon the mount to spread the vultures,
feast.

A solemn march is heard: a measured tread:—
Banners are furled again—and o'er the dead,
By martial hands, the crimson pall is spread.
A band on foot approach, they bear a form
Like the rent mountain oak, that braves the storm—
Heaves its young branches to the raging skies—
Receives the Thunderer's bolt—and prostrate lies!
Whence is that band—and whose the form they bear
With high—pale brow, and darkly clustered hair?
That hair is wet—but not with dews of night;
Its lifeless length was loaded in the fight.
Disfigured—motionless—with bosom bare—
And arm—still stretched abroad!—he slumbers there.
He was careering in the hottest fight;
His black barb leaping in his stormy might;
His banner—floating loudly on the ear,
As if some mighty Bird were hovering near:
His starry troops were conquering at his side;
Their plumes were blazing in their fiercest pride—
When suddenly—his heart!—its lordly swell
Was gone for ever!—as he dimly fell,
His hand once stretched his sabre to his foes!
His form dilated!—more erect he rose!—
His dark eye flashed once more!—but flashed in vain:
His wounded charger felt the loosened rein:—
Felt the strong hand that grasped his bloody mane—
And sprang to bear him off!—One desperate bound—

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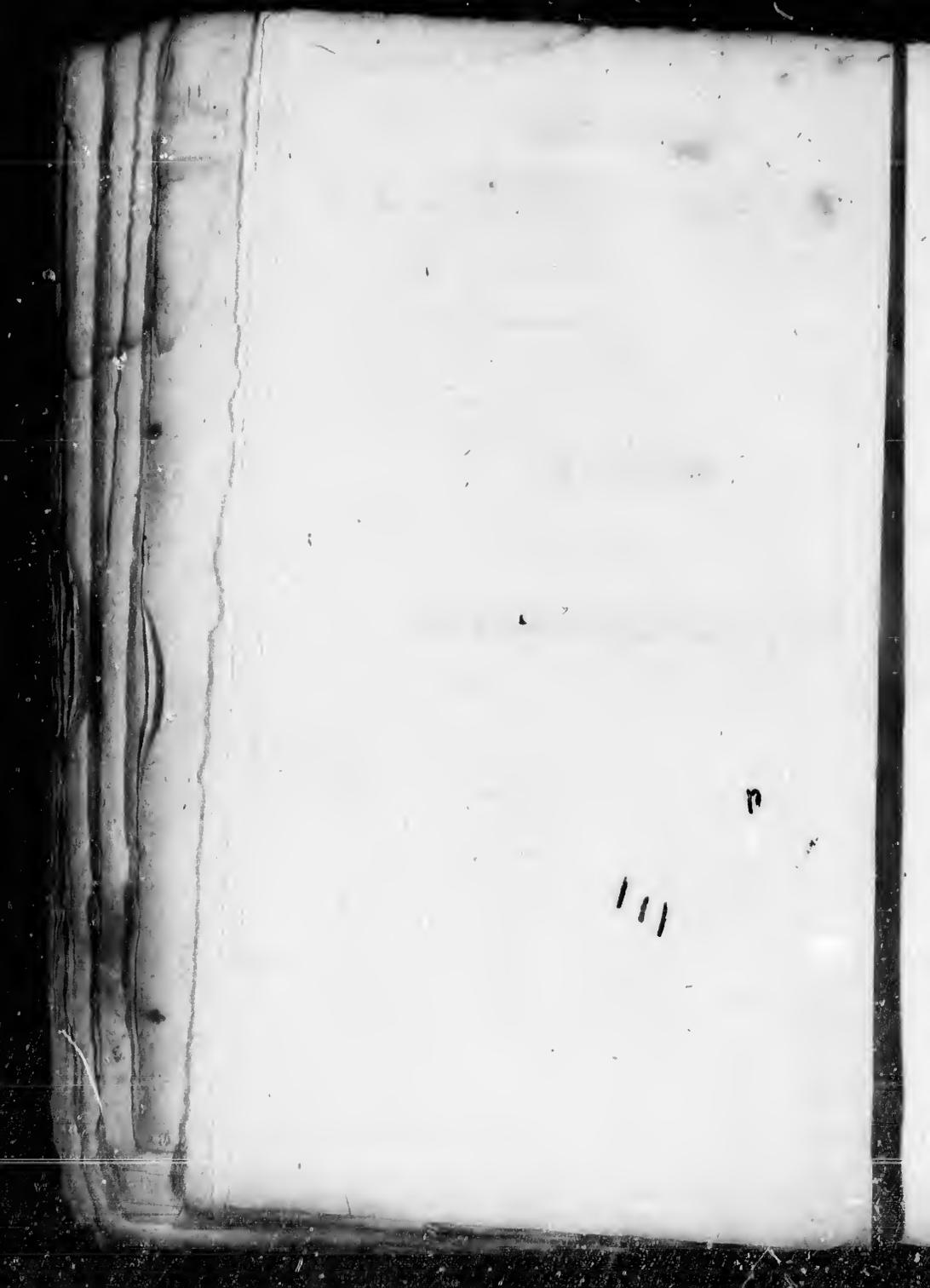
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BATTLE OF NIAGARA.

175

One gallant neigh he gave!—and on the ground
Stretched his dark limbs—triumphantly—and died!
On the wide battle field—in warrior pride;
Far from the noise of strife, and by his master's side.

Know ye that form—those features—and that air?
Have ye e'er seen that thickly clustered hair?
That!—was the brown-cheeked youth, with eye of fire,
Who rode a courser like the winds. His sire
Bows proudly o'er his course. His bloody bier
With precious dew is bathed—the cold sad tear—
The heart's last offering! o'er those ruins fall,
That lie concealed beneath a bleeding pall:
And one is there, whose trembling hands are prest
In desperate calmness on her swelling breast:
Whose mute—pale lip—whose sadly wandering eye
Speaks more than sorrow—suffering—agony!—
While gazing tearless on the form before her;
FATHER OF MERCIES! Father! Oh, restore her!



GOLDAU:

OR

THE MANIAC HARPER.

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TO THE READER.

THIS story is not a fiction;---the principal circumstances stand on record. On the 3d of September, 1806, about sunset, the Spitzberg, a part of mount Rosburg, in the canton of Schweitz, Switzerland, slid from its base; and from a height of more than two thousand feet, overwhelmed three whole villages, and upward of fifteen hundred peasants; leaving the rocks all naked in its path, and transforming an extensive valley into a hill. Among the villages destroyed was GOLDAU, the most romantick and beautiful of the three.



GOLDAU:

OR THE MANIAC HARPER.

UPON a tranquil—glorious night,
When all the western heaven was bright;
When, thronging down the far blue dome,
The sun in rolling clouds went home;---
There wandered to a goatherd's cot,
A youth---who sought to be forgot:
Who many a long and weary year
Had breathed his prayer and shed his tear.
Beneath his look of cloud was seen,
Somewhat, that told where fire had been;
For yet, a sorrowing beam was there:
A beam—in mockery of despair:
A beam that gave enough of light
To show his soul had set in night.
His step was slow—his form was bowed:
But yet his minstrel-air was proud:
Upon the mountain height he stood,
And looked abroad o'er wave and wood
Yet glowing with the blush of even,

And answering to the hues of heaven,
With such a melancholy grace,
He seemed as thus he stood alone,
Like some young prince upon his throne—
The genius of the lofty place!

He wore high plumes—a glittering vest—
And to his half uncovered breast,
An antique harp was strongly prest:
And, ever and anon, its strings
Gave musick to his wanderings:
While he would pause to see unrolled,
O'er heaven's blue arch, the crimson fold—
And purple plumes, and wings of fire—
And visions—'till his trembling lyre
Would shake a distant, thrilling note,
Like some sweet pipe in heaven afloat;
And then as calmly die away
As sunset hues in fading day—
As rose-tints on the quiet stream
Awakened by a passing beam:
As flashing wings that flit in play
Around the couch of infant day:
As songs that Evening hears, when all
Are listening to the quiet fall
Of airy melodies, that come,
From heaven, in one sweet murmuring hum.
And he would pause, and o'er it bend,
As if it were his only friend:
And he would send it trembling round—

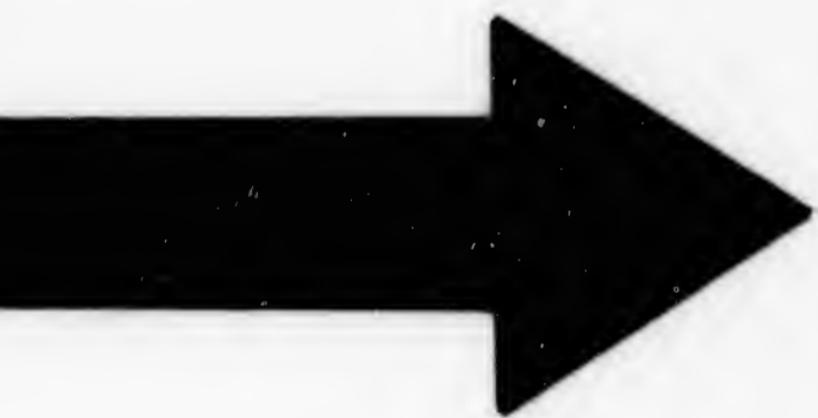
With touch—so magical and free—
 So full of sweet simplicity—
 And tenderness—and ecstasy—
 It seemed, indeed, no earthly sound.

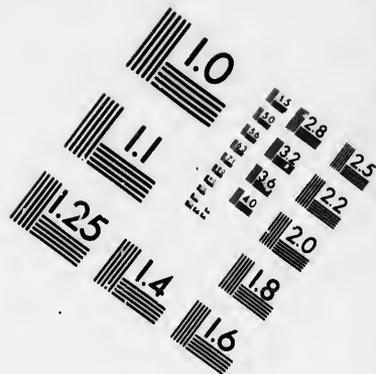
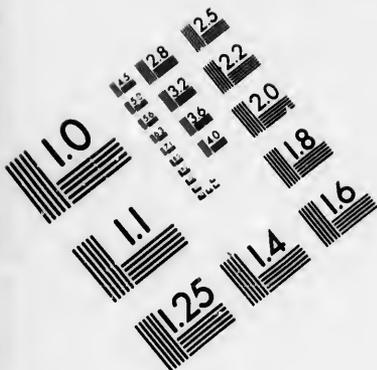
And those who heard him as he leant
 Upon its lonely wires, and sent
 His agitated voice away,
 In feeling's broken roundelay—
 Would wonder—weep—and hold their breath,
 As if they heard the hymn of death:
 And when the spell was broken—gone—
 Its sad enchantment all withdrawn—
 Would smile to see the trembling tear
 On other downcast lids appear—
 Nor e'er suspect themselves had given
 A tribute to these sounds of heaven!
 And all who heard him then, believed
 That he had loved—and been deceived:
 Or seen the stooping willow wave
 Its tresses o'er a loved one's grave:

For such his melancholy song,
 That every listener's heart was weeping
 Like youthful lovers, when they're sleeping
 In sorrows that they would prolong.

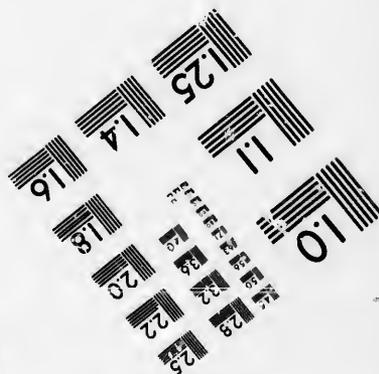
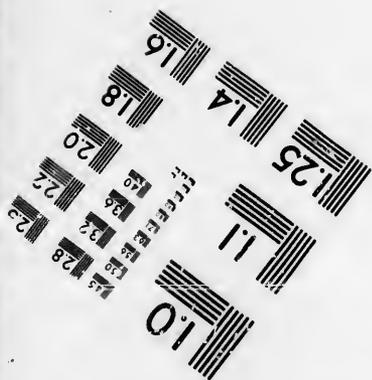
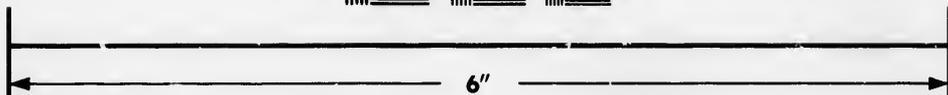
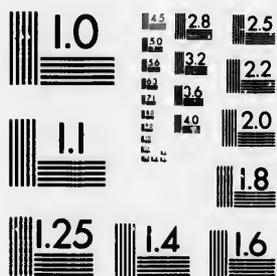
But those who heard the voice he sent
 When battle was his theme:
 Who saw his gorgeous vestment rent—
 His quenchless eye—the lights that went
 Beneath his brow of gathered might,







**IMAGE EVALUATION
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Like meteors that go forth at night,
In one continual stream!
And those who heard his ardent cry,
And all his harp-strings pealing high
Who saw his stern, uplifted brow—
His sweeping arm—his vestment flow—
The heaving of his youthful chest,
Beneath his mailed and glittering vest—
Who marked the martial belt that bound
His youthful form so closely round—
His attitude---so proud and high---
With look uplifted to the sky---
And outstretched arm, and waving hand,
As if it shook a conquering brand---
And high plumed bonnet—nodding low,
Whene'er he trod, as if it gave
To some young, supplicating foe,
A rescue o'er an opening grave!---
Yes! those who saw all this, would feel
Enthusiasm o'er them steal
So unexpectedly,---they stood,
Like men, who, 'mid a solitude,
Have heard a sudden trumpet-peal!

Their hearts would swell and they would rise—
And stand erect with flashing eyes—
And toss their arms unconsciously—
And join the shout of victory!
And when the summons died away,
Like battle at the close of day,

Would feel—as they had been in fight,
And wearied with their deeds of might:
Would stand entranced—or start, and seem
As bursting from a stormy dream:
Or gaze with troubled air around,
And wonder whence that trumpet sound!
And whither it had flown!—or hear
The tumult yet—distinct and clear—
Now pealing far—now ringing near,
And rattling on the startled ear!
As if a host had stooped from heaven
 Upon the winds that blow at night;
And all their harps and trumps had given
 A farewell to departing light!

And then, the glitter of each eye,
That kindled at his minstrelsy—
That lightened, when the echoing blast
Far o'er the hills in triumph past;
That varied with the varying note
Upon the eddying air afloat—
Would with that varying note decay,
And melt so peacefully away,
That each who saw his neighbour's cheek
The tumult of his soul bespeak—
And saw the maddening lustre die;
There reddening like an angry sky—
And saw each upright youthful form
Awake like genii of the storm,
With lifted brow and threatening air,
While pealed the battle anthem there—

And saw it, as that anthem died,
 Lose all its stateliness and pride;
 With yielding port and fading eye—
 And heard his furious shouting die:—
 Would wonder that himself had been
 So undisturbed!—and so serene!
 And this would be—while yet he stood
 In that delicious solitude
 When youthful hearts feel all alone—
 Alone amid the world!

When Phrensy leaves her radiant throne,
 And all her singing troops have flown:
 And all their wings are furled!

And this would be while yet the fire
 Enkindled by that wondrous lyre,
 Was quivering on his downcast lash,
 Just like the dying tempest-flash!
 And those who felt their bosoms swell
 Beneath the working of his spell:
 Who felt that young enchanter's might,
 Whose incantations woke the fight,
 And taught to peasant-hearts the feeling
 That mounts to hear the trumpet pealing,
 Then—deemed the youthful minstrel there,
 Familiar with the strife had been:
 And that his sad, appealing air—
 His darkened brow—his bosom bare—
 His haughty port of calm despair—
 Enthusiasm—genius were—
 And never but in warriors seen!

But those who knew him, knew full well
That something terrible once fell
Upon his heart, and froze the source,
Whence comes enthusiasm's force—
Something of icy touch that chills
The heart drops of our youthful years:
Something of withering strength that kills
The flowers that Genius wets with tears—
Fetters the fountain in its flow:
Mildews the blossom in its blow:
And breathes o'er fancy's budding wreath
The clotting damps of early death:
That spreads before the opening light—
(The sunshine of the heart!)
A cloud that tells of coming night,
And chills the warblers in their flight,
That twinkling gaily to the skies,
With piping throats and diamond eyes,
In unfledged strength depart.

Something—but what was never known:
Something had pressed his pulses down:
Blasted the verdure of his spring:
Shorn the gay plumage of his wing:
Silenced his harp, and stilled his lyre:
Heaped snow upon his bosom's fire—
And caught away the wreath of flame,
That hovered o'er his youthful name;
Obscured his sun—and wrapped the throne
Where glory in her jewels shone,

For ever from his searching gaze:
 And, on his brain, in lightning traced
 The suffering of his youthful days:
 Where Madness had with clouds erased
 The characters, that Rapture placed
 Upon his heart and soul in blaze!

'Tis true that there were those who saw—
 And whispered what they said in awe—
 That nought beneath the skies but guilt!
 Nought but the cry of blood that's spilt;—
 Could so unman a form so young—
 A heart so high and firmly strung:
 But such—whene'er they saw his eye
 Uplifted to the dark-blue sky
 In such a generous confidence—
 When night was forth—would feel a tear—
 And in their *virtue* would appear—
 More fearful of Omnipotence!

His faded plumes, and vestment torn,
 Were less like those by minstrels worn,
 Than like the garb of youthful knight:
 Caparisoned for glorious fight;
 Equipped beneath his lady's eye
 To couch his lance for chivalry:—
 To charge in tournament or strife—
 For wreath or scarf—for death, or life—
 And once, 'twas said, his full, black eye,
 When a young war-horse bounded by—

Awoke at once!---and lightnings keen,
 As on the falchion's point are seen---
 When sudden dawn amid the fight,
 Flashed forth!---then vanished from the sight,
 And darkened into tears!
 And dimly o'er his brow, there past
 A shade of memory---'twas the last---
 And first for many years.

Yes---something once *had* touched his brain---
 With fire---but he would ne'er complain---
 Had misery left him with the power
 To tell the suffering of that hour:---
 But---as it was, the fearful cause
 Of all the scenes that madness draws---
 That curse of Genius!---all that awes!---
 That reft his heart---and bowed his pride,
 To him was known---to none beside:
 And all *he* knew, was but a dream
 Of sleepless agony:---the beam,
 That shone upon his maniac way,
 Was but the melancholy ray,
 That plays o'er churchyards, when the Night
 Reveals her phantoms to the sight:
 'Twas but the lurid, wandering beam:---
 The troubled lightning of a stream;
 Or stricken armour's hasty gleam;
 'Twas but the light that meteors shed;
 That faintly watches o'er the bed,
 Where Desolation guards the dead:

The splendours of the storm, that show
Temples and monuments laid low;
And altars shattered by that God
Whose thunders roll but once---whose nod
But once in wrath, is ever given---
When temples fall---and spires are strone;
And Empire totters from her throne;
And prostrate Idols bow to heaven!

Such is the awful light that plays
Around his steps! the meteor blaze
That goes before Destruction's path!
That follows the Destroyer's wrath,
When o'er the blessed earth are seen,
Their footsteps in the blasted green;
And pyramids and statues thrown
In ruin o'er the earth---o'ergrown
With savage garlands---living wreaths
Of creeping things---while poison breathes
From every chaplet---every crown---
And every wonder that is down---
As if in mockery of their power---
The dread immortals of an hour:
As in derision of their strength,
Thus prostrate---rent---and strown at length.
Such is that minstrel's memory yet;
The very page he should forget,
Of all the volume of his days,
Is ever opened in its blaze!
And all the rest is from his sight
Enveloped in eternal night!

The ruins of his hopes are seen,
 And ruins only!--all the rest---
 That in their days of light have been,
 Are darkly shrouded in his breast,

His sufferings, and his home unknown;
 A madman---and a minstrel---thrown
 Upon the barren mountain, goes
 Unharm'd, amid his nature's foes:
 Protected by the peasant's prayer,
 He wanders through the dark woods, where
 Abides the she-wolf in her lair:
 Such prayers are his---:re his for ever!
 And ne'er will be refused---O, never!
 For never yet, there shone the eye,
 Could let him pass unheeded by;
 And every heart---and every shed,
 Gave welcome to that maniac's tread:
 And peasant-babes would run to cheer
 His footsteps, as he wandered near:
 And every sunny infant eye,
 Grew sunnier as his step came nigh:
 And when he went at night alone,
 Where mighty oaks in fragments strown,
 Proclaimed the revels of the storm---
 He went in safety:---o'er his form
 There hung a mute, but strong appeal,
 That those, who rend the clouds, might feel:
 Unharm'd, upon the cliff he'd stand,
 And see the Thunderer stretch his wand,

And hear his chariots roll;
And clap his hands---and shout for joy!---
Thus would that glorious minstrel-boy:
When lightnings wrapped the pole!
And he would toss his arms on high,
In greeting as the arrows flew:
And bare his bosom to the sky;
And stand with an intrepid eye,
And gaze upon the clouds that past,
Uprolling o'er the mountain blast,
And wonder at their depth of blue:---
Then---wildly toss his arms again,
As if he saw the rolling main;
And heard some ocean-chant anew:
As if---upon each passing cloud,
He saw the Tempest harping loud
Amid her fiery-bannered crew.

The tempting precipice was hidden;
The angels of the storm forbidden
To strive upon his wasting frame---
The powers of air! enrobed in flame---
Whose thrones are everlasting hills,
Whose army all creation fills:
Who ride upon the roaring main;
And listen to the battle strain;
The thunders of the deep, and song
Of trumpets bursting all along,
When streamers flash, and banners blaze,
And tall plumes bow, and lightning strays

O'er Ocean's dull-blue billows;
 And far amid the clouds are seen,
 Young angels' hands, that twine the green
 Of laurels dripping gallant blood,
 With sea-weed from the stormy flood,
 And thunder-blasted willows.

The sunset was his favourite hour:
 His eye would light--his form would tower;
 And kindle at departing day,
 As if its last, and loveliest ray
 Would win his very soul away;
 And there were those, who, when he stood,
 Sublime in airy solitude,
 Upon his mountain's topmost height,
 With arms outstretched, to meet the light---
 With form bowed down, as if it were
 In worship to the fiery air:
 Who--had he been from eastern climes,
 From sunnier hills--in earlier times--
 When thus he bowed him to the sky--
 Had charged him with idolatry:

For when he bowed he bowed in truth:
 His adoration was the thought,
 And worship, that from heaven is caught
 When genius blossoms in its youth.

'Twas feeling all, and generous love--
 The reaching of the soul above:--
 The intellectual homage pure,
 That is sincere, and will endure:

It was the offering of the heart,
The soul—and pulse—and every part,
That's noble in our frames, or given
To throb for suns, or stars, or heaven:
The spirit that is made of flame,
For ever mounting whence it came:
The pulse that counts the march of time,
Impatient for the call sublime,
When it may spring abroad—away—
And beat the march of endless day—
The heart, that by itself is nurst,
And heaves, and swells, 'till it hath burst:
That never yields—and ne'er complains—
And dies—but to conceal its pains,
And the bright, flashing, glorious eye
For ever open on the sky,
As if in that stupendous swell
It sought a spot, where he might dwell,
And pant for immortality.

That minstrel watched when others slept,
But when the day-light came—he wept
For tho' a maniac, he could see.
That sunshine sports with misery:
He dwelt in caverns;—and alone—
Held no communion, but with one:
And that was but a peasant's child,
A young enthusiast;—a wild
And melancholy girl, whose heart
Was subject to his wondrous art—

She was a sad and lonely one,
And she too loved the evening sun:
The twilight mantle when its blue
Is dropped with light, and wet with dew:
When watery melodies find birth,
And heaven itself seems nearer earth:
She never led the mountain race;
She never joined the insect chase:
Or left her solitary place,
To join the dance, or trill the song:
Or o'er the cliffs to bound along;
But all alone--in silence, where
The rocky cliff stood cloudless---bare---
With folded arms, and loosened hair---
And robe abroad upon the air---
And turbaned wreath and streaming feather,
Would stand for hours and hours together!
And listen to the song that came
 Tumultuous from a neighbouring height,
And watch that minstrel-boy in flame,
 While harping to the god of light.

That wild one had a feeling heart!
And when the minstrel would depart,
To wander o'er the hills, and stray
Upon the beetling cliff--his way,
By morn and noon, in sun and shade,
Was lighted by that dark eyed maid:
And when he trod a dangerous height,
Her shout would lead the wanderer right:

And he would then submissive turn,
 And smile as if he felt her care:
 And when they met, his cheek would burn,
 As if he knew what led her there.

No other voice could stay his course:
 Her's was the only earthly force
 To which he yielded, when he went
 In worship towards the firmament.
 She saw beneath that cloudy air
 The heart of flame imprisoned there:
 For every glance that left his eye,
 When pealed his bursting minstrelsy;
 And every shout he sent away,
 When woke his stormy battle-lay;
 And every sweeping of his hand,
 Showed one accustomed to command:
 And then---the sounds he always chose,
 In tempest or in tears, were those
 That only generous hearts can feel
 And only generous hearts conceive:
 For they were still the challenge-peal---
 The charge that makes the young heart reel,
 Or lordly spirits stoop, and grieve.

These were his everlasting themes:
 And these the echo of his dreams:
 The neigh of steeds, the bugle cry
 Of battle or of victory,
 The roar of wind---and rush of water:
 The blaze of heaven---cry of slaughter---

The thunders of the rolling deep
Whose monarchs rousing from their sleep,
Outstretch their sceptres e'er the wave
And call their spirits from the grave:---
When every billow starts to life,
Contending in the foamy strife---
For diadem of dripping green,
Entwined by Ocean's stormy queen.
These were for aye, his chosen themes;
But he would sing full oft, it seems,
With tendered touch, and tenderer note
Such airs as o'er the waters float---
When symphonies of evening rise
In whisper to the listening skies---
And swell and die so soft away---
We think some minstrel of the day
Is piping on its airy way:
Or some sweet songstress of the night
Waves musick from her wings in flight:
A lulling---faint---uncertain song---
That but to spirits can belong:
To happy spirits too---and none,
But those, who in the setting sun,
Expand their thin bright wings, and darting,
Spin musick to their god in parting:
Who has not heard these quiet airs
Come like the sigh of heaven, that bears
A soothing to his toiling cares?
As if some murmuring angel guest,
Within his void and echoing breast,
Were fanning all his thoughts to rest?

Who has not felt when sounds like these,
 Like prayers of lovers on the breeze--
 Came warm and fragrant by her cheek,
 Oh, more than mortal e'er may speak!
 As if unto her heart she'd caught
 Some instrument, that to her thought
 Gave answering melody and song,
 In murmurings like an airy tongue:
 And echoing in its insect din,
 To every pulse and hope within,
 Had set her thoughts to fairy numbers!
 Or if she ne'er has fancied this,
 This doubtful and bewildering bliss---
 Has she not dropped the lingering tear,
 And fancied that some one was near--
 Invisible indeed, but dear---
 The guardian of her evening slumbers!

Such were the sounds that ye would hear
 When that strange boy would call the tear:
 A deep and low complaining tone--
 Like lover's vows, when all alone,
 Upon some budding green he kneels,
 And listens to the sound that steals
 From some fresh woodbine-lattice near,
 When all that to his soul is dear,
 Is at her grateful vesper hymn--
 When bright eyes in their prayers grow dim:
 Sounds faintly uttered--half suppressed--
 Like fountains whispering to the blest:--

Or the subduing smothered tones
That sob upon the air like groans,
Of those who broken-hearted bend
Before some youthful--gallant friend:
Of those who kneel, and hold their breath,
By loved ones touched with sudden death:
Or sounds like chanting from a tomb,
When spirits sit amid the gloom
And melancholy garlands weave;
And twine the drooping lily wreath--
And withered wild-flowers from the heath,
To crown the maiden brow, that lies
Unkissed by Nature's mysteries:
To sprinkle o'er a virgin's bed
The blossoms that untimely shed--
Have budded--flourished to deceive.

That girl with rich dark hair, was wild
As Nature's youngest, freest child:
As artless--generous--and sincere--
As blushes when they first appear--
Or Rapture's unexpected tear:
Hers was the sudden crimson flush,
And hers the rich spontaneous gush
Of hearts, when first in youth they're prest,
And can't conceal that they are blest:
Her downcast eye, and pale smooth brow:
The heaving of her breast of snow:
The murmuring of her voice--and tread.
That faltered in its youthful dread--

Would ever to the eye reveal,
What all but mountain nymphs conceal:
And she, before that boy, would stand
With lifted brow and outstretched hand—
As if she felt a holy awe;—
And all her heart was in her eyes,
And all her soul would seem to rise—
While thus she stood for hours, and gazed
Upon that minstrel boy—amazed
At all she heard—and all she saw.

She knew the dreadful reason why
He dwelt upon the sunset sky;
For once as they together stood
Above the torrent and the wood;
In breathless—sunny solitude—
To see the ruddy clouds of even
Go blushing o'er the vault of heaven:
The richest—warmest—loveliest scene
That had for many an autumn been:—
There came a sullen labouring sound,
As if an earthquake rose around:
The minstrel uttered one low cry
Of sudden--thrilling agony---
And clasped his hands with look of fire--
And threw away his antique lyre---
And caught the maiden to his heart,
And bore her down the hill!
Oh, who may now the strength impart
To check that madman's will!

Where is the arrow or the bow:—
The Thunderer's bolt—to lay him low,
Sent forth by heaven in wrath!
The lightning shaft, that fiercely thrown,
Hath brought the mountain spoiler down,
In ruins o'er his path!
Have mercy heaven!—his desperate course,
Is like the stormy torrent's force,
When forth from some high, cloudy steep,
In foaming light 'tis seen to leap:—
Now bursting on the eye!
Now flashing darkly on its way
And flinging now, its fiery spray—
In rainbows to the sky!
Thus—thus the ravisher went forth;
Like meteors o'er the cloudy north:
Thus—thus the desperate boy went down,
In splendour o'er the mountain's brown:
His vestment streaming far behind,
And glittering in the rushing wind:
His dancing plumage tipped with light,
Like eaglets in their loftiest flight---
As now he darted on the sight,
And met the sun's last rays:---
Now hidden in the forest shade---
Emerging now---and now betrayed
By plumes that in the sunset played;
And robe that seemed to blaze!

But once she caught his eye of flame;
But then!--O, how distracting came

Her self-reproach, for all that led
Her heart to watch a madman's tread!
Still---still he bounds from cliff---
Like some light vaulting, airy skiff--
Upon the stormy billows tost,
When all but hope and faith are lost:
Still---still he plunges on his course;
Still straining on with maniac force---
From rock to rock, as if he were
Some spirit sporting on the air:
Unconscious of the dying maid,
That on his naked breast is laid---
Her hair flows loose---her dark eyes close,
Fled is the faintly breathing rose,
That lately tinged her cheek:
Sudden her dread descent is staid---
One bound!---his lifeless charge is laid
Upon a bank, and he is near,
Half kneeling in his maniac fear:
And now she moves!---her head she raises---
She starts, and round in terror gazes---
With wild half-uttered shriek---
For lo! before her bows a form,
Like some young genius of the storm---
And while she gazes on his eye,
Uplifted in idolatry,
She hears a stranger speak!

Gone is the madman's savage air--
His pale denouncing look is gone--

His port of sullen, calm despair---
 And gone, indeed, the madman's tone!
 His cheek burns fresh---his eye is bright,
 And all his soul breaks forth in light!
 His steps is buoyant, and his hair
 Is lightly lifted by the air;
 And o'er his reddening cheek, and eye,
 Upraised in feverish ecstasy,
 Is blown so carelessly, he seems
 Some youthful spirit sent from high,
 Clad in the glories of the sky--
 With locks of living shade, that flow
 About a brow of driven snow;
 Or like the forms that pass at night,
 Arrayed in blushing robes of light,
 In Fancy's sunniest dreams.

And but that still his well-known tears,
 And faded vestment quelled her fears,
 She had believed the form that knelt,
 Whose maniac pressure yet she felt,
 Was not the minstrel boy that went
 In worship to the firmament:
 She wondered---wept---and breathed one prayer---
 Then felt in more than safety there:
 'Ellen!' he faintly said, and smiled,
 As prostrate at her feet he knelt---
 'Ellen!'--again his eye looked wild--
 Again he rose---as if he felt,

And would assuage, some sudden pain,
That darted through his rocking brain:
He paused--and o'er his throbbing brow---
His hand went doubtfully, and slow---
Indignant brushed a falling tear,
And saw that dark-eyed girl appear
In awful loveliness, and youth,
Enthusiasm---tears---and truth---
And then was bent that maniac's pride,
His arms dropped lifeless at his side---
In Nature's own supremacy---
And Youth's tumultuous feeling---
Already in his ecstasy,
The maniac boy was kneeling:
When once again---a lightning pain--
Went flashing through his clouded brain,
Where Reason was revealing:

It went, and then a deeper night
Succeeded to its blazing light,
The maniac sprang erect from earth,
And tossed his arms abroad in air:
Like some young spirit, at its birth---
Some nursling of the fiend Despair:
Uttered one thrilling, dreadful cry,
And darted towards the darkening sky
One fierce reproachful look;
Gathered his mantle round his form,
And then, like those who rend the storm,
His upward course he took.

The strife was o'er!—he was again
 The minstrel-boy, with maniac brain:
 The strife was o'er!—the madman's air
 Returned for ever—and Despair
 Hath hung her cloud for ever there!
 Again he climbs the mountain's height:
 Again he hails departing light:
 Again his soul is forth in strength:
 Again his vestment flows at length;
 Again the mountain-echoes ring:
 Again his harp is wandering:
 Again his chords are wildly strung—
 And these the measures that he sung!

THE MINSTREL'S SONG.

Ye who would hear a mournful song,
 Such as the desert bird may sing,
 When sailing on her languid wing,
 By sunny cliffs and lifeless woods—
 And silent blooming solitudes—
 And watery worlds—and cloudless hills—
 Unmurmuring founts and sleeping rills—
 She hears on high the distant note,
 Of some sweet airy tune afloat—
 That to the birds of heaven belong!

Ye who have heard in the still of the night,
 When the soul was abroad in her uppermost flight,
 The whispering of trumpets and harps in the air:

Who have heard, when the rest of the world were
 asleep,
 As ye sat all alone o'er the measureless deep,
 The spirits of earth and of heaven at prayer!
 When the stars of the air, and the stars of the water,
 Were peaceful and bright as the innocent beam
 That plays o'er the lid in its happiest dream:
 When the song of the wind as it feebly arose,
 With the gush of the fountain whose melody flows,
 For hearts that awake when the world are at rest,
 Came over your soul like the airs of the blest:
 When ye thought ye could hear from the height of
 the sky
 The musick of peace going tenderly by—
 The girl ye had loved!—and the song ye had taught
 her!

Ye who would love such airy songs,
 As listening solitude prolongs,
 When from the height of yon blue dome,
 The moon-light trembles to the earth!
 And angel melodies find birth;
 And musick sighs in her echoless home!

Come ye and listen! I will sing
 What led my senses wandering.

Or, would he hear the rending song
 Bursting tumultuous along?
 The challenge—charge—and pealing cry—
 And shock of armies—when on high

Broad crimson banners flaunt the sky—
 And sabres flash—and helmets ring—
 And war-steeds neigh—and bugles sing—
 When comes the shout, they fly!—they fly!
 And echoing o'er the dark blue sky
 The cannon's thunder rolls!
 When all the heaven is rolling shade—
 And lightnings stream from every blade
 Revealing airy shapes, arrayed
 In strife, with warrior-souls!

Thus—thus he 'woke his harp again;
 A strange enthusiastick strain;
 And kneeling on the naked ground,
 Filled all the mountain echoes round:
 Then swept the chords, as if to raise
 The spirit of departed days!
 That harper had an audience there—
 In heaven, and earth, and in the air!
 Then, bending o'er the chords, he smote
 A thronging—bold—exulting note—
 And stood erect!—then flashed the wires!
 Then came the stormy clash of lyres!
 And had ye heard the rolling song,
 So full—triumphant—and so strong—
 Ye never had believed that one
 Thro' such a boundless theme could run.
 It was the noise of countless wings!
 Of countless harps!—with countless strings;

Of distant fifes—and echoing drums—
Of soldier-hymning when it comes
Upon the shifting breeze of night,
In farewells to the dying light,
When steeds are forth, and banners blaze,
Unfolding in the sun's last rays—
And squadrons o'er the plain are dashing—
And martial helms are nodding free
In youth's bold-hearted revelry—
And woman goes before the sight,
In airy pageantry and light,
With shawl and high-plumed bonnet flashin'.

And then he filled the sunset sky
With lightly springing melody,
Then shook the wires! and all along
There went the huntsman's bugle-song:
And up, aloft its silvery cry
Ran clear and far, and cheerily!
And then the pipe! while o'er the sky—
Where laughing babes were heard to fly,
Sweet bells ran ginglyling merrily!
His song is heard—a full dark eye,
And cheek of health's own mountain dye,
Are brightening to his minstrelsy;
A heart is swelling, and the sigh
That lingers as it passes by,
Proclaims entrancing ecstacy!
And these are now the words he sings—
That leap so proudly from his strings:

THE MINSTREL.

Oh waken, my Harp! to the marching of song!

Oh scatter the clouds that are brooding around thee:

Look forth in thy might, while the tempest is strong,

Nor reel in thy strength, as thou movest along,

Sublime on the winds, where my young spirit found
thee!

O, loosen thy numbers in pride,

Let them triumph along on the tide,

That bears the last links of the fetters that bound thee!

Away with the pall that envelops thy form!

Abroad o'er the hills let thy genius storm:

O burst the bright garlands that shrine thee:

O scatter thy jessamine blossoms in air!

And the Tempest herself shall twine thee,

Of the long wild grass, and the mountain's rank hair—

A wreath that is worthy the brow of Despair!

Such chaplets at night, in the wind, I have seen,

On the rock-rooted fir, and the blasted green,

That tell where the anger of heaven hath been:

When a thick blue light on their barrenness hung;

When the thunders pealed, and the cliff-tops rung;

And the bending oak in the cold rain swung.

The Harper paused—the clouds went past,

In pomp upon the rising blast:

The Harper's eye to heaven is raised,

And all the lustres that had blazed,

In triumph o'er his pallid brow,
Have with the sunset faded now:
And now his eye returns to earth,
And solemn melodies have birth,
And ah, a distant mournful sound,
Goes wandering thro' the caverns round:
Such symphonies are sometimes heard
From some sweet melancholy bird,
That sings her twilight song alone,
As if her heart sent forth a tone:—
In summer dreaming, ye may hear
Such singing gently pass the ear,
And hold your breath 'till it hath gone—
Then wonder, as the song is done,
That ye can be so soon alone:—
Or start to find the glittering tear
Upon the mossy turf appear:—
Or in your visions, when ye see
Some angel-harp, in ecstasy,
Awakened by an angel wing,
When every plume of glittering light,
Unfolding to the dazzled sight,
Goes faintly o'er some quiet string!

Wild sounds but sweet! the silky tune
Of fairies playing to the moon;
The sprightly flourish of the horn,
That underneath the blooming thorn,
Pipes sharply to the freshening morn;
The threaded melodies that sing
From blossomed harps of cobweb string:

The busy chirping minstrelsy,
Of Evening's myriads in their glee;
When every bright musician sings
With voice, and instrument and wings:
When all at once the concert breaks—
A multitude of tingling shakes!—
When glittering, miniature guitars,
And harps, embossed with diamond stars,
Equipped with fiery wings, take flight
In musick past the ear of Night:

When all around,
Ye hear the sound
Of windy bugles, plucked while blowing,
Strown loose upon the stream, and going,
In sweet farewells,
Like living shells,
Or fountains singing while they're flowing.

Of golden straws—and slippery shells;
Of sounding pebbles—coral shells—
And flow'ret trumpets with dewy rims,
Where one perpetual murmur swims;
As if some swiftly passing sound,
Were caught within its airy round;—
And droppings like the tinkling rain
Upon the crisped leaf—and strain
Of dainty wheat-stalks, split and singing;
And insect-armour sharply ringing;
And chirp of fairy birds in flight,—
One endless tune, like some young spright,

That's twittering on from morn 'till night.
With living drums, and many a fife,—
Of martial littleness and life,
And fine thin whistling tunes from grass,
Turning its edge to winds that pass;
And all the sweet fantastick sounds,
That linger on enchanted grounds:
When elfins, prisoned in a flower,
Are listening to the twilight shower,
And mock its sounds, and shout, and play
Full many a fairy-minstrel lay—
To pass their dreary time away.

Now heaves the lyre as if oppressed—
And panting now, subsides to rest,
Like rapture on a maiden's breast;
Or like the struggling sounds that rove,
When boyhood tells its earliest love:
Or like those strange unearthly lyres,
Whose hearts are strung with unseen wires,
That wake but to the winds of heaven—
The breezes of the morn and even;
That mounting to the rosy skies,
Like sky-larks on their freshest wing,
For ever mount, for ever sing,
Louder, and louder as they rise.

Now rudely comes the song again,
A thronging and impatient strain.

THE MINSTREL.

Heave darkly now my harp—friends of my lonely hour!
Cold swell thy numbers!

Away with the trumpet song—the wintry requiem pour,
The hymning for the dead—the rush of churchyard
shower—

For she who loved thee!

She who moved thee!

She who proved thee!

In darkness slumbers!

O, who has not felt, in the dead of the night,

The breathing of some one near to him—

The waving of some soft angel plume—

A vision of peace in an hour of gloom—

While a nameless wish on his heart sat light,

And the net-work over its pulse grew tight,

As he thought of her who was dear to him!

And who has not wished that the day might never

Intrude on such innocent sleep?

And prayed that the vision might stay for ever,

And who has not wakened to weep!

And who has not murmured—in agony too—

When the tenant of heaven away from him flew—

And he felt 'twas a vision indeed!

Such—such are the phantoms, my *days* pursue,

And will 'till my spirit is freed.

I awake from a trance on the cliff's stormy height,

While such visions are fading away from my sight—

And feel—while my senses are going astray—
 Like one that can watch his own heart in decay—
 Like a dreamer that's wandered uncovered in day!
 And find, as I start from the spell that enthralled me,
 That the voices and wings of the spirits that called me,
 Are pageants that flit thro' the fire of the brain:—
 Commissioned to waken my heart from its sleep—
 To stir my young blood—'till the maniac weep—
 But commissioned—by Mercy—in vain!—
 Nay—silence my harp!—the enchantment is near—
 Her pinions are waving!—my Ellen, appear!

He paused—and then imploringly,
 There went in lustre from his eye
 A mute petition to the sky:
 He turned and saw the dark-eyed maid;
 And saw her drop a trembling tear—
 Then on her breast his hand he laid,
 As listening if its pulse betrayed
 One added throb of doubt or fear.
 Then—gazing on her downcast eye,
 He shook his head reproachfully—
 Put back her flowing raven hair,
 And wiped the tear-drop glittering there,
 And shook his own imperial brow,
 And thanked her with his eye—
 Then dropt her yielding hand—and now
 His harp is pealing high!

And now a murmuring comes again,
A mournful—faint—and languid strain.

MINSTREL.

Nay—nay sweet girl—thou shalt not weep!
I'll wake my Ellen's summer sleep:
This is the strain she bid me sing,
When I would hear her angel wing.
A low—sweet symphony then fell
From each calm wire, as if a spell
In musick might be spoken!
'Twas like the breath of evening's shell
When faintly comes its faintest swell—
Or fairy note from flow'ret bell,
When some young insect's golden cell
By careless touch is broken!
And then was heard like singing air
This adjuration trembling there.

ADJURATION.

O come, on the beam of the night, love!
O come, on the beam of the night!
While the stars are all busy and bright, love:
O come, with thy tresses of light!

Away thro' the air we will go, love,
Where the waters of melody flow, love:

Where all the fresh lilies are blowing;
Where the turf is all mossy and green love, love;

Where the fountains of heaven are flowing,
And the skies are all blue and serene love.

O come, with thy plumage of light, love,
And we will embrace in our flight, love.

O come, to my desolate heart, love,
And smile on the clouds that are there,
And let us together depart, love,
And sing on our way thro' the air.

O come, let us hasten away, love—
Where spirits may worship and pray, love.

O come, on the beam of the night, love!
O come, on the beam of the night!
While the stars are all busy and bright, love,
O come, with thy tresses of light!

Then with a glance of fire he rose,
And this—a fiercer hymning rose:

This harp hath lain long and forgotten in gloom;
And the roses that wreathed it have lost all their bloom,
Since it brightened and trembled at home:
The swell of whose heaven, and smile of whose day,
First tempted its song on the breezes to stray:
The air of whose mountain first taught it to play,
And the wind from the surge, as it tumbled in foam
First challenged its numbers in storm to roam.

For the night of the heart, and of sorrow is o'er it,
 And the passionate hymn that in other days tore it,
 With her, who so oft to the green bower bore it,
 Have gone like the moonlighted song of a dream!
 Like the soul of an eye that hath shed its last beam!
 And the tendrils of lustre that over it curled,
 With the dark eye that gave all its wanderings birth,
 All gone—like a cherubim-wing that is furled—
 And left me alone—all alone in the world—
 With nothing to worship or sing to on earth!

Yet—yet o'er the mountains my country appears:
 And to her I will waken my lyre:
 Perhaps it may brighten again, tho' in tears,
 And the being it sang to in long vanished years,
 May come in my visions of fire!
 Ah, though she has gone—that young hope of my heart!
 Still she thinks of the nights when I played to her,
 When my sighs like the souls of the blest would de-
 part,
 As I knelt by my harp and prayed to her.

O, yes—tho' thou art gone, my love,
 Thou'lt know the lay—for none could move
 Thy pulse like him, who sings this song—
 Its throbs delay—subdue—prolong—
 For they were so obedient still,
 They fluttered, fainted at his will;
 Thy heart and soul, and thought kept time,
 Like angels to some heavenly chime;
 Now lightning wantoned in thine eyes,
 As bright as ever cleft the skies;

And now in rich dissolving dew---
 They darkly swam like heaven's own blue;
 Now bent to earth---now flashing bright;---
 Now fainting---fading on the sight---
 Like cherub eyes that weep in light;
 O, yes thou'lt know the lay again,
 And weep to hear my harp complain;
 Spirit! I know thou wilt, for ye
 Can never lose such memory:---
 Oh, I could sing my heart away,
 To such a spirit would it stay!

In the pause of the storm, I could hear
 Her sweet-toned voice, so wild and clear!
 That---suddenly---I'd turn around---
 Believing she was near!---
 And then!---I'd shed the bitter tear---
 As if I'd come too late!---and found---
 That---disappointed---*she* had gone;
 As if she had---that moment flown
 And left me---left me!---all alone---
 And then again I'd hear the tone
 Of her own lute---as 'twere to cheer---
 The pilgrim on his journey here:
 Like the dew of heaven---a pearly light---
 That falls where the touch of the storm hath been,
 In the silent night---
 Refreshing the air---and stirring the breeze
 With the flourishing green
 Of branching trees:

And often--when the sun went down--
 In battle--blood--and flame--
 As, o'er against the sky I stood,
 Away, by yonder blueish wood,
 Whence, often, on the winds she came,
 I've heard her--gently--sing my name--
 And seen *two* shadows--faintly thrown,
 Upon the water--far below,
 And I--great God!--was all alone!
 And one of them had wings--and stooping
 Amid her lovely hair,
 Whose vapoury flow,
 Was all around--seemed weeping, where
 The other--seemed in madness, drooping--
 That other!--who was he!--he strove
 In vain--in vain!--to touch her hand--
 As one that--overwhelmed with love--
 Within the awful presence of
 The creature of his heart doth stand!
 And often--often have I heard--
 Two voices mingling in the wood--
 Chiding and weeping--and they seemed--
 Like some of which I've often dreamed--
 I know not where--I know not why--
 I love but one--and she is gone--
 Yet still I often hear the tone--
 Of children--in the air--and sky,
 As they were drowning--and a third--
 Such as I've heard in solitude--
 Like some sweet-toned pronouncing bird,

Would say my name aloud,
 As if some lovely infant there,
 Encradled in a golden cloud—
 Where all was yellowish vapour— dim—
 Were faintly calling me to him!

Work!—there is musick in the hollow sky!
 Something mysterious parading by—
 'Tis the loud march—the echoing band of heaven,
 Marshalled aloft—in revelation given
 To all, who when, sublimely, up the air
 Great midnight moves in dim magnificence;
 Are out upon the hills; and, kneeling there,
 In the dread feeling of Omnipotence—
 Breathe to the awful symphonies that go
 Around the vaulted sky, and penetrate
 Each gloomy spot—where secret waters flow—
 And nature sits alone and desolate,
 Upon her Rocky throne—and see, away
 The dread machinery of air in play—
 The tracking meteors, as they pour along,
 All luminous with fiery hair, and sweep
 Athwart the grand, illuminated deep—
 Like a descending firmament—but stay!—
 O, listen! listen!—that awakening song!
 That awful burst! so windy—far and strong
 With loud, ungovernable melody—
 And now—'tis gone—'tis melted in the sky—
 And all the world is silent—how like death—
 All gone—for ever!—like some passing breath!—

The Harper paused; his numbers died:—
 The mountain-nymph was by his side:
 Unconscious that the mighty spell,
 Which drew her to his lonely cell,
 Was strengthening as she heard this song,
 Go so complainingly along;
 For let him sing of what he might,
 Of heaven or sunshine—storms or night—
 The battle—earthquake—or the bed
 Of honour—rapture—or the dead—
 Her swelling heart—her glistening lash—
 The sudden breath—the sudden flash—
 Proclaimed how well the charm was wrought,
 How surely was her young heart caught.

Again he smote his sounding lyre,
 Again his arm to heaven was raised;
 His robe was forth! and prouder—higher
 He rang his trumpet notes of fire,
 Until his very spirit blazed!
 And from his eye of lustrous night,
 There went—uninterrupted light!
 And thus he chanted to the rude
 Omnipotence of Solitude.

Switzerland of Hills! Thou muse of Storms,
 Where the cloud-spirit reins the bursting forms
 Of airy steeds—whose meteor-manes float far
 In lightning tresses o'er the midnight car
 That bears thine angels to their mountain war!

Home of the earthquake! land where Tell
 Bared his great bosom to his God, and fell,

Like his own Alpine-torrent, on his country's foe;
 Land of the unerring shaft and warrior-bow;
 The upward Eagle—and the bounding Doe:—
 The shaggy wolf—and the eternal flow
 Of cloud-nursed streams, and everlasting snow.

Switzerland! my country! 'tis to thee,
 I rock my harp in agony:—
 My country! nurse of Liberty,
 Home of the gallant, great and free,
 My sullen harp I rock to thee.

O, I have lost ye all!
 Parents—and home—and friends:
 Ye sleep beneath a mountain pall;
 A mountain-plumage o'er ye bends.
 The cliff-yew in funereal gloom,
 Is now the only mourning plume,
 That nods above a peoples' tomb.

Of the echoes that swim o'er thy bright blue lake,
 And deep in its caverns, their merry bells shake;
 And repeat thy young huntsman's cry:
 That clatter and laugh, when the goatherds take
 Their browsing flocks at the morning's break,
 Far over the hills—not one is awake
 In the swell of thy peaceable sky.

They sit on that wave with a motionless wing;
 And their cymbals are mute and the desert birds sing
 Their unanswered notes to the wave and the sky—
 One startling, and sudden—unchangeable cry,

As they stoop their broad wing and go sluggishly by:
 For deep in that blue-bosomed water is laid,
 As innocent, true, and as lovely a maid
 As ever in cheerfulness carolled her song,
 In the blithe mountain air, as she bounded along:
 The heavens are all blue, and the billows bright verge
 Is frothily laved by a whispering surge,
 That heaves incessant, a tranquil dirge,
 To lull the pale forms that sleep below:
 Forms—that rock as the waters flow.

That bright lake is still as a liquid sky,
 And when o'er its bosom the swift clouds fly,
 They pass like thoughts o'er a clear blue eye!

The fringe of thin foam that their sepulchre binds,
 Is as light as the cloud that is borne by the winds;
 While over its bosom the dim vapours hover,
 And flutterless skims the snowy-winged plover:
 Swiftly passing away—like a hunted wing;
 With a drooping plume—that may not fling
 One sound of life—or a rustling note—
 O'er that sleepless tomb—where my loved ones float.

Oh cool and fresh is that bright blue lake,
 While over its stillness no sounds awake:
 No sights— but those of the hill-top fountain
 That swims on the height of a cloud-wrapped moun-
 tain—

The basin of the rainbow-stream,
 The sunset gush—the morning gleam—

The picture of the poet's dream.
 Land of proud hearts! where Freedom broods
 Amid her home of echoing woods,
 The mother of the mountain floods—
 Dark Goldau is thy vale;
 The spirits of Rigi shall wail
 On their cloud-bosomed deep, as they sail
 In mist where thy children are lying—
 As their thunders once paused in their headlong de-
 scent,
 And delayed their discharge—while thy desert was rent
 With the cries of thy sons who were dying.

No chariots of fire on the clouds careered:
 No warrior-arm, with its falchion reared:—
 No death-angel's trump o'er the ocean was blown;
 No mantle of wrath o'er the heaven was thrown;
 No armies of light---with their banners of flame---
 On neighing steeds---thro' the sunset came,
 Or leaping from space appeared!
 No earthquakes reeled---no Thunderer stormed;
 No fetterless dead o'er the bright sky swarmed;
 No voices in heaven were heard!
 But the hour when the sun in his pride went down
 While his parting hung rich o'er the world:
 While abroad o'er the sky his flush mantle was blown,
 And his red-rushing streamers unfurled:---

An everlasting hill was torn
 From its eternal base---and borne---
 In gold and crimson vapours drest
 To where—a people are at rest!

Slowly it came in its mountain wrath,
 And the forests vanished before its path:
 And the rude cliffs bowed---and the waters fled---
 And the living were buried, while over their head
 They heard the full march of their foe as he sped---
 And the valley of life---was the tomb of the dead!

The clouds were all bright: no lightnings flew:
 And over that valley no death-blast blew:
 No storm passed by on his cloudy wing:
 No twang was heard from the sky-archer's string---
 But the dark, dim hill in its strength came down,
 While the shedding of day on its summit was thrown,
 A glory all light, like a wind-wreathed crown---
 While the tame bird flew to the vulture's nest,
 And the vulture forbore in that hour to molest---

The mountain sepulchre of all I loved!
 The village sank---and the monarch trees
 Leaned back from the encountering breeze---
 While this tremendous pageant moved!
 The mountain forsook his perpetual throne---
 Came down from his rock---and his path is shown---
 In barrenness and ruin---where
 The secret of his power lies bare---
 His rocks in nakedness arise:
 His desolation mock the skies.

Sweet vale---Goldau! farewell---
 An Alpine monument may dwell

Upon thy bosom, oh! my home!
But when the last dread trump shall sound
I'll tread again thy hallowed ground--
Sleep thee, my loved one, sleep thee!
While yet I live, I'll weep thee--
Of thy blue dwelling dream, wherever I roam,
And wish myself wrapped in its peaceful foam.

Sweet vale—Goldau—farewell!
My cold harp, cease thy swell--
'Till tuned where my loved ones dwell
My home!--Goldau!--farewell!

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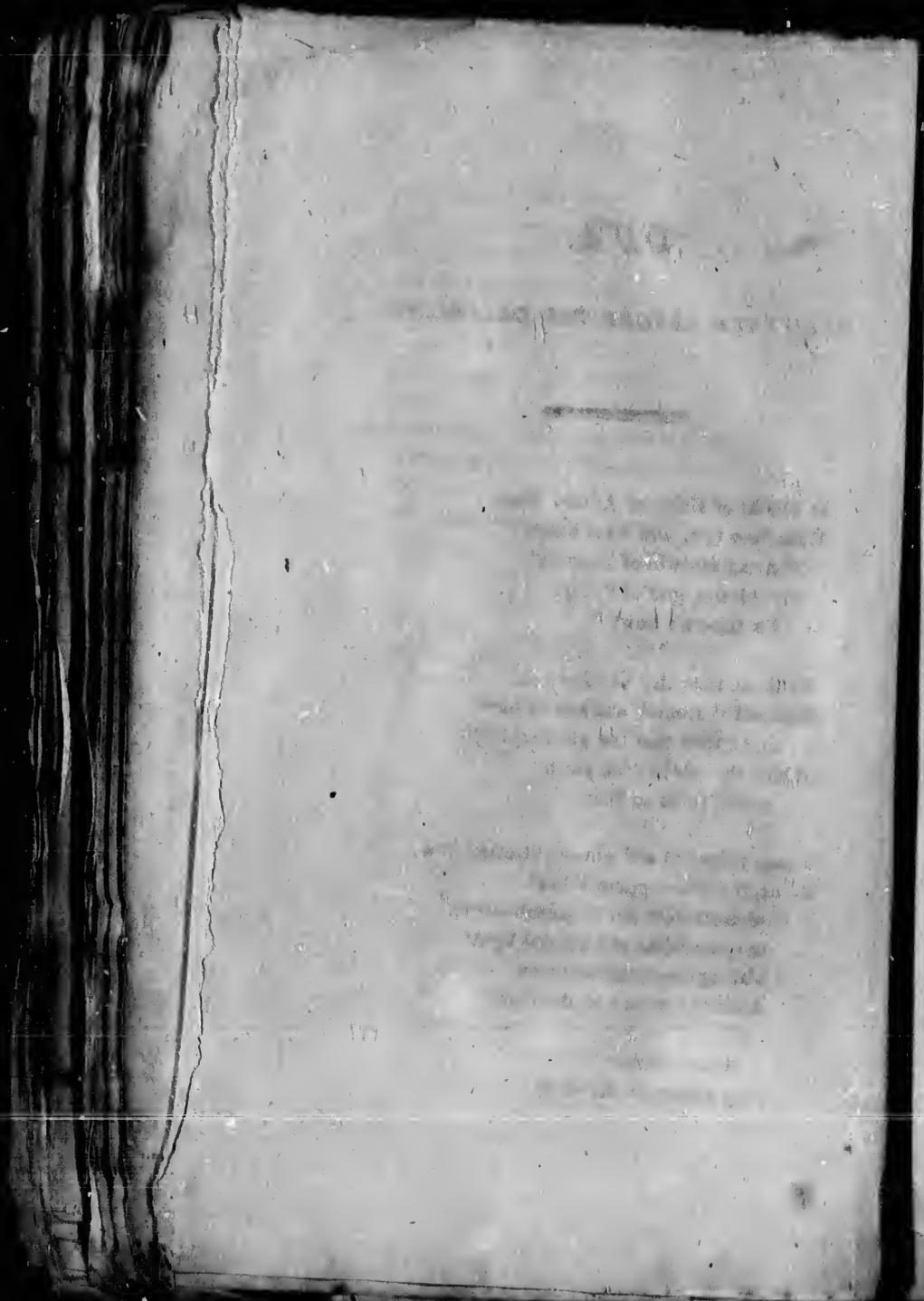
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ODE,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE DELPHIANS:

A LITERARY SOCIETY OF BALTIMORE.



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THE HISTORY OF THE

REIGN OF

CHARLES THE FIRST

BY

JOHN BURNET

ODE,

DELIVERED BEFORE THE DELPHIANS.

O THOU of Heaven! Apollo, thou,
With fiery eye, and lofty brow;
The radiant twin of Chastity!
The blazing god of Poesy!
To thee we bow!

We thank thee that another year
Hath rolled around, and left us here:
We thank thee that the glorious birth
Of him, thy minister on earth,
Is still to us so dear.

Young prince of air! whose glittering bow,
By us, thy worshippers below!
Is seen athwart our darkest heaven!
In quenchless and eternal light!
A blazing constellation given
Amid the season of the night!

Arise!—Arise!
Young archer of the skies,

DELPHIAN ODE.

Our chosen deity!
O bend thy bow of might,
And 'mid the vaulted night,
While we uprear
Our hands to thee;
Appear! appear!
In thy divine deity!

O thou of heaven, Apollo thou,
Shine out upon thy votaries now!

Show out thy mysteries where
Thou tread'st the lifeless air:
On the motionless cloud,
Be thy harpers arrayed;
Where shadowy faces crowd,
With forms of shade.

Thy musick too! O, be it heard
So faintly, that its sounds may seem
The warblings of some hidden bird,
That we have sought for in a dream.

Unfurl thy thin transparent sail,
That we have seen so often spread,
And bosom to the silent gale,
That wafts the spirits of the dead.

That seems to all but Delphian eyes
A vapour passing o'er the skies.
While 'tis, to us, the floating veil,

That, with its shadowy light, enshrouds
Thy sister's cold, sweet face in clouds.

To us—the showy, bannered air,
That streaming, flutters down the heaven,
When o'er the clouds assembled there,
With sounding wheels and flaming hair,
Thy conquering steeds in light are driven!

It is the pure transparency
By angel-fingers spun,
That wraps young love and infancy,
That veils the glowing face
Of nakedness and grace:
'Tis woven in the twilight beam,
And coloured in the blushing stream,
Beneath the setting sun.

Such is a *cloud* to Delphian-eyes!
The strangest wonder of the skies,
At morn---at noon---at night;
For ever changing as it flies,
Unfolding still its rainbow dyes,
For ever on the sight.

O, then unfurl that sail again,
And let us see o'er heaven's blue main,
Thy boat go swift and silently,
And hear the faint, uncertain chime,
Of bards that were in older time,
Who sit, and as they sail along

Awake a wild, and mingling song---
That tells of immortality!

Pronounce thine adjurations there!
And summon from each cemetry,
Thy earliest DELPHIANS, 'till the air
Is bright with harps! and loud with minstrelsy!

O let them not profane this hour,
And slumber in thy time of power!
But let thy ministers proclaim,
Through all the air,
In musick and in flame,
That thou art there!

Let all that in the darkness dwell,
In silence or in solitude,
In cavern or in wood,
Now hear thy harp's triumphant swell!
And, lifted by thy fearful spell,
From the fathomless deep,
Come forth in their sleep!
From the field of blood
Where the soldier lies;---
And the restless flood,
Where the sailor dies.

From the pathless wild,
Where, o'er the pilgrim's bones,
Or Nature's child---
And heaps of warrior Indians lie---

The old decaying trees,
Like spirits on the breeze,
In strange--low--interrupted tones,
Are swinging mearnfully!

From ocean's shore,
Where the sea-maids pour
A watery lamentation o'er
The dripping locks of some sweet form,
Just shipwrecked in the passing storm,
And weep and blow their melancholy shells,
And ring their sweet-toned coral bells,
Like murmurings from a cloud!

O let them all appear!
The spectres of the mind,
Of phrensy or of fear,
Careering on the wind!

O strike the note! and from his bier,
Each tenant of the deep will rise,
With motionless eyes;
And each his coral sceptre rear—
And each before our face appear,
Within his sea-grass shroud!

Let all that in the darkness dwell—
Now see thy form, and hear the swell
Of ancient harpers, loudly singing!
And from thy vaulted dwelling place,
Amid the solitudes of space,

DELPHIAN ODE.

Far thunders roll their awful base,
And harps and trumpets ringing!

Now be our invocation done!—
For lo!—Apollo of the sun,
Hangs out his starry lyre,
With frame of gold and strings of fire,
Upon our midnight firmament!
And now his bow of quenchless light
Is brightening on our sight—
And now 'tis slowly bent!
All hail to this auspicious hour!
These are the symbols of his power:
In mercy they are sent.

Apollo! god of poesy!
Of eloquence and light,
Of life, and pride, and ecstasy,
Is manifest to night!

O, let the air we breath be flame,
And let our echoing hearts proclaim,
In musick to the sky—
That he, the Delphian god! is near,
That he, our chosen one! is here,
'Till he, the god of song! is heard
In every Delphian-word;
'Till he, the god of light! is seen,
Like sunshine where the clouds have been,
Warm—lovely—and serene,
In every Delphian-eye!

Arise!—arise!

Proclaim ye to the skies!

That he hath left his dwelling place,

His chariot of revolving light;

And turn'd his coursers in the race—

When stretching o'er the bounds of space,

To fill our halls and hearts to night!

Then let us raise our hymning higher,

Sound every trumpet, harp, and lyre,

That he to man hath given;

'Till all that revel in the sky,

Uplifting high,

Their sullen midnight canopy,

Hang lingering as they're hurried by,

And poised upon their viewless wing,

Repeat the anthem that we sing

To him, the tenant of high heaven!

And now, Apollo! now,

Again we bow,

To thee,

In fervour and sincerity!

Another year has travelled round,

And still within this ring were found,

Like one that treads enchanted ground,

For ever lingering in it!

We feel as we approach its verge,

Like one, that on a precipice,

Recoiling from a dim abyss,

Stand listening to the surge!

He dare not step—there's danger when
He puts his foot beyond the bound;
'Tis so with us—beyond are men
Too little like what here are found:
Within this circle there's a power
That charms a year into a hour,
An hour into a minute!

This—like the boundaries drawn on air,
By angels' wings that eddy there,
Is felt, but never seen;
A strange, unearthly atmosphere,
Is ever warm and breathing here,
As if there's something heavenly near,
Invisibly serene!
The summer of the heart is found,
For ever, in this viewless bound,
While all beyond is cold;
And here, for ever may be seen,
The constant-branching evergreen;
The verdure of the heart, that spreads,
A living arbour o'er our heads;
The laurels of the brain, that grow,
In intellectual light, and throw
Their streaming garlands round our hair,
Self-woven in immortal air;
And all the flowers of heaven, that blow,
Beneath the fierce and feverish glow,
Of him, our god! whose burning face,
Within this consecrated place,
The Delphians in their dreams behold!

This viewless prison-house of ours,
 That holds our spirits captive here,
 Is not a temple wrought with flowers,
 That, stripped from Dissipation's bowers,
 Are hung in empty mockery,
 Where idleness and revelry,
 In festival appear—

'Tis not a ring by pleasure traced:
 No foaming goblets round are placed—
 No woven flowers, nor mingling vines,
 Of aught, that young Volupte twines,
 Nor white arms interlaced;—
 Nor snowy breasts—nor sparkling eyes,
 Around our haunts obedient rise,
 To grace our midnight mysteries.

Our viewless boundary is a chain
 That passes through each heart,
 That—lengthened—soon contracts again,
 That—rent—is always rent in vain,
 The links—are load-stones of the brain!
 And can't be kept apart!

These unseen bands of strength that bind
 Our hearts and souls, are intertwined,
 By wit, and sympathy, and mind—
 Unseen, 'tis true, as they were traced
 Upon the ocean-waste,
 But steady as the eternal chain,
 That fetters the rebellious main.

Whence is this knitting of our souls?
 Whence is the magick that controls
 Our wandering thought, and keeps us here?
 It is the band of brotherhood---
 By genius only understood---
 To genius only dear:

The flash of wit and light of song,
 The stream of heart that pours along,
 Betraying in its course,
 Ten thousand precious things that grow
 Upon its bank—like founts that flow,
 Abruptly from a hidden source,
 Whose shining wave and joyful sound,
 For ever turn us wondering round,
 Like traveller o'er some desert ground,
 Some wilderness or mountain,
 That smiles to hear the gushing bound
 Of some fresh springing fountain,
 And stands, with folded arms, to see,
 However thirsty he may be,
 Its young tide rippling cheerfully,
 And round about in murmurs stealing,
 Now running there, and hiding here,
 As 'twere—some living thing in fear;
 And still ten thousand tints revealing,
 Like serpent in the grass concealing;
 While all the drowsy buds awake,
 Unfolding in their starry pride,
 And dip their bright green leaves and shake
 Their silvery blossoms o'er the tide.

And with his eyes uplifted sees—
 A new creation in the breeze—
 The glittering willow wave its leaves,
 The emerald turf itself grow brighter,
 And garlands that dear Nature weaves,
 Upon the lifting wind—dance lighter.

So 'tis with us—a sudden stream
 Comes from the desert, with a gleam
 Of loveliness and mystery;
 And lo! unnumbered things concealed
 In every heart—are then revealed
 And shine in every eye:

'Tis this that fascinates us here;
 That makes this social group so dear;
 That binds us to each other:
 'Tis this that makes the lengthening year
 That's past in light—to us appear
 A cloudless momentary dream;
 A lovely—wandering beam,
 That chanced—in passing o'er a crowd
 Of *strangers*—gathered in a cloud,
 To show to each—his *brother!*
 A lovely beam! that fell astray,
 As if it were to show us this;
 That we had chosen a clouded way
 Upon a crumbling precipice;
 That men were made for men, and must
 Commingle in their light;

That souls within their sheaths will rust,
 But brighten in the fight:
 That all the weapons of the mind
 In solitude consume away;
 The bow strings, and the shafts designed
 Alike for song, and strife and play,
 The lightning that immortals wield,
 The flashing blade and flaming shield—
 All—all—when they have left the field—
 Grow dim and waste away!

O then be this our prayer!
 Still may that beam be playing there;
 Whene'er we go astray!
 Assembled as we are to-night,
 Be still our shields and weapons bright,
 'Till gathered for the judgment day—
 Beneath a far more fearful cloud,
 We hear far trumpets bursting loud,
 And gaze on every passing shroud,
 To catch one melancholy ray.

Be this our prayer. O may we meet,
 O many an hour as rich as this!
 'Till every heart forgets to beat,
 And may such precious moments cheat
 Our spirits to forgetfulness;
 'Till all the icy hearts abroad,
 On life's unhospitable road,
 Are all forgotten or forgiven;
 And may the path we tread to night,

Be trodden 'till each Delphian light
Be quenched or set in heaven.

Our week of cheerless toil once past,
This holy sabbath comes at last,

This sabbath of the heart!
This lovely hour!—O be it blest,
In mental fellowship and rest,

And be it ever set apart!
For ever, while we stay on earth,
For art and science, song and mirth,
'Till other Delphians burst from night,
And all the world is filled with light!

From our cluster of stars, it is true,
One, holy and bright, is withdrawn,
'Twas the herald of evening and dew,
And the star of a lustreless morn.

For whole seasons that star was alone,
Alone—in its fathomless sphere,
For whole seasons its splendours had shone,
Unobscured—for no other was near.

For the dark of its sky was too deep,
Its ray was too mild and serene,
It was hastening away to its sleep,
And none would have known it had been!

But others were wandering around,
Like that, unobserved in the sky,

Alone in the vaulted profound,
 Too dim---and too far for the eye--

But lo! it once chanced, in the route
 Of two, that were bosomed in space,
 That they touched, as they wandered about,
 And each then abandoned its place--

And one was the star that is gone,
 The other is here in its light;
 'Tis our centre and pride---'tis the one
 About whom we gather to-night.

The conjunction was watched in the sky,
 And others soon came afar;
 A new Pleiades blazed on the eye,
 And chose for their centre this star!

Yes---one of our group is withdrawn;
 One star of our worship is gone,
 But its place was supplied
 By another that came,
 In lustre and pride,
 O'er an orbit of flame--

And yet another---in the *place*
 Whence that has been translated---
 Goes brightening o'er the tract of space---
 Sublimely elevated--

Another from our heaven of pride
 Is blotted out for ever,

O, never be *his* place supplied!

No--never!

A dreary blank were better far,
Than such a smoking foggy star--

To him--our chief--one parting strain;

O, may he long our chief remain!

May he, to whom we kneel,

Apollo! of the silver bow,

His starry harp on him bestow!

And all the mysteries of space,

The wonders of his beaming face,

To him, our chief, reveal!

O, let us ne'er forget the night,

When he--our chief--burst into light;

When, having reared a pillared dome,

We rose to consecrate a home,

Where Science--Wit--and Song might dwell

And Wonder work his spell;

And Genius stay his blazing march,

And Musick hang her dripping shell,

Where all the Muses might suspend

Their ringing harps--and Fancy bend

With Intellect in prayer;

Oh then,

Amid the sons of men,

Our chief appeared!

His hand upreared--

And lo! upon the air,

O 3

DELPHIAN ODE.

We saw a temple building! where
 Strange musick we had heard!
 Then let our chief be loudly named;
 With trumpets be his might proclaimed;
He reared this architectural swell!
He fixed the key-stone of our arch!

Then hail to our chief in the tumult of song,
 Let the hymn of his praises go pealing along!
 May the swell of his heart be for ever the same:
 May the light of his brain
 Undiminished remain,
 To brighten our path to the temple of Fame:
 O may he be crowned by the wreath of the mind!
 The wreath that Apollo in glory hath twined;
 The leaves all of light and the blossoms of flame!

And may his harp, this night bequeathed,
 By him, our god---with fire be wreathed,
 And may that bow of strength be bent,
 Through time with still encreasing force!
 May every sun's revolving course,
 Still find him here,
 To Delphians dear,
 Our chief---our glory---and our pride!
 And when the messenger is sent---
 And he to heaven is called at last,
 Upon Apollo's tide,
 Or on the roaring blast---
 O, may he as he hurries past,

Pour bravely out
One farewell shout,
To us, his Delphians here below!
And with his harp, and with his bow,
Go thundering o'er the firmament!

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CONQUEST OF PERU.

BOOK I.

O THOU, the Everlasting!—Thou, O God!
Whose habitation is the universe—
Whose throne—eternity:—Jehovah! Thou,
Whose dwelling is all space, pavilioned o'er
With rolling worlds!—Omnipotent!—to thee—
The GOD OF BATTLES, we uplift our prayer
And supplication!

We have seen thee ride
Upon the storm, with trumpeting and smoke,
And bloody clouds!—and all the heavens on fire
With horsemen! chariots! armed multitudes!
Banners! and shields and spears!

And seen the vaulted sky roll all together
Tumultuous—like the ocean in a storm:—
While all its glimmering verge—around our earth—
Stood thick with battlements—and turrets—towers
And ensigns—cherubim—and seraphim:—
The apparition of embattled gods—
Revealed in brief transparency:—arrayed—
Dazzling! and terrible!—

And heard the shout
Of countless armies!—neigh of steeds!—and o'er
The dark round firmament—a giddy host,
Of winged shadows, in the night, have seen
Up-swarming from a cloud!

While all about
The mountains nodded—and the waters heaved;
Shouting and thunder rolled!—and all the skies
Were loud with battle, and with victory!

O Thou!--from whom the rebel angels fled,
When thou didst rend thine everlasting veil,
And show thy countenance in wrath! O Thou!
Before whose brow, unclothed in light---put forth
In awful revelation---they that stood
Erect in heaven---they that walked sublime,
E'en in thy presence, Lord!---And they that shone
Most glorious 'mid the host of glorious ones;---
With Lucifer! The Morning star!---the Terrible!--
The chief of old Immortals---with the sight
Were suddenly consumed! Almighty! Thou,
Whose face but shone upon the rebel host
Of warring constellations---and their crowns
Were quenched for ever! And the mightiest fell!
And lo! innumerable wings went up,
And gathered round about the Eternal's throne---
And all the solitudes of air were filled
With thunders and with voices! And the war
Fled from thy presence! And thy wrath was o'er,
And heaven again in peace!

O Thou, the stay
Of men and angels---whose uplifted arm

Reached from the midnight firmament, and wrapped
 In cloudy, blue, tempestuous light, hath led
 Thine armies through the wilderness!--whose throne
 Of whirlwind and of thunder, through the day
 Was visible in heaven! Jehovah! Thou!
 Captain of armies! Chief of countless wars!
 Who, through the march of centuries, hath led
 Thy chosen ones to battle!--Thou, whose shield,
 Of vaulted darkness, hath been interposed
 Between the blazing sun, and battling hosts,
 When thy commissioned ones had done thy will--
 Whose peaceful voice, along the troubled sky;
 Hath re-established all the loosened hills--
 Charmed the loud Ocean in his bed, and stayed
 The sweeping tempest--turned the warrior back,
 Recalled the chariot--reined the neighing steed--
 And conquering wheel--and blood-drenched ban-
 ner--all!
 While raging in the war--
 And once, for slaughter, held the rolling sun
 Immoveable in heaven--'till the work
 Of awful retribution had been done.

O Thou, the God of BATTLES!--hear our prayer!
 O bless our song!--in mercy fill our soul
 With visions of the war!--O, let the wind
 Be full of distant trumpets--rising horns--
 And sounding hoofs, advancing o'er the hills!
 O, let us, o'er the battlements of heaven,
 The cloudy Andes--and the western Alps--
 The habitation of the Indian-God--

O, let us see young trooping warriors pass!
The souls of gallant men that died in war;---
Each, with his bow and quiver!--each erect,
And firmly planted on his cloud! with spear
Couched for the coming white man--o'er his brow
The vulture's plumage---or the ragged mane
Of some young lion, that on earth he tore---
Or---arrow fixed---and bow-string fiercely drawn,
With eye immoveable---and burning dark
In deadliness and hate---his shoulder bare,
And sinewy limb---his sandals freshly bound
With bleeding tendons, from the panther torn,
Whose spotted skin is floating heavily
Upon the wind--- and dripping darkly yet!
Let every cloud that moves along the heaven
Bear tumult in its bosom!--when it stoops,
Or rests upon the mountain top---or spreads
Its angry wings aloft---or, opening wide---
Reveals the bursting Tempest on her throne,
Amid her armoury of burnished shields---
And flaming spears---her lightnings all about
Shaking their fearful wings---her thunderbolts
Streaming with crimson flame---and armed shapes
All harnessing their chariots and their steeds---
To the loud trumpeting of air---O let us see
Armies with armies wrestling---banners spread!
The flaming cross to blazing suns opposed---
The warriors of the church in scarlet robes---
And glittering mail---and helmets studded o'er
With steel and gold---in war---with naked men!
Unarmed---defenceless---and oppressed with awe--

Children of Spain—with children of the Sun!
Castilian warriors trained in fields of blood;
Armed with thunder—lightning—and engaged
With suppliant red men—born and nursed in peace;
O let us hear the old Castilian cry!
God! and St. Jago!—the tremendous cry,
That, like an earthquake, shook the hills of Spain,
And tumbled to the earth the Moorish pride—
Darkened their crescent—rent the bloody veil
Of all their temples—scattered to the winds
Their streaming trophies—their impieties—
Their palaces and thrones!—O let us hear
That war cry peal again! And let us hear
The red-man's thrilling voice!—the Mexican!
And ringing battle axes—and the twang
Of brazen bows—and see the glittering flight
Of winged arrows flaming through the sky.
God of the Indian!—Monarch of the skies!
O bear thy red right arm!—O bend thy bow,
Omnipotent!—and let thunders roll!

O Thou—our Inspiration—Thou, O God!
To whom the Prophets and the crowned Kings—
The bards of many years! who caught from thee
Their blazing of the spirit—Thou, to whom
The Jewish monarchs, on their ivory thrones
Flaming with jewelry—have fallen down,
And rung their golden harps, age after age—
O Thou—to whom the gifted men of old,
That stood among the mysteries of heaven,
Read the thick stars—and listened to the wind,

Of many thunders pealing thy decree,
 Creation sprang to light—when time began—
 And all the boundless sky was full of suns—
 Rolling in symphony—and man was made—
 Sublime and confident—and woman, up
 From the sunshine of the Eternal, rose
 All intellect and love!—And all the hills,
 And all the vales were green—and all the trees in
 flower.

O bless our trembling harp!

We sing of battle!—We have tuned our heart
 In awe and veneration to the men
 Of other days—thy youngest born—to whom
 This western world was an inheritance—
 Who gazed on thee—their Father!—undisturbed—
 Unshaken—unextinguished—in the light
 Of mightiest revelation—Men—who saw,
 The Everlasting—face to face—and lived.

The battle was not done. The sun had rolled
 All day along the lines of death. All day
 The skies had thundered to the sounding hills;
 And all the live-long day the blood of men
 Had flowed in sacrifice. The night had come—
 A night that brought no safety and no rest—
 Our god was angry—He went home in blood—
 In horrible effulgence—

The morning came—
 We were all out upon the neighbouring hills,

In sacrifice and prayer. The weary night—
 The very heavens too—had rolled away'
 In earthquake and in thunder, not a spot—
 Within the empty, hollow firmament—
 Not even a cloud—was left—but all was black
 With measureless infinity. We clung to earth—
 To shrubs and rocks—like men that stand
 Upon a dizzy precipice—-and blind
 And giddy—down—in terrible dismay—
 Thus were we clinging—-all—-a multitude—
 When, suddenly! the dreadful void above,
 Was all illuminated!—downward rolled,
 From its extremest elevation—with the sound
 Of chariots descending—and the noise
 Of volleying whirlwinds—white and shining clouds!
 All luminous with glory—tumbling round—
 In smoky crimson—yellowish light—-and blue—
 Eddying tumultuous!—then—evolving slow
 All drenched in blood—-and shaking out thick light—
 In awful drapery—like a battle-sheet,
 Spread like a curtain o'er the sky—-they went—
 Lifting and breaking in the wind—
 And then away, away—
 O'er the great water—from the land of souls—
 A mighty bird went up, as if pursued—
 Toiling and labouring o'er the solid sky—
 Touching along the vault, as if she sought
 Some outlet for escape!

. And while we looked above—
 The heavens all motionless—a brazen dome—

They approached! Then—on the other side
 There came a throng—a host—a multitude—
 Clad in white robes—with feathers in their hair—
 And bow and quivers!—And we trembled, then—
 We knew they were Peruvians!—they went
 With musick and with dance to meet their foe—
 Sun of the skies! how breathlessly we stood!
 We saw them join in battle—and we pealed
 Our own Peruvian cry to urge them on!—
 Already were their arrows in the air—
 Already had they touched!—and rang— for lo!
 They bounded shivering from the strangers' hearts,
 As they were indistructable! We groaned—
 Together, all at once—But soon—again—
 We numbered the increasing of the host
 Arrayed in white—and saw the ocean-band—
 Almost enclosed—and then—aloft—we pealed
 Another battle cry!—

Swift at the sound, we saw
 The war revived!—but the.—oh, wonderful!—
 We saw a creature—fashioned like a man—
 His head on fire—the lightning in his hand—
 Upon a glorious something—bound among
 The snowy host—and then, as from the sky—
 There rolled a sudden cloud—upon them all—
 Streaming with fire!—the lake was covered o'er—
 With eddyng smoke—The wondrous vision fled—
 And then—while we were growing breathless—there
 In agony—to see the white smoke clear away—
 We heard the roll of distant thunder—then—
 We turned us to the ocean—to the hills—

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But not a cloud was there---the blessed sky
 Was all serene; and now the passing mist
 Had left the bosom of the lake below---
 O what a sight!---the snowy band was gone--
 All gone!---and with the conquering step of pride---
 That creature in the van!---the strangers went---
 Their colours out---and all their warrior dress,
 Gleaming discoloured fire---they passed away---
 We saw it---we!---they passed away---away!
 O'er the black water---to the very side,
 That leads to Peru---and her palaces---
 Her Incas!---and the Temple of the Sun!---
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And then---O then, our own great God appeared!
 And, at the glorious sight, the priesthood blew
 Ten thousand silver trumpets---and we fell
 Upon our faces to the earth---and worshipped.
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He came!---in triumph came!

A host of flaming billows from the sea,
 Rose up and shook their helmets in his beam:
 Then rolling up he went---and far and near,
 In oily gold and green---and trembling fire,
 Wavy and rich---and streaming o'er with white
 And glittering foam---and sunshine---red---
 And changeable with gloss---the silky Ocean heaved!

O! 'twas a glorious sight!---the heavens on fire---
 The sky one rainbow---and the lovely wave
 Reflecting all its hues, in softened light---

Old Ocean dancing in the troubled gold---
 And up the firmament of kindling blue
 The rolling Sun ascending like a god:---
 Then came the wonder!---o'er the lighted sky
 Mysterious musick went---and on the top
 Of our chief temple, something seemed to move---
 And a quick glimmering was all around it---
 As if ten thousand steely blades, and spears
 Were brandished---shaken in a midnight beam,
 Or flourished o'er the wave!

Again the thunder pealed!

Up, like a creature newly strung with life,
 Our Inca sprang from earth. The wonder came!
 Away upon the dim horizon---where the air
 Shone with a faint effulgence---where the blue
 Was purest, brightest---there appeared---O God!
 The Spirit of the Ocean!---all his wings were out!
 His long bright hair streamed thick upon the wind!
 In thunder he arose! Clouds burnt around him,
 And o'er the wave, and through the rolling smoke,
 Rushing in light, he came!---and as we fled,
 Thundered again through all our echoing hills!

TO THE READER.

Of the following Poems the reader is already prepared to form an opinion. If he *dislikes* them, I am entitled to his gratitude—for in culling over a volume of trash, with a view of fulfilling my engagements in the preface, I found so little tolerable—or rather endurable, that I have selected not one-fifth part of what I at first intended publishing. If this is not a fair excuse, the author does not know what is. He believes, however, that it will be a most acceptable one, for his breach of faith—and if any of his readers are still so unreasonable as to complain because they are disappointed, rather than wearied—he has this—and his last plea to offer—it must be effectual. The following pieces are the *best* of a whole volume—they may judge for themselves what the rest must have been—and be thankful for their escape.

PERRY'S VICTORY.

COLUMBIA appear! To thy mountains ascend,
And pour thy bold hymn to the winds and the woods,
Columbia appear!—O'er thy tempest-harp bend,
And far, to the nations, its trumpet-song send:
Let thy cliff echoes wake, with their sun-nourished

broods,

And chant to the desert, the skies, and the floods;
And bid them remember

The tenth of September,

When our eagle came down from her home in the sky,
And the souls of our ancients were marshalled on high.

Columbia appear!--let thy warriors behold,

Their flag—like a firmament bend o'er thy head—

The wide—rainbow-flag—with its star-clustered field!

Let the knell of dark Battle, beneath it, be tolled;

While the anthem of peace shall be pealed for the
dead,

And the rude waters heave, on whose bosom they
bled:

O they will remember

The tenth of September,

When their souls were let loose in a tempest of flame,

And wide Erie shook at the trumpet of Fame!

Columbia appear!--Let thy cloud-minstrels wake,
As they march on the storm—all the grandeur of song,
'Till the far mountains' nod, and the motionless lake
Shall be mantled in froth--and its monarch shall quake
On his green, oozy throne, as their harping comes
strong,

With the chime of the winds that are bursting along;
For he will remember

The tenth of September,

When he saw his dominions all covered with foam;
And heard the loud war in his echoless home.

Columbia appear!--Be thine olive displayed!

O cheer, with thy smile, all the land and the tide!
Be the anthem we hear, not the song that was made,
When the victims of slaughter stood forth, all arrayed
In blood-dripping garments--and shouted--and died:

But, let us remember

The tenth of September,

When the dark waves of Erie were brightened to day;
And the flames of the battle were quenched in their
spray.

HYMN,

(Sung at the late ordination of Mr. Pierpont
in Boston.*)

O, THOU---the Everlasting!---Thou,
The only God!---Jehovah!--we,
With all thy throned archangels, bow
In hymning and in prayer to thee!

* I can offer no other apology for having ventured upon this species of composition--than the true one. It is this--indignation at the miserable, trashy---not to say blasphemous, versifications of scripture abroad, purporting to be SACRED SONGS--and DIVINE HYMNS--alike destitute of magnificence and sublimity--of the royal magnificence of Solomon--and the great simplicity of Isaiah--having nothing of the monarch, less of the prophet--and still less of the bard to recommend them, in their English dress.

The attempt was a bold one--and I feel that I have failed--for I am not *satisfied* with what I have done--yet as I could not--if I would---produce any thing *worse* than I have seen, and as I *might* produce something better, I have made the attempt. May it lead others--with a better knack at versifying--to a proper veneration for the noble simplicity---and richness---the unadulterated and vast sublimity of scripture.

Around thy cloud-encompassed throne,
 Where unseen harps for ever ring;
 Where everlasting trumps are blown;
 And Kings—and Bards—and Prophets sing—

We kneel—O, God!—with them that were
 Thy chosen ones on earth:—we bow,
 With crowned multitudes, in prayer,
 And ask thy blessing—Father, now.

On this, thy flock, assembled here,
 And him to whom thou hast called to thee,
 Commissioned, Father!—to appear,
 In thy consuming ministry:

O, Thou!—to whom thy people came,
 In ancient time—with songs and prayers:
 Whose servant saw thee, wrapped in flame—
 O be our God, as thou art theirs!

TO _____.

'TIS true—I have not known thee long;
 Yet I have worshipped—blamed—and loved thee;
 For thou'rt so like a thing of song,
 That I have dreamt of—ardent—young—
 Changing with every thing that moved thee:

That I have dwelt upon thine eye,
 So happy—clear—and mild—and blue,
 'Till I have seen the loveliest sky!
 Come down in a dissolving dye,
 And drop with heaven—and light—and dew!

At night I've prayed 'till I have wept,
 To think what sorrows might beset thee;
 While visions to my bosom crept,
 'Till I forgot to breathe—and slept—
 But—even in sleep—could not forget thee:
 Again would come thy soft blue eye,
 Melting again in light and love;
 Again thy lip would change its dye,
 My soul would leave my lip—and I,
 Would wander in my dreams above;
 Then heart—to heart—I'd meet thee, where,
 A pure, transparent heaven was swelling—
 I'd feel the floating of thy hair
 Upon my breast—and kneel in prayer
 With thee—with thee!—in thy blue dwelling.

But then—oh! we should never wake,
 When dreams like these sing to our heart—
 Nor ever, by one murmur, break
 The charm that binds their wing—they take
 Such long—long farewells when they part;
 Bright one, adieu!—no hour is near,
 When I may pour my thoughts to thee—

Thou'lt be my soul enchantment dear,
 Yet will thou never know it here—
 But some fresh day—some summer year,
 In yon blue heaven, we'll both appear—
 Just like my dreams—as pure—as free.

The following lines were hastily—very hastily written,
 on seeing the celebrated Mr. Wood touch off a
 likeness—as usual—in the twinkling of an eye.

To the Genius of Painting.

YOUNG wanton of our sunniest dreaming!
 Dear child of heaven!
 With lighted eye---and loose-hair streaming,
 Like meteors o'er the brow of even!
 Who comest—strangely fair,
 And sittest on the air,
 With pencil dripping light!—and eye
 Intent on nature's imagery,
 To catch her fleetest, loveliest beaming.

O stay thy fairy mimickry—
 Suspend thy life-enkindling power—
 One moment---wanton!---while I try
 To show thee to the world, as I
 Have seen thee in my lonely hour:

O, grant my prayer!
 Withhold thy hand awhile—
 Thy wondrous hand—and smile—
 Bind up thy streaming hair,
 That I may catch thee, child of heaven!
 And show thee—as to me thou'rt given.
 See ye—'tis there!—how blithsomenly it goes—
 With every feather trembling—round it flows,
 An air-spun mantle, coloured with the rose.

That is the genius!—see!
 How gloriously, wild and free—
 All light, and fire, and energy!
 How carelessly he treads the air,
 Collecting hues and sun-beams there—
 And flashing—sprinkling—all about—
 The canvass that's before him—
 Ten thousand tints of nameless hue—
 Of mingling sunshine—tender blue—
 The gushing of the happy heart,
 The lustre of the kindling eye—
 When lifted to the evening sky—
 Now pausing—dwelling—touching out
 The secret meaning of each part—
 The faint and tearful tenderness—
 The thought that nothing can express—
 O, who would not adore him!

'Tis done—the mingling tints grow warm—
 Within the wash appears a form,
 Peering like Iris thro' the storm;—

The lightning—that he caught but now
From yonder cloud—beneath a brow,
Of loveliness and roguery,
Is flashing fast and wickedly.
You've "seen it!"—hey?—you "know that face?"—
"The young coquette!"—all light and grace:
'Tis she indeed—and now, the tint
That on his fire-tipped pencil dwelt—
A rose-bud's heart that seemed to melt—
Is changed into a lip—and now the dew,
That he just pilfered from a flower—
Yet freshly weeping from a shower,
Is sprinkled o'er its pulpy red—
And now
My conscience! what a chase I'm led
This painting—sure—the devil's in't.

SONG.

I'VE loved to hear the war-horn's cry,
And panted at the drum's deep roll;
And held my breath, when—flaming high—
I've seen our starry banners fly,
As challenging the haughty sky,
They stirred the battle in my soul:
For I was so adventurous then,
I burnt to be the slave—of men.

I've looked upon the morning light,
Flushing its standard far and free;
And seen it struggle with the night,
And loved it, for it told of fight;
And every flash that triumph'd bright,
Seemed glance of glorious Liberty!
For I was fanciful and wild,
As youthful Freedom's freest child.

I've sailed upon the dark-blue deep:
I've shouted to the eaglet soaring;
And hung me from a rocking steep,
When all but spirits were asleep;
And oh, my very soul would leap!
To hear its gallant waters roaring;
For every sound that told of life,
To me, was but the voice of strife.

But, I am strangely altered now--
I love no more the bugle's voice--
The rushing wave--the plunging prow--
The mountain's tempest-clouded brow--
The daring--the exulting flow
Of all that made me once rejoice--
I've learnt to talk of tears--and sighs--
And locks of gold--and dying eyes!

The Lyre of the Winds.

HARK! 'tis the harp's wild minstrel tone,
Convulsive—quivering—strange and lone:
Now bursting on the ear—now gone—
Now piping 'mid the breeze, as tho' it told
That some bright spirit had to heaven flown,
And angel-trumpets had its welcome blown!
And now, so full of pomp—so deep—so bold,
So strong—so steady were its numbers roll'd,
As if Prediction smote its trembling chords,
And with the weight of prophecy oppressed them;
Then such rich tones concealed her fearful words,
As if dear Pity had herself expressed them:
So indistinct these murmurs were,
They seemed, sometimes, still less than air;
Sometimes—as if the shrinking strings
Were swept by Phrensy's burning wings—
Now with an unknown spirit speaking,
Now ringing fierce and sharp! now low,
With startling nearness, pealing now,
Now—distant—faint—and sad—and slow—
Like Feeling's murmurs, when her heart is breaking:
Or sounds we dream of, when our souls are waking.
Now like the flute, whose trancing note,
In visions, o'er our memories float,
As all along the trembling air
It seems to send its spirit there;
And now—the pipe's deep, drowsy, breath,
Complaining like the march of death—

And now, the fiery hautboy's cry,
 Echoing along the clear blue sky!
 And now—a lightly shouting strain,
 As if, across the slumbering main,
 GREEN ERIN'S BARDS—a shadowy train—
 Were tuning all their harps again:
 And now—the ardent—quivering lyre
 Flashing and chiming higher—higher—
 And now the sea-nymph's winding shell,
 Stealing like sighs through ocean cell—
 From where the minstrel mermaids dwell:
 Now a silvery sob, as of elf-babe straying;
 Now distant, yet clear, like fairy-steed neighing,
 When it springs on the air with a spirited shake,
 And is answered again from the hare-bell and brake;
 And bright little warriors jump up—all awake!
 When the cry of their bugles are heard for the strife,
 And it gallops abroad full of laughter and life;
 When a diamond-edged scymetar swings from each side,
 And their streamers sing clearly and sharp as they ride;
 When Echo leans forward and mimicks the sound,
 And Melody leaps to their helmet's fine ringing;
 And the minstrels of fairy-land, prancing around,
 On cymbal-hoofed chargers—are shouting and singing,
 And the sweet, bustling sounds are all dancing and light,
 As if spirits of harmony mingled in fight,
 And clank'd their ton'd armour, and pour'd their sweet
 breath,
 In a struggle for Melody's wind-woven wreath.

ERRATA.

The following errors occur in a few copies only; most of them having been discovered before the form was entirely worked off.

In the Dedication, for your's read *yours*; page 7, line 9, for *its* read *their*; line 12, for *it* read *they*; page 17, for "we have worn the *opinions of her criticism* on all subjects," read "we have worn the opinions of *Rome—her criticism* on all subjects;" page 38, line 25, for *it* read *them*; page 45, for "they pass like thoughts o'er a clear blue *sky*," read "they pass like thoughts o'er a clear-blue *eye*;" page 56, line 3, for *glitiered* read *glittering*; line 20, for *filicitous*, read *felicitous*:— page 82— the reader will understand by these words "THE TIME EMPLOYED IS THREE DAYS"—not the time of the *first canto*, as it would seem from the position of the words—but the time of the whole poem; page 98, line 6, for *quits* read *visits*; page 110, line 11, substitute a *comma* for the *semicolon*, at the end of the line—the *sense*, (if there be any,) is materially affected by the present reading; page 116, line 27, substitute a *period* for a *comma*; page 154, line 8, for *give* read *given*; page 235, line 26, for *were* read *we're*; page 236, line 9, for *angel's wings* read *angel-wings*; this *important* alteration is made that the line may be decently musical.

The reader is desired to spell *wariour*, *terror*, and such words with an *u*, throughout the whole book. I am not particularly partial to Dr. Johnson, but I have sufficient respect to the best standard in our language, to follow it, even in trifles—and I did follow it, but the *improvements* of the printer have rendered this note necessary.

And, finally, the reader will be good enough to add the following note to page 56; referring to it from the word *poet* in the *first line*. It was omitted in an unaccountable manner.

Note.—Or rather, that criticism was *poetry*: for I have some reason to believe—and have said so from the first, tho' *assured* to the contrary, from what I regarded as the best authority—that both of these criticisms were from the *same* pen! If I am right—I have only to say that my judgment is founded on the composition—not on the authors. It is very possible for a random criticism to hit judiciously sometimes—and to appear, when it does, as the consequence of good taste and correct feeling—perhaps too, of even a poetical imagination. If I am right—and I believe I am, I can only wonder that a tolerable genius may be so miserably eclipsed—a tolerable taste, turned so cruelly awry; and then offer one word of advice to the author:—it is this—*if you are praised for a good thing, don't repeat it: the prettiest thoughts are apt to become mighty silly in the second edition—particularly, when the author has time enough to be original—and too little quicksilver in his composition to be believed, when he says that, in the hurry of his feeling, he stole from him:—if. Besides, and you would do well to remember it—a very just and very pretty remark made on one subject, may become very stupid, pert and ridiculous, when applied to another. So, be careful!—and if you should chance to be praised again for saying a smart thing—take care not to repeat it in the same company, at least, 'till you are very sure it will apply.*

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