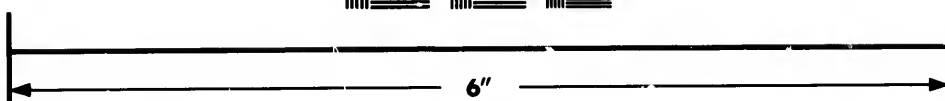
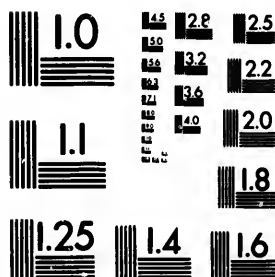


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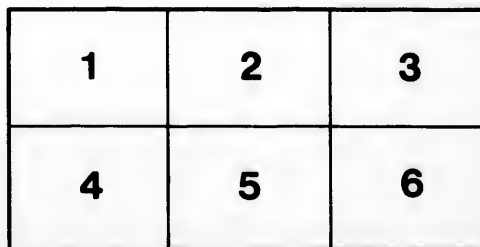
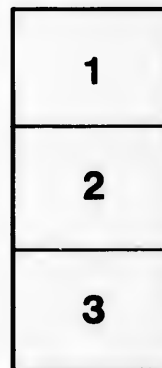
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Wm Lloyd Garrison

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POEMS OF WORDSWORTH

(FROM ARNOLD'S SELECTIONS)

EDITED BY

J. E. WETHERELL, B.A.,

Principal of Strathroy Collegiate Institute.

WITH A

Memoir of Wordsworth by PROF. WM. CLARK, LL.D., Trinity University, Toronto ; An Essay on The Literary Mission of Wordsworth by Principal Grant, Queen's University, Kingston ; Monograph on the Esthetic Use of Wordsworth's Poetry, together with Examination Papers, by WM. HOUSTON, M.A. ; A Critical Estimate of Wordsworth by PROF. CHARLES G. D. ROBERTS, M.A., King's College, Windsor, N.S.

TORONTO :

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PREFACE.

The present volume contains those poems of Wordsworth that have been prescribed by the University of Toronto for the Pass Matriculation Examination, and adopted by the Education Department for the Junior Leaving Examination.

The text in the main is that of Matthew Arnold's edition; but, as Wordsworth frequently revised his poems, and as Arnold has taken it upon himself to select in each case the version that suited his own poetic taste, often rejecting Wordsworth's final reading for an earlier one, a study of variants becomes useful if not necessary. This study in synonyms and poetic phrasing will prove very interesting to the thoughtful student. All the materials for such a literary exercise will be found in the full table of variant readings contained in the notes of this edition.

The Memoir of Wordsworth by Professor Clark of Trinity College will be found to contain all the information of a biographical nature that the young student will need.

The article on The Literary Mission of Wordsworth by Principal Grant is an excellent treatment of one of the most interesting themes in the literary history of the century.

Mr. Wm. Houston's chapter on the Esthetic Use of Wordsworth's Poetry, containing a plan of study, is rich in matter and suggestion. This article, it is believed, will be welcomed

by all teachers of English literature in Ontario. Mr. Houston has added a number of examination questions, which are intended to illustrate the views he has embodied in his paper. What he has to say on the use of written examinations in general is based on long experience and observation of their working, and cannot fail to prove useful to both teachers and examiners.

The judicial estimate of Prof. Roberts concerning the place of Wordsworth among English bards will attract wide attention. The chief poet of Canada shows us clearly that Matthew Arnold's estimate of Wordsworth's genius is misleading and demands correction.

The pleasing sketch from *The Athenæum* on Dorothy and William Wordsworth will help the reader to appreciate more than one of the poems in this selection.

For obvious reasons the Notes on the poems in the present edition are somewhat numerous. Those teachers of English who look askance at annotated texts will of necessity make an exception in the case of Wordsworth. The poet himself has even condescended to be his own interpreter and annotator, and his abundant comments and delightful literary gossip have added many pages to the Notes.

The "Poetic Tributes to Wordsworth" at the end of this volume speak for themselves. Those from the poems of Matthew Arnold and William Watson find a place here through the courtesy of Messrs. MacMillan.

STRATHROY, July 8th, 1892.



WORDSWORTH'S WALK.

MEMOIR OF WORDSWORTH

BY

WILLIAM CLARK, M.A.,

Honorary LL. D., D. C. L., F. R. S. C.

The place of Wordsworth in the foremost rank of English Poets is now established beyond all question. Critics will always differ as to the exact order in which our foremost poets are to be ranged. Whilst Shakespeare holds the post of pre-eminence unquestioned, and Milton is generally put next, although some claim the third place for Spenser, there are many who will place Wordsworth next to Milton,

and the general consent will put few between them. If Wordsworth were to be judged only by his highest flights, hardly any place could be too exalted to assign to him ; if judged by the whole bulk of his poetry, he must stand lower. Few poets have risen to so eminent a poetic height ; no great poet has written so much which is unworthy of his genius. It must be acknowledged that hardly any poet has ever been so independent and self-sufficing. It might be argued that the mighty Shakespeare himself was more largely influenced by his contemporaries than was Wordsworth.

The Poet was the son of John Wordsworth, a solicitor and agent to Mr. Lowther, afterwards Earl of Lonsdale. He was born on the 7th day of April, 1770, at Cocker-mouth, a small town situated at the confluence of the Cocker and the Derwent, on the borders of that lake district which he was afterwards to render so famous. Scott was one year younger, Coleridge two years, and Southey four. In speaking of the comparative independence of Wordsworth's genius, it would be a great mistake to ignore the great forces, literary and political, which were operating during his life. He was nineteen years of age when the great French Revolution broke out ; and he, as well as Southey and Coleridge, at first regarded the explosion with sympathy and hopefulness, if afterwards they were strong in their denunciations of it. Both states of mind are quite intelligible ; and the taunts and jibes of Byron and others, directed against the "Lakers" as turncoats, were unreasonable and absurd.

No less remarkable were the literary influences than the political. Pope was dead only twenty-six

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years, and his authority was already a thing of the past. Gray died the year after Wordsworth was born. Although Wordsworth has been called the High Priest of Nature, he was not the first to herald the return from the artificiality of the age of Queen Anne. Cowper, born forty years earlier, and Burns, eleven, had both contributed powerfully to the restoration of more natural forms of thought and expression. We shall presently have to notice the influence of Coleridge also.

As a child, according to his own statement, Wordsworth was "of a stiff, moody, violent temper," and his mother, while declaring that his future life would be remarkable for good or evil, also said that he was the only one of her five children about whose future she was anxious. She died when William was only eight years of age; and he was sent to school at the small market town of Hawkshead in the north-eastern corner of Lancashire, only a few miles from Ambleside. We learn from the "Prelude" that even in these early days he had begun to feel the power of nature:

"Ye mountains and ye lakes
And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
That dwell among the hills where I was born,
If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasures, and have lived
With God and Nature communing, removed
From little enmities and low desires—
The gift is yours."

No words could better describe the spirit and manner of the poet's life or the influences by which he was moulded. When he was fourteen, his father died, and from that time his education became the care of his two uncles, by whom he was sent to St. John's Col-

lege, Cambridge, in 1787, when he was in his eighteenth year, and he took his Bachelor's degree in 1791.

During one of his Cambridge vacations Wordsworth made a pedestrian tour on the continent, in company with a Mr. Jones, an undergraduate of the same university. It was the hopeful era of the great Revolution, and the sympathies and hopes of the Poet were enlisted on its side. He tells us of his meeting with a number of deputies who had been sitting in the National Assembly at Paris :

"In this proud company
We landed—took with them our evening meal,
Guests welcome almost as the angels were
To Abraham of old. The supper done,
With flowing cups elate and happy thoughts
We rose at signal given, and formed a ring,
And, hand in hand, danced round and round the board ;
All hearts were open, every tongue was loud
With amity and glee."

It was not long before this period of sunshine was obscured by gathering clouds ; and, when Wordsworth returned to France in 1791, after taking his degree, he became involved with the Girondins, and he says himself that it was probably only through circumstances which necessitated his return to England that he escaped the guillotine.

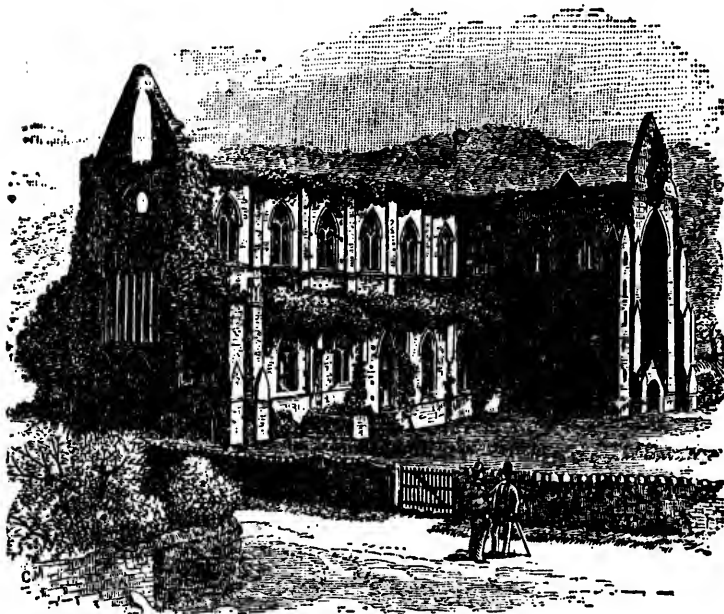
Wordsworth's first publication was in 1793, when he put forth "Descriptive Sketches" and "An Evening Walk." The volume, if it made no great stir among the public at large, deeply impressed one who was destined to be the only potent literary influence in Wordsworth's life, and who probably received from him more than he imparted, Samuel Taylor Coleridge. "Seldom, if ever," he declares, "was the emergence of an original poetic genius

above the literary horizon more evidently announced."

In 1795 the Poet took up his residence with his sister Dora at Racedown in Dorsetshire; and whilst there he wrote "Guilt and Sorrow" and the "Borderers," a tragedy, neither of which was published until many years afterwards, except a portion of "Guilt and Sorrow," which was put forth under the title of "The Female Vagrant," in 1798. It is generally agreed that the tragedy proved conclusively Wordsworth's lack of dramatic power; but the "Lines left upon a Seat in a Yew-tree," written about the same time and published in 1798, contain within them the promise of true poetic greatness. The "Ruined Cottage," which is now a part of Book I. of "The Excursion," the story of Margaret, was written about the same time, and is declared by Coleridge to be "superior to anything in our language which in any way resembles it."

It was at this time that Wordsworth made the acquaintance of Coleridge; and in order to be near him, he removed, in 1797, to Alfoxden, in Somersetshire, under the shadow of the Quantock Hills. In the same year the two poets, together with Wordsworth's sister, took a pedestrian tour through the west of England, which resulted in the publication of the "Lyrical Ballads" in 1798, followed by a second and enlarged edition in 1800. It was the joint production of Coleridge and Wordsworth, the former of whom wrote four of the poems, and the latter eighteen. The volume began with Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner," and ended with Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey." Among the other poems included in this collection were Coleridge's "Foster Mother's Tale," and "The

Nightingale," and Wordsworth's "We are Seven," "The Thorn," "The Last of the Flock," and "The Idiot Boy." The second volume contained four of the poems on Lucy, written in 1799. The remaining poem, which begins "I travelled among unknown men," seems to have been written about the same



TINTERN ABBEY.

time, but was not published until 1807. These poems are of surpassing beauty, and the best of them are found in this collection. In the issue of 1800 were also included "Ruth," "Luey Gray," "Matthew," "The Pet Lamb," and others.

If the first publication of the Lyrical Ballads was received with a mingled feeling of disregard and contempt, the Essay which accompanied the second volume aroused the rage of the critics; for it was a

declaration that the style adopted in the poems was no matter of accident, but the result and expression of a principle. "The principal object," said Wordsworth, "proposed in these poems was to choose incidents and situations from common life, and to relate and describe them throughout, as far as was possible, in a selection of language really used by men, and, at the same time, to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual aspect. Humble and rustic life was generally chosen, because in that condition the essential passions of the heart find a better soil in which they can attain their maturity, are less under restraint, and speak a plainer and more emphatic language." Coleridge, in his "Biographia Literaria," declares that the outcry against the poems was caused not so much by the contents, for, he says, "the removal of less than a hundred lines would have precluded nine-tenths of the criticism of this work."

"In the critical remarks, therefore," he goes on, "prefixed and annexed to the Lyrical Ballads, I believe, we may safely rest, as the true origin of the unexampled opposition which Mr. Wordsworth's writings have been since doomed to encounter. The humbler passages in the poems themselves were dwelt on and cited to justify the rejection of the theory. What in and for themselves would have been either forgotten or forgiven as imperfections, or at least comparative failures, provoked direct hostility when announced as intentional, as the result of choice after full deliberation. Thus the poems, admitted by all as excellent, joined with those which had pleased a far greater number,

though they formed two-thirds of the whole work, instead of being deemed an atonement for the few exceptions, gave wind and fuel to the animosity against both the poems and the poet."

It must be confessed that both in these early poems and also in some of his later writings, Wordsworth put a considerable strain upon his theory and upon the prejudices of his readers. In the striving after simplicity the poet does, beyond all question, now and then descend to what an irreverent critic would call twaddle or namby pamby. Yet, for all that, it cannot be denied that Wordsworth has triumphed. Ridiculed not only by the powerful pen of Byron but by the acknowledged leaders of criticism in his own day, he kept on his steadfast way until he not only obtained full recognition as a true poet, but is now, by universal consent, numbered among the first five or six names in the English Parnassus.

In a later chapter of the "Biographia Literaria" Coleridge gives an account of the origin of the Lyrical Ballads which the reader may be glad to see, especially as this publication formed an era in the history of English poetry. We reproduce his remarks in a somewhat abridged form. "During the first year that Mr. Wordsworth and I were neighbours," he remarks—that is in the year 1797—"our conversations frequently turned on the two cardinal points of poetry, the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colours of imagination. The sudden charm which accidents of light and shade, which moonlight or sunset diffused

over a known and familiar landscape, appeared to represent the practicability of combining both. These are the poetry of nature. The thought suggested itself (to which of us I do not recollect), that a series of poems might be composed of two sorts. In the one, the incidents and agents were to be, in part at least, supernatural; and the excellence aimed at was to consist in the interesting of the affections by the dramatic truth of such emotions, which would naturally accompany such situations, supposing them real. For the second class, subjects were to be chosen from ordinary life; the characters and incidents were to be such as will be found in every village and its vicinity, where there is a meditative and feeling mind to seek after them, or to notice them, when they present themselves.

“In this idea originated the plan of the *Lyrical Ballads*; in which it was agreed, that my endeavours should be directed to persons and characters supernatural, or at least romantic; yet so as to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith. Mr. Wordsworth, on the other hand, was to propose to himself as his object, to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention to the lethargy of custom, and directing it to the loveliness and the wonders of the world before us; an inexhaustible treasure, but for which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude, we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not, and hearts that neither feel nor under-

stand." It is interesting to learn from him that "The Dark Ladie" and "Christabel" were intended to appear in this collection, but had not been written when Wordsworth was ready with his contribution. It is superfluous to remark that every word of Coleridge's criticism is of value, and deserves to be weighed by those who would understand the Lyrical Ballads and the genius of Wordsworth in general.

It should be mentioned that several of the most beautiful poems in the second volume of the Lyrical Ballads were written in Germany during the winter of 1798 and 1799. Wordsworth and his sister were accompanied by Coleridge as far as Hamburg; and when he proceeded first to Ratzeburg, where he spent four months, and afterwards to Göttingen, for five more, where he studied German philosophy and other subjects, Wordsworth and Dora proceeded to Goslar, in Hanover, on the borders of the Hartz Forest, where they spent a bitter winter in comparative isolation. Unlike Coleridge, who became saturated with German ideas, Wordsworth was living his old English life over again, producing, among other poems, "Lucy Gray," the four poems on "Lucy," "Ruth," "The Fountain," "Matthew," and "Nutting."

The last of these poems, he tells us, was intended as part of a poem on his own life, but struck out as not being wanted there. The verses arose out of the remembrance of feelings he had often had when a boy, and particularly in the woods that stretch from the side of Erthwaite Lake towards Grasmere. He left Goslar on the 10th of February, 1799, and at this time wrote the opening passage of the "Prelude." In December of the same year he and his sister removed to Grasmere, where the poet spent

the remaining years of his life, first in a two-storied cottage at Town-End, where they lived until 1808. They were at Allan Bank until 1811, two years at the Parsonage of Grasmere, and afterwards at Rydal Mount. It has already been mentioned that the second volume of Lyrical Ballads was published in 1800, shortly after his removal to Grasmere.

About midsummer in 1802 the poet and his sister paid a visit to France. In crossing Westminster Bridge he composed the sonnet beginning "Earth has not anything to show more fair," which, he tells us, he wrote on the roof of a coach on his way to France. But this year was notable for a much more memorable event in his history, his marriage to his cousin, Mary Hutchinson, of whom three years later he wrote the lines beginning :

"She was a phantom of delight,"

sketching the comparison of her life as girl, as woman, as wife, in lines of inimitable beauty, concluding

"A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warn, to comfort, and command
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel-light."

In the year of his marriage he wrote some of his finest poems, "Alice Fell," "Beggars," "My Heart Leaps Up When I Behold," containing the famous line, "The Child is Father of the Man," "Resolution and Independence," and others.

In 1803 Wordsworth, his sister, and Coleridge made their visit to Scotland. They visited the Land of Burns and proceeded to the Highlands; but Coleridge fell ill and was forced to leave them at Loch

Lomond. During this tour Wordsworth wrote a good many poems which give evidences of the circumstances of their origin. Perhaps the most striking of these are the beautiful lines, "To a Highland Girl," written at Inversnaid, on Loch Lomond, beginning :

" Sweet Highland Girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower ! "

But there are others not unworthy to hold a place beside these lines, among which may be mentioned "Stepping Westward," "The Solitary Reaper," "At the Grave of Burns," and "Yarrow Unvisited," to be followed in after years by "Yarrow Visited" and "Yarrow Revisited."

It has been said that the first or youthful period of Wordsworth's poetical life and work came to an end in 1808, his middle and mature period in 1818, the remaining years representing his decadence. Among the poems belonging to the first period special mention should be made of the noble "Ode to Duty," beginning, "Stern Daughter of the Voice of God," the ode "To the Skylark," and "The Waggoner," written in 1805, the glorious "Ode on Intimations of Immortality" (1803-1806), which has contested with "Lycidas," the honor of being the high-water mark of English poetry. We should also mention the "Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle," and "The White Doe of Rylestone," written in 1807.

During the next ten years Wordsworth produced many minor poems, such as "Laodameia" (1814), the "Lines to Haydon," beginning, "High is our calling, Friend" (1815), the "Ode to Lycius" (1817), the ode "Composed upon an Evening of Extraordinary Splendour and Beauty" (1818), beginning "Had this efful-

gence disappeared," which has been called the last fine poem which Wordsworth wrote, and "The Excursion," which belongs mainly to this second period, his longest, but not his greatest poem (1795-1814.)

Wordsworth's longest poem was to consist of three parts, "The Prelude," which was the earliest written (1799-1805), although it was not published until after his death in 1850; "The Excursion," consisting of



HAWKSHEAD SCHOOL HOUSE.

nine books, probably written, for the most part, after the Prelude and published in 1814. "The Recluse," which remained a mere fragment, and was first published in 1888, was intended to be the first division of the second part. The third was only planned. We shall best explain the poet's intention with regard to this work by following the guidance which he affords us in the Preface to the edition of 1814:

"The portion then published," he remarks, "belongs to the second part of a long and laborious work which is to consist of three parts." He would have preferred to publish these parts in their natural order; but "as the second division of the work was designed to refer more to passing events, and to an existing state of things, than the others were meant to do, more continuous exertion was naturally bestowed upon it, and greater progress made here than in the rest of the poem," and so he had complied with the earnest request of friends to give that portion of his work to the public.

The general title intended to be given to the work, "The Recluse," was derived more particularly from the first part, known as "The Prelude." Intending the whole poem to be the principal monument of his genius, "a literary book that might live," he thought it "a reasonable thing to take a review of his own mind and examine how far Nature and Education had qualified him for such employment. . . . That work, addressed to a dear Friend [S. T. Coleridge], most distinguished for his knowledge and genius, and to whom the author's intellect is deeply indebted, has been long finished. . . . The preparatory poem is biographical, and conducts the history of the author's mind to the point when he was emboldened to hope that his faculties were sufficiently matured for entering upon the arduous labour which he had proposed to himself." This portion, as we have said, was published in 1850, under the title of "The Prelude, or, Growth of a Poet's Mind; an Autobiographical Poem." Coleridge, who had seen the Prelude in MS., described it as

" An Orphic song indeed,
A song divine, of high and passionate thoughts,
To their own music chanted ! "

Coleridge may possibly have been right and the Public wrong ; but this poem can hardly be said to have added to its writer's reputation in any way.

The nine books of the "Excursion" have many fine passages, but their general effect is heavy and prosaic. The principal personage introduced is The Wanderer, described as a Scotch Pedlar, but really representing Wordsworth himself. The other principal characters are The Solitary and The Pastor. There are many passages of great poetic beauty, of subtle thought, of deep spiritual insight in this poem ; but the reader is provoked by the air of superiority with which the tamest and the dullest work is forced on his attention. As Mr. Matthew Arnold remarks : " Work altogether inferior, work quite uninspired, flat, and dull, is produced by him with evident unconsciousness of its defects, and he presents it to us with the same faith and seriousness as his best work."

After 1818 Wordsworth published a good deal, perhaps a full third of the whole of his literary work, and there are some charming odes, which may be culled from his various collections, but the old level is not maintained. In 1820 he visited the Continent again, and two years later he published a series of Odes commemorating the localities visited. In the same year (1820) he wrote and published his Sonnets on the River Duddon. In 1821 he wrote the long series of Ecclesiastical Sonnets, following the course of British and English Church history. They were published in the following year. One poem

is given to *Yarrow Revisited*, written in 1831, the year of his visit to Walter Scott. The last poem of his which we possess is his *Ode on the Installation of Prince Albert as Chancellor of the University of Cambridge*, July, 1847. We reluctantly abstain from indicating lines and poems which are not unworthy of earlier days; and we will notice only one, written in 1824, and published in 1827, addressed to his wife, and beginning: "O dearer far than light and life are dear."

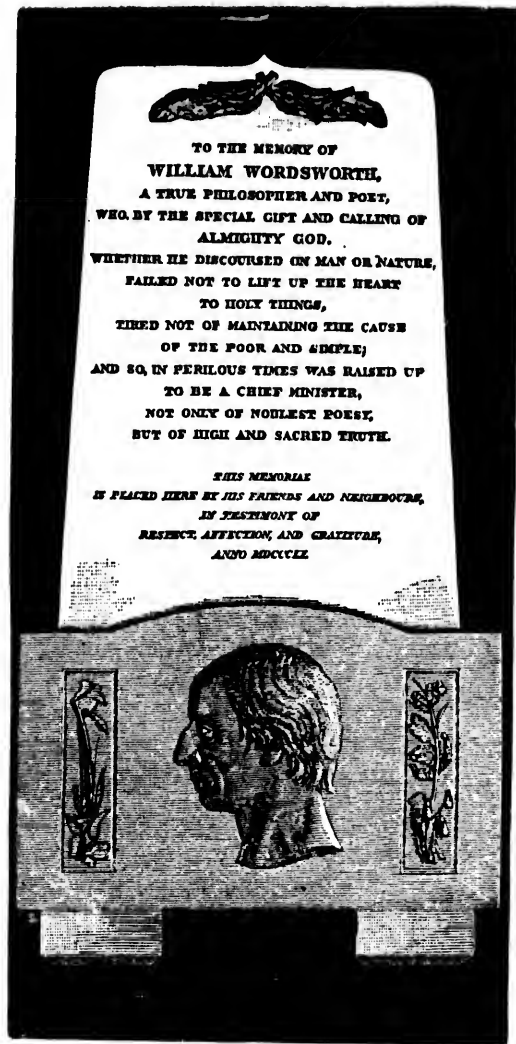
A general view of Wordsworth's genius is given in this volume by a genuine admirer, Principal Grant, the mere mention of whose name is sufficient to commend his work; so that it may be enough merely to add a few words in reference to some of the poet's personal characteristics, and some of the outward incidents of his life not yet mentioned.

Wordsworth is an example of the spiritual man and the mystic who lives above the world, or rather who sees the spiritual aspect and meaning of the world. A man of utter simplicity of character and absolute faith in his own spiritual perceptions, and theories of art, he holds in his way with a calmness, a definiteness of aim, and a certainty of purpose which are at least astonishing. This utter disregard of any worldly advancement was present with him throughout his whole life; and for a good many years he lived on a very small income, yet always with too much self-respect to run into debt. In 1813, at the time of his removal to Rydal Mount, he was made Distributor of Stamps for the County by the Earl of Lonsdale. The duties of the office were performed by a deputy, so that his time was free for his work; and the income of the poet, which was

£500, together with his own slight resources, sufficed amply for all his needs.

His marriage was of the happiest, and brought him three sons and two daughters. In 1839 he received the degree of D.C.L. from Oxford. In 1842 he resigned his post which was given to his second son, Thomas, whilst the poet received a retiring pension of £300 a year. In 1843 he succeeded Southey as Poet Laureate; and he died in 1850, on the 23rd of April, the anniversary of the birth and death of Shakespeare. Wordsworth's character as a man and as a poet is written in his works. A purer, truer, and more spiritual man could hardly have lived. He loved nature, and he loved it as a living thing. To those who are indifferent to nature and disinclined for meditation Wordsworth is a sealed book. What his contemporaries thought of him we can still read on his tombstone* in Grasmere Churchyard, and the words are guilty of no exaggeration.

* See next page.



MEMORIAL TABLET, ST. OSWALDS.

THE LITERARY MISSION OF WORDSWORTH.

BY

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In these days we have come to speak of a poet's mission, implying by the phrase that in his work we recognize something of that spirit and devotion which consecrated the life of prophet or apostle. This point of view, which we might have difficulty in using with some poets, is especially appropriate to Wordsworth. He said himself that he had made no vows, but that unknown to him vows were made for him; and never did ancient prophet or priest feel his call more deeply or live up to it more truthfully. An enthusiastic admirer declared that what he did "was the work which the Baptist did, when he came to the pleasure-laden citizens of Jerusalem to work a reformation; the work which Milton tried to do when he raised that clear calm voice of his to call back his countrymen to simpler manners and to simpler laws."* Wordsworth himself expressed what he felt to be his mission in the comparison of the poet to Phœbus. "The sun," he said, "was personified by the ancients as a charioteer, driving four fiery steeds over the vault of heaven; he was called Phœbus, and was regarded as the god of Poetry, of Prophecy, and of Medicine. Phœbus combined all these characters. And every poet has a similar mission on earth; he

* Lectures and Addresses, p. 241, Robertson of Brighton.

must diffuse health and life; he must prophesy to his generation; he must teach the present age by counselling with the future; he must plead for posterity; and he must imitate Phœbus in guiding and governing all his faculties—fiery steeds though they be—with the most exact precision, lest instead of being a Phœbus he prove a Phæton, and set the world on fire and be hurled from his car; he must rein in his fancy and temper his imagination with the control and direction of sound reason and drive on in the right track with a steady hand." *

That we may understand what was the special work to which Wordsworth was called and how he did it, it is necessary to know something of his environment and also of his time in its relation to the past. Only thus can we understand the right place in history and literature of any great writer.

The astonishing fulness of life, which received its highest expression in Shakespeare, continued throughout the Elizabethan age and became concentrated in Milton, in whom the perfection of Greek art and the moral power of English Puritanism were combined. With the Restoration a new era commenced. The French writers were taken as the models of style and rigour of life was replaced by license. Shakespeare's realism was declared to be barbarous and Milton's religion to be in bad taste. In literature form and in poetry smoothness of versification became paramount. It was an age in which Poets were "most correct and least inspired." This spirit of formalism is no less evident in the religion than in the poetry of the time. The church, though established and armed with ter-

† *Memoirs*, Vol. II., p. 7.

rible laws against non-conformity, scarcely pretended to deal with conduct. When poetry, the supreme expression of the thought of the age, has become largely a matter of conventional rules, a stereotyped form of elegy and pastoral or social satire rather than the intense utterance of a fervid life, it is a sure sign that there is little faith, even among those who in one sphere or another are the natural leaders of the people. The eighteenth century accordingly was not an inspiring time in which to live. France gives us pictures of Dragonnades in the interest of orthodoxy, and court splendour bought by the drudgery of millions; of a nation burdened with debt to adorn a Pompadour, or hurried to the battlefield to avenge an insult offered to her; of hungry crowds whose petition of grievances was answered by a new gallows forty feet high; of the Bastille and of feudal laws and privileges existing side by side with the refined corruption of a later age.

In England the influence of the Puritan revival continued to permeate society, but the isolation of classes, the cruelty of the punishments inflicted by law, the ignorance of the peasantry and the Squires, the deservedly little influence of the clergy, the general coarseness of sentiment and manners, the haughty indifference of the aristocracy to the general welfare, were sure signs that unbelief reigned, and that the fire of heaven burned low and only in obscure corners of the land. Glimpses of the actual state of things are given by Crabbe with prosaic truthfulness, but no prophet voice denounced them and inspired the heart of the people with a faith blossoming out in new heroisms and new psalms. Now, what characterizes the nineteenth century is that its great poets and

prose preachers have kept steadily in view the spiritual meaning of life. The consequence is that they have contributed powerfully to all truly liberal tendencies of the time. Reforms in every sphere have come, and they have come not with poets discoursing on the Rape of the Lock or perfumers' and milliners' shops, or on veiled prophets of Khorassan, or on men and scenes far distant, but—as might have been expected—with poets profoundly impressed with the seriousness, we might say the sacredness, of the work they had undertaken. There has been and there still is continual protest against materialism in philosophy and traditionalism in theology; against unreality of all kinds and injustice of all kinds, and though the old evils are not dead and new ones appear every day, and the century has to bear the accumulated iniquities of the past and the present, yet reform has been made, things are getting better and the battle of truth is being fought hopefully by men of "inwardness, faith and power."

Of all this great movement Wordsworth may be considered the greatest pioneer. Not only so, the quantity and quality of his work is so notable that Matthew Arnold places him, "among the poets who have appeared in the last two or three centuries, after Shakespeare, Moliere, Milton, Goethe indeed, but before all the rest." If he has so few superiors among modern poets, he must have done permanent and splendid work.

Nature was Wordsworth's great teacher; but his ideas took form and colour from the French Revolution, that "grim protest against the conventional and the false," and from the critical philosophy which in Germany was replacing the barren illuminism of a

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previous age. With the first of these forces he came in personal contact. The second influenced him through Coleridge. He began life as an ardent Republican in politics, in poetry, in religion, in everything.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie,
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

No wonder that from the first he protested against the conventionalism that oppressed him in society and literature. When a student, who had learned to commune with the Eternal among the mountains and the lakes, was obliged at college to attend prayers that professors and tutors found superfluous for their own souls, he naturally revolted. But Wordsworth's rebellion was always controlled by his strong, English common sense. A visit to France where he saw the Revolution devouring its own children, drove him almost to despair and atheism, but the very "madness of extremes" taught him, after a while, where the true path lay, and that our highest wisdom is in loyal, loving obedience to the great primary affections and duties of life. From that moment he began to teach the English speaking people the lessons they most needed, and he set himself to this high work with a patience, strength and faith that should at once guide and inspire every true teacher. No vulgar ambition for money, place, power or immediate success made him swerve for a moment from the straight path. "Every great poet is a teacher," he said; "I wish to be considered either as a teacher or nothing." And he that believeth doth not make haste. He laid to heart the warning of Coleridge that "every author as far as he is great, and at the same time original,

must create the taste by which he is to be enjoyed." So, when his friends complained bitterly of the indifference and injustice of the public, he calmly answered, "Make yourselves at rest respecting me; I speak the truths the world must feel at last." His heart was fixed. No matter what others might do, he had chosen the better part. In every sight and sound of nature he found beauty and truth. Keats could say, "Nothing startles me beyond the moment; the setting sun will always set me to rights, or if a sparrow come before my window, I take part in its existence and pick about the gravel," and Wordsworth was physically and spiritually a stronger man than Keats. To him

"Our noisy years seemed moments in the being of the eternal silence,"

but he saw men living as if their few moments were the whole of their life and as if eternal beauty and truth were nothing to them. Everywhere the spirit of worldliness prevailed. He wrote to Lady Beaumont: "It is an awful truth that there neither is, nor can be, any genuine enjoyment of poetry among nineteen out of twenty of those persons who live or wish to live in the broad light of the world, among those who either are, or are striving to make themselves, people of consideration in society. This is a truth and an awful one; because to be incapable of a feeling of poetry, in my sense of the word, is to be without love of human nature and reverence for God."*

Even to the professed teachers of the day, nature seemed little more than a machine and the Bible a catechism. They were in bondage to time and sense

* Memoirs of Wordsworth, Vol. I., p. 333-342.

and could not interpret either nature or the Bible. It was laid upon the poet to cry out against their idolatry, and he did so with the sternness of a Hebrew prophet. His first work was to bring men back to nature, to reveal nature to them as an eternal fountain of beauty, truth and joy ; as from God and god-like ; and to show them " that there is really nothing around us common and negligible." We can hardly understand the revolution that the Lakers, as they were called, effected, or realize how vitiated was public taste and how artificial were the standards and the points of view. James Tobin implored Wordsworth not to publish " We are Seven," because " it would make him everlastingly ridiculous," and when the " Cumberland Beggar " was read to another gentleman, his comment was, " Why ! that is very pretty, but you may call it anything but poetry." The world then could make nothing of a poet to whom

The meanest flower that blows could give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears,

or of an epic the hero of which was an old Scotch p^llar.

But the world did " feel at last." In 1817, Blackwood's Magazine was started with men on its staff who judged poetry by other canons than those of Lord Jeffrey ; and in the next year John Wilson proclaimed in its pages what manner of man Wordsworth was. The tide turned and it rose so high that when he went up to Oxford to receive the honorary degree that had been conferred on him, " scarcely had his name been pronounced, than from three thousand voices at once there broke forth a burst of

applause, echoed and taken up again and again, when it seemed about to die away, and that thrice repeated" by undergraduates and Masters of Arts alike. Arnold of Rugby, who was present, tells how striking the scene was to him, "remembering how old Coleridge had inoculated a little knot of us with the love of Wordsworth, when his name was in general a byword." Wordsworth had taught England once more to appreciate spiritual truth.

Wordsworth then in his teaching started from nature. So did the Great Teacher—with reverence be it said—who taught men to see the character of God in the lilies of the field, and taught them the best of the good news of the Kingdom by pointing to the sun that shone and the rain that fell on the evil as on the good. Wordsworth felt that in bringing us to nature he was bringing us to God; that thus we would be freed from those petty self-seeking aims that mean death to the intellect as well as to the spirit, and turn us into human beavers, or tigers, or apes; and he believed that we would get with the new points of view, a serene atmosphere, angels' food, and deliverance from self-imposed burdens. For said he, "not by bread alone is the life of man sustained, not by raiment alone is he warmed; but by the genial and vernal inmate of the breast, which at once pushes forth and cherishes; by self-support and self-sufficing endeavours; by anticipations, apprehensions, and active remembrances; by elasticity under insult and firm resistance to injury; by joy and by love; by pride which his imagination gathers in from afar; by patience, because life wants not promises; by admiration; by gratitude, which—debasing him not when his fellow being is its object—habitually ex-

pands itself, for his elevation, in complacency towards his Creator."*

The religion of nature so far as it goes is true, but man is the interpreter and high priest of nature, and in his life and heart are the riddles of existence read. Wordsworth gave back to the world not only the love of nature which it had well nigh lost, but also faith in humanity. To the all-absorbing love which is the stock-in-trade of the average novelist, he paid little heed, probably because that passion intensifies individualism and is always perilously near to selfishness. He dealt rather with the perennial affections, the love of husband and wife, of mother and child, of brother and sister, and with the primary duties, those that we owe to home, to friends, to country, and to that which is highest in man. He has been accused of losing his own faith; of beginning as a democrat and ending as an aristocrat, and even Browning assailed him with his indignant

"Just for a handful of silver he left us,"

but Browning confessed afterwards that he was wrong. Stationariness is not consistency. A man must sometimes change the form of his ideas to be true to their principle. When Wordsworth was a Radical, he did not mean that one man was as good as another, but that if he were true to the divine in him, no matter at what work he was engaged, he was worthy of all honour. In later years when he was a Tory, he did not mean that the name, wealth or plush made the man, but that the best way of discovering and of encouraging insight, independence and worth, was to have different orders in society on a just basis

* Convention of Cintra, p. 164-5.

and to have the lines of each frankly defined. He may have been extreme at both periods, but in aim and principle he never varied. He was the great teacher to his age of the oneness and the essential worth of humanity. In opposition to the conventional habit of looking at "persons of quality" and "the masses" as two distinct orders of beings, as well as in opposition to the two great facts of modern society—the accumulation of wealth and the division of labour,—he drew his characters to show that there is but one human heart, and that the great lack in the land was the lack of sympathy between the different classes. Duty was to him the supreme watchword, because the supreme reality, and in his loftiest conception of it, the greatest of the Greek Poets scarcely surpassed him either in sympathy with beauty or in perfection of artistic form :

Stern Lawgiver! Yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds
And fragrance in thy footing treads;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh and strong.

When he identified duty with patriotism—and he did so at the right moment—Burns himself was not more intense. The man who had welcomed the French Revolution cried out at the prospect of an invasion of England :

We must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake, the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held.

This then was Wordsworth's mission; to deliver men from conventionalism and insincerity, and to reveal to them nature and the living God; to exalt

the spiritual over the material, the eternal over the transitory, duty over appetite. In Christ he found all truth ; and the essence of Christian education was a contemplating of the character and personal history of Christ. "Work it," he said, "into your thoughts, into your imagination, make it a real presence in the mind." The spiritual law so powerfully affirmed by Keats, applies to every manifestation of the Eternal and most fully therefore to the highest, "What the Imagination seizes as beauty must be Truth."



WORDSWORTH'S POETRY.

BY

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If it be true, as Arnold said, that "almost every one who has praised Wordsworth's poetry has praised it well," the explanation is perhaps not far to seek. It lies partly in the poetry itself, whose charm stands so small a chance of being discovered by the indiscriminating or vulgarized by the familiarities of incompetent enthusiasm; and partly in the fact that the lovers of Wordsworth have felt the task of justifying their passion to the world to be one that required the exercise of their utmost powers. At the present day, when Wordsworth criticism, having freed itself from the personal element, has ceased to be controversial, it is easy to understand the vehement differences of opinion between critics on the subject of Wordsworth's genius. We can comprehend, and perhaps make allowance for, the attitude of Jeffrey when, on reading the "Lyrical Ballads," he exclaimed "This will never do!" We can appreciate, on the other hand, the veiled enthusiasm of Arnold, which led him to set Wordsworth immediately after Shakespeare, Milton, Goethe, in the pantheon of modern poets, and to claim for him a definite superiority over his equals—Hugo, Byron, Shelley, Heine, Burns, and others. There could hardly be a more persuasive and seem-

ingly disinterested statement of an extravagant claim than is afforded by Arnold's famous essay. For all the pains he took to divest himself of prejudice, Arnold was biased by that very Wordsworthianism which, in some of its more obtrusive phases, he impales so delicately on the point of his urbane derision. Arnold was brought up in the camp of militant Wordsworthianism; and there was that in Wordsworth's poetry which responded irresistibly to Arnold's personal needs, as also to the personal needs of many others of the best minds of England, fretted as they were by the modern unrest. Hence it was as inevitable that Arnold should tend to an overestimate of Wordsworth, as that he should fall into a depreciation of Shelley;—so hard is it to be absolutely judicial in regard to a concern so personal and so intimate as poetry. Had Arnold belonged a generation later, or had he looked with the eyes of continental criticism, we can hardly doubt that he would have placed Wordsworth amid, rather than above, the little band of great singers who made the youth of this century magnificent.

With a fairness all too rare among critics, Arnold himself warns us that he is under the sway of an enthusiasm; for at the close of his plea he confesses that which proclaims him incapable of estimating Wordsworth by those rigid standards of criticism which to others he applied with a precision so unerring. He says:—"I can read with pleasure and edification *Peter Bell*, and the whole series of *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*, and the address to Mr. Wilkinson's spade, and even the *Thanksgiving Ode*;—everything of Wordsworth, I think, except *Vaudracour and*

Julia. It is not for nothing that one has been brought up in the veneration of a man so truly worthy of homage; that one has seen and heard him, lived in his neighborhood, and been familiar with his country."

We may be reasonably sure that *only* a profound personal veneration could enable Arnold to read with pleasure and edification such lines as

" But when the pony moved his legs,
Oh ! then for the poor idiot boy !
For joy he cannot hold the bridle,
For joy his head and heels are idle,
He's idle all for very joy."

This is not an unfair specimen of the puerility which goes to make up a large part of what Arnold confesses to reading with pleasure and edification. A vastly larger portion is distinguished mainly by a colossal dullness, a platitude which can only be realized in the mass, and of which no quotation could convey an adequate idea. There is little room to hope that the intelligent reader, who begins his acquaintance with Wordsworth by *The Idiot Boy*, or *Peter Bell*, or even by the lines on Simon Lee (which Mr. Palgrave has unhappily included in his admirable anthology), can easily be brought to share in Arnold's veneration, or to believe that Wordsworth was a man "so truly worthy of homage." It is very unprofitable to ignore the fact that the larger portion of Wordsworth's verse is worthless; and only by a frank avowal of the fact can we expect to secure a fair judgment. By such a frank avowal we rule out all that mass of commonplace, or worse, which has hopelessly alienated so many lovers of poetry; and

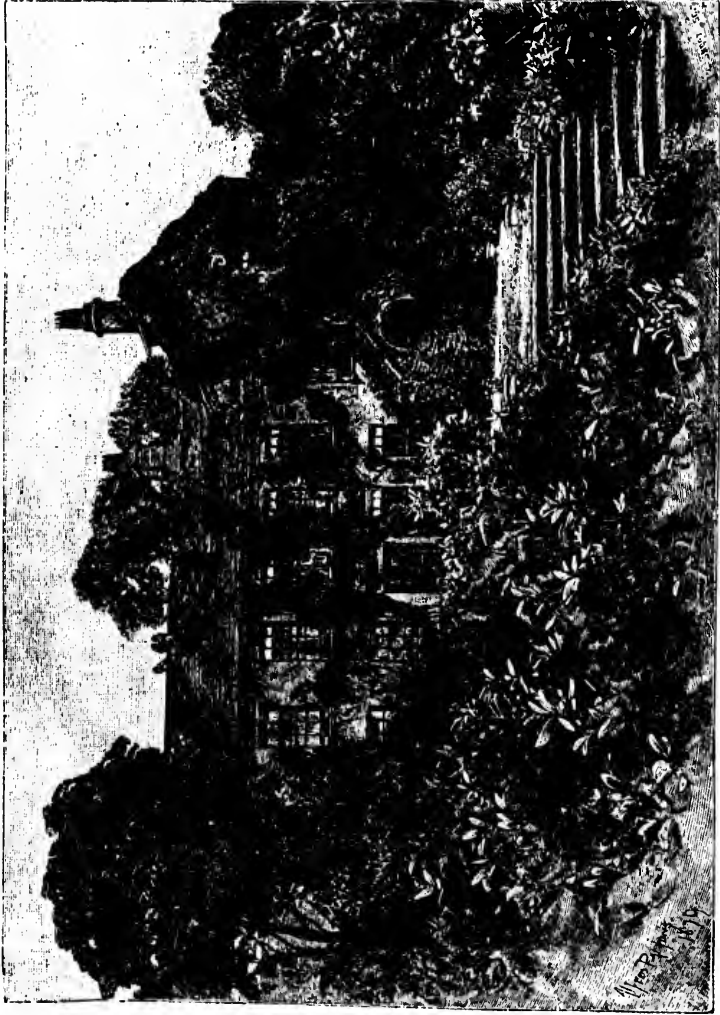
we bring under consideration nothing but that select body of verse by which alone Wordsworth ought to be judged,—verse meagre indeed in quantity, but of a quality hardly to be matched. It is pretty safe to assume that criticism will continue to agree with Arnold as to the supreme excellence of that portion of Wordsworth's verse which was truly inspired. Where the elimination of the personal element is likely to tell most markedly against Arnold's conclusions, will be seen in the shrinkage which must, I think, take place in the number of Wordsworth's poems accepted as ranking among the truly inspired.

In the foregoing paragraphs I have endeavored to show that severe selection was called for in order that full justice might be done to the genius of Wordsworth,—a selection more severe and discriminating than would be necessary in the case of any other poet equally great. For the present volume there is yet more sufficient justification. Justice to the student whose mind is in a state to receive and to accept first impressions, makes it imperative that he should be brought first in contact with Wordsworth's genius through the medium of a volume of selections, and thus saved from the false impression he would be sure to receive if he plunged at once into the stupifying wilderness of *Wordsworth's Complete Works*. The distinctive excellence of Wordsworth's poetry is something so high, so ennobling, so renovating to the spirit, that it can be regarded as nothing short of a calamity for one to acquire a preconception which will seal him against its influence. One so sealed is deaf to the voice which, more than any other in modern song, conveys the secret of repose. To be

shut out from hearing Wordsworth's message is to lose the surest guide we have to those regions of luminous calm which this breathless age so needs for its soul's health. Wordsworth's peculiar province is that border-land wherein Nature and the heart of Man act and react upon each other. His vision is occupied not so much with Nature as with the relations between Nature and his inmost self. No other poet, of our race at least, has made so definite and intelligible the terms of our communion with external Nature. But it must be always born in mind that of great poets there are those, like Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe, whose greatness is orbic and universal, and those again, of a lower station, whose greatness may be set forth as lying within certain more or less determinable limits. Among these latter, and high among them, we may be sure that Wordsworth will hold unassailable place.



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RYDAL, MOUNT.

WORDSWORTH'S POEMS.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

At the corner of Wood Street, when daylight appears,
Hangs a thrush that sings loud ; it has sung for three
years.

Poor Susan has passed by the spot, and has heard
In the silence of morning the song of the bird.

'Tis a note of enchantment ; what ails her? She
sees

A mountain ascending, a vision of trees ;
Bright volumes of vapor through Lothbury glide,
And a river flows on through the vale of Cheapside.

Green pastures she views in the midst of the dale,
Down which she so often has tripped with her pail ;
And a single small cottage, a nest like a dove's,
The one only dwelling on earth that she loves.

She looks, and her heart is in heaven : but they fade,
The mist and the river, the hill and the shade ;
The stream will not flow, and the hill will not rise,
And the colors have all passed away from her eyes.

WE ARE SEVEN.

—A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death ?



I met a little cottage girl :
She was eight years old, she said ;
Her hair was thick with many a curl
That clustered round her head.

She had a rustic, woodland air,
And she was wildly clad ;
Her eyes were fair, and very fair :
Her beauty made me glad.

“Sisters and brothers, little maid,
How many may you be ?”
“How many? Seven in all,” she said,
And, wondering, looked at me.

“And where are they? I pray you tell.”
She answered, “Seven are we ;
And two of us at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea.

“Two of us in the church-yard lie,
My sister and my brother ;
And in the church-yard cottage, I
Dwell near them with my mother.”

“You say that two at Conway dwell,
And two are gone to sea,
Yet ye are seven?—I pray you tell,
Sweet maid, how this may be.”

Then did the little maid reply,
“Seven boys and girls are we ;
Two of us in the church-yard lie,
Beneath the church-yard tree.”

“You run about, my little maid,
Your limbs they are alive ;
If two are in the church-yard laid,
Then ye are only five.”

“Their graves are green, they may be seen,”
The little maid replied,
“Twelve steps or more from my mother's door,
And they are side by side.

“My stockings there I often knit,
My kerchief there I hem ;
And there upon the ground I sit—
I sit and sing to them.

“And often after sunset, sir,
When it is light and fair,
I take my little porringer,
And eat my supper there.

“The first that died was little Jane ;
In bed she moaning lay,
Till God released her of her pain ;
And then she went away.

“So in the church-yard she was laid ;
And when the grass was dry,
Togeth'er round her grave we played,
My brother John and I.

“And when the ground was white with snow,
And I could run and slide,
My brother John was forced to go,
And he lies by her side.”

“How many are you, then,” said I,
 “If they two are in heaven?”
 The little maiden did reply,
 “O master! we are seven!”

“But they are dead; those two are dead!
 Their spirits are in heaven!”
 ’Twas throwing words away; for still
 The little maid would have her will,
 And said, “Nay, we are seven!”

LINES

COMPOSED A FEW MILES ABOVE TINTERN ABBEY, ON REVISIT-
 ING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING A TOUR,
 JULY 13, 1798.

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
 Of five long winters! and again I hear
 These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
 With a sweet inland murmur.* Once again
 Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
 That on a wild secluded scene impress
 Thoughts of more deep seclusion, and connect
 The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
 Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 Among the woods and copses, nor disturb

* The river is not affected by the tides a few miles above Tintern.

The wild green landscape. Once again I see
 These hedge-rows—hardly hedge-rows—little lines
 Of sportive wood run wild : these pastoral farms,
 Green to the very door ; and wreaths of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees.
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
 Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The hermit sits alone.

These beautiful forms,
 Through a long absence, have not been to me
 As is a landscape to a blind man's eye ;
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart ;
 And passing even into my purer mind,
 With tranquil restoration : feelings, too,
 Of unremembered pleasure ; such, perhaps,
 As have no slight or trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life—
 His little, nameless, unremembered acts
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime : that blessed mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world
 Is lightened ; that serene and blessed mood
 In which the affections gently lead us on,
 Until the breath of this corporeal frame
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul ;
 While with an eye made quiet by the power

Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,
In darkness, and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight, when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye ! Thou wanderer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee !

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again :
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when
first

I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led : more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion ; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colors and their forms, were then to me

An appetite, a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts: a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains, and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create*
And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
In Nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts; the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

* This line has a close resemblance to an admirable line of Young, the exact expression of which I do not recollect.

Nor, perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay :
For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river ; thou, my dearest friend,
My dear, dear friend, and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh ! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear sister ! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her ; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy : for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk ;
And let the misty mountain winds be free
To blow against thee ; and in after-years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; oh ! then,
If solitude or fear or pain or grief
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,

And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together ; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service : rather say
With warmer love, oh ! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake.

LUCY GRAY ;

OR, SOLITUDE.

OFT I had heard of Lucy Gray :
And, when I crossed the wild,
I chanced to see at break of day
The solitary Child.

No mate, no comrade Lucy knew ;
She dwelt on a wide moor,
—The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door !

You yet may spy the fawn at play,
The hare upon the green ;
But the sweet face of Lucy Gray
Will never more be seen.

“ To-night will be a stormy night—
You to the town must go ;
And take a lantern, Child, to light
Your mother through the snow.”

“ That, Father ! will I gladly do :
’Tis scarcely afternoon—
The Minster-clock has just struck two,
And yonder is the Moon.”

At this the Father raised his hook,
And snapped a faggot-band ;
He plied his work ;—and Lucy took
The lantern in her hand.

Not blither is the mountain roe :
With many a wanton stroke
Her feet disperse the powdery snow
That rises up like smoke.

The snow came on before its time :
She wandered up and down ;
And many a hill did Lucy climb ;
But never reached the town.

The wretched parents all that night
Went shouting far and wide ;
But there was neither sound nor sight
To serve them for a guide.

At day-break on a hill they stood
That overlooked the moor ;
And thence they saw the bridge of wood,
A furlong from their door.

They wept,—and turning homeward, cried,
“ In Heaven we all shall meet : ”
—When in the snow the mother spied
The print of Lucy's feet.

Half breathless from the steep hill's edge
They tracked the footmarks small ;
And through the broken hawthorn-hedge,
And by the long stone-wall ;

And then an open field they crossed :
The marks were still the same ;
They tracked them on, nor ever lost ;
And to the Bridge they came.

They followed from the snowy bank
Those footmarks one by one,
Into the middle of the plank ;
And further there were none !

—Yet some maintain that to this day
She is a living child ;
That you may see sweet Lucy Gray
Upon the lonesome wild.

O'er rough and smooth she trips along
And never looks behind ;
And sings a solitary song
That whistles in the wind.

THE FOUNTAIN.

A CONVERSATION.

WE talked with open heart, and tongue
Affectionate and true—
A pair of friends, though I was young,
And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
Beside a mossy seat ;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
And gurgled at our feet.

“Now, Matthew,” said I, “let us match
This water's pleasant tune
With some old border-song, or catch,
That suits a summer's noon ;

“Or of the church-clock and the chimes
Sing here beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
Which you last April made.”

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
The spring beneath the tree ;
And thus the dear old man replied,
The gray-haired man of glee :

“Down to the vale this water steers,
How merrily it goes !
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows.

“ And here, on this delightful day,
I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
Beside this fountain's brink.

“ My eyes are dim with childish tears,
My heart is idly stirred ;
For the same sound is in my ears
Which in those days I heard.

“ Thus fares it still in our decay :
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

“ The blackbird in the summer trees,
The lark upon the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

“ With Nature never do *they* wage
A foolish strife : they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free ;

“ But we are pressed by heavy laws,
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy because
We have been glad of yore.

“ If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

“My days, my friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved ;
And many love me, but by none
Am I enough beloved.”

“Now both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains.
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains.

“And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee !”
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
“Alas ! that cannot be.”

We rose up from the fountain side,
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide
And through the wood we went ;

And ere we came to Leonard's rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

MICHAEL.

A PASTORAL POEM.

If from the public way you turn your steps
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
You will suppose that with an upright path
Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent

The pastoral mountains front you, face to face.
But, courage ! for around that boisterous brook
The mountains have all opened out themselves,
And made a hidden valley of their own.
No habitation can be seen ; but they
Who journey hither find themselves alone
With a few sheep, with rocks and stones, and kites
That overhead are sailing in the sky.
It is, in truth, an utter solitude ;
Nor should I have made mention of this dell
But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones ;
And to that place a story appertains,
Which, though it be ungarnished with events,
Is not unfit, I deem, for the fireside
Or for the summer shade. It was the first
Of those domestic tales that speak to me
Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men
Whom I already loved—not, verily,
For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills
Where was their occupation and abode.
And hence this tale, while I was yet a boy
Careless of books, yet having felt the power
Of Nature, by the gentle agency
Of natural objects led me on to feel
For passions that were not my own, and think
(At random and imperfectly indeed)
On man, the heart of man, and human life.
Therefore, although it be a history
Homely and rude, I will relate the same
For the delight of a few natural hearts ;
And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake
Of youthful poets, who among these hills
Will be my second self when I am gone.

Upon the forest-side in Grasmere Vale
There dwelt a shepherd, Michael was his name ;
An old man, stout of heart and strong of limb.
His bodily frame had been from youth to age
Of an unusual strength : his mind was keen,
Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs,
And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt
And watchful more than ordinary men.
Hence had he learnt the meaning of all winds,
Of blasts of every tone ; and oftentimes,
When others heeded not, he heard the south
Make subterraneous music, like the noise
Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.
The shepherd, at such warning, of his flock
Bethought him, and he to himself would say,
“ The winds are now devising work for me ! ”
And, truly, at all times, the storm—that drives
The traveller to a shelter—summoned him
Up to the mountains : he had been alone
Amid the heart of many thousand mists
That came to him and left him on the heights.
So lived he till his eightieth year was past.
And grossly that man errs who should suppose
That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,
Were things indifferent to the shepherd's thoughts.
Fields where with cheerful spirits he had breathed
The common air ; the hills which he so oft
Had climbed with vigorous steps, which had im-
pressed
So many incidents upon his mind
Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;
Which, like a book, preserved the memory
Of the dumb animals whom he had saved,
Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts
The certainty of honourable gain—

Those fields, those hills (what could they less ?), had
laid
Strong hold on his affections ; were to him
A pleasurable feeling of blind love,
The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.
His helpmate was a comely matron, old—
Though younger than himself full twenty years.
She was a woman of a stirring life,
Whose heart was in her house. Two wheels she had
Of antique form—this large for spinning wool,
'That small for flax ; and if one wheel had rest,
It was because the other was at work.
The pair had but one inmate in their house,
An only child, who had been born to them
When Michael, telling o'er his years, began
To deem that he was old—in shepherd's phrase,
With one foot in the grave. This only son,
With two brave sheep-dogs tried in many a storm,
The one of an inestimable worth,
Made all their household. I may truly say,
That they were as a proverb in the vale
For endless industry. When day was gone,
And from their occupations out-of-doors
The son and father were come home, even then
Their labor did not cease ; unless when all
Turned to their cleanly supper-board, and there,
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk,
Sat round their basket piled with oaten cakes,
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when their
meal
Was ended, Luke (for so the son was named)
And his old father both betook themselves
To such convenient work as might employ

Their hands by the fireside : perhaps to card
Wool for the housewife's spindle, or repair
Some injury done to sickle, flail, or scythe,
Or other implement of house or field.

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge,
That in our ancient uncouth country style
Did with a huge projection overbrow
Large space beneath, as duly as the light
Of day grew dim the housewife hung a lamp—
An aged utensil, which had performed
Service beyond all others of its kind.
Early at evening did it burn, and late,
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,
Which, going by from year to year, had found,
And left the couple neither gay, perhaps,
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,
Living a life of eager industry.
And now, when Luke had reached his eighteenth year,
There by the light of this old lamp they sat,
Father and son, while late into the night
The housewife plied her own peculiar work,
Making the cottage through the silent hours
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.
This light was famous in its neighborhood,
And was a public symbol of the life
That thrifty pair had lived. For, as it chanced,
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail-Raise,
And westward to the village near the lake ;
And from this constant light, so regular
And so far seen, the house itself, by all
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale,
Both old and young, was named **THE EVENING STAR.**

Thus living on through such a length of years,
The shepherd, if he loved himself, must needs
Have loved his helpmate ; but to Michael's heart
This son of his old age was yet more dear—
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same
Blind spirit which is in the blood of all—
Than that a child more than all other gifts
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,
And stirrings of inquietude, when they
By tendency of nature needs must fail.
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,
His heart and his heart's joy. For oftentimes
Old Michael, while he was a babe in arms,
Had done him female service, not alone
For pastime and delight, as is the use
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced
To acts of tenderness ; and he had rocked
His cradle with a woman's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the boy
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love—
Albeit of a stern, unbending mind—
To have the young one in his sight, when he
Had work by his own door, or when he sat
With sheep before him on his shepherd's stool,
Beneath that large old oak which near their door
Stood, and from its enormous breadth of shade
Chosen for the shearer's covert from the sun,
Thence in our rustic dialect was called
The CLIPPING TREE,* a name which yet it bears.
There, while they two were sitting in the shade,
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks

* Clipping is the word used in the North of England for shearing.

Of fond correction and reproof bestowed
Upon the child, if he disturbed the sheep
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when, by Heaven's good grace, the boy grew up
A healthy lad, and carried in his cheek
Two steady roses that were five years old,
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped
With iron, making it throughout in all
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,
And gave it to the boy ; wherewith equipt
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;
And, to his office prematurely called,
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,
Something between a hindrance and a help ;
And for this cause not always, I believe,
Receiving from his father hire of praise ;
Though naught was left undone which staff, or
voice,
Or looks, or threatening gestures could perform.

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand
Against the mountain blasts, and to the heights,
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,
He with his father daily went, and they
Were as companions, why should I relate
That objects which the shepherd loved before
Were dearer now ? that from the boy there came
Feelings and emanations—things which were
Light to the sun and music to the wind ;
And that the old man's heart seemed born again !

Thus in his father's sight the boy grew up :
And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,
He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived
From day to day, to Michael's ear there came
Distressful tidings. Long before the time
Of which I speak, the shepherd had been bound
In surety for his brother's son, a man
Of an industrious life and ample means ;
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly
Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture—
A grievous penalty, but little less
Than half his substance. This unlooked-for claim,
At the first hearing, for a moment took
More hope out of his life than he supposed
That any old man ever could have lost.
As soon as he had gathered so much strength
That he could look his trouble in the face,
It seemed that his sole refuge was to sell
A portion of his patrimonial fields.
Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,
And his heart failed him. " Isabel," said he,
Two evenings after he had heard the news,
" I have been toiling more than seventy years,
And in the open sunshine of God's love
Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.
Our lot is a hard lot ; the sun himself
Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;
And I have lived to be a fool at last
To my own family. . An evil man
That was, and made an evil choice, if he

Were false to us ; and if he were not false,
There are ten thousand to whom loss like this
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him ; but
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.
When I began, my purpose was to speak
Of remedies, and of a cheerful hope.
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel : the land
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;
He shall possess it, free as is the wind
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st,
Another kinsman ; he will be our friend
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,
Thriving in trade ; and Luke to him shall go,
And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift
He quickly will repair this loss, and then
May come again to us. If here he stay,
What can be done ? Where every one is poor,
What can be gained ?" At this the old man paused,
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind
Was busy looking back into past times.
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,
He was a parish-boy ; at the church door
They made a gathering for him—shillings, pence,
And half-pennies—wherewith the neighbors bought
A basket, which they filled with peddler's wares ;
And, with this basket on his arm, the lad
Went up to London, found a master there,
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy
To go and overlook his merchandise
Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,
And left estates and moneys to the poor,
And, at his birthplace, built a chapel floored
With marble, which he sent from foreign lands.
These thoughts, and many others of like sort
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,

And her face brightened. The old man was glad,
And thus resumed: "Well, Isabel! this scheme,
These two days, has been meat and drink to me.
Far more than we have lost is left us yet.
We have enough. I wish, indeed, that I
Were younger: but this hope is a good hope.
Make ready Luke's best garments, of the best
Buy for him more, and let us send him forth
To-morrow, or the next day, or to-night:
If he *could* go, the boy should go to night."
Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth
With a light heart. The housewife for five days
Was restless morn and night, and all day long
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare
Things needful for the journey of her son.
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came
To stop her in her work: for when she lay
By Michael's side, she through the two last nights
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep;
And when they rose that morning she could see
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves
Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go:
We have no other child but thee to lose,
None to remember. Do not go away;
For if thou leave thy father, he will die."
The youth made answer with a jocund voice;
And Isabel when she had told her fears,
Recovered heart. That evening her best fare
Did she bring forth, and altogether sat
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

With daylight Isabel resumed her work;
And all the ensuing week the house appeared
As cheerful as a grove in spring: at length

The expected letter from their kinsman came,
With kind assurances that he would do
His utmost for the welfare of the boy ;
To which requests were added that forthwith
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more
The letter was read over ; Isabel
Went forth to show it to the neighbors round ;
Nor was there at that time on English land
A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel
Had to her house returned, the old man said,
" He shall depart to-morrow." To this word
The housewife answered, talking much of things
Which, if at such short notice he should go,
Would surely be forgotten. But at length
She gave consent, and Michael was at ease.

Near the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,
In that deep valley, Michael had designed
To build a sheepfold ; and, before he heard
The tidings of his melancholy loss,
For this same purpose he had gathered up
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge
Lay thrown together, ready for the work.
With Luke that evening thitherward he walked ;
And soon as they had reached the place he stopped,
And thus the old man spake to him : " My son,
To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart
I look upon thee, for thou art the same
That wert a promise to me ere thy birth,
And all thy life hast been my daily joy.
I will relate to thee some little part
Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good
When thou art from me, even if I should speak
Of things thou canst not know of. After thou
First camest into the world—as oft befalls

To new-born infants—thou didst sleep away
Two days, and blessings from thy father's tongue
Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,
And still I loved thee with increasing love.
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds
Than when I heard thee by our own fireside
First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;
When thou, a feeding babe, didst in thy joy
Sing at thy mother's breast. Month followed month,
And in the open fields my life was passed
And on the mountains ; else I think that thou
Hadst been brought up upon thy father's knees.
But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,
As well thou knowest, in us the old and young
Have played together, nor with me didst thou
Lack any pleasure which a boy can know.”
Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words
He sobbed aloud. The old man grasped his hand,
And said, “Nay, do not take it so ; I see
That these are things of which I need not speak.
Even to the utmost I have been to thee
A kind and a good father. And herein
I but repay a gift which I myself
Received at other's hands ; for, though now old
Beyond the common life of man, I still
Remember them who loved me in my youth.
Both of them sleep together. Here they lived,
As all their forefathers had done, and when
At length their time was come, they were not loath
To give their bodies to the family mould.
I wished that thou shouldst live the life they lived.
But 'tis a long time to look back, my son,
And see so little gain from threescore years.
These fields were burthened when they came to me,
Till I was forty years of age, not more

Than half of my inheritance was mine.
I toiled and toiled. God blessed me in my work,
And till these three weeks past the land was free.
It looks as if it never could endure
Another master. Heaven forgive me, Luke,
If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good
That thou shouldst go." At this the old man paused.
Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,
Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :
"This was a work for us ; and now, my son,
It is a work for me. But lay one stone—
Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands.
Nay, boy, be of good hope ; we both may live
To see a better day. At eighty-four
I still am strong and hale. Do thou thy part ;
I will do mine. I will begin again
With many tasks that were resigned to thee.
Up to the heights and in among the storms
Will I without thee go again, and do
All works which I was wont to do alone
Before I knew thy face. Heaven bless thee, boy !
Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast
With many hopes. It should be so. Yes, yes,
I knew that thou couldst never have a wish
To leave me, Luke ; thou hast been bound to me
Only by links of love. When thou art gone,
What will be left to us ? But I forget
My purposes. Lay now the corner-stone,
As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,
When thou art gone away, should evil men
Be thy companions, think of me, my son,
And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,
And God will strengthen thee. Amid all fear
And all temptation, Luke, I pray that thou
Mayst bear in mind the life thy fathers lived,

Who, being innocent, did for that cause .
Bestir them in good deeds. Now, fare thee well.
When thou returnest, thou in this place wilt see
A work which is not here—a covenant
'Twill be between us. But whatever fate
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,
And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The shepherd ended here; and Luke stooped
down,
And, as his father had requested, laid
The first stone of the sheepfold. At the sight
The old man's grief broke from him; to his heart
He pressed his son, he kiss'd him and wept;
And to the house together they returned.
Hushed was that house in peace, or seeming peace,
Ere the night fell: with morrow's dawn the boy
Began his journey; and when he had reached
The public way, he put on a bold face;
And all the neighbors, as he passed their doors,
Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,
That followed him till he was out of sight.

A good report did from their kinsman come,
Of Luke and his well-doing; and the boy
Wrote loving letters, full of wondrous news,
Which, as the housewife phrased it, were throughout
"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.
So, many months passed on; and once again
The shepherd went about his daily work
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and now
Sometimes, when he could find a leisure hour,
He to that valley took his way, and there
Wrought at the sheepfold. Meantime Luke began

To slacken in his duty ; and, at length
 He in the dissolute city gave himself
 To evil courses : ignominy and shame
 Fell on him, so that he was driven at last
 To seek a hiding-place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love ;
 'Twill make a thing endurable which else
 Would upset the brain or break the heart.
 I have conversed with more than one who well
 Remember the old man, and what he was
 Years after he had heard this heavy news.
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age
 Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks
 He went, and still looked up towards the sun,
 And listened to the wind ; and, as before,
 Performed all kinds of labor for his sheep,
 And for the land his small inheritance.
 And to that hollow dell from time to time
 Did he repair, to build the fold of which
 His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet
 The pity which was then in every heart
 For the old man ; and 'tis believed by all
 That many and many a day he thither went
 And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the sheepfold, sometimes was he seen,
 Sitting alone, with that his faithful dog,
 Then old, beside him, lying at his feet.
 The length of full seven years, from time to time,
 He at the building of this sheepfold wrought,
 And left the work unfinished when he died.
 Three years, or little more, did Isabel
 Survive her husband. At her death the estate
 Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand.

The cottage which was named the EVENING STAR
 Is gone ; the ploughshare has been through the ground
 On which it stood ; great changes have been wrought
 In all the neighborhood : yet the oak is left
 That grew beside their door ; and the remains
 Of the unfinished sheepfold may be seen
 Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

HART-LEAP WELL.

[Hart-leap Well is a small spring of water, about five miles from Richmond, in Yorkshire, and near the side of the road that leads from Richmond to Askriigg. Its name is derived from a remarkable chase, the memory of which is preserved by the monuments spoken of in the second part of the following poem, which monuments do now exist as I have there described them.]

THE knight had ridden down from Wensley Moor
 With the slow motion of a summer's cloud ;
 He turned aside towards a vassal's door,
 And " Bring another horse ! " he cried aloud.

" Another horse ! " That shout the vassal heard,
 And saddled his best steed, a comely gray.
 Sir Walter mounted him ; he was the third
 Which he had mounted on that glorious day.

Joy sparkled in the prancing courser's eyes ;
 The horse and horseman are a happy pair ;
 But, though Sir Walter like a falcon flies,
 There is a doleful silence in the air.

A rout this morning left Sir Walter's hall
 That as they galloped made the echoes roar ;
 But horse and man are vanished, one and all ;
 Such race, I think, was never seen before.

Sir Walter, restless as a veering wind,
Calls to the few tired dogs that yet remain ;
Blanch, Swift, and Music, noblest of their kind,
Follow, and up the weary mountain strain.

The knight hallooed, he cheered and chid them on
With suppliant gestures and upbraidings stern ;
But breath and eyesight fail ; and, one by one,
The dogs are stretched among the mountain fern.

Where is the throng, the tumult of the race ?
The bugles that so joyfully were blown ?
This chase it looks not like an earthly chase ;
Sir Walter and the hart are left alone.

The poor hart toils along the mountain-side ;
I will not stop to tell how far he fled,
Nor will I mention by what death he died ;
But now the knight beholds him lying dead.

Dismounting, then, he leaned against a thorn ;
He had no follower, dog, nor man, nor boy :
He neither cracked his whip, nor blew his horn,
But gazed upon the spoil with silent joy.

Close to the thorn on which Sir Walter leaned,
Stood his dumb partner in this glorious feat ;
Weak as a lamb the hour that it is yeaned,
And white with foam as if with cleaving sleet.

Upon his side the hart was lying stretched ;
His nostril touched a spring beneath a hill,
And with the last deep groan his breath had fetched
The waters of the spring were trembling still.

And now, too happy for repose or rest,
(Never had living man such joyful lot),
Sir Walter walked all round, north, south and west,
And gazed and gazed upon that darling spot.

And climbing up the hill (it was at least
Nine roods of sheer ascent), Sir Walter found
Three several hoof-marks which the hunted beast
Had left imprinted on the grassy ground.

Sir Walter wiped his face, and cried, "Till now
Such sight was never seen by living eyes :
Three leaps have borne him from this lofty brow,
Down to the very fountain where he lies.

"I'll build a pleasure-house upon this spot,
And a small arbor, made for rural joy ;
'Twill be the traveller's shed, the pilgrim's cot,
A place of love for damsels that are coy.

"A cunning artist will I have to frame
A basin for that fountain in the dell !
And they who do make mention of the same,
From this day forth shall call it *HART-LEAP WELL*.

"And, gallant stag ! to make thy praises known,
Another monument shall here be raised ;
Three several pillars, each a rough-hewn stone,
And planted where thy hoofs the turf have grazed.

"And, in the summer-time, when days are long,
I will come hither with my paramour ;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
We will make merry in that pleasant bower.

“ Till the foundations of the mountains fail
My mansion with its arbor shall endure—
The joy of them who till the fields of Swale,
And them who dwell among the woods of Ure ! ”

Then home he went, and left the hart, stone-dead,
With breathless nostrils stretched above the
spring.

Soon did the knight perform what he had said,
And far and wide the fame thereof did ring.

Ere thrice the moon into her port had steered,
A cup of stone received the living well ;
Three pillars of rude stone Sir Walter reared,
And built a house of pleasure in the dell.

And near the fountain, flowers of stature tall
With trailing plants and trees were intertwined,
Which soon composed a little sylvan hall—
A leafy shelter from the sun and wind.

And thither, when the summer days were long,
Sir Walter led his wondering paramour ;
And with the dancers and the minstrel's song
Made merriment within that pleasant bower.

The knight, Sir Walter, died in course of time,
And his bones lie in his paternal vale,
But there is matter for a second rhyme,
And I to this would add another tale.

PART SECOND.

The moving accident is not my trade ;
To freeze the blood I have no ready arts :
'Tis my delight, alone in summer shade,
To pipe a simple song for thinking hearts.

As I from Hawes to Richmond did repair,
It chanced that I saw standing in a dell
Three aspens at three corners of a square ;
And one, not four yards distant, near a well.

What this imported I could ill divine ;
And, pulling now the rein my horse to stop,
I saw three pillars standing in a line,
The last stone pillar on a dark hill-top.

The trees were gray, with neither arms nor head ;
Half-wasted the square mound of tawny green ;
So that you just might say, as then I said,
“ Here in old time the hand of man hath been.”

I looked upon the hill both far and near,
More doleful place did never eye survey ;
It seemed as if the spring-time came not here,
And Nature here were willing to decay.

I stood in various thoughts and fancies lost,
When one, who was in shepherd's garb attired,
Came up the hollow. Him did I accost,
And what this place might be I then inquired.

The shepherd stopped, and that same story told
Which in my former rhyme I have rehearsed.
“ A jolly place,” said he, “ in times of old !
But something ails it now ; the spot is curst.

“ You see these lifeless stumps of aspen wood—
Some say that they are beeches, others elms—
These were the bower ; and here a mansion stood,
The finest palace of a hundred realms !

- “The arbor does its own condition tell ;
You see the stones, the fountain, and the stream ;
But as to the great lodge ! you might as well
Hunt half a day for a forgotten dream.
- “There’s neither dog nor heifer, horse nor sheep,
Will wet his lips within that cup of stone ;
And oftentimes, when all are fast asleep,
This water doth send forth a dolorous groan.
- “Some say that here a murder has been done,
And blood cries out for blood ; but, for my part,
I’ve guessed, when I’ve been sitting in the sun,
That it was all for that unhappy hart.
- “What thoughts must through the creature’s brain
have passed !
Even from the topmost stone, upon the steep,
Are but three bounds ; and look, sir, at this last—
O master ! it has been a cruel leap.
- “For thirteen hours he ran a desperate race ;
And in my simple mind we cannot tell
What cause the hart might have to love this place
And come and make his death-bed near the well.
- “Here on the grass perhaps asleep he sank,
Lulled by the fountain in the summer-tide ;
This water was perhaps the first he drank
When he had wandered from his mother’s side.
- “In April here beneath the scented thorn
He heard the birds their morning carols sing ;
And he, perhaps, for aught we know, was born
Not half a furlong from that self-same spring.

“ Now, here is neither grass nor pleasant shade :
The sun on drearier hollow never shone ;
So will it be, as I have often said,
Till trees, and stones, and fountain, all are gone.”

“ Gray-headed shepherd, thou hast spoken well ;
Small difference lies between thy creed and mine :
This beast not unobserved by Nature fell ;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine.

“ The Being that is in the clouds and air,
That is in the green leaves among the groves,
Maintains a deep and reverential care
For the unoffending creatures whom he loves.

“ The pleasure-house is dust—behind, before,
This is no common waste, no common gloom ;
But nature, in due course of time, once more
Shall here put on her beauty and her bloom.

“ She leaves these objects to a slow decay,
That what we are, and have been, may be known ;
But, at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown.

“ One lesson, shepherd, let us two divide,
Taught both by what she shows and what conceals—
Never to blend our pleasure or our pride
With sorrow of the meanest thing that feels.”

TO THE DAISY.

BRIGHT flower, whose home is everywhere !
A pilgrim bold in Nature's care,
And oft, the long year through, the heir
Of joy or sorrow,

Methinks that there abides in thee
Some concord with humanity,
Given to no other flower I see
The forest through !

And wherefore ? Man is soon deprest ;
A thoughtless thing ! who, once unblest,
Does little on his memory rest,
Or on his reason ;
But thou wouldst teach him how to find
A shelter under every wind,
A hope for times that are unkind
And every season.

TO THE DAISY.

In youth from rock to rock I went,
From hill to hill in discontent
Of pleasure high and turbulent,
Most pleased when most uneasy ;
But now my own delights I make,—
My thirst at every rill can slake,
And gladly Nature's love partake
Of thee, sweet Daisy !

Thee Winter in the garland wears
That thinly decks his few grey hairs ;
Spring parts the clouds with softest airs,
That she may sun thee ;
Whole summer-fields are thine by right ;
And Autumn, melancholy wight !
Doth in thy crimson head delight
When rains are on thee.

In shoals and bands, a morrice train,
Thou greet'st the traveller in the lane,
Pleased at his greeting thee again ;
 Yet nothing daunted,
Nor grieved, if thou be set at nought :
And oft alone in nooks remote
We meet thee, like a pleasant thought,
 When such are wanted.

Be violets in their secret mews
The flowers the wanton Zephyrs choose ;
Proud be the rose, with rains and dews
 Her head impearling.
Thou liv'st with less ambitious aim,
Yet hast not gone without thy fame :
Thou art indeed by many a claim
 The Poet's darling.

If to a rock from rains he fly,
Or, some bright day of April sky,
Imprisoned by hot sunshine lie
 Near the green holly,
And wearily at length should fare ;
He needs but look about, and there
Thou art !—a friend at hand, to scare
 His melancholy.

A hundred times, by rock or bower,
Ere thus I have lain crouched an hour,
Have I derived from thy sweet power
 Some apprehension ;
Some steady love ; some brief delight ;
Some memory that had taken flight ;
Some chime of fancy wrong or right ;
 Or stray invention.

If stately passions in me burn,
 And one chance look to Thee should turn,
 I drink out of an humbler urn
 A lowlier pleasure ;
 The homely sympathy that heeds
 The common life our nature breeds ;
 A wisdom fitted to the needs
 Of hearts at leisure.

Fresh smitten by the morning ray,
 When thou art up, alert and gay,
 Then, cheerful Flower ! my spirits play
 With kindred gladness :
 And when, at dusk, by dews opprest
 Thou sink'st, the image of thy rest
 Hath often eased my pensive breast
 Of careful sadness.

And all day long I number yet,
 All seasons through, another debt, .
 Which I, wherever thou art met,
 To thee am owing ;
 An instinct call it, a blind sense ;
 A happy, genial influence,
 Coming one knows not how, nor whence,
 Nor whither going.

Child of the Year ! that round dost run
 Thy course, bold lover of the sun,
 And cheerful when the day's begun
 As lark or leveret,
 Thy long-lost praise* thou shalt regain ;
 Nor be less dear to future men
 Than in old time ;—thou not in vain
 Art Nature's favorite.

* See, in Chaucer and the elder Poets, the honors formerly paid to this flower.

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

(AT INVERSNEYDE, UPON LOCH LOMOND.)

SWEET Highland girl, a very shower
Of beauty is thy earthly dower !
Twice seven consenting years have shed
Their utmost bounty on thy head :
And these gray rocks—this household lawn ;
These trees, a veil just half withdrawn ;
This fall of water, that doth make
A murmur near the silent lake ;
This little bay, a quiet road
That holds in shelter thy abode—
In truth, together do ye seem
Like something fashioned in a dream ;
Such forms as from their covert peep
When earthly cares are laid asleep ;
Yet, dream and vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart ;
God shield thee to thy latest years !
Thee neither know I nor thy peers ;
And yet my eyes are filled with tears.

With earnest feeling I shall pray
For thee when I am far away ;
For never saw I mien or face
In which more plainly I could trace
Benignity and home-bred sense
Ripening in perfect innocence.
Here scattered like a random seed,
Remote from men, thou dost not need
The embarrassed look of shy distress
And maidenly shamefacedness ;

Thou wear'st upon thy forehead clear
 The freedom of a mountaineer---
 A face with gladness overspread !
 Soft smiles by human kindness bred !
 And seemliness complete, that sways
 Thy courtesies, about thee plays ;
 With no restraint, but such as springs
 From quick and eager visitings
 Of thoughts that lie beyond the reach
 Of thy few words of English speech :
 A bondage sweetly brooked, a strife
 That gives thy gestures grace and life !
 So have I, not unmoved in mind,
 Seen birds of tempest-loving kind,
 Thus beating up against the wind.

What hand but would a garland cull
 For thee who art so beautiful ?
 O happy pleasure ! here to dwell
 Beside thee in some heathy dell ;
 Adopt your homely ways and dress,
 A shepherd, thou a shepherdess !
 But I could frame a wish for thee
 More like a grave reality :
 Thou art to me but as a wave
 Of the wild sea ; and I would have
 Some claim upon thee, if I could,
 Though but of common neighborhood.
 What joy to hear thee, and to see !
 Thy elder brother I would be,
 Thy father, anything to thee !

Now thanks to Heaven ! that of its grace
 Hath led me to this lonely place.
 Joy have I had ; and going hence
 I bear away my recompense.

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In spots like these it is we prize
 Our memory, feel that she hath eyes :
 Then, why should I be loath to stir ?
 I feel this place was made for her ;
 To give new pleasure like the past.
 Continued long as life shall last.
 Nor am I loath, though pleased at heart,
 Sweet Highland girl ! from thee to part ;
 For I, methinks, till I grow old,
 As fair before me shall behold,
 As I do now, the cabin small,
 The lake, the bay, the waterfall,
 And thee, the spirit of them all !

STEPPING WESTWARD.

[While my fellow-traveller and I were walking by the side of Loch Katrine, one fine evening after sunset, in our road to a hut where, in the course of our tour, we had been hospitably entertained some weeks before, we met, in one of the loneliest parts of that solitary region, two well-dressed women, one of whom said to us, by way of greeting, "What, you are stepping westward?"]

"What, you are stepping westward?" — "Yea."

"I would be a *wildish* destiny
 If we, who thus together roam
 In a strange land, and far from home,
 Were in this place the guests of Chance :
 Yet who would stop, or fear to advance,
 Though home or shelter he had none,
 With such a sky to lead him on ?

The dewy ground was dark and cold ;
 Behind, all gloomy to behold ;
 And stepping westward seemed to be
 A kind of *heavenly* destiny.

I liked the greeting ; 'twas a sound
 Of something without place or bound,
 And seemed to give me spiritual right
 To travel through that region bright.

The voice was soft, and she who spake
 Was walking by her native lake :
 The salutation had to me
 The very sound of courtesy :
 Its power was felt ; and while my eye
 Was fixed upon the glowing sky,
 The echo of the voice enwrought
 A human sweetness with the thought
 Of travelling through the world that lay
 Before me in my endless way.

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
 Yon solitary Highland lass,
 Reaping and singing by herself ;
 Stop here, or gently pass !
 Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
 And sings a melancholy strain ;
 Oh, listen ! for the vale profound
 Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
 So sweetly to reposing bands
 Of travellers in some shady haunt
 Among Arabian sands :
 A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
 In springtime from the cuckoo-bird,
 Breaking the silence of the seas
 Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings ?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago :
Or is it some more humble lay
Familiar matter of to-day ?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again ?

Whate'er the theme, the maiden sang
As if her song could have no ending ;
I saw her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle bending.
I listened till I had my fill ;
And when I mounted up the hill,
The music in my heart I bore
Long after it was heard no more.

AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS, 1803,

SEVEN YEARS AFTER HIS DEATH.

I SHIVER, spirit fierce and bold.
At the thought of what I now behold :
As vapors breathed from dungeons cold
Strike pleasure dead,
So sadness comes from out the mould
Where Burns is laid.

And have I, then, thy bones so near.
And thou forbidden to appear ?
As if it were thyself that's here
I shrink with pain ;
And both my wishes and my fear
Alike are vain.

Off, weight ! nor press on weight ! Away,
Dark thoughts !—they came, but not to stay.
With chastened feelings would I pay
 The tribute due
To him, and aught that hides his clay
 From mortal view.

Fresh as the flower whose modest worth
He sang, his genius "glinted" forth,
Rose like a star that touching earth,
 For so it seems,
Doth glorify its humble birth
 With matchless beams.

The piercing eye, the thoughtful brow,
The struggling heart, where be they now ?
Full soon the aspirant of the plough,
 The prompt, the brave,
Slept, with the obscurest, in the low
 And silent grave.

Well might I mourn that he was gone,
Whose light I hailed when first it shone,
When, breaking forth as nature's own,
 It showed my youth
How verse may build a princely throne
 On humble truth.

Alas ! where'er the current tends,
Regret pursues and with it blends—
Huge Criffel's hoary top ascends
 By Skiddaw seen :
Neighbors we were, and loving friends
 We might have been !

True friends though diversely inclined ;
But heart with heart and mind with mind,
Where the main fibres are entwined,
 Through Nature's skill,
May even by contraries be joined
 More closely still.

The tear will start, and let it flow ;
Thou " poor inhabitant below,"
At this dread moment—even so—
 Might we together
Havesate and talked where gowans blow,
 Or on wild heather.

What treasures would have then been placed
Within my reach ; of knowledge graced
By fancy what a rich repast !
 But why go on ?
Oh ! spare to sweep, thou mournful blast,
 His grave grass-grown.

There, too, a son, his joy and pride
(Not three weeks past the stripling died),
Lies gathered to his father's side,
 Soul-moving sight !
Yet one to which is not denied
 Some sad delight.

For *he* is safe, a quiet bed
Hath early found among the dead,
Harbored where none can be misled,
 Wronged, or distressed ;
And surely here it may be said
 That such are blest.

And oh for thee, by pitying grace
 Checked oft-times in a devious race,
 May He who halloweth the place
 Where man is laid
 Receive thy spirit in the embrace
 For which it prayed !

Sighing, I turned away ; but ere
 Night fell, I heard, or seemed to hear,
 Music that sorrow comes not near—
 A ritual hymn,
 Chaunted in love that casts out fear
 By seraphim.

THOUGHTS

SUGGESTED THE DAY FOLLOWING, ON THE BANKS OF NITH,
 NEAR THE POET'S RESIDENCE.

Too frail to keep the lofty vow
 That must have followed when his brow
 Was wreathed—"The Vision" tells us how—
 With holly spray,
 He faltered, drifted to and fro,
 And passed away.

Well might such thoughts, dear sister, throng
 Our minds when, lingering all too long
 Over the grave of Burns we hung
 In social grief—
 Indulged as if it were a wrong
 To seek relief.

But, leaving each unquiet theme
 Where gentlest judgments may misdeem.

And prompt to welcome every gleam
Of good and fair,
Let us beside this limpid stream
Breathe hopeful air.

Enough of sorrow, wreck, and blight :
Think rather of those moments bright
When to the consciousness of right
His course was true,
When wisdom prospered in his sight
And virtue grew.

Yes, freely let our hearts expand,
Freely as in youth's season bland,
When side by side, his book in hand,
We wont to stray,
Our pleasure varying at command
Of each sweet lay.

How oft inspired must he have trode
These pathways, yon far-stretching road !
There lurks his home ; in that abode,
With mirth elate,
Or in his nobly pensive mood,
The rustic sate.

Proud thoughts that image overawes,
Before it humbly let us pause,
And ask of Nature from what cause
And by what rules
She trained her Burns to win applause
That shames the schools.

Through busiest street and loneliest glen
Are felt the flashes of his pen ;

He rules 'mid winter snows, and when
 Bees fill their hives.

Deep in the general heart of men
 His power survives.

What need of fields in some far clime
 Where heroes, sages, bards sublime,
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme
 From genuine springs,
 Shall dwell together till old Time
 Folds up his wings ?

Sweet Mercy ! to the gates of heaven
 This minstrel lead, his sins forgiven ;
 The rueful conflict, the heart riven
 With vain endeavor,
 And memory of earth's bitter leaven
 Effaced forever.

But why to Him confine the prayer,
 When kindred thoughts and yearnings bear
 On the frail heart the purest share
 With all that live ?
 The best of what we do and are,
 Just God, forgive !

TO THE CUCKOO.

O BLITHE new-comer ! I have heard,
 I hear thee and rejoice.
 O cuckoo ! shall I call thee bird,
 Or but a wandering voice ?

While I am lying on the grass
 Thy twofold shout I hear :
 From hill to hill it seems to pass,
 At once far off and near.

Though babbling only to the vale
Of sunshine and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto me a tale
Of visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of the spring !
Even yet thou art to me
No bird—but an invisible thing,
A voice, a mystery ;

The same whom in my schoolboy days
I listened to ; that cry
Which made me look a thousand ways
In bush and tree and sky.

To seek thee did I often rove
Through woods and on the green ;
And thou wert still a hope, a love—
Still longed for, never seen.

And I can listen to thee yet ;
Can lie upon the plain
And listen, till I do beget
That golden time again.

O blessed bird ! the earth we pace
Again appears to be
An unsubstantial, fairy place,
That is fit home for thee !

THE CUCKOO AGAIN.

YES, it was the mountain Echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting Cuckoo,
Giving to her sound for sound !

Unsolicited reply
 To a babbling wanderer sent ;
 Like her ordinary cry,
 Like—but oh, how different !

Hears not also mortal life ?
 Hear not we, unthinking creatures !
 Slaves of folly, love or strife—
 Voices of two different natures ?

Have not *we* too?—yes, we have
 Answers, and we know not whence ;
 Echoes from beyond the grave
 Recognized intelligence !

Often as thy inward ear
 Catches such rebounds, beware !—
 Listen, ponder, hold them dear ;
 For of God,—of God they are.

FIDELITY.

A BARKING sound the shepherd hears,
 A cry as of a dog or fox ;
 He halts, and searches with his eyes
 Among the scattered rocks ;
 And now at distance can discern
 A stirring in a brake of fern ;
 And instantly a dog is seen,
 Glancing through that covert green.

The dog is not of mountain breed ;
 Its motions, too, are wild and shy ;
 With something, as the shepherd thinks,
 Unusual in its cry.

Nor is there any one in sight
All round, in hollow or on height ;
Nor shout nor whistle strikes his ear ;
What is the creature doing here ?

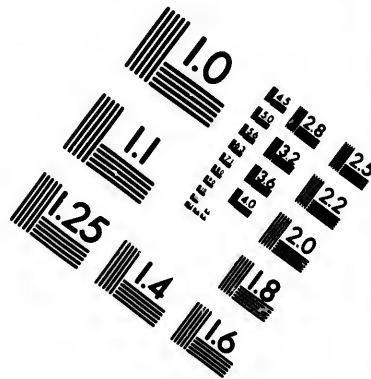
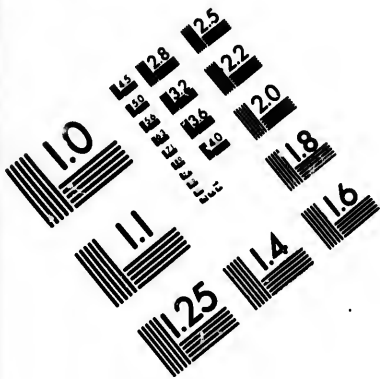
It was a cove, a huge recess,
That keeps, till June, December's snow ;
A lofty precipice in front,
A silent tarn* below !
Far in the bosom of Helvellyn,
Remote from public road or dwelling,
Pathway or cultivated land,
From trace of human foot or hand.

There sometimes doth a leaping fish
Send through the tarn a lonely cheer ;
The crags repeat the raven's croak
In symphony austere.
Thither the rainbow comes—the cloud,
And mists that spread the flying shroud ;
And sunbeams ; and the sounding blast
That, if it could, would hurry past ;
But that enormous barrier biuds it fast.

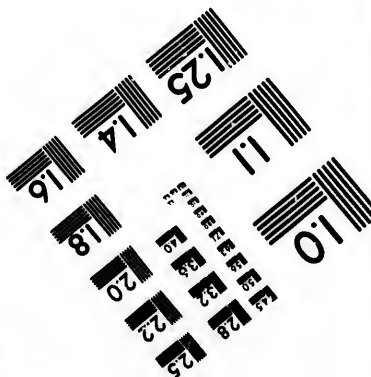
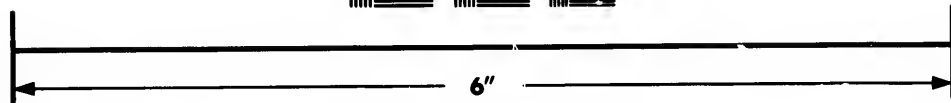
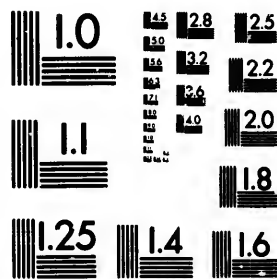
Not free from boding thoughts, a while
The shepherd stood ; then makes his way
Towards the dog, o'er rocks and stones,
As quickly as he may ;
Nor far had gone before he found
A human skeleton on the ground ;
The appalled discoverer with a sigh
Looks round, to learn the history.

* Tarn is a *small* mere or lake, mostly high up in the mountains.





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From those abrupt and perilous rocks
 The man had fallen, that place of fear !
 At length upon the shepherd's mind
 It breaks, and all is clear.
 He instantly recalled the name,
 And who he was, and whence he came ;
 Remembered, too, the very day
 On which the traveller passed this way.

But hear a wonder, for whose sake
 This lamentable tale I tell !
 A lasting monument of words
 This wonder merits well.
 The dog, which still was hovering nigh
 Repeating the same timid cry,
 This dog had been through three months' space
 A dweller in that savage place.

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day
 When this ill-fated traveller died,
 The dog had watched about the spot,
 Or by his master's side.
 How nourished here through such long time
 He knows who gave that love sublime ;
 And gave that strength of feeling, great
 Above all human estimate.

ELEGIAC STANZAS,

SUGGESTED BY A PICTURE OF PEELE CASTLE IN A STORM
 PAINTED BY SIR GEORGE BEAUMONT.

I was thy neighbor once, thou rugged pile !
 Four summer weeks I dwelt in sight of thee :
 I saw thee every day, and all the while
 Thy form was sleeping on a glassy sea.

So pure the sky, so quiet was the air !
So like, so very like, was day to day !
Whene'er I looked, thy image still was there :
It trembled, but it never passed away.

How perfect was the calm ! it seemed no sleep :
No-mood which season takes away or brings :
I could have fancied that the mighty deep
Was even the gentlest of all gentle things.

Ah ! *then*, if mine had been the painter's hand,
To express what then I saw, and add the gleam,
(The light that never was, on sea or land,
The consecration, and the poet's dream,)

I would have planted thee, thou hoary pile,
Amid a world how different from this !
Beside a sea that could not cease to smile ;
On tranquil land, beneath a sky of bliss.

A picture had it been of lasting ease,
Elysian quiet, without toil or strife ;
No motion but the moving tide, a breeze,
Or merely silent Nature's breathing life.

Such, in the fond illusion of my heart,
Such picture would I at that time have made ;
And seen the soul of truth in every part,
A steadfast peace that might not be betrayed.

So once it would have been ; 'tis so no more ;
I have submitted to a new control ;
A power is gone which nothing can restore ;
A deep distress hath humanized my soul.

Not for a moment could I now behold
A smiling sea and be what I have been.
The feeling of my loss will ne'er be old ;
This, which I know, I speak with mind serene.

Then, Beaumont, friend! who would have been the
friend,

If he had lived, of him whom I deplore,
This work of thine I blame not, but commend—
This sea in anger and that dismal shore.

Oh, 'tis a passionate work—yet wise and well,
Well chosen is the spirit that is here ;
That hulk which labors in the deadly swell,
This rueful sky, this pageantry of fear.

And this huge castle, standing here sublime,
I love to see the look with which it braves,
Cased in the unfeeling armor of old time,
The lightning, the fierce wind, and trampling
waves.

Farewell, farewell the heart that lives alone,
Housed, in a dream, at distance from the kind !
Such happiness, wherever it be known,
Is to be pitied, for 'tis surely blind.

But welcome fortitude and patient cheer,
And frequent sights of what is to be borne !
Such sights, or worse, as are before me here—
Not without hope we suffer and we mourn.

FRENCH REVOLUTION,

AS IT APPEARED TO ENTHUSIASTS AT ITS COMMENCEMENT.

Oh! pleasant exercise of hope and joy !
For mighty were the auxiliars which then stood
Upon our side, we who were strong in love !
Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven ! Oh, times

In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute took at once
The attraction of a country in romance !
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights,
When most intent on making of herself
A prime enchantress, to assist the work
Which then was going forward in her name !
Not favored spots alone, but the whole earth,
The beauty wore of promise—that which sets
(As at some moment might not be unfelt
Among the bowers of Paradise itself)
The budding rose above the rose full-blown.
What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away !
They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
The playfellows of fancy, who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtilty, and strength,
Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred
Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found there
As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it ; they, too, who, of gentle mood,
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,
And in the region of their peaceful selves ;—
Now was it that *both* found, the meek and lofty
Did both find helpers to their heart's desire,
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish ;
Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where,
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where in the end
We find our happiness, or not at all !

ODE TO DUTY.

“*Jam non consilio bonus, sed more cō perductus, ut non tantum recte facere possim, sed nisi recte facere non possim.*”

STERN daughter of the voice of God
 O Duty ! if that name thou love
 Who art a light to guide, a rod
 To check the erring, and reprove ;
 Thou who art victory and law
 When empty terrors overawe,
 From vain temptations dost set free,
 And calm'st the weary strife of frail humanity !

There are who ask not if thine eye
 Be on them ; who in love and truth,
 Where no misgiving is, rely
 Upon the genial sense of youth :
 Glad hearts, without reproach or blot,
 Who do thy work and know it not :
 Long may the kindly impulse last !
 But thou, if they should totter, teach them to stand
 fast !

Serene will be our days and bright,
 And happy will our nature be,
 When love is an unerring light,
 And joy its own security.
 And they a blissful course may hold,
 Even now who, not unwisely bold,
 Live in the spirit of this creed,
 Yet seek thy firm support according to their need.

I, loving freedom, and untried—
No sport of every random gust,
Yet being to myself a guide—
Too blindly have reposed my trust ;
And oft, when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task, in smoother walks to stray ;
But thee I now would serve more strictly, if I may.

Through no disturbance of my soul,
Or strong compunction in me wrought,
I supplicate for thy control ;
But in the quietness of thought
Me this unchartered freedom tires ;
I feel the weight of chance desires ;
My hopes no more must change their name,
I long for a repose that ever is the same.

Stern lawgiver ! yet thou dost wear
The Godhead's most benignant grace ;
Nor know we anything so fair
As is the smile upon thy face.
Flowers laugh before thee on their beds,
And fragrance in thy footing treads ;
Thou dost preserve the stars from wrong ;
And the most ancient heavens, through thee, are fresh
and strong.

To humbler functions, awful power !
I call thee : I myself commend
Unto thy guidance from this hour ;
Oh, let my weakness have an end !
Give unto me, made lowly wise,
The spirit of self-sacrifice ;
The confidence of reason give,
And in the light of truth thy bondman let me live !

ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY.

FROM RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD.

I.

THERE was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore ;
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

II.

The rainbow comes and goes,
And lovely is the rose ;
The moon doth with delight
Look round her when the heavens are bare ;
Waters on a starry night
Are beautiful and fair ;
The sunshine is a glorious birth ;
But yet I know, where'er I go,
That there hath passed away a glory from the earth.

III.

Now, while the birds thus sing a joyous song,
And while the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,

To me alone there came a thought of grief :
A timely utterance gave that thought relief,
And I again am strong.
The cataracts blow their trumpets from the steep ;
No more shall grief of mine the season wrong ;
I hear the echoes through the mountains throng ;
The winds come to me from the fields of sleep,
And all the earth is gay ;
Land and sea
Give themselves up to jollity,
And with the heart of May
Doth every beast keep holiday.
Thou child of joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy
shepherd-boy !

iv.

Ye blessed creatures, I have heard the call
Ye to each other make ; I see
The heavens laugh with you in your jubilee ;
My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
Oh, evil day if I were sullen
While the earth herself is adorning
This sweet May morning,
And the children are pulling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers, while the sun shines warm,
And the babe leaps up on his mother's arm !
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear !
—But there's a tree, of many, one,
A single field which I have looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that is gone ;

The pansy at my feet
 Doth the same tale repeat :
 Whither is fled the visionary gleam ?
 Where is it now, the glory and the dream ?

v.

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting :
 The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
 Hath had elsewhere its setting,
 And cometh from afar ;
 Not in entire forgetfulness,
 And not in utter nakedness,
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come
 From God, who is our home.
 Heaven lies about us in our infancy ;
 Shades of the prison-house begin to close
 Upon the growing boy,
 But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
 He sees it in his joy ;
 The youth, who daily farther from the East
 Must travel, still is Nature's priest,
 And by the vision splendid
 Is on his way attended ;
 At length the man perceives it die away,
 And fade into the light of common day.

vi.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of her own ;
 Yearnings she hath in her own natural kind,
 And even with something of a mother's mind,
 And no unworthy aim,
 The homely nurse doth all she can
 To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
 Forget the glories he hath known,
 And that imperial palace whence he came.

VII.

Behold the child among his new-born blisses,
 A six years' darling of a pigmy size !
 See, where 'mid work of his own hand he lies,
 Fretted by sallies of his mother's kisses,
 With light upon him from his father's eyes !
 See, at his feet, some little plan or chart,
 Some fragment from his dream of human life,
 Shaped by himself with newly learned art ;
 A wedding or a festival,
 A mourning or a funeral,
 And this hath now his heart,
 And unto this he frames his song ;
 Then will he fit his tongue
 To dialogues of business, love, or strife ;
 But it will not be long
 Ere this be thrown aside,
 And with new joy and pride
 The little actor cons another part ;
 Filling from time to time his "humorous stage"
 With all the Persons, down to palsied Age,
 That life brings with her in her equipage ;
 As if his whole vocation.
 Were endless imitation.

VIII.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
 Thy soul's immensity ;
 Thou best philosopher, who yet dost keep
 Thy heritage ; thou eye among the blind,
 That, deaf and silent, read'st the eternal deep,
 Haunted forever by the eternal mind—
 Mighty prophet ! seer blest !
 On whom those truths do rest

Which we are toiling all our lives to find,
 In darkness lost, the darkness of the grave ;
 Thou, over whom thy immortality
 Broods like the day, a master o'er a slave,
 A presence which is not to be put by ;
 Thou little child, yet glorious in the might
 Of heaven-born freedom on thy being's height,
 Why with such earnest pains dost thou provoke
 The years to bring the inevitable yoke,
 Thus blindly with their blessedness at strife ?
 Full soon thy soul shall have her earthly freight,
 And custom lie upon thee with a weight,
 Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life !

IX.

O joy ! that in our embers
 Is something that doth live,
 That nature yet remembers
 What was so fugitive !
 The thought of our past years in me doth breed
 Perpetual benediction—not, indeed,
 For that which is most worthy to be blest ;
 Delight and liberty, the simple creed
 Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
 With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast :
 Not for these I raise
 The song of thanks and praise ;
 But for those obstinate questionings
 Of sense and outward things,
 Fallings from us, vanishings ;
 Blank misgivings of a creature
 Moving about in worlds not realized,
 High instincts before which our mortal nature
 Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised ;

But for those first affections,
 Those shadowy recollections,
 Which, be they what they may,
 Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
 Are yet a master light of all our seeing ;
 Uphold us, cherish, and have power to make
 Our noisy years seem moments in the being
 Of the eternal silence : truths that wake,
 To perish never ;
 Which neither listlessness, nor mad endeavor,
 Nor man nor boy,
 Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
 Can utterly abolish or destroy !
 Hence, in the season of calm weather,
 Though inland far we be,
 Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
 Which brought us hither,
 Can in a moment travel thither,
 And see the children sport upon the shore,
 And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

x.

Then sing, ye birds ! sing, sing a joyous song !
 And let the young lambs bound
 As to the tabor's sound !
 We in thought will join your throng,
 Ye that pipe and ye that play,
 Ye that through your hearts to-day
 Feel the gladness of the May !
 What though the radiance which was once so bright
 Be now forever taken from my sight,
 Though nothing can bring back the hour
 Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower ;
 We will grieve not, rather find
 Strength in what remains behind ;

In the the primal sympathy
 Which, having been, must ever be,
 In the soothing thoughts that spring
 Out of human suffering,
 In the faith that looks through death,
 In years that bring the philosophic mind.

XI

And O, ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves
 Think not of any severing of our loves !
 Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might :
 I only have relinquished one delight
 To live beneath your more habitual sway.
 I love the brooks which down their channels fret,
 Even more than when I tripped lightly as they ;
 The innocent brightness of a new-born day
 Is lovely yet ;
 The clouds that gather round the setting sun
 Do take a sober coloring from an eye
 That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality ;
 Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
 Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
 Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
 To me the meanest flower that blows can give
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

CHARACTER OF THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

Who is the happy warrior? Who is he
 That every man in arms should wish to be?
 It is the generous spirit who, when brought
 Among the tasks of real life, hath wrought
 Upon the plan that pleased his childish thought ;

Whose high endeavors are an inward light
That makes the path before him always bright ;
Who, with a natural instinct to discern
What knowledge can perform, is diligent to learn ;
Abides by this resolve, and stops not there,
But makes his moral being his prime care ;
Who, doomed to go in company with pain
And fear and bloodshed--miserable train !—
Turns his necessity to glorious gain ;
In face of these doth exercise a power
Which is our human nature's highest dower :
Controls them and subdues, transmutes, bereaves
Of their bad influence, and their good receives ;
By objects which might force the soul to abate
Her feeling, rendered more compassionate ;
Is placable, because occasions rise
So often that demand such sacrifice ;
More skilful in self-knowledge, even more pure,
As tempted more ; more able to endure
As more exposed to suffering and distress ;
Thence, also, more alive to tenderness.
'Tis he whose law is reason ; who depends
Upon that law as on the best of friends :
Whence, in a state where men are tempted still
To evil for a guard against worse ill,
And what in quality or act is best
Doth seldom on a right foundation rest,
He fixes good on good alone, and owes
To virtue every triumph that he knows :
Who, if he rise to station of command,
Rises by open means, and there will stand
On honorable terms, or else retire,
And in himself possess his own desire ;
Who comprehends his trust, and to the same
Keeps faithful with a singleness of aim ;

And therefore does not stoop, nor lie in wait
For wealth or honors, or for worldly state ;
Whom they must follow ; on whose head must fall
Like showers of manna, if they come at all ;
Whose powers shed round him, in the common strife
Or mild concerns of ordinary life,
A constant influence, a peculiar grace ;
But who, if he be called upon to face
Some awful moment to which Heaven has joined
Great issues, good or bad for human kind,
Is happy as a lover ; and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired ;
And through the heat of conflict keeps the law
In calmness made, and sees what he foresaw ;
Or if an unexpected call succeed,
Come when it will, is equal to the need :
He who, though thus endued as with a sense
And faculty for storm and turbulence,
Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To home-felt pleasures and to gentle scenes ;
Sweet images ! which, wheresoe'er he be,
Are at his heart, and such fidelity
It is his darling passion to approve ;
More brave for this, that he hath much to love :
"Tis, finally, the man who, lifted high,
Conspicuous object in a nation's eye,
Or left unthought of in obscurity,—
Who, with a toward or untoward lot,
Prosperous or adverse, to his wish or not,
Plays, in the many games of life, that one
Where what he most doth value must be won ;
Whom neither shape of danger can dismay
Nor thought of tender happiness betray ;
Who, not content that former worth stand fast,
Looks forward, persevering to the last,

From well to better, daily self-surpast ;
Who, whether praise of him must walk the earth
Forever, and to noble deeds give birth,
Or he must go to dust without his fame
And leave a dead, unprofitable name,
Finds comfort in himself and in his cause ;
And, while the mortal mist is gathering, draws
His breath in confidence of Heaven's applause :
This is the happy warrior ; this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.

THE LEECH-GATHERER ;

OR,

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

THERE was a roaring in the wind all night ;
The rain came heavily and fell in floods ;
But now the sun is rising calm and bright ;
The birds are singing in the distant woods ;
Over his own sweet voice the stock-dove broods ;
The jay makes answer as the magpie chatters ;
And all the air is filled with pleasant noise of waters.

All things that love the sun are out of doors ;
The sky rejoices in the morning's birth ;
The grass is bright with rain-drops ; on the moors
The hare is running races in her mirth,
And with her feet she from the plashy earth
Raises a mist that, glittering in the sun,
Runs with her all the way wherever she doth run.

I was a traveller then upon the moor ;
I saw the hare that raced about with joy ;
I heard the woods and distant waters roar ;
Or heard them not, as happy as a boy.

The pleasant season did my heart employ :
My old remembrances went from me wholly
And all the ways of men so vain and melancholy.

But, as it sometimes chanceth, from the might
Of joy in minds that can no further go,
As high as we have mounted in delight,
In our dejection do we sink as low :
To me that morning did it happen so ;
And fears and fancies thick upon me came ;
Dim sadness—and blind thoughts I knew not, nor
could name.

I heard the skylark warbling in the sky ;
And I bethought me of the playful hare :
Even such a happy child of earth am I,
Even as these blissful creatures do I fare ;
Far from the world I walk, and from all care ;
But there may come another day to me—
Solitude, pain of heart, distress, and poverty

My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood :
As if all needful things would come unsought
To genial faith, still rich in genial good :
But how can he expect that others should
Build for him, sow for him, and at his call
Love him, who for himself will take no heed at all ?

I thought of Chatterton, the marvellous boy,
The sleepless soul that perished in his pride ;
Of him who walked in glory and in joy,
Following his plough, along the mountain-side :
By our own spirits are we deified ;
We poets in our youth begin in gladness ;
But thereof comes in the end despondency and mad-
ness.

Now, whether it were by peculiar grace,
A leading from above, a something given,
Yet it befell that, in this lonely place,
When I with these untoward thoughts had striven,
Beside a pool bare to the eye of heaven
I saw a man before me unawares :
The oldest man he seemed that ever wore gray hairs.

As a huge stone is sometimes seen to lie
Couched on the bald top of an eminence ;
Wonder to all who do the same espy,
By what means it could thither come, and whence ;
So that it seems a thing endued with sense ;
Like a sea-beast crawled forth, that on a shelf
Of rock or sand reposeth, there to sun itself ;

Such seemed this man, not all alive nor dead,
Nor all asleep, in his extreme old age :
His body was bent double, feet and head
Coming together in life's pilgrimage ;
As if some dire constraint of pain, or rage
Of sickness felt by him in times long past,
A more than human weight upon his frame had cast.

Himself he propped—his body, limbs, and face—
Upon a long gray staff of shaven wood :
And still, as I drew near with gentle pace,
Upon the margin of that moorish flood,
Motionless as a cloud, the old man stood ;
That heareth not the loud winds when they call ;
And moveth all together, if it move at all.

At length, himself unsettling, he the pond
Stirred with his staff, and fixedly did look
Upon the muddy water, which he conned,
As if he had been reading in a book ;

And now a stranger's privilege I took ;
And, drawing to his side, to him did say,
"This morning gives us promise of a glorious day."

A gentle answer did the old man make
In courteous speech, which forth he slowly drew :
And him with further words I thus bespake :
"What occupation do you there pursue ?
This is a lonesome place for one like you."
He answered, while a flash of mild surprise
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet vivid eyes.

His words came feebly from a feeble chest,
But each in solemn order followed each,
With something of a lofty utterance drest—
Choice word and measured phrase, above the reach
Of ordinary men ; a stately speech,
Such as grave livers do in Scotland use,
Religious men, who give to God and man their dues.

He told that to these waters he had come
To gather leeches, being old and poor :
Employment hazardous and wearisome !
And he had many hardships to endure.
From pond to pond he roamed ; from moor to
moor ;
Housing, with God's good help, by choice or chance ;
And in this way he gained an honest maintenance.

The old man still stood talking by my side ;
But now his voice to me was like a stream
Scarce heard ; nor word from word could I divide ;
And the whole body of the man did seem
Like one whom I had met with in a dream ;
Or like a man from some far region sent,
To give me human strength by apt admonishment.

My former thoughts returned : the fear that kills,
And hope that is unwilling to be fed ;
Cold, pain, and labor, and all fleshly ills,
And mighty poets in their misery dead.
Perplexed, and longing to be comforted,
My question eagerly did I renew,
“How is it that you live, and what is it you do?”

He with a smile did then his words repeat ;
And said that, gathering leeches, far and wide
He travelled ; stirring thus about his feet
The waters of the pools where they abide.
“Once I could meet with them on every side ;
But they have dwindled long by slow decay ;
Yet still I persevere, and find them where I may ”

While he was talking thus, the lonely place,
The old man's shape and speech, all troubled me :
In my mind's eye I seemed to see him pacc
About the weary moors continually,
Wandering about alone and silently.
While I these thoughts within myself pursued,
He, having made a pause, the same discourse renewed.

And soon with this he other matter blended,
Cheerfully uttered, with demeanor kind,
But stately in the main ; and when he ended,
I could have laughed myself to scorn to find
In that decrepit man so firm a mind.
“God,” said I, “be my help and stay secure ;
I'll think of the leech-gatherer on the lonely moor !”

YARROW UNVISITED.

[See the various poems, the scene of which is laid upon the banks of the Yarrow; in particular, the exquisite ballad of Hamilton, beginning

“Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome Marrow !”]

FROM Stirling Castle we had seen
The mazy Forth unravelled ;
Had trod the banks of Clyde and Tay,
And with the Tweed had travelled ;
And when we came to Clovenford,
Then said my “winsome Marrow,”
“Whate’er betide, we’ll turn aside,
And see the braes of Yarrow.”

“Let Yarrow folk, frae Selkirk Town,
Who have been buying, selling,
Go back to Yarrow, ’tis their own ;
Each maiden to her dwelling.
On Yarrow’s banks let herons feed,
Hares couch, and rabbits burrow ;
But we will downward with the Tweed,
Nor turn aside to Yarrow.

“There’s Galla Water, Leader Haughs,
Both lying right before us ;
And Dryborough, where with chiming Tweed
The lintwhites sing in chorus ;
There’s pleasant Teviotdale, a land
Made blithe with plough and harrow :
Why throw away a needful day
To go in search of Yarrow ?

“ What's Yarrow but a river bare,
That glides the dark hills under ?
There are a thousand such elsewhere
As worthy of your wonder.”

Strange words they seemed of slight and scorn ;
My true-love sighed for sorrow ;
And looked me in the face, to think
I thus could speak of Yarrow.

“ Oh, green,” said I, “ are Yarrow's holms,
And sweet is Yarrow's flowing !
Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,*
But we will leave it growing.
O'er hilly path and open strath,
We'll wander Scotland thorough ;
But, though so near, we will not turn
'Into the dale of Yarrow.

“ Let beeves and home-bred kine partake
The sweets of Burn-mill meadow ;
The swan on still Saint Mary's lake
Float double, swan and shadow !
We will not see them ; will not go
To-day, nor yet to-morrow ;
Enough if in our hearts we know
There's such a place as Yarrow.

“ Be Yarrow stream unseen, unknown !
It must, or we shall rue it ;
We have a vision of our own ;
Ah ! why should we undo it ?
The treasured dreams of times long past,
We'll keep them, winsome Marrow !
For when we're there, although 'tis fair,
'Twill be another Yarrow.

* See Hamilton's ballad, as above.

" If care with freezing years should come,
 And wandering seem but folly ;
 Should we be loath to stir from home,
 And yet be melancholy ;
 Should life be dull and spirits low,
 'Twill soothe us in our sorrow,
 That earth has something yet to show,
 The bonny holms of Yarrow ! "

YARROW VISITED,

SEPTEMBER, 1814.

AND is this—Yarrow?—*This* the stream
 Of which my fancy cherished,
 So faithfully, a waking dream?
 An image that hath perished !
 Oh, that some minstrel's harp were near,
 To utter notes of gladness,
 And chase this silence from the air,
 That fills my heart with sadness !

Yet why? a silvery current flows
 With uncontrolled meanderings ;
 Nor have these eyes by greener hills
 Been soothed in all my wanderings.
 And, through her depths, Saint Mary's Lake
 Is visibly delighted ;
 For not a feature of those hills
 Is in the mirror slighted.

A blue sky bends o'er Yarrow vale,
 Save where that pearly whiteness
 Is round the rising sun diffused,
 A tender hazy brightness ;

Mild dawn of promise ! that excludes
All profitless dejection ;
Though not unwilling here to admit
A pensive recollection.

Where was it that the famous Flower
Of Yarrow Vale lay bleeding ?
His bed perchance was yon smooth mound
On which the herd is feeding :
And haply from this crystal pool,
Now peaceful as the morning,
The water-wraith ascended thrice—
And gave his doleful warning.

Delicious is the lay that sings
The haunts of happy lovers,
The path that leads them to the grove,
The leafy grove that covers :
And pity sanctifies the verse
That paints, by strength of sorrow,
The unconquerable strength of love ;
Bear witness, rueful Yarrow !

But thou, that didst appear so fair
To fond imagination,
Dost rival in the light of day
Her delicate creation :
Meek loveliness is round thee spread,
A softness still and holy ;
The grace of forest charms decayed,
And pastoral melancholy.

That region left, the vale unfolds
Rich groves of lofty stature,
With Yarrow winding through the pomp
Of cultivated nature ;

And rising from those lofty groves,
Behold a ruin hoary !
The shattered front of Newark's towers,
Renowned in Border story.

Fair scenes for childhood's opening bloom,
For sportive youth to stray in ;
For manhood to enjoy his strength ;
And age to wear away in !
Yon cottage seems a bower of bliss,
A covert for protection
Of tender thoughts that nestle there,
The brood of chaste affection.

How sweet on this autumnal day,
The wild-wood fruits to gather,
And on my true-love's forehead plant
A crest of blooming heather.
And what if I enwreathed my own !
'Twere no offence to reason ;
The sober hills thus decked their brows
To meet the wintry season.

I see—but not by sight alone,
Loved Yarrow, have I won thee ;
A ray of fancy still survives—
Her sunshine plays upon thee !
Thy ever-youthful waters keep
A course of lively pleasure ;
And gladsome notes my lips can breathe,
Accordant to the measure.

The vapors linger round the heights,
They melt—and soon must vanish ;
One hour is theirs, nor more is mine—
Sad thought, which I would banish,

But that I know, where'er I go,
 Thy genuine image, Yarrow !
 Will dwell with me—to heighten joy,
 And cheer my mind in sorrow.

YARROW REVISITED.

[The following stanzas are a memorial of a day passed with Sir Walter Scott, and other friends visiting the banks of the Yarrow under his guidance, immediately before his departure from Abbotsford for Naples.]

THE gallant youth, who may have gained,
 Or seeks, a “winsome Marrow,”
 Was but an infant in the lap
 When first I looked on Yarrow ;
 Once more, by Newark's castle-gate
 Long left without a warder,
 I stood, looked, listened, and with thee
 Great Minstrel of the Border !

Grave thoughts ruled wide on that sweet day,
 Their dignity installing
 In gentle bosoms, while sere leaves
 Were on the bough or falling ;
 But breezes played, and sunshine gleamed,
 The forest to embolden ;
 Reddened the fiery hues, and shot
 Transparence through the golden.

For busy thoughts the stream flowed on
 In foamy agitation ;
 And slept in many a crystal pool
 For quiet contemplation.

No public and no private care
The freeborn mind enthralling,
We made a day of happy hours,
Our happy days recalling.

Brisk youth appeared, the morn of youth,
With freaks of graceful folly—
Life's temperate noon, her sober eve,
Her night not melancholy ;
Past, present, future, all appeared
In harmony united,
Like guests that meet, and some from far,
By cordial love invited.

And if, as Yarrow, through the woods
And down the meadow ranging,
Did meet us with unaltered face,
Though we were changed and changing ;
If, *then*, some natural shadows spread
Our inward prospect over,
The soul's deep valley was not slow
Its brightness to recover.

Eternal blessings on the Muse,
And her divine employment !
The blameless Muse, who trains her sons
For hope and calm enjoyment ;
Albeit sickness, lingering yet,
Has o'er their pillow brooded ;
And Care waylays their steps—a Sprite
Not easily eluded.

For thee, O SCOTT ! compelled to change
Green Eildon-hill and Cheviot
For warm Vesuvio's vine-clad slopes,
And leave thy Tweed and Teviot

For mild Sorrento's breezy waves :
May classic fancy, linking
With native fancy her fresh aid,
Preserve thy heart from sinking !

Oh ! while they minister to thee,
Each vying with the other,
May Health return to mellow age
With Strength, her venturous brother ;
And Tiber, and each brook and rill
Renowned in song and story,
With unimagined beauty shine,
Nor lose one ray of glory.

For thou, upon a hundred streams,
By tales of love and sorrow,
Of faithful love, undaunted truth,
Hast shed the power of Yarrow ;
And streams unknown, hills yet unseen,
Wherever they invite thee,
At parent Nature's grateful call,
With gladness must requite thee.

A gracious welcome shall be thine,
Such looks of love and honor
As thy own Yarrow gave to me
When first I gazed upon her ;
Beheld what I had feared to see,
Unwilling to surrender
Dreams treasured up from early days,
The holy and the tender.

And what, for this frail world, were all
That mortals do or suffer,
Did no responsive harp, no pen,
Memorial tribute offer ?

Yea, what were mighty Nature's self
Her features, could they win us,
Unhelped by the poetic voice
That hourly speaks within us?

Nor deem that localized romance
Plays false with our affections ;
Unsanctifies our tears—made sport
For fanciful dejections.
Oh, no ! the visions of the past
Sustain the heart in feeling
Life as she is—our changeful life—
With friends and kindred dealing.

Bear witness ye whose thoughts that day
In Yarrow's groves were centred ;
Who through the silent portal arch
Of mouldering Newark entered ;
And climb the winding stair that once
Too timidly was mounted
By the "last Minstrel" (not the last !)
Ere he his tale recounted.

Flow on forever, Yarrow stream !
Fulfil thy pensive duty,
Well pleased that future bards should chant
For simple hearts thy beauty ;
To dream-light dear while yet unseen,
Dear to the common sunshine,
And dearer still, as now I feel,
To memory's shadowy moonshine !

TO A SKYLARK.

ETHEREAL minstrel ! pilgrim of the sky !
 Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound ?
 Or, while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
 Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground ?—
 Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will
 Those quivering wings composed, that music still !

To the last point of vision and beyond,
 Mount, daring warbler ! that love-prompted strain
 ('Twixt thee and thine a never-failing bond)
 Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain :
 Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege ! to sing
 All independent of the leafy spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood ;
 A privacy of glorious light is thine,
 Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
 Of harmony, with instinct more divine :
 Type of the wise who soar, but never roam ;
 True to the kindred points of heaven and home !

A POET'S EPITAPH.

ART thou a Statesman, in the van
 Of public business trained and bred ?
 —First learn to love one living man ;
Then may'st thou think upon the dead.

A Lawyer art thou ?—draw not nigh !
 Go, carry to some fitter place
 The keenness of that practised eye,
 The hardness of that sallow face.

Art thou a Man of purple cheer ?
A rosy Man, right plump to see ?
Approach ; yet, Doctor, not too near,
This grave no cushion is for thee.

Or art thou one of gallant pride,
A soldier, and no man of chaff ?
Welcome !—but lay thy sword aside,
And lean upon a peasant's staff.

Physician art thou ? One all eyes,
Philosopher ! a fingering slave,
One that would peep and botanize
Upon his mother's grave ?

Wrapt closely in thy sensual fleece,
O turn aside,—and take, I pray,
That he below may rest in peace,
That abject thing, thy soul, away !

A Moralist perchance appears ;
Led, Heaven knows how ! to this poor sod :
And he has neither eyes nor ears ;
Himself his world, and his own God ;

One to whose smooth-rubbed soul can cling
Nor form, nor feeling, great or small ;
A reasoning, self-sufficing thing,
An intellectual All-in-all !

Shut close the door ; press down the latch
Sleep in thy intellectual crust ;
Nor lose ten tickings of thy watch
Near this unprofitable dust.

But who is He, with modest looks,
And clad in homely russet brown ?
He murmurs near the running brooks
A music sweeter than their own.

He is retired as noontide dew,
Or fountain in a noon-day grove :
And you must love him, ere to you
He will seem worthy of your love.

The outward shows of sky and earth,
Of hill and valley, he has viewed ;
And impulses of deeper birth
Have come to him in solitude.

In common things that round us lie
Some random truths he can impart ;—
The harvest of a quiet eye
That broods and sleeps on his own heart.

But he is weak ; both Man and Boy,
Hath been an idler in the land ;
Contented if he might enjoy
The things which others understand.

—Come hither in thy hour of strength
Come, weak as is a breaking wave !
Here stretch thy body at full length ;
Or build thy house upon this grave !

THE AFFLICTION OF MARGARET.

WHERE art thou, my beloved son,
Where art thou, worse to me than dead ?
Oh, find me, prosperous or undone !
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same,
That I may rest, and neither blame
Nor sorrow may attend thy name ?

Seven years, alas ! to have received
No tidings of an only child ;
To have despaired, and have believed,
And be for evermore beguiled,
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss !
I catch at them, and then I miss ;
Was ever darkness like to this ?

He was among the prime in worth,
An object beauteous to behold ;
Well born, well bred, I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold :
If things ensued that wanted grace,
As hath been said, they were not base ;
And never blush was on my face.

Ah ! little doth the young-one dream,
When full of play and childish cares,
What power is in his wildest scream,
Heard by his mother unawares !
He knows it not, he cannot guess :
Years to a mother bring distress,
But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me ! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought ; and, being blind,
Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong :
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed." And that is true ;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

My son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honor and of gain,
Oh, do not dread thy mother's door ;
Think not of me with grief and pain ;

I now can see with better eyes ;
And worldly grandeur I despise,
And fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas ! the fowls of heaven have wings,
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight ;
They mount—how short a voyage brings
The wanderers back to their delight !
Chains tie *us* down by land and sea ;
And wishes, vain as mine, may be
All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maimed, mangled by inhuman men ;
Or thou upon a desert thrown
Inheritest the lion's den ;
Or hast been summoned to the deep,
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
An incommunicable sleep.

I look for ghosts ; but none will force
Their way to me : 'tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead ;
For, surely, then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night,
With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds ;
I dread the rustling of the grass ;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass.
I question things, and do not find
One that will answer to my mind ;
And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie
 My troubles, and beyond relief :
 If any chance to heave a sigh,
 They pity me, and not my grief.
 Then come to me, my son, or send
 Some tidings that my woes may end :
 I have no other earthly friend !

THE COMPLAINT OF A FORSAKEN INDIAN WOMAN.

[When a Northern Indian, from sickness, is unable to continue his journey with his companions, he is left behind, covered over with deer-skins, and is supplied with water, food, and fuel, if the situation of the place will afford it. He is informed of the track which his companions intend to pursue, and if he is unable to follow or overtake them, he perishes alone in the desert, unless he should have the good-fortune to fall in with some other tribes of Indians. The females are equally, or still more, exposed to the same fate. See that very interesting work, Hearne's *Journey from Hudson's Bay to the Northern Ocean*. In the high northern latitudes, as the same writer informs us, when the Northern Lights vary their position in the air, they make a rustling and a crackling noise, as alluded to in the following poem.]

BEFORE I see another day,
 Oh, let my body die away !
 In sleep I heard the northern gleams ;
 The stars were mingled with my dreams ;
 In rustling conflict through the skies,
 I heard, I saw, the flashes drive,
 And yet they are upon my eyes,
 And yet I am alive ;
 Before I see another day,
 Oh, let my body die away !

My fire is dead : it knew no pain ;
Yet is it dead, and I remain.
All stiff with ice the ashes lie ;
And they are dead, and I will die.
When I was well, I wished to live,
For clothes, for warmth, for food, and fire ;
But they to me no joy can give,
No pleasure now, and no desire.
Then here contented will I lie !
Alone I cannot fear to die.

Alas ! ye might have dragged me on
Another day, a single one !
Too soon I yielded to despair ;
Why did ye listen to my prayer ?
When ye were gone my limbs were stronger ;
And oh, how grievously I rue
That, afterwards, a little longer,
My friends, I did not follow you !
For strong and without pain I lay,
My friends, when ye were gone away.

My child ! they gave thee to another,
A woman who was not thy mother.
When from my arms my babe they took,
On me how strangely did he look !
Through his whole body something ran,
A most strange working did I see,
As if he strove to be a man,
That he might pull the sledge for me :
And then he stretched his arms, how wild !
Oh mercy ! like a helpless child.

My little joy ! my little pride !
In two days more I must have died.

Then do not weep and grieve for me ;
 I feel I must have died with thee.
 O wind, that o'er my head art flying
 The way my friends their course did bend
 I should not feel the pain of dying,
 Could I with thee a message send.
 Too soon, my friends, ye went away ;
 For I had many things to say.

I'll follow you across the snow ;
 Ye travel heavily and slow ;
 In spite of all my weary pain,
 I'll look upon your tents again.
 My fire is dead, and snowy-white
 The water which beside it stood ;
 The wolf has come to me to-night,
 And he has stolen away my food.
 Forever left alone am I,
 Then wherefore should I fear to die ?

SONG AT THE FEAST OF BROUGHAM CASTLE,

UPON THE RESTORATION OF LORD CLIFFORD, THE SHEPHERD,
 TO THE ESTATES AND HONORS OF HIS ANCESTORS.

High in the breathless hall the minstrel sate,
 And Eamont's murmur mingled with the song.—
 The words of ancient time I thus translate,
 A festal strain that hath been silent long :

“ From town to town, from tower to tower,
 The Red Rose is a gladsome flower.
 Her thirty years of winter past,
 The Red Rose is revived at last ;

She lifts her head for endless spring,
 For everlasting blossoming :
 Both Roses flourish, Red and White.*
 In love and sisterly delight
 The two that were at strife are blended,
 And all old troubles now are ended.
 Joy, joy to both ! but most to her
 Who is the flower of Lancaster !
 Behold her how she smiles to-day
 On this great throng, this bright array !
 Fair greeting doth she send to all
 From every corner of the hall ;
 But, chiefly from above the board
 Where sits in state our rightful Lord,
 A Clifford to his own restored !

" They came with banner, spear, and shield ;
 And it was proved in Bosworth field.
 Not long the Avenger was withstood—
 Earth helped him with the cry of blood :
 St. George was for us, and the might
 Of blessed angels crowned the right.
 Loud voice the land has uttered forth,
 We loudest in the faithful North :
 Our fields rejoice, our mountains ring,
 Our streams proclaim a welcoming ;
 Our strong-abodes and castles see
 The glory of their loyalty.

" How glad is Skipton at this hour—
 Though she is but a lonely tower !
 To vacancy and silence left ;
 Of all her guardian sons bereft—
 Knight, squire, or yeoman, page or groom :
 We have them at the feast of Brougham.

How glad Pendragon, though the sleep
Of years be on her!—She shall reap
A taste of this great pleasure, viewing
As in a dream her own renewing.
Rejoiced is Brough, right glad I deem
Beside her little humble stream ;
And she that keepeth watch and ward
Her statelier Eden's course to guard ;
They both are happy at this hour,
Though each is but a lonely tower :—
But here is perfect joy and pride
For one fair house by Eamont's side,
This day distinguished without peer
To see her master and to cheer—
Him and his lady mother dear !

“ Oh ! it was a time forlorn
When the fatherless was born.
Give her wings that she may fly,
Or she sees her infant die !
Swords that are with slaughter wild
Hunt the mother and the child.
Who will take them from the light ?
Yonder is a man in sight ;
Yonder is a house—but where ?
No, they must not enter there.
To the caves and to the brooks,
To the clouds of heaven she looks ;
She is speechless, but her eyes
Pray in ghostly agonies.
Blissful Mary, Mother mild,
Maid and Mother undefiled,
Save a mother and her child !

“ Now who is he that bounds with joy
On Carrock's side, a Shepherd Boy ?

No thoughts hath he but thoughts that pass
Light as the wind along the grass.
Can this be he who hither came
In secret, like a smothered flame—
O'er whom such thankful tears were shed—
For shelter and a poor man's bread?
God loves the child; and God hath willed
That those dear words should be fulfilled,
The lady's words, when forced away
The last she to her babe did say,
'My own, my own, thy fellow-guest
I may not be; but rest thee, rest,
For lowly shepherd's life is best!'

“Alas! when evil men are strong
No life is good, no pleasure long,
The boy must part from Mosedale's groves,
And leave Blencathara's rugged coves,
And quit the flowers that summer brings
To Glenderamakin's lofty springs;
Must vanish, and his careless cheer
Be turned to heaviness and fear.
Give Sir Lancelot Threlkeld praise!
Hear it, good man, old in days,
Thou tree of covert and of rest!
For this young bird that is distress;
Among thy branches safe he lay,
And he was free to sport and play
When falcons were abroad for prey.

“A recreant harp that sings of fear
And heaviness in Clifford's ear!
I said, when evil men are strong,
No life is good, no pleasure long,
A weak and cowardly untruth!
Our Clifford was a happy youth,

And thankful through a weary time,
That brought him up to manhood's prime.
Again he wanders forth at will,
And tends a flock from hill to hill ;
His garb is humble ; ne'er was seen
Such garb with such a noble mien ;
Among the shepherd-grooms no mate
Hath he, a child of strength and state !
Yet lacks not friends for solemn glee,
And a cheerful company,
That learned of him submissive ways ;
And comforted his private days.
To his side the fallow-deer
Came, and rested without fear ;
The eagle, lord of land and sea,
Stooped down to pay him fealty ;
And both the undying fish that swim
Through Bowscale Tarn did wait on him :
The pair were servants of his eye
In their immortality ;
They moved about in open sight,
To and fro, for his delight.
He knew the rocks which angels haunt
On the mountains visitant ;
He hath kenned them taking wing ;
And the caves where faeries sing
He hath entered, and been told
By voices how men lived of old.
Among the heavens his eye can see
Face of thing that is to be ;
And if men report him right,
He could whisper words of might.
Now another day is come,
Fitter hope and nobler doom ;
He hath thrown aside his crook,

And hath buried deep his book ;
Armor rusting in his halls
On the blood of Clifford calls ;
'Quell the Scot,' exclaims the lance ;
Bear me to the heart of France
Is the longing of the shield.
Tell thy name, thou trembling field—
Field of death, where'er thou be,
Groan thou with our victory !
Happy day and mighty hour,
When our Shepherd, in his power,
Mailed and horsed, with lance and sword,
To his ancestors restored
Like a reappearing star,
Like a glory from afar,
First shall head the flock of war !”

Alas ! the fervent harper did not know
That for a tranquil soul the lay was framed,
Who, long compelled in humble walks to go,
Was softened into feeling, soothed, and tamed.

Love had he found in huts where poor men lie ;
His daily teachers had been woods and rills,
The silence that is in the starry sky,
The sleep that is among the lonely hills.

In him the savage virtue of the race,
Revenge, and all ferocious thoughts, were dead ;
Nor did he change, but kept in lofty place
The wisdom which adversity had bred.

Glad were the vales, and every cottage hearth ;
The shepherd lord was honored more and more ;
And ages after he was laid in earth,
“The good Lord Clifford” was the name he
bore.

THE BROTHERS.*

“THESE tourists, Heaven preserve us! needs must
live

A profitable life. Some glance along,
Rapid and gay, as if the earth were air,
And they were butterflies to wheel about
Long as the summer lasted; some, as wise,
Perched on the forehead of a jutting crag,
Pencil in hand and book upon the knee,
Will look and scribble, scribble on and look,
Until a man might travel twelve stout miles
Or reap an acre of his neighbor's corn.
But, for that moping son of idleness,
Why can he tarry *yonder*? In our church-yard
Is neither epitaph nor monument,
Tombstone nor name—only the turf we tread
And a few natural graves.” To Jane, his wife,
Thus spake the homely Priest of Ennerdale.
It was a July evening; and he sat
Upon the long stone seat beneath the eaves

* This poem was intended to conclude a series of pastorals, the scene of which was laid among the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland. I mention this to apologize for the abruptness with which the poem begins.

Of his old cottage—as it chanced, that day,
Employed in winter's work. Upon the stone
His wife sate near him, teasing matted wool,
While from the twin cards toothed with glittering
wire

He fed the spindle of his youngest child,
Who turned her large round wheel in the open air
With back and forward steps. Towards the field
In which the parish chapel stood alone,
Girt round with a bare ring of mossy wall,
While half an hour went by, the priest had sent
Many a long look of wonder ; and at last,
Risen from his seat beside the snow-white ridge
Of carded wool which the old man had piled,
He laid his implements with gentle care,
Each in the other locked ; and down the path
That from his cottage to the church-yard led
He took his way, impatient to accost
The stranger, whom he saw still lingering there.

'Twas one well known to him in former days,
A shepherd lad ;—who ere his sixteenth year
Had left that calling, tempted to intrust
His expectations to the fickle winds
And perilous waters, with the mariners
A fellow-mariner, and so had fared
Through twenty seasons ; but he had been reared
Among the mountains, and he in his heart
Was half a shepherd on the stormy seas.
Oft in the piping shrouds had Leonard heard
The tones of waterfalls and inland sounds
Of caves and trees : and when the regular wind
Between the tropics filled the steady sail,

And blew with the same breath through days and
 weeks,
 Lengthening invisibly its weary line
 Along the cloudless main, he, in those hours
 Of tiresome indolence, would often hang
 Over the vessel's side, and gaze and gaze ;
 And while the broad green wave and sparkling foam
 Flashed round him images and hues that wrought
 In union with the employment of his heart,
 He, thus by feverish passion overcome,
 Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
 Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
 Saw mountains,—saw the forms of sheep that grazed
 On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
 And shepherds clad in the same country gray
 Which he himself had worn.*

And now, at last,
 From perils manifold, with some small wealth
 Acquired by traffic 'mid the Indian isles,
 To his paternal home he is returned,
 With a determined purpose to resume
 The life he had lived there ; both for the sake
 Of many darling pleasures, and the love
 Which to an only brother he has borne
 In all his hardships, since that happy time
 When, whether it blew foul or fair, they two
 Were brother shepherds on their native hills.
 They were the last of all their race ; and now,
 When Leonard had approached his home, his heart
 Failed in him ; and not venturing to inquire
 Tidings of one whom he so dearly loved,
 Towards the church-yard he had turned aside ;

* This description of the calenture is sketched from an imperfect recollection of an admirable one in prose, by Mr. Gilbert, author of *The Hurricane*.

That, as he knew in what particular spot
His family were laid, he thence might learn
If still his brother lived, or to the file
Another grave was added. He had found
Another grave, near which a full half-hour
He had remained ; but as he gazed there grew
Such a confusion in his memory
That he began to doubt ; and hope was his
That he had seen this heap of turf before
That it was not another grave, but one
He had forgotten. He had lost his path,
As up the vale, that afternoon, he walked
Through fields which once had been well known to
him :

And oh ! what joy the recollection now
Sent to his heart ! He lifted up his eyes
And, looking round, imagined that he saw
Strange alteration wrought on every side
Among the woods and fields, and that the rocks
And everlasting hills themselves were changed.

By this the priest, who down the field had come
Unseen by Leonard, at the church-yard gate
Stopped short, and thence, at leisure, limb by limb
Perused him with a gay complacency.
Ay, thought the vicar, smiling to himself,
'Tis one of those who needs must leave the path
Of the world's business to go wild alone :
His arms have a perpetual holiday ;
The happy man will creep about the fields,
Following his fancies by the hour, to bring
Tears down his cheek, or solitary smiles
Into his face, until the setting sun
Write fool upon his forehead. Planted thus
Beneath a shed that overarched the gate

Of this rude church-yard, till the stars appeared,
 The good man might have communed with himself,
 But that the stranger, who had left the grave,
 Approached ; he recognized the priest at once,
 And after greetings interchanged, and given
 By Leonard to the vicar as to one
 Unknown to him, this dialogue ensued.

Leonard.

You live, sir, in these dales, a quiet life :
 Your years make up one peaceful family ;
 And who would grieve and fret if, welcome come
 And welcome gone, they are so like each other,
 They cannot be remembered? Scarce a funeral
 Comes to this church-yard once in eighteen months ;
 And yet some changes must take place among you :
 And you, who dwell here, even among these rocks,
 Can trace the finger of mortality,
 And see that with our threescore years and ten
 We are not all that perish. I remember
 (For many years ago I passed this road)
 There was a footway all along the fields
 By the brook-side—'tis gone—and that dark cleft !
 To me it does not seem to wear the face
 Which then it had.

Priest.

Nay, sir, for aught I know,
 That chasm is much the same—

Leonard.

But, surely, yonder—

Priest.

Ay, there, indeed, your memory is a friend
 That does not play you false. On that tall pike

(It is the loneliest place of all these hills)
There were two springs which bubbled side by side,
As if they had been made that they might be
Companions for each other. The huge crag
Was rent with lightning : one hath disappeared ;
The other, left behind, is flowing still.*
For accidents and changes such as these
We want not store of them ;—a water-spout
Will bring down half a mountain ; what a feast
For folks that wander up and down like you,
To see an acre's breadth of that wide cliff
One roaring cataract ! A sharp May storm
Will come with loads of January snow,
And in one night send twenty score of sheep
To feed the ravens. Or a shepherd dies
By some untoward death among the rocks ;
The ice breaks up and sweeps away a bridge ;
A wood is felled :—and then for our own homes !
A child is born or christened, a field ploughed,
A daughter sent to service, a web spun,
The old house-clock is decked with a new face ;
And hence, so far from wanting facts or dates
To chronicle the time, we all have here
A pair of diaries—one serving, sir,
For the whole dale, and one for each fireside—
Yours was a stranger's judgment ; for historians,
Commend me to these valleys !

Leonard.

Yet your church-yard
Seems, if such freedom may be used with you,
To say that you are heedless of the past :

*This actually took place upon Kidstow Pike at the head
Hawes-water.

An orphan could not find his mother's grave ;
 Here's neither head nor foot stone, plate of brass,
 Cross-bones nor skull—type of our earthly state
 Nor emblem of our hopes : the dead man's home
 Is but a fellow to that pasture-field.

Priest.

Why, there, sir, is a thought that's new to me !
 The stone-cutters, 'tis true, might beg their bread
 If every English church-yard were like ours ;
 Yet your conclusion wanders from the truth.
 We have no need of names and epitaphs ;
 We talk about the dead by our firesides.
 And then, for our immortal part ! *we* want
 No symbols, sir, to tell us that plain tale :
 The thought of death sits easy on the man
 Who has been born and dies among the mountains.

Leonard.

Your dalesmen, then, do in each other's thoughts
 Possess a kind of second life ; no doubt
 You, sir, could help me to the history
 Of half these graves ?

Priest.

For eightscore winters past,
 With what I've witnessed, and with what I've heard,
 Perhaps I might ; and on a winter evening,
 If you were seated at my chimney's nook,
 By turning o'er these hillocks one by one,
 We two could travel, sir, through a strange round ;
 Yet all in the broad highway of the world.
 Now there's a grave—your foot is half upon it—
 It looks just like the rest ; and yet that man
 Died broken-hearted.

Leonard.

"Tis a common case.
We'll take another : who is he that lies
Beneath yon ridge, the last of those three graves?
It touches on that piece of native rock
Left in the church-yard wall.

Priest.

That's Walter Ewbank.
He had as white a head and fresh a cheek
As ever were produced by youth and age
Engendering in the blood of hale fourscore.
Through five long generations had the heart
Of Walter's forefathers o'erflowed the bounds
Of their inheritance, that single cottage—
You see it yonder !—and those few green fields.
They toiled and wrought, and still from sire to son
Each struggled, and each yielded as before
A little—yet a little ; and old Walter,
They left to him the family heart, and land
With other burdens than the crop it bore.
Year after year the old man still kept up
A cheerful mind, and buffeted with bond,
Interest, and mortgages ; at last he sank,
And went into his grave before his time.
Poor Walter ! whether it was care that spurred him
God only knows, but to the very last
He had the lightest foot in Ennerdale :
His pace was never that of an old man.
I almost see him tripping down the path
With his two grandsons after him. But you,
Unless our landlord be your host to-night,
Have far to travel ; and on these rough paths
Even in the longest day of midsummer—

Leonard.

But those two orphans !

Priest.

Orphans ! Such they were—
 Yet not while Walter lived ; for though their parents
 Lay buried side by side as now they lie,
 The old man was a father to the boys—
 Two fathers in one father : and if tears,
 Shed when he talked of them where they were not,
 And hauntings from the infirmity of love,
 Are aught of what makes up a mother's heart,
 This old man, in the day of his old age,
 Was half a mother to them. If you weep, sir,
 To hear a stranger talking about strangers,
 Heaven bless you when you are among your kin-
 dred !

Ay—you may turn that way—it is a grave
 Which will bear looking at.

Leonard.

These boys—I hope
 They loved this good old man ?

Priest.

They did—and truly :
 But that was what we almost overlooked,
 They were such darlings of each other. For
 Though from their cradles they had lived with Walter,
 The only kinsman near them, and though he
 Inclined to them by reason of his age
 With a more fond, familiar tenderness,

They, notwithstanding, had much love to spare,
And it all went into each other's hearts.
Leonard, the elder by just eighteen months,
Was two years taller. 'Twas a joy to see,
To hear, to meet them! From their house the school
Is distant three short miles; and in the time
Of storm and thaw, when every watercourse
And unbridged stream, such as you may have noticed!
Crossing our roads at every hundred steps,
Was swoln into a noisy rivulet,
Would Leonard then, when elder boys perhaps
Remained at home, go staggering through the fords,
Bearing his brother on his back. I have seen him
On windy days in one of those stray brooks,
Ay, more than once I have seen him, mid-leg deep,
Their two books lying both on a dry stone
Upon the hither side. And once I said,
As I remember, looking round these rocks
And hills on which we all of us were born,
That God who made the great book of the world
Would bless such piety—

Leonard.

It may be then—

Priest.

Never did worthier lads break English bread;
The finest Sunday that the autumn saw
With all its mealy clusters of ripe nuts
Could never keep these boys away from church,
Or tempt them to an hour of Sabbath breach.
Leonard and James! I warrant every corner
Among these rocks and every hollow place
Where foot could come to one or both of them

Was known as well as to the flowers that grow there.
 Like roebucks they went bounding o'er the hills ;
 They played like two young ravens on the crags.
 Then they would write, ay, and speak, too, as well
 As many of their betters. And for Leonard !
 The very night before he went away,
 In my own house I put into his hand
 A Bible, and I'd wager house and field
 That, if he is alive, he has it yet.

Leonard.

It seems these brothers have not lived to be
 A comfort to each other—

Priest.

That they might
 Live to such end is what both old and young
 In this our valley all of us have wished,
 And what, for my part, I have often prayed.
 But Leonard—

Leonard.

Then James still is left among you ?

Priest.

'Tis of the elder brother I am speaking.
 They had an uncle ; he was at that time
 A thriving man, and trafficked on the seas :
 And but for that same uncle, to this hour
 Leonard had never handled rope or shroud ;
 For the boy loved the life which we lead here ;
 And, though of unripe years, a stripling only,
 His soul was knit to this his native soil.

But, as I said, old Walter was too weak
 To strive with such a torrent. When he died,
 The estate and house were sold, and all their sheep,
 A pretty flock, and which, for aught I know,
 Had clothed the Ewbanks for a thousand years :—
 Well—all was gone, and they were destitute.
 And Leonard, chiefly for his brother's sake,
 Resolved to try his fortune on the seas.
 Twelve years are past since we had tidings from
 him.

If there were one among us who had heard
 That Leonard Ewbank was come home again,
 From the Great Gavel,* down by Leeza's banks,
 And down the Enna far as Egremont,
 The day would be a very festival ;
 And those two bells of ours, which there you see—
 Hanging in the open air—but, O good sir !
 This is sad talk—they'll never sound for him—
 Living or dead. When last we heard of him,
 He was in slavery among the Moors
 Upon the Barbary coast. 'Twas not a little
 That would bring down his spirit ; and, no doubt,
 Before it ended in his death, the youth
 Was sadly crossed. Poor Leonard ! when we parted,
 He took me by the hand and said to me,
 If e'er he should grow rich, he would return
 To live in peace upon his father's land,
 And lay his bones among us.

* The Great Gavel, so called, I imagine, from its resemblance to the gable-end of a house, is one of the highest of the Cumberland mountains. It stands at the head of the several vales of Ennerdale, Wastdale, and Borrowdale.

The Leeza is a river which flows into the Lake of Ennerdale. On issuing from the lake, it changes its name, and is called the End, Eyne, or Enna. It falls into the sea a little below Egremont,

Leonard.

If that day
Should come, 'twould needs be a glad day for him.
He would himself, no doubt, be happy then
As any that should meet him—

Priest.

Happy ! sir—

Leonard.

You said his kindred all were in their graves,
And that he had one brother—

Priest.

That is but
A fellow tale of sorrow. From his youth
James, though not sickly, yet was delicate ;
And Leonard being always by his side
Had done so many offices about him
That, though he was not of a timid nature,
Yet still the spirit of a mountain boy
In him was somewhat checked ; and when his brother
Was gone to sea, and he was left alone,
The little color that he had was soon
Stolen from his cheek. He drooped and pined
and pined—

Leonard.

But these are all the graves of full-grown men !

Priest.

Ay, sir, that passed away : we took him to us ;
He was the child of all the dale—he lived
Three months with one, and six months with another ;
And wanted neither food nor clothes nor love :

And many, many happy days were his.
 But whether blithe or sad, 'tis my belief
 His absent brother still was at his heart.
 And when he dwelt beneath our roof, we found
 (A practice till this time unknown to him)
 That often, rising from his bed at night,
 He in his sleep would walk about, and sleeping
 He sought his brother Leonard.—You are moved !
 Forgive me, sir. Before I spoke to you,
 I judged you most unkindly.

Leonard.

But this youth,
 How did he die at last ?

Priest.

One sweet May morning
 (It will be twelve years since when spring returns),
 He had gone forth among the new-dropped lambs,
 With two or three companions, whom their course
 Of occupation led from height to height
 Under a cloudless sun, till he at length
 Through weariness, or, haply, to indulge
 The humor of the moment, lagged behind.
 You see yon precipice ; it wears the shape
 Of a vast building made of many crags ;
 And in the midst is one particular rock
 That rises like a column from the vale,
 Whence by our shepherds it is called The Pillar.
 Upon its aëry summit crowned with heath,
 The loiterer, not unnoticed by his comrades,
 Lay stretched at ease. But passing by the place
 On their return, they found that he was gone.
 No ill was feared ; but one of them by chance
 Entering, when evening was far spent, the house

Which at that time was James's home, there learned
 That nobody had seen him all that day.
 The morning came, and still he was unheard of.
 The neighbors were alarmed, and to the brook
 Some hastened, some towards the lake. Ere noon
 They found him at the foot of that same rock
 Dead, and with mangled limbs. The third day after
 I buried him, poor youth, and there he lies.

Leonard.

And that, then, *is* his grave! Before his death
 You say that he saw many happy years?

Priest.

Ay, that he did—

Leonard.

And all went well with him?—

Priest.

If he had one the youth had twenty homes.

Leonard.

And you believe, then, that his mind was easy?

Priest.

Yes, long before he died, he found that time
 Is a true friend to sorrow; and unless
 His thoughts were turned on Leonard's luckless for-
 tune,
 He talked about him with a cheerful love.

Leonard.

He could not come to an unhallowed end!

Priest.

Nay, God forbid! You recollect I mentioned
A habit which disquietude and grief
Had brought upon him; and we all conjectured
That, as the day was warm, he had lain down
Upon the grass, and, waiting for his comrades,
He there had fallen asleep; that in his sleep
He to the margin of the precipice
Had walked, and from the summit had fallen head-
long.

And so, no doubt, he perished. At the time,
We guess, that in his hand he must have held
His Shepherd's staff; for midway in the cliff
It had been caught; and there for many years
It hung—and mouldered there.

The Priest here ended
The Stranger would have thanked him, but he felt
A gushing from his heart, that took away
The power of speech. Both left the spot in silence;
And Leonard, when they reached the church-yard
gate,
As the Priest lifted up the latch, turned round,—
And, looking at the grave, he said, "My Brother!"
The Vicar did not hear the words: and now,
Pointing towards the Cottage he entreated
That Leonard would partake his homely fare:
The Other thanked him with a fervent voice;
But added, that the evening being calm,
He would pursue his journey. So they parted.
It was not long ere Leonard reached a grove
That overhung the road; he there stopped short,
And sitting down beneath the trees, reviewed
All that the Priest had said: his early years

Were with him in his heart : his cherished hopes,
And thoughts which had been his an hour before,
All pressed on him with such a weight, that now,
This vale, where he had been so happy, seemed
A place in which he could not bear to live :
So he relinquished all his purposes.
He travelled on to Egremont : and thence,
That night he wrote a letter to the Priest,
Reminding him of what had passed between them ;
And adding, with a hope to be forgiven,
That it was from the weakness of his heart
He had not dared to tell him who he was.

This done, he went on shipboard, and is now
A Seaman, a gray-headed Mariner.

“ MY HEART LEAPS UP.”

My heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky :
So was it when my life began ;
So is it now I am a man ;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die !
The child is father of the man ;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

“ I WANDERED LONELY AS A CLOUD.”

I WANDERED lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils ;

Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky-way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of the bay :
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Outdid the sparkling waves in glee.
A poet could not but be gay
In such a jocund company ;
I gazed and gazed, but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought.

For oft when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude,
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

TO A SKYLARK.

Up with me, up with me into the clouds !
For thy song, lark, is strong ;
Up with me, up with me into the clouds !
Singing, singing,
With clouds and sky about thee ringing,
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot which seems so to thy mind !

I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
And to-day my heart is weary ;

There is a blessing in the air,
Which seems a sense of joy to yield
To the bare trees, and mountains bare,
And grass in the green field.

My sister ! ('tis a wish of mine)
Now that our morning meal is done,
Make haste, your morning task resign ;
Come forth and feel the sun.

Edward will come with you ; and, pray,
Put on with speed your woodland dress ;
And bring no book : for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

No joyless forms shall regulate
Our living calendar :
We from to-day, my friend, will date'
The opening of the year.

Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing ;
From earth to man, from man to earth :
It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than fifty years of reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.

Some silent laws our hearts will make,
Which they shall long obey :
We for the year to come may take
Our temper from to-day.

And from the blessed power that rolls
About, below, above,
We'll frame the measure of our souls :
They shall be tuned to love.

Then come, my sister ! come, I pray,
With speed put on your woodland dress ;
And bring no book ; for this one day
We'll give to idleness.

LINES WRITTEN IN EARLY SPRING.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts in that sweet bower
The periwinkle trailed its wreaths ;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopped and played ;
Their thoughts I cannot measure :
But the least motion that they made,
It seemed a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air ;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

From heaven if this belief be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man ?

EXPOSTULATION AND REPLY.

“WHY, William, on that old gray stone,
Thus for the length of half a day,
Why, William, sit you thus alone,
And dream your time away ?

“Where are your books? that light bequeathed
To beings else forlorn and blind!
Up! up! and drink the spirit breathed
From dead men to their kind.

“You look round on your mother Earth
As if she for no purpose bore you ;
As if you were her first-born birth,
And none had lived before ‘you!’”

One morning thus, by Esthwaite Lake,
When life was sweet, I knew not why,
To me my good friend Matthew spake,
And thus I made reply :

“The eye—it cannot choose but see ;
We cannot bid the ear be still ;
Our bodies feel, where'er they be,
Against or with our will.

“Nor less I deem that there are powers
Which of themselves our minds impress ;
That we can feed this mind of ours
In a wise passiveness.

“Think you, 'mid all this mighty sum
Of things forever speaking,
That nothing of itself will come,
But we must still be seeking ?

“Then ask not wherefore, here, alone,
Conversing as I may,
I sit upon this old gray stone,
And dream my time away.”

THE TABLES TURNED.

AN EVENING SCENE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Up! up! my friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double;
Up! up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

The sun, above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow
Through all the long green fields has spread,
His first sweet evening yellow.

Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland linnet;
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless—
Spontaneous wisdom breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

One impulse from a vernal wood
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

Sweet is the lore which Nature brings ;
Our meddling intellect
Misshapes the beauteous forms of things :
We murder to dissect.

Enough of science and of art ;
Close up these barren leaves :
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives.

“STRANGE FITS OF PASSION HAVE I
KNOWN.”

STRANGE fits of passion have I known ;
And I will dare to tell,
But in the lover's ear alone,
What once to me befell.

When she I loved was strong and gay,
And like a rose in June,
I to her cottage bent my way,
Beneath the evening moon.

Upon the moon I fixed my eye,
All over the wide lea ;
My horse trudged on, and we drew nigh
Those paths so dear to me.

And now we reached the orchard plot ;
And, as we climbed the hill,
Towards the roof of Lucy's cot
The moon descended still.

In one of those sweet dreams I slept,
Kind Nature's gentlest boon !
And all the while my eyes I kept
On the descending moon.

My horse moved on ; hoof after hoof
He raised, and never stopped ;
When down behind the cottage roof
At once the bright moon dropped.

What fond and wayward thoughts will slide
Into a lover's head !
" O mercy ! " to myself I cried,
" If Lucy should be dead ! "

"THREE YEARS SHE GREW."

THREE years she grew in sun and shower,
Then Nature said, " A lovelier flower
On earth was never sown ;
This child I to myself will take ;
She shall be mine, and I will make
A lady of my own.

" Myself will to my darling be
Both law and impulse ; and with me
The girl, in rock and plain,
In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,
Shall feel an overseeing power
To kindle or restrain.

“She shall be sportive as the fawn
That wild with glee across the lawn
Or up the mountain springs ;
And hers shall be the breathing balm,
And hers the silence and the calm
Of mute insensate things.

The floating clouds their state shall lend
To her ; for her the willow bend ;
Nor shall she fail to see
Even in the motions of the storm
Grace that shall mould the maiden's form
By silent sympathy.

The stars of midnight shall be dear
To her ; and she shall lean her ear
In many a secret place
Where rivulets dance their wayward round,
And beauty born of murmuring sound
Shall pass into her face.

And vital feelings of delight
Shall rear her form to stately height,
Her virgin bosom swell ;
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give
While she and I together live
Here in this happy dell.”

Thus nature spake—The work was done—
How soon my Lucy's race was run !
She died, and left to me
This heath, this calm and quiet scene ;
The memory of what has been,
And nevermore will be.

“SHE DWELT AMONG THE UNTRODDEN
WAYS.”

SHE dwelt among the untrodden ways
Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise
And very few to love!

A violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden from the eye!
Fair as a star, when only one
Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me!

“A SLUMBER DID MY SPIRIT SEAL.”

A SLUMBER did my spirit seal ;
I had no human fears ;
She seemed a thing that could not feel
The touch of earthly years.

No motion has she now, no force ;
She neither hears nor sees,
Rolled round in earth's diurnal course,
With rocks and stones and trees.

"I TRAVELLED AMONG UNKNOWN MEN."

I TRAVELLED among unknown men,
In lands beyond the sea ;
Nor, England, did I know till then
What love I bore to thee.

'Tis past, that melancholy dream !
Nor will I quit thy shore
A second time ; for still I seem
To love thee more and more.

Among thy mountains did I feel
The joy of my desire ;
And she I cherished turned her wheel
Beside an English fire.

Thy mornings showed, thy nights concealed
The bowers where Lucy played ;
And thine is too the last green field
That Lucy's eyes surveyed.

"SHE WAS A PHANTOM OF DELIGHT."

SHE was a Phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight ;
A lovely Apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament ;
Her eyes as stars of Twilight fair ;
Like Twilight's, too, her dusky hair ;
But all things else about her drawn
From May-time and the cheerful Dawn ;

A dancing Shape, an Image gay,
To haunt, to startle, and waylay.

I saw her upon nearer view,
A Spirit, yet a Woman too!
Her household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin liberty;
A countenance in which did meet
Sweet records, promises as sweet;
A Creature not too bright or good
For human nature's daily food;
For transient sorrows, simple wiles,
Praise, blame, love, kisses, tears, and smiles.

And now I see with eye serene
The very pulse of the machine;
A Being breathing thoughtful breath,
A Traveller between life and death;
The reason firm, the temperate will,
Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill;
A perfect Woman, nobly planned,
To warm, to comfort, and command;
And yet a Spirit still, and bright
With something of an angel light.

LAODAMEIA.

“ WITH sacrifice, before the rising morn
Performed, my slaughtered lord have I required ;
And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,
Him of the infernal gods have I desired :
Celestial pity I again implore :
Restore him to my sight, great Jove, restore ! ”

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
With faith, the suppliant heavenward lifts her
hands ;
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
Her countenance brightens and her eye expands ;
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows ;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror ! what hath she perceived ? O joy !
What doth she look on ? whom doth she behold ?
Her hero slain upon the beach of Troy ?
His vital presence ? his corporeal mould ?
It is—if sense deceive her not—’tis he !
And a god leads him, wingèd Mercury !

Mild Hermes spake, and touched her with his wand
That calms all fear : “ Such grace hath crowned
thy prayer,
Laodameia, that at Jove’s command
Thy husband walks the paths of upper air :
He comes to tarry with thee three hours’ space ;
Accept the gift, behold him face to face ! ”

Forth sprang the impassioned queen her lord to
clasp :

Again that consummation she essayed ;
But unsubstantial form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made.
The phantom parts, but parts to reunite,
And reassume his place before her sight.

“Protesilaos, lo ! thy guide is gone !

Confirm, I pray, the vision with thy voice :
This is our palace, yonder is thy throne ;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will rejoice.
Not to appal me have the gods bestowed
This precious boon, and blest a sad abode.”

“Great Jove, Laodameia ! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect. Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive :
But in reward of thy fidelity.
And something also did my worth obtain ;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

“Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand
Should die ; but me the threat could not withhold.
A generous cause a victim did demand ;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain ;
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain.”

“Supreme of heroes—bravest, noblest, best !
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore ;
Thou found'st, and I forgive thee—here thou art—
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

to
“But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave ;
And he whose power restores thee hath decreed
That thou shouldst cheat the malice of the grave :
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

“No spectre greets me—no vain shadow this ;
Come, blooming hero, place thee by my side !
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss
To me, this day, a second time thy bride !”
Jove frowned in heaven : the conscious Parcæ threw
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

“This visage tells thee that my doom is past :
Know, virtue were not virtue, if the joys
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish. Earth destroys
Those raptures duly, Erebus disdains ;
Calm pleasures there abide, majestic pains.

“Be taught, O faithful consort, to control
Rebellious passion : for the gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult, of the soul ;
A fervent, not ungovernable love.
Thy transports moderate ; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn.”

“Ah, wherefore? Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian monster of the tomb
Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And Æson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

“The gods to us are merciful, and they
Yet further may relent ; for mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favorite seat be feeble woman’s breast.

“But if thou goest, I follow.”—“Peace !” he said.
She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered ;
The ghastly color from his lips had fled ;
In his deportment, shape, and mien appeared
Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
Brought from a pensive though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure ;
No fears to beat away, no strife to heal,
The past unsighed for, and the future sure ;
Spake of heroic arts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued ;

Of all that is most beautiful—imaged there
In happier beauty : more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;
Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the soul shall enter which hath earned
That privilege by virtue. “Ill,” said he,
“The end of man’s existence I discerned,
Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight,
While tears were thy best pastime, day and night :

“ And while my youthful peers before my eyes
 (Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
 By martial sports, or seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in counsel were detained ;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

“ The wished-for wind was given : I then revolved
 The oracle, upon the silent sea ;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
 That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

“ Yet bitter, oftentimes bitter, was the pang
 When of thy loss I thought, beloved wife !
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
 And on the joys we shared in mortal life,
The paths which we have trod—these fountains,
 flowers ;
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

“ But should suspense permit the foe to cry,
 ‘ Behold, they tremble ! haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die ? ’
 In soul I swept the indignity away :
Old frailties then recurred ; but lofty thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

“ And thou, though strong in love, art all too weak ;
 In reason, in self-government too slow ;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
 Our blest reunion in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympathized ;
Be thy affections raised and solemnized.

“ Learn, by a mortal yearning to ascend
Towards a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end ;
For this the passion to excess was driven—
That self might be annulled: **her** bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love.”

Aloud she shrieked ! for Hermes reappears !
Round the dear shade she would have clung—’tis
vain—
The hours are past—too brief had they been years—
And him no mortal effort can detain.
Swift, toward the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace-floor a lifeless corse she lay.

Ah, judge her gently who so deeply loved !
Her who in reason’s spite, yet without crime,
Was in a trance of passion thus removed ;
Delivered from the galling yoke of time
And these frail elements, to gather flowers
Of blissful quiet ’mid unfading bowers.

Yet tears to human suffering are due ;
And mortal hopes defeated and o’erthrown
Are mourned by man ; and not by man alone,
As fondly he believes. Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she died ;
And ever, when such stature they had gained
That Ilium’s walls were subject to their view,
The trees’ tall summits withered at the sight :
A constant interchange of growth and blight !

III.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF THE VENETIAN REPUBLIC.

ONCE did she hold the gorgeous East in fee,
And was the safeguard of the West : the worth
Of Venice did not fall below her birth,
Venice, the eldest child of Liberty.
She was a maiden city, bright and free ;
No guile seduced, no force could violate ;
And, when she took unto herself a mate,
She must espouse the everlasting Sea.
And what if she had seen those glories fade,
Those titles vanish, and that strength decay ;
Yet shall some tribute of regret be paid
When her long life hath reached its final day.
Men are we, and must grieve when even the shade
Of that which once was great is passed away.

VI.

THOUGHT OF A BRITON ON THE SUBJUGATION OF SWITZER-
LAND.

Two voices are there ; one is of the sea,
One of the mountains. each a mighty voice :
In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty !
There came a tyrant, and with holy glee
Thou fought'st against him ; but hast vainly striven :
Thou from the Alpine holds at length art driven,
Where not a torrent murmurs heard by thee.
Of one deep bliss thine ear hath been bereft ;
Then cleave, O cleave to that which still is left ;

For, high-souled Maid, what sorrow would it be
 That mountain floods should thunder as before,
 And Ocean bellow from his rocky shore,
 And neither awful voice be heard by thee!

VII.

WRITTEN IN LONDON, SEPTEMBER, 1802.

O FRIEND! I know not which way I must look
 For comfort, being, as I am, opprest
 To think that now our life is only drest
 For show; mean handiwork of craftsman, cook,
 Or groom! We must run glittering like a brook
 In the open sunshine, or we are unblest;
 The wealthiest man among us is the best;
 No grandeur now in Nature or in book
 Delights us. Rapine, avarice, expense,
 This is idolatry; and these we adore;
 Plain living and high thinking are no more:
 The homely beauty of the good old cause
 Is gone; our peace, our fearful innocence,
 And pure religion breathing household laws.

VIII.

THE world is too much with us; late and soon,
 Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
 Little we see in Nature that is ours;
 We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!
 This Sea that bares her bosom to the moon;
 The winds that will be howling at all hours,
 And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers—
 For this, for everything, we are out of tune;
 It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be

A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn,
 So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
 Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;
 Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea,
 Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

IX.

LONDON, 1802.

MILTON ! thou shouldst be living at this hour :
 England hath need of thee ; she is a fen
 Of stagnant waters ; altar, sword, and pen,
 Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,
 Have forfeited their ancient English dower
 Of inward happiness. We are selfish men ;
 Oh ! raise us up, return to us again ;
 And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.
 Thy soul was like a **Star**, and dwelt apart ;
 Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea ;
 Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,
 So didst thou travel on life's common way,
 In cheerful godliness ; and yet thy heart
 The lowliest duties on herself did lay.

XVII.

TO THOMAS CLARKSON, ON THE FINAL PASSING OF THE BILL
 FOR THE ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE, MARCH, 1807.

CLARKSON ! it was an obstinate hill to climb :
 How toilsome—nay, how dire it was by thee
 Is known ; by none, perhaps, so feelingly ;
 But thou, who, starting in thy fervent prime,
 Didst first lead forth this pilgrimage sublime,

Hast heard the constant Voice its charge repeat,
 Which, out of thy young heart's oracular seat,
 First roused thee. O, true yoke-fellow of Time,
 Duty's intrepid liegeman, see, the palm
 Is won, and by all nations shall be worn !
 The bloody writing is forever torn,
 And thou henceforth shalt have a good man's calm,
 A great man's happiness ; thy zeal shall find
 Repose at length, firm friend of humankind !

XIX.

Scorn not the sonnet ; critic, you have frowned,
 Mindless of its just honors ; with this key
 Shakespeare unlocked his heart ; the melody
 Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound ;
 A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound ;
 Camoens soothed with it an exile's grief ;
 The sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
 Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
 His visionary brow ; a glow-worm lamp,
 It cheered mild Spenser, called from faery-land
 To struggle through dark ways ; and when a damp
 Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
 The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
 Soul-animating strains—alas, too few !

XX.

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room,
 And hermits are contented with their cells,
 And students with their pensive citadels ;
 Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
 Sit blithe and happy ; bees that soar for bloom
 High as the highest peak of Furness Fells
 Will murmur by the hour in fox-glove bells :

In truth, the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is ; and hence to me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the sonnet's scanty plot of ground ;
Pleased if some souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

XXIII.

PERSONAL TALK.

I AM not one who much or oft delight
To season my fireside with personal talk
Of friends, who live within an easy walk,
Or neighbors daily, weekly, in my sight ;
And, for my chance-acquaintance, ladies bright,
Sons, mothers, maidens withering on the stalk,
These all wear out of me, like forms with chalk
Painted on rich men's floors for one feast-night.
Better than such discourse doth silence long,
Long, barren silence, square with my desire ;
To sit without emotion, hope, or aim,
In the loved presence of my cottage-fire,
And listen to the flapping of the flame,
Or kettle whispering its faint undersong.

XXIV.

CONTINUED.

WINGS have we,—and as far as we can go
We may find pleasure : wilderness and wood,
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
Dreams, books, are each a world ; and books, we
know,

Are a substantial world, both pure and good :
 Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
 Our pastime and our happiness will grow.
 There find I personal themes, a plenteous store,
 Matter wherein right voluble I am,
 To which I listen with a ready ear ;
 Two shall be named, pre-eminently dear—
 The gentle **Lady** married to the Moor ;
 And heavenly **Una** with her milk-white lamb.

XXV.

CONCLUDED.

Now can I not believe but that hereby
 Great gains are mine ; for thus I live remote
 From evil-speaking ; rancor, never sought,
 Comes to me not ; malignant truth, or lie.
 Hence have I genial seasons, hence have I
 Smooth passions, smooth discourse, and joyous
 thought :
 And thus from day to day my little boat
 Rocks in its harbor, lodging peaceably.
 Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,
 Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares—
 The Poets who on earth have made us heirs
 Of truth and pure delight by heavenly lays !
 Oh ! might my name be numbered among theirs,
 Then gladly would I end my mortal days.

XXVI.

TO SLEEP.

A FLOCK of sheep that leisurely pass by,
 One after one ; the sound of rain, and bees
 Murmuring ; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
 Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky,

By turns have all been thought of, yet I lie
 Sleepless ; and soon the small birds' melodies
 Must hear, first uttered from my orchard trees ;
 And the first cuckoo's melancholy cry.
 Even thus last night, and two nights more, I lay,
 And could not win thee, Sleep, by any stealth :
 So do not let me wear to-night away :
 Without thee, what is all the morning's wealth ?
 Come, blessed barrier between day and day,
 Dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health !

XXVII.

COMPOSED UPON THE BEACH NEAR CALAIS, 1802.

It is a beauteous evening, calm and free ;
 The holy time is quiet as a nun
 Breathless with adoration ; the broad sun
 Is sinking down in its tranquillity ;
 The gentleness of heaven is on the sea :
 Listen ! the mighty Being is awake,
 And doth with his eternal motion make
 A sound like thunder —everlastingly.
 Dear child ! dear girl ! that walkest with me here,
 If thou appear'st untouched by solemn thought,
 Thy nature is not therefore less divine,
 Thou liest in Abraham's bosom all the year ;
 And worshipp'st at the temple's inner shrine,
 God being with thee when we know it not.

XXIX.

COMPOSED UPON WESTMINSTER BRIDGE, SEPTEMBER 3, 1803.

EARTH has not anything to show more fair
 Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
 A sight so touching in its majesty :
 This city now doth, like a garment, wear

The beauty of the morning ; silent, bare,
 Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
 Open unto the fields and to the sky ;
 All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
 Never did sun more beautifully steep
 In his first splendor, valley, rock, or hill ;
 Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep !
 The river glideth at his own sweet will :
 Dear God ! the very houses seem asleep ;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still !

XLII.

Most sweet it is with unuplifted eyes
 To pace the ground, if path be there or none,
 While a fair region round the traveller lies
 Which he forbears again to look upon ;
 Pleased rather with some soft ideal scene,
 The work of fancy, or some happy tone
 Of meditation, slipping in between
 The beauty coming and the beauty gone.
 If Thought and Love desert us, from that day
 Let us break of all commerce with the Muse :
 With Thought and Love companions of our way,
 Whate'er the senses take or may refuse,
 The mind's internal heaven shall shed her dews
 Of inspiration on the humblest lay.

XLIII.

ON THE DEPARTURE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT FROM ABBOTSFORD
 FOR NAPLES.

A TROUBLE, not of clouds or weeping rain,
 Nor of the setting sun's pathetic light
 Engendered, hangs o'er Eildon's triple height :
 Spirits of Power, assembled there, complain

For kindred Power departing from their sight ;
 While Tweed, best pleased in chanting a blithe strain,
 Saddens his voice again and yet again.
 Lift up your hearts, ye mourners ! for the might
 Of the whole world's good wishes with him goes ;
 Blessings and prayers, in nobler retinue
 Than sceptred king or laurelled conqueror knows,
 Follow this wondrous Potentate. Be true,
 Ye winds of ocean and the midland sea,
 Wafting your charge to soft Parthenope !

XLV.

THEY called thee Merry England in old time ;
 A happy people won for thee that name,
 With envy heard in many a distant clime ;
 And spite of change, for me thou keep'st the same
 Endearing title, a responsive chime
 To the heart's fond belief ; though some there are
 Whose sterner judgments deem that word a snare
 For inattentive fancy, like the lime
 Which foolish birds are caught with. Can, I ask,
 This face of rural beauty be a mask
 For discontent and poverty and crime ;
 These spreading towns a cloak for lawless will ?
 Forbid it, Heaven ! and Merry England still
 Shall be thy rightful name in prose and rhyme !

XLVII.

A POET !—he hath put his heart to school,
 Nor dares to move unpropped upon the staff
 Which Art hath lodged within his hand—must laugh
 By precept only, and shed tears by rule.
 Thy Art be Nature ; the live current quaff,

And let the groveller sip his stagnant pool,
 In fear that else, when critics grave and cool
 Have killed him, Scorn should write his epitaph.
 How does the meadow-flower its bloom unfold?
 Because the lovely little flower is free
 Down to its root, and in that freedom bold;
 And so the grandeur of the forest tree
 Comes not by casting in a formal mould,
 But from its *own* divine vitality.

LI.

THE TROSSACHS.

THERE'S not a nook within this solemn Pass,
 But were an apt confessional for one
 Taught by his summer spent, his autumn gone,
 That life is but a tale of morning grass
 Withered at eve. From scenes of art which chase
 That thought away, turn, and with watchful eyes
 Feed it 'mid Nature's old felicities,
 Rocks, rivers, and smooth lakes more clear than glass
 Untouched, unbreathed upon. Thrice-happy quest,
 If from a golden perch of aspen spray
 (October's workmanship to rival May)
 The pensive warbler of the ruddy breast
 That moral sweeten by a heaven-taught lay,
 Lulling the year, with all its cares, to rest!

LVII.

IN SIGHT OF THE TOWN OF COCKERMOUTH.

(Where the author was born, and his father's remains are laid.)

A POINT of life between my parents' dust,
 And yours, my buried little-ones, am I;
 And to those graves looking habitually
 In kindred quiet I repose my trust.

Death to the innocent is more than just,
And, to the sinner, mercifully bent ;
So may I hope, if truly I repent
And meekly bear the ills, which bear I must.
And you, my offspring, that do still remain,
Yet may outstrip me in the appointed race,
If e'er, through fault of mine, in mutual pain
We breathed together for a moment's space,
The wrong, by love provoked, let love arraign,
And only love keep in your hearts a place.

MATTHEW.

[In the school of Hawkshead is a tablet on which are inscribed, in gilt letters, the names of the several persons who have been schoolmasters there since the foundation of the school, with the time at which they entered upon and quitted their office. Opposite to one of those names the author wrote the following lines.]

If Nature, for a favorite child,
In thee hath tempered so her clay,
That every hour thy heart runs wild,
Yet never once doth go astray.

Read o'er these lines ; and then review
This tablet, that thus humbly rears
In such diversity of hue
Its history of two hundred years.

—When through this little wreck of fame,
Cipher and syllable ! thine eye
Has travelled down to Matthew's name,
Pause with no common sympathy.

And, if a sleeping tear should wake,
Then be it neither checked nor stayed ;
For Matthew a request I make
Which for himself he had not made.

Poor Matthew, all his frolics o'er,
Is silent as a standing pool ;
Far from the chimney's merry roar,
And murmur of the village school.

The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness ;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round,
It seemed as if he drank it up,
He felt with spirit so profound.

Thou soul of God's best earthly mould !
Thou happy soul ! and can it be
That these two words of glittering gold
Are all that must remain of thee ?

THE TWO APRIL MORNINGS.

We walked along, while bright and red
Uprose the morning sun ;
And Matthew stopped, he looked and said,
"The will of God be done !"

A village Schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray ;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday.

And on that morning; through the grass
And by the steaming rills,
We travelled merrily, to pass
A day among the hills.

“Our work,” said I, “was well begun ;
Then, from thy breast what thought,
Beneath so beautiful a sun,
So sad a sigh has brought?”

A second time did Matthew stop ;
And fixing still his eye
Upon the eastern mountain-top,
To me he made reply :

“Yon cloud with that long purple cleft
Brings fresh into my mind
A day like this which I have left
Full thirty years behind.

“And just above yon slope of corn
Such colors, and no other,
Were in the sky, that April morn,
Of this the very brother.

“With rod and line I sued the sport
Which that sweet season gave,
And, coming to the church, stopped short
Beside my daughter's grave.

“ Nine summers had she scarcely seen,
The pride of all the vale ;
And then she sang ;—she would have been
A very nightingale.

“ Six feet in earth my Emma lay ;
And yet I loved her more,
For so it seemed, than till that day
I e'er had loved before.

“ And, turning from her grave, I met,
Beside the church-yard yew,
A blooming girl, whose hair was wet
With points of morning dew.

“ A basket on her head she bare ;
Her brow was smooth and white :
To see a child so very fair,
It was a pure delight !

“ No fountain from its rocky cave
E'er tripped with foot so free ;
She seemed as happy as a wave
That dances on the sea.

“ There came from me a sigh of pain
Which I could ill confine ;
I looked at her, and looked again,
—And did not wish her mine.”

Matthew is in his grave, yet now,
Methinks, I see him stand,
As at that moment, with a bough
Of wilding in his hand.

THE WISHING-GATE.

[In the vale of Grasmere, by the side of the highway leading to Ambleside, is a gate which, time out of mind, has been called the Wishing-gate, from a belief that wishes formed or indulged there have a favorable issue.]

HOPE rules a land forever green :
All powers that serve the bright-eyed queen
Are confident and gay ;
Clouds at her bidding disappear ;
Points she to aught? the bliss draws near,
And Fancy smooths the way.

Not such the land of wishes—there
Dwell fruitless day-dreams, lawless prayer,
And thoughts with things at strife ;
Yet how forlorn, should ye depart,
Ye superstitions of the *heart*,
How poor were human life !

When magic lore abjured its might,
Ye did not forfeit one dear right,
One tender claim abate ;
Witness this symbol of your sway,
Surviving near the public way—
The rustic Wishing-gate !

Inquire not if the faery race
Shed kindly influence on the place,
Ere northward they retired ;
If here a warrior left a spell,
Panting for glory as he fell ;
Or here a saint expired.

Enough that all around is fair,
Composed with Nature's finest care,
And in her fondest love ;
Peace to embosom and content,
To overawe the turbulent,
The selfish to reprove.

Yea ! even the stranger from afar,
Reclining on this moss-grown bar,
Unknowing and unknown,
The infection of the ground partakes,
Longing for his beloved, who makes
All happiness her own.

Then why should conscious spirits fear
The mystic stirrings that are here,
The ancient faith disclaim ?
The local genius ne'er befriends
Desires whose course in folly ends,
Whose just reward is shame.

Smile if thou wilt, but not in scorn,
If some, by ceaseless pains outworn,
Here crave an easier lot ;
If some have thirsted to renew
A broken vow, or bind a true,
With firmer, holier knot.

And not in vain, when thoughts are cast
Upon the irrevocable past,
Some penitent sincere
May for a worthier future sigh,
While trickles from his downcast eye
No unavailing tear.

The worldling, pining to be freed
 From turmoil, who would turn or speed
 The current of his fate,
 Might stop before this favored scene,
 At Nature's call, nor blush to lean
 Upon the Wishing-gate.

The sage, who feels how blind, how weak
 Is man, though loath such help to *seek*,
 Yet, passing, here might pause,
 And yearn for insight to allay
 Misgiving, while the crimson day
 In quietness withdraws ;

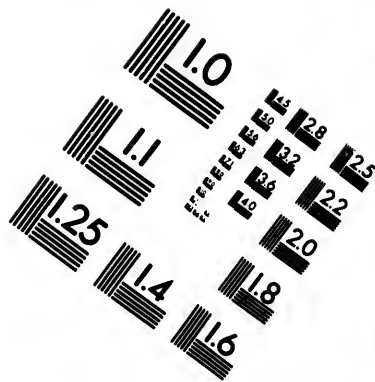
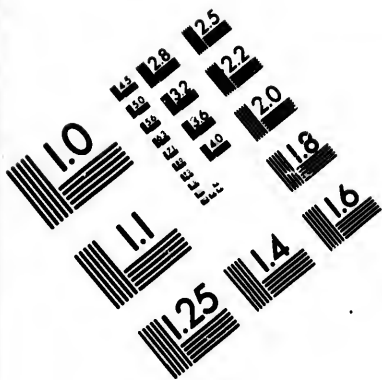
Or when the church-clock's knell profound
 To Time's first step across the bound
 Of midnight makes reply ;
 Time pressing on with starry crest,
 To filial sleep upon the breast
 Of dread Eternity !

TO THE REV. DR. WORDSWORTH.

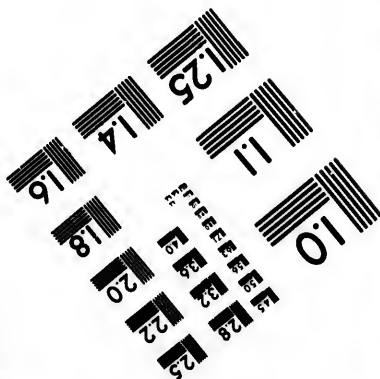
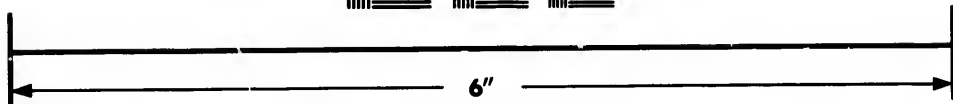
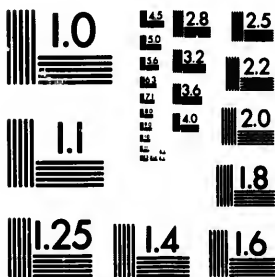
WITH THE SONNETS TO THE RIVER DUDDON, AND OTHER
 POEMS.

THE minstrels played their Christmas tune
 To-night beneath my cottage eaves :
 While, smitten by a lofty moon,
 The encircling laurels, thick with leaves,
 Gave back a rich and dazzling sheen,
 That overpowered their natural green.





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Through hill and valley every breeze
Had sunk to rest with folded wings ;
Keen was the air, but could not freeze
Nor check the music of the strings ;
So stout and hardy were the band
That scraped the chords with strenuous hand.

And who but listened?—till was paid
Respect to every inmate's claim :
The greeting given, the music played,
In honor of each household name,
Duly pronounced with lusty call.
And " merry Christmas " wished to all !

O Brother ! I revere the choice
That took thee from thy native hills ;
And it is given thee to rejoice :
Though public care full often tills
(Heaven only witness of the toil)
A barren and ungrateful soil.

Yet would that thou, with me and mine,
Hadst heard this never-failing rite ;
And seen on other faces shine
A true revival of the light
Which Nature and these rustic powers,
In simple childhood, spread through ours !

For pleasure had not ceased to wait
On these expected annual rounds,
Whether the rich man's sumptuous gate
Call forth the unelaborate sounds,
Or they are offered at the door
That guards the lowliest of the poor.

How touching, when, at midnight, sweep
Snow-muffled winds, and all is dark,
To hear—and sink again to sleep !
Or, at an earlier call, to mark,
By blazing fire the still suspense
Of self-complacent innocence ;

The mutual nod—the grave disguise
Of hearts with gladness brimming o'er ;
And some unbidden tears that rise
For names once heard, and heard no more—
Tears brightened by the serenade
For infant in the cradle laid !

Ah ! not for emerald fields alone,
With ambient streams more pure and bright
Than fabled Cytherea's zone
Glittering before the Thunderer's sight,
Is to my heart of hearts endeared
The ground where we were born and reared !

Hail, ancient manners !—sure defence,
Where they survive, of wholesome laws ;
Remnants of love whose modest sense
Thus into narrow room withdraws.
Hail, usages of pristine mould,
And ye that guard them, mountains old !

Bear with me, brother! quench the thought
That slights this passion, or condemns ;
If thee fond fancy ever brought
From the proud margin of the Thames,
And Lambeth's venerable towers,
To humbler streams and greener bowers.

Yes, they can make, who fail to find,
 Short leisure even in busiest days,
 Moments to cast a look behind,
 And profit by those kindly rays
 That through the clouds do sometimes steal
 And all the far-off past reveal.

Hence, while the Imperial City's din
 Breaks frequent on thy satiate ear,
 A pleased attention I may win
 To agitations less severe,
 That neither overwhelm nor cloy,
 But fill the hollow vale with joy !

DEVOTIONAL INCITEMENTS.

“ Not to the earth confined,
 “ Ascend to heaven.”

WHERE will they stop, those breathing Powers,
 The spirits of the new-born flowers ?
 They wander with the breeze, they wind
 Where'er the streams a passage find ;
 Up from their native ground they rise
 In mute aerial harmonies ;
 From humble violet, modest thyme,
 Exhaled, the essential odors climb,
 As if no space below the sky
 Their subtle flight could satisfy :
 Heaven will not tax our thoughts with pride
 If like ambitions be *their* guide.

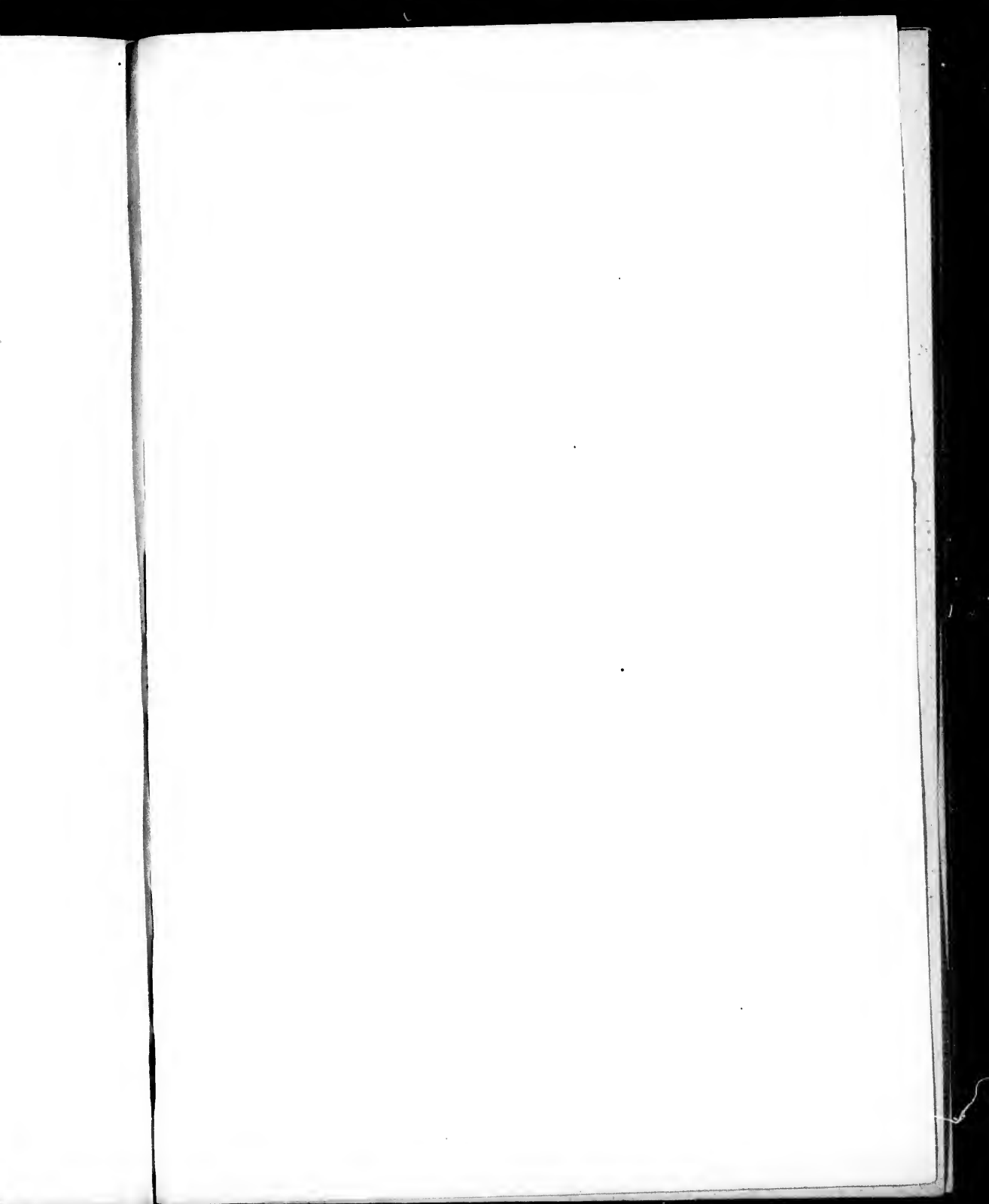
Roused by the kindest of May showers,
 The spirit quickener of the flowers,

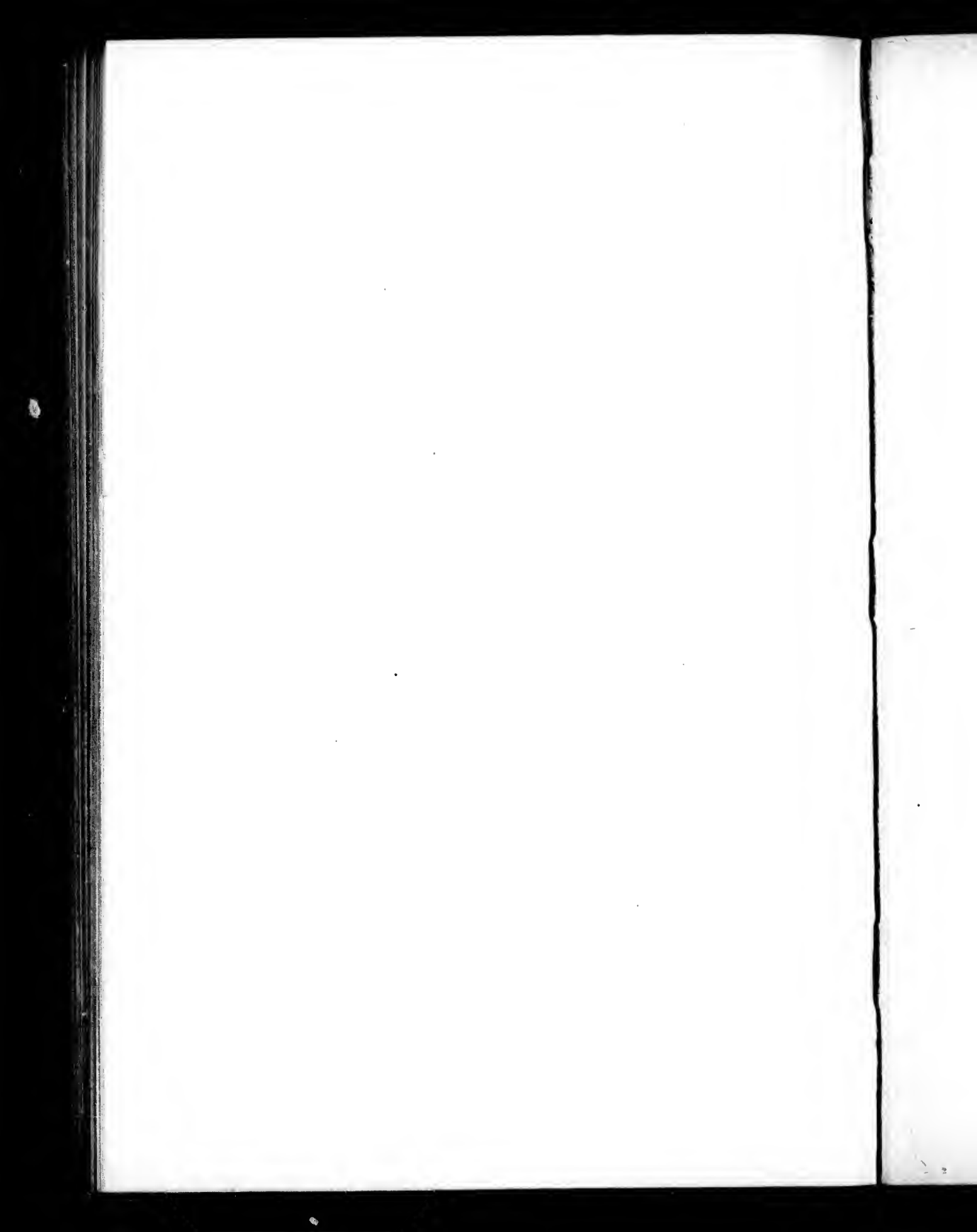
That with moist virtue softly cleaves
The buds, and freshens the young leaves,
The birds pour forth their souls in notes
Of rapture from a thousand throats—
Here checked by too impetuous haste,
While there the music runs to waste,
With bounty more and more enlarged,
Till the whole air is overcharged.
Give ear, O Man! to their appeal,
And thirst for no inferior zeal,
Thou who canst *think* as well as feel.

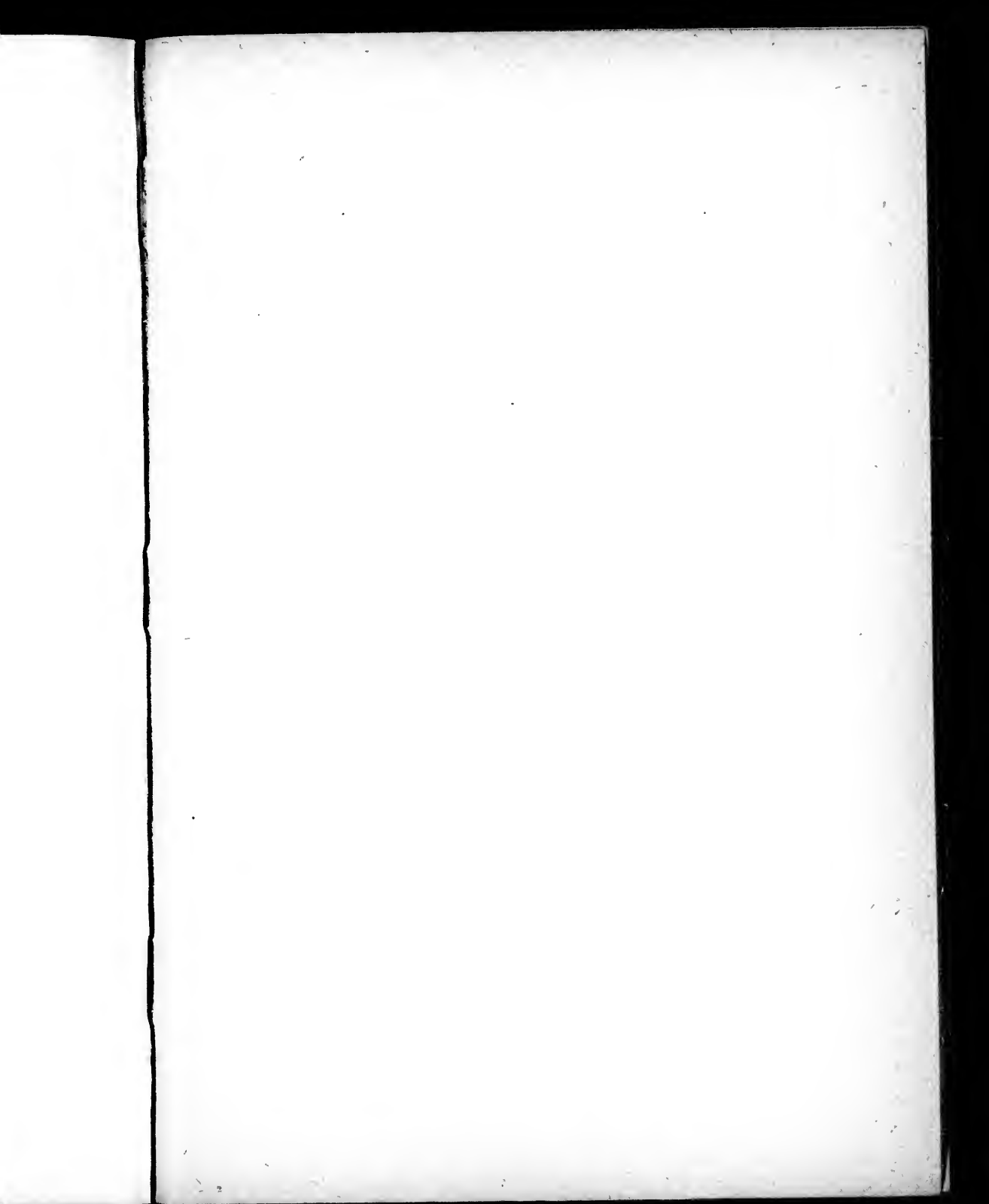
Mount from the earth; aspire! aspire!
So pleads the town's cathedral quire,
In strains that from their solemn height
Sink, to attain a loftier flight;
While incense from the altar breathes
Rich fragrance in embodied wreaths;
Or, flung from swinging censer, shrouds
The taper-lights, and curls in clouds
Around angelic forms, the still
Creation of the painter's skill,
That on the service wait concealed
One moment, and the next revealed.
Cast off your bonds, awake, arise,
And for no transient ecstasies!
What else can mean the visual plea
Of still or moving imagery—
The iterated summons loud,
Not wasted on the attendant crowd,
Nor wholly lost upon the throng
Hurrying the busy streets along?

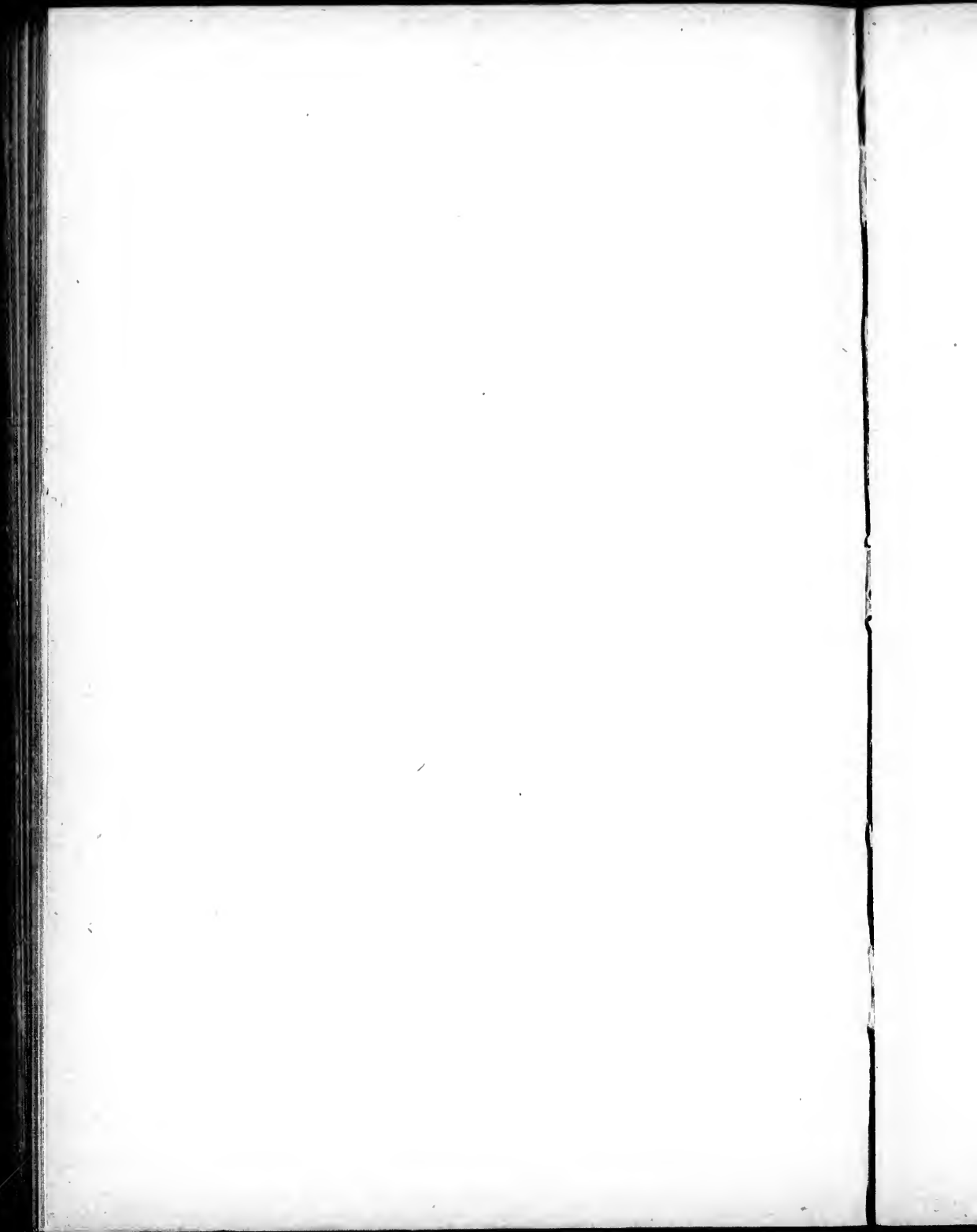
Alas! the sanctities combined
By art to unsensualize the mind

Decay and languish ; or, as creeds
And humors change, are spurned like weeds.
The priests are from their altars thrust ;
Temples are levelled with the dust ;
And solemn rites and awful forms
Founder amid fanatic storms.
Yet evermore, through years renewed
In undisturbed vicissitude
Of seasons balancing their flight
On the swift wings of day and night,
Kind Nature keeps a heavenly door
Wide open for the scattered poor.
Where flower-breathed incense to the skies
Is wafted in mute harmonies ;
And ground fresh-cloven by the plough
Is fragrant with a humbler vow ;
Where birds and brooks from leafy dells
Chime forth unwearied canticles,
And vapors magnify and spread
The glory of the sun's bright head—
Still constant in her worship, still
Conforming to the Eternal Will,
Whether men sow or reap the fields,
Divine monition Nature yields,
That not by bread alone we live,
Or what a hand of flesh can give ;
That every day should leave some part
Free for a Sabbath of the heart ;
So shall the seventh be truly blest,
From morn to eve, with hallowed rest.











NOTES.

THE REVERIE OF POOR SUSAN.

This poem was written in 1797, and published in 1800. Wordsworth says in his notes: "This arose out of my observation of the affecting music of these birds hanging in this way in the London streets during the freshness and stillness of the spring morning."

Somewhat of the human interest of the poem has been lost by the omission of the following stanza, appended to the piece in the edition of 1800:

"Poor outcast! return—to receive thee once more
The house of the father will open its door,
And thou once again, in thy platu russet gown,
May'st hear the thrush sing from a tree of its own."

Wood Street.—There are four streets of this name in London, but the one here meant runs northward from Cheapside.

Lothbury.—A street near at hand, behind the Bank of England.

"Wordsworth's limitations were inseparably connected with his strength. And just as the flat scenery of Cambridgeshire had only served to intensify his love for such elements of beauty and grandeur as still were present in sky and fen, even so the bewilderment of London taught him to recognize with an intense joy such fragments of things rustic, such aspects of things eternal, as were to be found amidst that rush and roar. He became the poet, as one may say, not of London considered as London, but of London considered as a part of the country. Among the poems describing these sudden shocks of vision and memory, none is more exquisite than the *Reverie of Poor Susan*. The picture is one of those which come home to many a country heart with one of those sudden 'revulsions into the

natural' which philosophers assert to be the essence of human joy. But noblest and best known of all these poems is the *Sonnet on Westminster Bridge*, in which nature has re-asserted her dominion over the works of all the multitude of men; and in the early clearness the poet beholds the great city 'not as full of noise and dust and confusion, but as something silent, grand, and everlasting.' And even in later life, when Wordsworth was often in London, he never lost this external manner of regarding it."—MYERS.

WE ARE SEVEN.

This poem was first printed in the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798. It had been lying dormant in the author's mind for about four years. Wordsworth gives the history of the poem as follows:

"Written at Alfoxden in the spring of 1798, under circumstances somewhat remarkable. The little girl who is the heroine I met within the area of Goodrich Castle in the year 1793. Having left the Isle of Wight and crossed Salisbury Plain I proceeded by Bristol up the Wye, and so on to North Wales, to the Vale of Clwydd, where I spent my summer under the roof of the father of my friend, Robert Jones. In reference to this poem I will here mention one of the most remarkable facts in my own poetic history and that of Mr. Coleridge. In the spring of the year 1798, he, my sister, and myself started from Alfoxden, pretty late in the afternoon, with a view to visit Lenton and the Valley of Stones near it; and as our united funds were very small, we agreed to defray the expense of the tour by writing a poem, to be sent to the New Monthly Magazine, set up by Phillips the bookseller, and edited by Dr. Aikin. Accordingly we set off and proceeded along the Quantock Hills towards Watchet, and in the course of this walk was planned the poem of the *Ancient Mariner*, founded on a dream, as Mr. Coleridge said, of his friend, Mr. Cruikshank. . . . As we endeavored to proceed conjointly (I speak of the same evening) our respective manners proved so widely different that it would have been quite presumptuous in me to do anything but separate from an undertaking upon which I could only have been a clog. We returned after a few days from a delightful tour, of which I have many pleasant, and some of them droll enough, recollections. We returned by Dulverton to Alfoxden. The *Ancient Mariner* grew and grew till it became too important for our first object, which was limited to our expectation of five pounds, and we began to talk of a volume, which was to consist, as Mr. Coleridge has told the world, of poems chiefly on supernatural subjects taken from common life, but looked at, as much as might be, through an imaginative medium. Accordingly I wrote '*The Idiot Boy*,' '*Her Eyes are Wild*,'

etc., 'We are Seven,' 'The Thorn,' and some others. To return to 'We are Seven,' the piece that called forth this note, I composed it while walking in the grove at Alfoxden. My friends will not deem it too trifling to relate that while walking to and fro I composed the last stanza first, having begun with the last line. When it was all but finished, I came in and recited it to Mr. Coleridge and my sister, and said, 'A prefatory stanza must be added, and I should sit down to our little tea-meal with greater pleasure if my task were finished.' I mentioned in substance what I wished to express, and Coleridge immediately threw off the stanza thus :

'A little child, dear brother Jem,' etc.

I objected to the rhyme, 'dear brother Jem,' as being ludicrous, but we all enjoyed the joke of hitching in our friend, James Tobin's name, who was familiarly called Jem. He was the brother of the dramatist, and this reminds me of an anecdote which it may be worth while here to notice. The said Jem got a sight of the *Lyrical Ballads* as it was going through the press at Bristol, during which time I was residing in that city. One evening he came to me with a grave face, and said, 'Wordsworth, I have seen the volume that Coleridge and you are about to publish. There is one poem in it which I earnestly entreat you will cancel, for, if published, it will make you everlastingly ridiculous.' I answered that I felt much obliged by the interest he took in my good name as a writer, and begged to know what was the unfortunate piece he alluded to. He said, 'It is called "We are Seven."' 'Nay!' said I, 'that shall take its chance, however,' and he left me in despair. I have only to add that in the spring of 1841 I revisited Goodrich Castle, not having seen that part of the Wye since I met the little girl there in 1793. It would have given me greater pleasure to have found in the neighboring hamlet traces of one who had interested me so much; but that was impossible, as unfortunately I did not even know her name."

A simple child.—Coleridge's initial line was abbreviated thus in the edition of 1815.

Conway.—A town in North Wales.

Porringer.—A bowl for porridge.

But they are dead.—The artistic reason for the length of the final stanza is obvious.

The following variants are found :

- (1) v. 44. "And sing a song to them." (1836.)
(M. A. has preferred the original reading of 1798.)
- (2) v. 54. "And all the summer day." (1798.)
- (3) v. 63. "Quick was the little maid's reply." (1836.)
(M. A. has retained the original reading of 1798.)

- (1) "Popular as the little poem has become in virtue of its unwithering beauty, it cannot be fully appreciated until it is placed in its proper relation to the great Ode. Wherever Wordsworth deals with the subject of death it is with calmness and childlike simplicity. Wisely does he rest the solution of the great question of Immortality, not upon the dicta of the wise and prudent, but upon the heaven-taught wisdom of the child, before its ideas are corrupted by the senses, and the 'trailing clouds of glory' disappear."—GEORGE.
- (2) "Whosoever looks searchingly into the characteristic genius of Wordsworth will see that he does not willingly deal with a passion in its direct aspect, or presenting an unmodified contour, but in forms more complex and oblique, and when passing under the shadow of some secondary passion. Joy, for instance, that wells up from constitutional sources, joy that is ebullient from youth to age, and cannot cease to sparkle, he yet exhibits in the person of Matthew (see *The Fountain*), the village school-master, as touched and overgloomed by memories of sorrow. In the poem of "*We are Seven*," which brings into day for the first time a profound fact in the abysses of human nature, namely, that the mind of an infant cannot admit the idea of death, any more than the fountain of light can comprehend the aboriginal darkness; the little mountaineer, who furnishes the text for this lovely strain, she whose fulness of life could not brook the gloomy faith in a grave, is yet (for the effect upon the reader) brought into connection with the reflex shadows of the grave: and if she herself has *not*, the reader *has*, the gloom of that contemplation obliquely irradiated, as raised in relief upon his imagination, even by *her*. Death and its sunny antipole are forced into connection."—DE QUINCEY.

TINTERN ABBEY.

Of this poem Wordsworth says: "No poem of mine was composed under circumstances more pleasant for me to remember than this. I began it upon leaving Tintern, after crossing the Wye, and concluded it just as I was entering Bristol in the evening, after a ramble of four or five days, with my sister. Not a line of it was altered, and not any part of it written down till I reached Bristol. It was published almost immediately after in the little volume," the *Lyrical Ballads*, 1798.

This poem has been styled "the *locus classicus*, or consecrated formulary of the Wordsworthian faith."

Myers remarks: "So congruous in all ages are the aspirations and the hopes of men that it would be rash indeed to

attempt to assign the moment when any spiritual truth rises for the first time on human consciousness. But thus much, I think, may be fairly said, that the maxims of Wordsworth's form of natural religion were uttered before Wordsworth only in the sense in which the maxims of Christianity were uttered before Christ. To compare small things with great—or, rather, to compare great things with things vastly greater—the essential spirit of the *Lines near Tintern Abbey* was for practical purposes as new to mankind as the essential spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. Not the isolated expression of moral ideas, but their fusion into a whole in one memorable personality, is that which connects them forever with a single name. Therefore it is that Wordsworth is venerated; because to so many men—indifferent, it may be, to literary or poetical effects, as such—he has shown by the subtle intensity of his own emotion how the contemplation of Nature can be made a revealing agency, like Love or Prayer—an opening, if indeed there be any opening, into the transcendent world."

Tintern Abbey.—A German traveller has called this abbey "the most beautiful ruin in the world." It is on the right bank of the Wye in Monmouthshire.

These waters.—"The Wye, between Monmouth and its junction with the Severn at Chepstow, flows between steep and beautifully wooded hills. The bed of the river is rocky, and the fall is so rapid that the tide only penetrates a few miles from the mouth." Compare *In Memoriam* :

"There twice a day the Severn fills,
The salt sea-water passes by,
And hushes half the babbling Wye,
And makes a silence in the hills."

Impress thoughts, etc.—The lofty cliffs direct the attention to the deep quiet of the sky, and thus they seem to deepen the seclusion of the narrow valley.

In silence.—Turner makes a happy comment: "The silence is made noticeable by the human life, implied by the smoke, but of which there is no other sign."

Unremembered acts.—The recurrence of the word 'unremembered' seems unfortunate. One looks for some connection with 'unremembered pleasure' above; but the 'unremembered pleasure' is a cause, and the 'unremembered acts' are a result, so there is no parallelism in the thought as the language would seem to imply.

Aspect.—Nature, or quality.

The burthen, etc.—Compare *The Prelude*, I. 20-23:

"It is shaken off,
The burthen of my own unnatural self,
The heavy weight of many a weary day
Not mine, and such as were not made for me,"

The affections.—The higher emotions.

Of this . . . belief.—This carries the reader back to “nor less, I trust.”

Fretful stir unprofitable.—“Our English poetic diction has inherited certain traits from the bilingual period. There is what may be called the *ambidextral adjective*; where two adjectives are given to one substantive, one being placed before and the other after it. At first the prepositive adjective was Saxon and the postpositive Romanesque; but this was soon forgotten, while the ambidextral habit was retained.”—*Earle*.

The fever of the world.—Compare *Macbeth*, III. 2, 22 :

“Duncan is in his grave.
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.”

Hung upon.—Weighed down.

For nature then, etc.—There are three periods in the Poet's experience,—(1) when the love of Nature was supreme; (2) when the love of Nature was secondary to the love of Man; (3) when the love of Man and the love of Nature have become coequal and interfused.

Glad animal movements, etc.—Compare *The Prelude*, I. :

“Thus oft amid those fits of vulgar joy
Which, through all seasons, on a child's pursuits
Are prompt attendants, 'mid that giddy bliss
Which, like a tempest, works along the blood
And is forgotten : even then I felt
Gleams like the flashing of a shield ;—the earth
And common face of Nature spake to me
Rememberable things.”

Other gifts have followed.—Compare “*Ode on Immortality* :

“Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower,
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind.”

For I have learned, etc.—Compare *Lines written in Early Spring* :

“I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to my mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.”

A sense sublime.—“These lines are a wonderfully beautiful expression of what has been called Wordsworth's ‘Panthicism.’ To the poet, filled with visions of the harmony and ideal life of

the universal nature, all phases of beauty and power, whether in animate or inanimate things, appear to be parts of one mighty and eternal spirit."--*Turner*.

"The invisible voice that came to him through the visible universe was not in him, as has often been asserted, a Pantheistic conception. Almost in the same breath he speaks of

'Nature's self, which is the breath of God,'

and

'His pure word by miracle revealed.'

He tells us that he held the speaking face of earth and heaven to be an organ of intercourse with man,—

'Established by the sovereign intellect
Who through that bodily image hath diffused,
As might appear to the eye of fleeting time,
A deathless spirit.'

And again, he says that even if the earth was to be burnt up and to disappear,

'Yet would the living Presence still subsist victorious.'

To assert this, whatever it may be, is not to preach Pantheism. It is only to make the earth not a mere piece of mechanism but a vital entity, and to regard it as in living and intimate relation with Him who made and upholds it, and speaks to man more or less distinctly through it."--*Shairp*.

From this green earth.—What is the force of 'from'?

World of eye and ear.—Where in the preceding context has the latter been referred to?

Half create.—Compare the beautiful little poem :

"Yes! thou art fair, yet be not moved
To scorn the declaration,
That sometimes I in thee have loved
My fancy's own creation.

Imagination needs must stir;
Dear maid, this truth believe,
Minds that have nothing to confer
Find little to perceive.

Be pleased that nature made thee fit
To feed my heart's devotion,
By laws to which all Forins submit
In sky, air, earth and ocean."

"He discovered that in order to attain the highest and truest vision of Nature, the soul of man must not be altogether passive, but must act along with and in unison with Nature, must send from itself abroad an emanation, which, meeting with natural objects, produces something better than either the soul itself or Nature by herself could generate. This creation is,

as has been observed, 'partly given by the object, partly by the poet's mind,' is neither wholly mind, nor wholly object, but something, call it aspect, effluence, emanation, which partakes of both. It is the meeting or marriage of the life that is in the soul with the life that is in the universe, which two are akin to each other, that produces the truest vision and the highest poetry."—*Shairp*.

It would be interesting here to compare Wordsworth's philosophy with that of Coleridge. See *Dejection: An Ode* :—

"O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding-garment, ours her shroud!
And would we aught behold, of higher worth,
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth,
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the Earth—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!"

In nature and the language of the sense.—In Nature as interpreted by the senses.

Genial spirits.—Compare Coleridge's "My genial spirits fail" in the *Ode on Dejection*.

My dearest Friend.—His sister Dorothy, than whom there is no sweeter character in the whole range of literary history.

"Birds in the bower, and lambs in the green field,
Could they have known her, would have loved; methought
Her very presence such a sweetness breathed,
That flowers, and trees, and even the silent hills,
And everything she looked on, should have had
An intimation how she bore herself
Towards them, and to all creatures."

An account of the life-long intimacy between the poet and his wonderfully gifted sister will be found elsewhere in this volume, in an article from the *Athenæum*: "Dorothy and William Wordsworth."

Nature never did betray, etc.—Compare with the present splendid passage the following apostrophe in Book II. of *The Prelude* :

"If this be error, and another faith
Find easier access to the pious mind,
Yet were I grossly destitute of all
Those human sentiments that make this earth
So dear, if I should fail with grateful voice
To speak of you, ye mountains, and ye lakes
And sounding cataracts, ye mists and winds
That dwell among the hills where I was born.
If in my youth I have been pure in heart,
If, mingling with the world, I am content
With my own modest pleasures, and have lived

With God and Nature communing, removed
 From little enmities and low desires,
 The gift is yours; if in these times of fear,
 This melancholy waste of hopes o'erthrown,
 If, 'mid indifference and apathy,
 And wicked exultation when good men
 On every side fall off, we know not how,
 To selfishness, disguised in gentle names
 Of peace and quiet and domestic love,
 Yet mingled not unwillingly with sneers
 On visionary minds; if, in this time
 Of dereliction and dismay, I yet
 Despair not of our nature, but retain
 A more than Roman confidence, a faith
 That fails not, in all sorrow my support,
 'The blessing of my life; the gift is yours,
 Ye winds and sounding cataracts! 'tis yours,
 Ye mountains! thine, O Nature, Thou hast fed
 My lofty speculations; and in thee,
 For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
 A never-failing principle of joy
 And purest passion."

Inform the mind.—In the earlier sense of 'animate.'

Of solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief.—"What profound pathos do these words assume when we remember how long and mournfully, ere life ended, those wild eyes were darkened!"—*Shairp*.

"The shooting lights of her wild eyes' reflected to the full the strain of imaginative emotion which was mingled in the poet's nature with that spirit of steadfast and conservative virtue which has already given to the family a Master of Trinity, two bishops, and other divines and scholars of weight and consideration. In the poet himself the conservative and ecclesiastical tendencies of his character became more and more apparent as advancing years stiffened the movements of the mind. In his sister the ardent element was less restrained; it showed itself in a most innocent direction, but it brought with it a heavy punishment. Her passion for nature and her affection for her brother led her into mountain rambles which were beyond her strength, and her last years were spent in a condition of physical and mental decay."

The following variants may be noticed:—

- (1) v. 4. 'Sweet' was changed to 'soft' in 1845.
- (2) vv. 13-15. The reading of 1798 was

"Among the woods and copses lose themselves,
 Nor with their green and simple hue disturb
 The wild green landscape. Once again I see," etc.

The present is the reading of 1802.

A later variant (1845) reads thus—

"Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
 'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see," etc.

- (3) v. 19. "Sent up," etc. In the edition of 1798 there occurs immediately after the present line the following :

"And the low copses—coming from the trees,"

- (4) vv. 23, 24. The present is the reading of 1827. In the 1798 edition the lines stood thus :

"Though absent long,
These forms of beauty have not been to me," etc.

- (5) v. 33. "As have no slight," etc. The original reading was—

"As may have had no trivial influence."

-
- (1) "[This poem] is unsurpassed in English blank verse for sweeps of rhythm, long but not cumbrous, and exquisitely musical cadence."—*Turner*.
- (2) "It is the seed-thought of all the poetry of the first half of the eighteenth century."—*Whipple*.
- (3) "To those who are strangers to this state of impassioned contemplation, Wordsworth's poetry, or all that is highest in it, is a sealed book."—*Dowden*.
-

LUCY GRAY.

This poem was written at Goslar in Germany, in 1799. Regarding the poem Wordsworth says :

"It was founded on a circumstance told me by my sister, of a little girl who, not far from Halifax, in Yorkshire, was bewildered in a snow-storm. Her footsteps were tracked by her parents to the middle of a lock of a canal, and no other vestige of her, backward or forward, could be traced. The body, however, was found in the canal. The way in which the incident was treated, and the spiritualizing of the character, might furnish hints for contrasting the imaginative influences which I have endeavored to throw over common life, with Crabbe's matter-of-fact style of handling subjects of the same kind."

"*Lucy Gray*," says Matthew Arnold, "is a beautiful success." The poem, apparently so simple, demands the close attention of the student. The sub-title, *Solitude*, which to the superficial reader appears almost an affectation, furnishes in reality the key to the interpretation of the poem. The poet has taken a concrete incident and has so employed its vital essence that the lonely child becomes a representation and embodiment of Solitude. "The Solitary Child" has neither

mate nor comrade and she dwells on a lonely moor. Although she is not fatherless and motherless like Alice Fell, still in a sense she is without father and mother. Lonely in life she meets a lonely death and her wraith haunts the lonesome wild and sings evermore a solitary song.

These variants may be noticed :

- (1) "The *storm* came on," v. 29.
- (2) "*Then downwards* from the steep hill's edge," v. 45.

- (1) State the poetic value of vv. 7, 8, —

—"The sweetest thing that ever grew
Beside a human door!"

- (2) "And yonder is the moon"— What has this to do with the girl's situation?
- (3) "Not blither is the mountain roe." Why does the poet represent her as happy?
- (4) "Before its time." What bearing has this phrase on the story?
- (5) "And thence they saw the bridge of wood." Does this sight give them an inkling of the girl's fate? If not, why is it mentioned here?

THE FOUNTAIN.

This poem and the other two "Matthew" poems — "Matthew" and "The Two April Mornings"—were written at Goslar in Germany, in 1799, when the temperature was below freezing point.

In "The Two April Mornings" Matthew is thus described :

"A village Schoolmaster was he,
With hair of glittering gray;
As blithe a man as you could see
On a spring holiday."

In the poem called "Matthew" the varying moods of the old man are thus indicated :

"The sighs which Matthew heaved were sighs
Of one tired out with fun and madness;
The tears which came to Matthew's eyes
Were tears of light, the dew of gladness.

Yet, sometimes, when the secret cup
Of still and serious thought went round.
It seemed as if he drank it up —
He felt with spirit so profound."

Border-song.—Some song of the wild life of the Scottish Border. Wordsworth belonged to the Border country.

Catch.—A song sung in succession, one catching it from another.

'Twill murmur, etc.—Compare Tennyson's lines—

" I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses ;
I linger by my shingly bars ;
I loiter round my cresses.

I chatter, chatter, as I flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come and men may go
But I go on for ever."

Idly.—His tears are childish and vain.

Mourns less, etc.—Compare Tennyson's treatment of the same theme—the yearning for an irrevocable past—in the song of "The Princess":

"Tears, idle tears, I know not what they mean,
Tears from the depth of some divine despair
Rise in the heart, and gather to the eyes,
In looking on the happy autumn-fields,
And thinking of the days that are no more."

Hutton thus comments on the motive of Wordsworth's poem :
" Thus meditating, he wrings from the temporary sadness fresh conviction that the ebbing away, both in spirit and in appearance, of the brightest past, sad as it must ever be, is not so sad a thing as the weak yearning which, in departing, it often leaves stranded on the soul to cling to the appearance when the spirit is irrevocably gone."

Their old age.—' *Their* ' is emphatic.

But we are pressed, etc.—Because we have been cheerful the world expects us to be cheerful. We cannot carol when we will and be silent when we will.

It is the man of mirth.—The ties that bound him to his kindred were those of real affection.

I live.—The pronoun is emphatic.

Plains.—" In Italian poetry, as in Spanish and Portuguese, words identical in sound may be rhymed if they differ in sense. Chaucer, Spenser, and Milton indulge in the same license."

We rose, etc.—" The last two stanzas are a very artistic close to the poem, and have great dramatic force, leaving the reader in a state of wonder at the complexity of the human heart"—*Turner*.

In this poem several variants must be noticed :—

- (1) v. 9. The original reading was : "Now, Matthew, let us try to match."
- (2) v. 21. The reading of the text is the original reading. In 1836 it was changed for the worse to "No check, no stay, this streamlet fears."
- (3) vv. 37, 38. Here again we have the original reading. The edition of 1836 has :

"The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill."

- (4) v. 63. The original reading was "At this he grasped his hands." Hutton compares the two readings thus :

"The earlier reading looks like hard fact, and no doubt sounds a little rough and abrupt ; but I feel pretty sure, not only that the earlier version expressed the truth as it was present to Wordsworth's inner eye when he wrote the poem, but that it agreed better with the mood of those earlier days, when the old man's wringing of his hands, in a sort of passion of protest against the notion that any one could take the place of his lost child, would have seemed much more natural and dignified to Wordsworth than the mere kindly expression of grateful feeling for which he subsequently exchanged it."

- (1) Show the suitability of the title, "The Fountain," by connecting it with the motive of the poem.
- (2) "The mingling of deep emotion and 'witty rhymes,' the alternation of sadness and lightness, gives to the poem such an uncertainty of tone, that, although the lines seem so boldly simple as hardly to bear repetition, its full charm is felt only after repeated readings."—*Dillard*.
- (3) See (2) under "We are Seven": "Whoever looks searchingly," etc.

MICHAEL. v

This poem, written in 1800, at Grasmere, was first published in the second volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*.

Of this poem Wordsworth writes : "The character and circumstances of Luke were taken from a family to whom had belonged, many years before, the house we lived in at Town-End, along with some fields and woodlands on the eastern shores of Grasmere."

In this poem we have a portrait of one of the dalesmen, or *statesmen*, as they were called, of Westmoreland. Of this robust class Myers writes :

“To those who wish to deduce the character of a population from the character of their race and surroundings the peasantry of Cumberland and Westmoreland form an attractive theme. Drawn in great part from the strong Scandinavian stock, they dwell in a land solemn and beautiful as Norway itself, but without Norway's rigour and penury, and with still lakes and happy rivers instead of Norway's inarming melancholy sea. They are a mountain folk ; but their mountains are no precipices of insuperable snow, such as keep the dwellers in some Swiss hamlet shut in ignorance and stagnating in idiocy. These barriers divide only to concentrate, and environ only to endear ; their guardianship is but enough to give an added unity to each group of kindred homes, and thus it is that the Cumbrian dalesmen have afforded perhaps as near a realization as human fates have yet allowed of the rural society which statesmen desire for their country's greatness. They have given an example of substantial comfort strenuously won ; of home affections intensified by independent strength ; of isolation without ignorance, and of a shrewd simplicity ; of an hereditary virtue which needs no support from fanaticism, and to which honor is more than law.”

A *Pastoral Poem* is a poem of the epic variety dealing with the life and manners of shepherds.

Green-head Ghyll.—This is a glen not far from Town-End, Grasmere, where Wordsworth was living at the time “Michael” was written. Dr. Arnold of Rugby in a letter to a friend (1832) tells of a walk he had with Wordsworth up Green-head Ghyll to see the unfinished sheepfold recorded in “Michael.”

Clipping Tree.—‘Clipping’ is the word used in the north of England for ‘shearing.’

The following variants occur in the poem :—

(1) vv. 18-20 :

“ And to that simple object appertains
A story,—unenriched with strange events,
Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,”

(2) vv. 66, 67 :

“ Hills, which with vigorous step
He had so often climbed ;”

(3) v. 112 :

“ With huge and black projection overbrowed ”

- (4) v. 145 :
 " Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—"
- (5) v. 147 is omitted in Arnold's edition. It runs thus :
 " More than all other gifts
 That earth can offer to declining man,"
- (6) vv. 163-166 :
 " When he
 Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool
 Sat with a fettered sheep before him stretched
 Under the large old oak, that near his door
 Stood single, and, from matchless depth of shade "
- (7) vv. 221-224 :
 " As soon as he had armed himself with strength
 To look his trouble in the face, it seemed
 The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once "
- (8) v. 253 :
 " He may return to us. If here he stay,"
- (9) v. 456 :
 " He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,"
- (10) v. 468 :
 " Sitting alone, or with his faithful dog,"

A number of variations in single words may be noticed :

v. 1 :	'step'	for 'steps.'
v. 10 :	'thither'	" 'hither.'
v. 124 :	'sate'	" 'sat.'
v. 214 :	'pressed'	" 'prest.'
v. 263 :	'his'	" 'this.'
v. 338 :	'touch on'	" 'speak of.'
v. 374 :	'burdened'	" 'burthened.'
v. 409 :	'temptations'	" 'temptation.'

- (1) "In the matter of style this is the most perfect of all Wordsworth's narrative poems; perhaps in no poem of his is there such complete subordination of language to the thought; the two are related in such a way as to illustrate a style which conserves the mental economy of the reader. The theme and the language are equally simple; there is no attempt to heighten the effect by artifices of 'poetic diction.' This being so, what is there in the poem that renders it the delight of all who are familiar with it? It is its sympathy, its sincerity, its vigor—that tone which comes from living and thinking close to the heart of things."—George.

- (2) "Your teachers are wisest when they make you content in quiet virtue; and that literature and art are best for you which point out, in common life and familiar things, the objects for hopeful labor and for humble love."—*Ruskin*.
- (3) "The right sort of verse to choose from Wordsworth, if we are to seize his true and most characteristic form of expression, is a line like this from *Michael* :—

"And never lifted up a single stone."

There is nothing subtle in it, no heightening, no study of poetic style, strictly so called, at all; yet it is expression of the highest and most truly expressive kind."—*Arnold*.

- (4) "Wherever we meet with the successful balance, in Wordsworth, of profound truth of subject with profound truth of execution, he is unique. His best poems are those which most perfectly exhibit this balance. If I had to pick out poems of a kind most perfectly to show Wordsworth's unique power, I should choose poems such as *Michael*, *The Fountain*, *The Highland Reaper*."

HART-LEAP WELL.

This poem was written and published in 1800 with the author's prefatory note.

In the poet's later MS. notes we find the following :

"Written at Town-End, Grasmere. The first eight stanzas were composed extempore one winter evening in the cottage; when, after having tired myself with laboring at an awkward passage in *The Brothers*, I started with a sudden impulse to this to get rid of the other, and finished it in a day or two. My sister and I had passed the place a few weeks before in our wild winter journey from Sockburn on the banks of the Tees to Grasmere. A peasant whom we met near the spot told us the story so far as concerned the name of the well and the hart, and pointed out the stones. Both the stones and the well are objects that may easily be missed; the tradition by this time may be extinct in the neighborhood; the man who related it to us was very old."

Doleful silence.—A characteristic touch. The poet will not present to us joy unmixed, but he must throw it under the shadow of the coming event.

"This Beast not unobserved by Nature fell;
His death was mourned by sympathy divine."

Cleaving sleet.—Sleet that *adheres*.

Paramour.—Lady-love, originally not used in a bad sense.

Swale.—The *Swale* and the *Ure* are rivers in Yorkshire that unite to form the Ouse.

Ere thrice the moon, etc.—When the moon is used to indicate the passing of time, a month is usually suggested. Here, however, the metaphor represents the moon as sailing over the sky to her port in the west. The clause "Ere thrice the moon into her port had steered," is not to be taken with the third and fourth lines of the stanza.

The moving accident, etc.—Cf. Othello, Act I, sc. 3: "Moving accidents by flood and field."

Hawes . . . Richmond.—Towns in Yorkshire.

De Quincey's comment on the mingled tones of this poem is valuable. He remarks that it is in Wordsworth's manner to present an entanglement of darkness and light,—an influx of the joyous into the sad, and the sad into the joyous.—"Out of suffering there is evoked the image of peace. Out of the cruel leap, and the agonizing race through thirteen hours; out of the anguish in the perishing brute, and the headlong courage of his final despair,—out of the ruined lodge and the forgotten mansion, bowers that are trodden under foot, and pleasure-houses that are dust, the poet calls up a vision of *palingenesis*; he interposes his solemn images of suffering, of decay and ruin, only as a visionary haze through which gleams transpire of a trembling dawn far off, but surely on the road.

"The pleasure-house is dust
But, at the coming of the milder day,
These monuments shall all be overgrown."

List of variants occurring in the poem :

(1) vv. 3, 4 :

"And now, as he approached a vassal's door,
"Bring forth another horse!" he cried aloud"—(1836).

(2) v. 21 : The edition of 1800 has "chid and cheered."

(3) v. 27 :

"This race it looks not like an earthly race."

(4) v. 35 : The earlier reading was "smacked his whip."

(5) v. 38 : The edition of 1800 has "glorious fact," and in v. 40 "all foaming like a mountain cataract."

(6) v. 46 : The earlier reading was

"Was never man in such a joyful case,"

the rhyme below being "place."

- (7) v. 49: Originally "turning up the hill."
 (8) v. 50: Changed in 1815 to "four rods." Nine rods, 148½ feet, is a prodigious distance for three leaps!
 (9) v. 51:
 "Three several marks which vith his hoofs the beast"
 (10) v. 52: In the first editions, "verdant ground."
 (11) v. 51: Changed in 1836 to "human eyes."
 (12) v. 65: Originally "gallant brute."
 (13) v. 80:
 "The fame whereof through many a land did ring."—(1800.)
 (14) v. 90: Originally, "journeyed with his paramour."
 (15) v. 98: The edition of 1800 had "curl the blood."
 (16) v. 113: Till 1815 it was "hills."
 (17) v. 150: "Lulled by this Fountain" (1800).
 (18) v 153: The later reading of 1836 is "flowering thorn."
 (19) v 157: Until 1827, "But now here's"—

TO THE DAISY.

The poems addressed to this flower were written at Town-End, Grasmere, in 1802, and published in 1807.

The first stanza of this poem has been twice revised. In the text we have the original reading. The edition of 1836 reads:

"Confiding flower, by Nature's care
 Made bold,—who, lodging here or there,
 Art all the long year through the heir
 Of joy or sorrow."

The edition of 1843 reads:

"Bright Flower, whose home is everywhere,
 Bold in maternal Nature's care,
 And all the long year through the heir
 Of joy or sorrow!"

Some concord, etc.—This was afterwards changed to "Communion with humanity," but restored in a subsequent edition.

Thorough.—An ancient equivalent for '*through*.'

The second stanza reads thus in editions later than the first:

"Is it that man is soon deprest—
 A thoughtless thing, who, once unblest,"

The following appears as a third stanza in some editions:

“Thou wander'st the wide world about,
 Unchecked by pride or scrupulous doubt,
 With friends to greet thee or without,
 Yet pleased and willing;
 Meek, yielding to the occasion's call,
 And all things suffering from all,
 Thy function apostolical
 In peace fulfilling.”

Thy function, etc.—Wordsworth says of this: “I have been censured for the last line but one—‘thy function apostolical’—as being little less than profane. How could it be thought so? The word is adopted with reference to its derivation implying something sent on a mission; and assuredly this little flower, especially when the subject of verse, may be regarded, in its humble degree, as administering both to moral and to spiritual purposes.”

The student should examine the literary value of the last stanza, and determine for what probable reasons the poet's ripper judgment and taste rejected it.

TO THE DAISY.

In the edition of 1815 the following quotation from Wither (with reference to his muse) was prefixed to the poem:

“Her divine skill taught me this,
 That from everything I saw
 I could some instruction draw,
 And raise pleasure to the height
 Through the meanest object's sight.
 By the murmur of a spring,
 Or the least bough's rustling,
 By a daisy whose leaves spread
 Shut when Titan goes to bed,
 Or a shady hush or tree,
 She could more infuse in me
 Than all Nature's beauties can
 In some other wiser man.”

A morrice train.—The *morrice* was a fantastic dance associated with the old Mayday games of England.

Mews.—Hiding-places. The original meaning is, places for confining fowls while moulting.

Poet's darling.—With the exception of the rose, the lily, and the violet, no flower has a more extensive literature than the daisy. Beginning with early English the following are a few of the best known passages:

“Of all the floures in the mede,
 Than love I most these floures white and rede,
 Soch that men callen daisies in our toun.”

CHAUCER.—*Legend of Good Women.*

“ That well by reason men it call may
The daisie or els the eye of the day,
The emprise, and floure of floures all.”
CHAUCER.—*Legend of Good Women.*

“ The grassy ground with dainty daisies dight.”
SPENSER.—*The Shepherd's Calendar.*

“ And still at every close she would repeat
The burden of the song. The daisy is so sweet.”
DRYDEN.—*The Flower and the Leaf.*

“ Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
Thou's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush among the stoure
Thy slender stem;
To spare thee now is past my power,
Thou bonny gem.”
BURNS.—*To a Mountain Daisy.*

“ There is a flower, a little flower,
With silver crest and golden eye,
That welcomes every changing hour,
And weathers every sky.”
MONTGOMERY.—*A Field Flower.*

Wearily at length should fare.—Does this mean ‘should be stretched out at full length,’ or ‘should at length move on’? See below: “Ere thus I have lain couched an hour” (not *crouched*, as the text has it).

Apprehension.—The word has its root meaning from *apprehendo*, I seize.

Some chime of fancy.—A note of the poet in the edition of 1836 substitutes ‘charm’ for ‘chime,’ but all recent editions have the original reading.

Careful sadness.—Notice the original meaning of ‘careful’ here, ‘full of care.’

Thy long-lost praise.—See the quotations from Chaucer above.

The chief variants in this poem are these :

(1) vv. 7, 8 :

“ And Nature's love of thee partake,
Her much-loved Daisy !” (1836.)

(2) vv. 9-12 :

“ When soothed awhile by milder airs,
Thee Winter in his garb wears,
That thinly shades his few gray hairs;
Spring cannot shun thee ;” (1807.)

“ When Winter decks his few gray hairs,
Thee in the scar'y wreath he wears;
Spring parts,” etc. (1827.)

The present reading dates from 1836.

- (3) vv. 19-21. Until 1836 the reading was :
 " If welcome once, thou count'st it gain ;
 Thou art not daunted,
 Nor car'st if thou be set at naught."
- (4) vv. 57, 58. The original reading was :
 " When, smitten by the morning ray,
 I see thee rise, alert and gay,"
- (5) vv. 60-64. The original reading was :
 " With kindred motion
 At dusk, I've seldom marked thee press
 The ground, as if in thankfulness,
 Without some feeling, more or less,
 Of true devotion."
- (6) vv. 73-75. The early reading this. The revision reads thus :
 " Child of the year, that round dost run
 Thy pleasant course, when day's begun
 As ready to salute the sun," etc.
- (7) v. 76. Originally read " As morning leveret."
- (8) vv. 77-79. The original reading was :
 " Thou long the poet's praise shalt gain ;
 Thou wilt be more beloved by men
 In times to come ;"

In 1815 this was altered to read :

" Thy long-lost praise thou shalt regain ;
 Dear shalt thou be to future men
 As in old time."

The present text dates from 1836.

-
- (1) " To Shelley a flower is a thing of light and of love, — bright with its yearning, pale with its passion. To Thomson a flower is an object which has a certain shape and color. To Wordsworth a flower is a living partaker of the common spiritual life and joy of being, a joy which is at once calm and ecstatic."—*Dowden*.
- (2) " The product of Wordsworth's impassioned and illumined gaze which we have in these three poems shows us in what special sense he was the poet of Nature. His imagination is both creative and perceptive, and is the result of habitual communion with Nature, and constant reflection upon her impressions. He comes to her as a priest to whom she would confide her secrets ; his communion is holy, and hence he inspires his disciples with an enthusiasm which is calm and deep, rather than tumultuous."—*George*.

It will be noticed that George, in the foregoing extract, refers to *three* poems. The third poem, not contained in the text of the present edition, must be added here :

TO THE DAISY.

" With little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy, again I talk to thee,
For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming common-place
Of nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace
Which Love makes for thee !

Of on the dappled turf at ease
I sit and play with smiles,
Loose types of things through all degrees,
Thoughts of thy raising ;
And many a fond and idle name
I give to thee for praise or blame,
As is the humour of the game,
While I am gazing.

A nun demure of lowly port ;
Or sprightly maiden of Love's court,
In thy simplicity the sport
Of all temptations :
A queen in crown of rubies drest ;
A starveling in a scanty vest ;
Are all, as seems to suit thee best,
Thy appellations.

A little Cyclops, with one eye
Staring to threaten and defy,
That thought comes next—and instantly
The freak is over,
The shape will vanish—and behold
A silver shield with boss of gold,
That spreads itself, some faery bold
In fight to cover !

I see thee glittering from afar—
And then thou art a pretty star ;
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee !
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest ;—
May peace come never to his nest
Who shall reprove thee !

Bright *Flower!* for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast !
Sweet silent creature !
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature !"

In 1805 Wordsworth wrote a fourth poem "To the Daisy," in memory of his brother, Captain John Wordsworth, who

perished at sea on the 5th of February, of that year. A few stanzas of that poem may be quoted here :

" Sweet Flower ! belike one day to have
A place upon thy Poet's grave,
I welcome thee once more :
But He, who was on land, at sea,
My Brother, too, in loving thee,
Although he loved more silently,
Sleeps by his native shore.

* * * * *

Yet then, when called ashore, he sought
The tender peace of rural thought ;
In more than happy mood
To your abodes, bright daisy Flowers !
He then would steal at leisure hours,
And loved you glittering in your bowers,
A starry multitude.

* * * * *

That neighborhood of grove and field
To Him a resting-place should yield,
A meek man and a brave !
The birds shall sing and ocean make
A mournful murmur for *his* sake ;
And Thou, sweet Flower, shall sleep and wake
Upon his senseless grave."

TO A HIGHLAND GIRL.

In the year 1803 Wordsworth and his sister made a tour through Scotland. Dorothy's Journal describes the meeting with the beautiful Highland girl whom her brother has made immortal : " When beginning to descend the hill toward Loch Lomond [they had walked over from Loch Katrine] we overtook two girls, who told us we could not cross the ferry until evening, for the boat was gone with a number of people to church. One of the girls was exceedingly beautiful : and the figures of both of them, in gray plaids falling to their feet, their faces being only uncovered, excited our attention before we spoke to them. I think I never heard the English language sound more sweetly than from the mouth of the elder of these girls, as she stood at the gate answering our inquiries, her face flushed with the rain." The poet and his sister waited at the ferry-house until the return of the boat in the afternoon. This experience at the ferry-house prompted the writing of the poem some months afterwards.

Inversnaid (or Inversneyde), on the eastern shore of Loch Lomond, is a small hamlet at the confluence of the Inversnaid burn with a stream that flows west of Loch Arclet ; and is the point of communication between Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine. The present writer visited this delightful spot in the summer of 1890, reaching Inversnaid pier to experience

just such rainy weather as flushed the sweet face of the Highland Girl. The surrounding scenery is very charming, a fit environment for the lovely maiden.

Consenting.—The word is used in its primary sense (*consentire*, 'to agree.')

This fall of water.—The present editor in his tour through the Highlands saw nothing more beautiful than the waterfall at Inversnaid by which the burn, just before pouring its crystal waters into Loch Lomond, takes an exquisite leap of thirty feet.

The silent lake.—It would be impossible to exaggerate the loveliness of Loch Lomond. Professor Wilson prefaces his description of that richly romantic lake with this utterance: "Oh! for the plumes and pinions of the poised eagle, that we might now hang over Loch Lomond and all her isles!"

A quiet road.—'Road' seems to be used in the sense of 'roadstead.'

Thy peers—Thy companions or associates.

Beating up, etc.—In nautical language the phrase means to make head against the wind by tacking and veering.

Happy pleasure.—'Happy' seems to mean 'fortunate.'

Your homely ways.—Notice the reason for the use of 'your' instead of 'thy.'

Anything to thee!—The love, of course, is entirely poetical. As some one has said,—we have the purest admiration and interest unwarmed by any more ardent sentiment.

Though pleased, etc.—That is, though pleased at heart while I remain.

Till I grow old.—Wordsworth in his old age speaks thus of the girl: "The sort of prophecy with which the verses conclude has, through God's goodness, been realized; and now, approaching the close of my 73rd year, I have a most vivid remembrance of her and the beautiful objects with which she was surrounded."

In Dorothy's journal we find how deeply she too has been impressed: "At this day the innocent merriment of the girls with their kindness to us, and the beautiful face and figure of the elder, come to my mind whenever I think of the ferry-house and the waterfall of Loch Lomond, and I never think of the two girls but the whole image of that romantic spot is before me, a living image as it will be to my dying day."

The variants of the poem are these :—

- (1) vv. 5, 6.

"that household Lawn;
Those trees,"—(1836.)

- (2) v. 15. In 1836 this line was made to read :

"Yet, dream or vision as thou art."

In 1845 the poet added and altered thus :

"But, O fair creature ! in the light
Of common day so heavenly bright,
I bless thee, vision as thou art,
I bless thee with a human heart."

- (3) v. 18. Until 1845 this line read :

"I neither know thee nor thy peers."

- (1) "The purest note of Wordsworth's genius is discernible in such fulness and sweetness of fervent thought and majestic sympathy."—*Swinburne*.

- (2) "It is in such poems as this that we see illustrated the *pure*, as distinguished from the *ornate*, in poetic style. The pure style depends for its efficacy upon penetrating at once to the heart of scene or character, and using only such accessories of imagery and dress as are essential to a grasp of the spirit of the whole; while the ornate depends upon the number of striking allusions, the wealth of figure, and abundance of drapery."—*George*.

- (3) In Wordsworth's poem "The Three Cottage Girls," written about 1820, after describing the 'Italian Maid' and the 'Helvetian Girl' he returns with all his original ardor to the 'Sweet Highland Girl':

"Sweet Highland girl ! a very shower
Of beauty was thy earthly dower,
When thou didst pass before my eyes,
Gay vision under sullen skies,
While hope and love around thee played,
Near the rough Falls of Inversnaid !
Time cannot thin thy flowing hair,
Nor take one ray of light from thee ;
For in my fancy thou dost share
The gift of immortality."

- (4) It is not commonly known that the first few lines of that beautiful poem "She was a Phantom of Delight" (Wordsworth's tribute to his wife) were originally intended as a part of the poem on the Highland Girl :

"She was a phantom of delight
When first she gleamed upon my sight,
A lovely apparition, sent
To be a moment's ornament."

- (5) "That such a meeting as this should have formed so long-remembered an incident in the poet's life will appear, perhaps, equally ridiculous to the philosopher and to the man of the world. The one would have given less, the other would have demanded more. And yet the quest of beauty, like the quest of truth, reaps its surest reward when it is disinterested as well as keen; and the true lover of human kind will often draw his most exquisite moments from what to most men seems but the shadow of a joy. Especially, as in this case, his heart will be prodigal of the impulses of that protecting tenderness which it is the blessing of early girlhood to draw forth unwittingly, and to enjoy unknown—affections which lead to no declaration, and desire no return."—*Myers*.

STEPPING WESTWARD.

Stepping Westward.—In Dorothy's Journal we find the following reference to the present incident: "We have never had a more delightful walk than this evening. Ben Lomond and the three pointed-topped mountains of Loch Lomond were very majestic under the clear sky, the lake perfectly calm, and the air sweet and mild. The sun had been set for some time, when our path having led us close to the shore of the calm lake, we met two neatly dressed women, without hats, who had probably been taking their Sunday evening's walk. One of them said to me in a friendly, soft tone of voice, 'What! are you stepping Westward?' I cannot describe how affecting this simple expression was in that remote place, with the western sky in front, yet glowing with the departing sun. William wrote the following poem long after, in remembrance of his feelings and mine."

The drift of the poem cannot be caught unless the reader understands the local meaning of "stepping westward." In Perth and other parts of Scotland any distant place, whatever its direction, is described as 'doon West,' so that 'You are stepping Westward' is equivalent to 'You are going far.'

Wildish.—The poet's fancy is that he and his sister would be wandering on into infinite distance without purpose or home.

Her native lake.—Loch Katrine, which seven years after this (1810) was to furnish the scenery of Scott's *Lady of the Lake*. Wordsworth and his sister had visited Scott in September, 1803, and after Wordsworth returned to Westmoreland he wrote a cordial letter to Scott, describing the

beautiful autumnal scenery of the Highland Lakes: "My sister was quite enchanted, and we often said to each other, 'What a pity Mr. Scott is not with us!'"—And it was Scott, after all, who was destined to make this beautiful Highland loch immortal.

Human sweetness.—The word 'human' is emphatic. The fancy in which the poet indulges is more exquisite because Nature's beauty in the endless journey is to be heightened by a human association.

Endless way.—The poet's exhilaration in the closing lines reminds one of Tennyson's *Ulysses*. The aged hero seeing gleams of the "untravell'd world" exclaims:

" My purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die."

George's excellent comment on "Stepping Westward" must be quoted here: "In making the accidental interrogation reveal the soul of the scene, while being itself exalted by it, Wordsworth transfigures the whole. By his wonderful aptness in selecting the points of vantage, and by his conciseness, he produces the maximum of power."

THE SOLITARY REAPER.

Of the region of Loch Voil Dorothy's Journal says: "As we descended, the scene became more fertile, our way being pleasantly varied,—through coppice or open fields, and passing farm-houses, though always with an intermixture of uncultivated ground. It was harvest-time, and the fields wore quietly—might I say pensively?—enlivened by small companies of reapers. It is not uncommon in the more lonely parts of the Highlands to see a single person so employed."

This poem, like the two preceding, was written in 1803, and published in the edition of 1807.

Some variants in the poem are these:

- (1) v. 10. The text has the original reading, which was unfortunately changed in 1827 to

" More welcome notes to weary bands."

- (2) v. 13 This is the final reading. That of 1807 was

" No sweeter voice was ever heard."

That of 1827 read:

" Such thrilling voice was never heard."

- (3) v. 29. The reading of 1807 has been retained. Although vernacular, it seems happier than the revision of 1820 :
 " I listened, motionless and still."
- (4) v. 80. " And when," the revision of 1827, was in 1836 changed back to " And as," the original reading.
-
- (1) "The slightest touch of remoteness in place or in time is apt to have a thrilling influence. A good example is afforded in Wordsworth's lines :—

" Will no one tell me what she sings ?
 Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
 For *old*, unhappy, *far-off* things,
 And battles *long ago*."

—*Bain*.

(Of these two lines Swinburne has justly said that they are not excelled by anything of equal length in the whole compass of literature.)

- (2) "What poet ever produced such beauty and power with so simple materials ! The maiden, the latest lingerer in the field, is the medium through which the romance of Highland scenery, and the soul of solitary Highland life is revealed to us ; even her voice seems a part of Nature, so mysteriously does it blend with the beauty of the scene."—*George*.
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AT THE GRAVE OF BURNS.

Under date of Thursday, August 18th, 1803, Dorothy wrote in her Journal : "Went to the churchyard where Burns is buried. . . . He lies at a corner of the churchyard, and his son Francis Wallace beside him. . . . We looked at the grave with melancholy and painful reflections, repeating to each other his own verses :—

" Is there a man whose judgment clear
 Can others teach the course to steer,
 Yet runs himself life's mad career
 Wild as the wave ?—
 Here pause—and, through the starting tear,
 Survey this grave."

It was a fitting tribute to Burns that the first-fruits of Wordsworth's visit to Scotland should be dedicated to the memory of the Scottish Poet in the three poems, " At the Grave of Burns," " Thoughts Suggested the Day Following," and " To the Sons of Burns."

It will be noticed that Wordsworth in these three poems has employed—to put us in the atmosphere of the Scottish bard—the favorite metre of Burns.

The grave of Burns, now honored with a splendid mausoleum, lies in the cemetery of the town of Dumfries. The house where Burns spent the last years of his life, where he died, and where his widow dwelt long after his death, stands in a small old street, now called Burns' Street, in the near vicinity of the cemetery.

Fresh as the flower, etc.—See Burns' poem "To a Mountain Daisy":

"Wee, *modest*, crimson-tippèd flower"—

Glinted.—Also from the poem "To a Mountain Daisy":

"Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble, birth;
Yet cheerfully thou *glinted* forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce rear'd above the parent earth
Thy tender form."

'Glinted means 'peeped.' Cleverly has Wordsworth employed the word as applying to the development of Burns's genius.

Full soon.—Burns died at the early age of thirty-seven.

When first it shone.—Burns's first volume of verses appeared in 1786. Wordsworth was then only sixteen years old and had not yet gone to Cambridge. Indeed, at the time of Burns's death in 1796, Wordsworth was just beginning his poetic career and had not yet published anything.

Criffel.—A mountain overhanging the river Nith near Dumfries. Within sight of Criffel was Skiddaw, in Cumberland, near Wordsworth's home.

Poor inhabitant below.—Taken from "A Bard's Epitaph," a stanza of which has already been quoted. Following the stanza quoted above is this stanza:

"*The poor inhabitant below*
Was quick to learn, and wise to know,
And keenly felt the friendly glow,
And softer flame:
But thoughtless follies laid him low,
And stain'd his name!"

Of Burns's poem "A Bard's Epitaph," Wordsworth has said: "Here is a sincere and solemn avowal—a public declaration from his own will—a confession at once devout, poetical, and human,—a history in the shape of a prophecy!"

THOUGHTS.

Dorothy's Journal says: "We were glad to leave Dumfries, which is no agreeable place to those who do not love the bustle of a town which seems to be rising up to wealth. On our road to Brownhill we passed Ellisland at a little distance on our right. . . . Travelled through the Vale of Nith, here little like a vale it is so broad, with irregular hills rising up on each side. . . . Left the Nith about a mile and a half and reached Brownhill, a lonely inn."

The Ellisland Farm, where Burns lived from the time of his leaving Edinburgh in 1788 till his removal to the town of Dumfries in 1791, lies on the left bank of the river Nith. Here Burns wrote his "Tam O' Shanter," his "Mary in Heaven," and many other poems. One of the windows of the house still retains a scratching made by the poet of the famous line:

"An honest man's the noblest work of God."

The Vision.—In "The Vision" Burns narrates how his "native muse" appears to him and encourages him. These are the closing stanzas of the poem:

"Thou canst not learn, nor can I show,
To paint with Thomson's landscape glow;
Or wake the bosom-melting throe,
 With Shenstone's art;
Or pour, with Gray, the moving flow
 Warm on the heart.

Yet all beneath the unrival'd rose,
The lowly daisy sweetly blows;
Though large the forest's monarch throws
 His army shade,
Yet green the juley hawthorn grows
 Adown the glade.

Then never murmur or repine;
Strive in thy humble sphere to shine;
And, trust me, not Potosi's mine,
 Nor King's regard,
Can give a bliss o'ermatching thine—
 A rustic bard.

To give my counsels all in one,—
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan;
Preserve the dignity of man,
 With soul erect;
And trust, the universal plan
 Will all protect."

'And wear thou this,' she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head:
The polish'd leaves and berries red,
 Did rustling play;
And like a passing thought, she fled
 In light away."

Through busiest street, etc.—What a sublime tribute this to the genius of one who had taught him in his youth :

“ How Verse may build a princely throne
On humble truth.”

Here may be quoted the first and the last stanza of the poem “ To the Sons of Burns, after visiting the Grave of their Father ” :

“ Mid crowded obelisks and urns
I sought the untimely grave of Burns ;
Sons of the Bard, my heart still mourns
With sorrow true ;
And more would grieve, but that it turns
Trembling to you !

* * * * *

Let no mean hope your souls enslave ;
Be independent, generous, brave ;
Your Father such example gave,
And such revere ;
But be admonished by his grave,
And think, and fear ! ”

TO THE CUCKOO.

This poem was composed in the orchard at Town-End, Grasmere, 1804.

The note and the habits of the American cuckoo are very unlike those of the European variety. One who has not heard the European cuckoo cannot possibly understand Wordsworth's enthusiasm.

New-comer.—The earliest appearance of the cuckoo recorded in White's *Selborne* is on April 7th.

Wandering voice.—The bird avoids observation, because the sight of a cuckoo is a signal for all the small birds to be up in its pursuit.

Wordsworth, in dealing with Fancy and Imagination in an essay prefixed to the 1815 edition of his poems, takes the third and fourth lines of the first stanza as an instance of the power of imagination : “ This concise interrogation characterizes the seeming ubiquity of the voice of the cuckoo, and dispossesses the creature almost of a corporeal existence ; the imagination being tempted to this exertion of her power by a consciousness in the memory that the cuckoo is almost perpetually heard throughout the season of the Spring, but seldom becomes an object of sight.”

From hill to hill, etc.—How much better is this than the reading in many editions :

“ That seems to fill the whole air's space,
As loud far off as near.”

Visionary hours.—His memory and imagination summon up the past.

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- (1) “ This lyric, notwithstanding its ethereal imaginative beauty, was stigmatized as affected and ridiculous by the blindness of contemporary criticism. Of all his own poems this was Wordsworth's favorite.”—*Turner*.
 - (2) “ Of all Wordsworth's illustrations of the effect of sound upon the spiritual nature this is the finest. Early in life he had a firm assurance that the life of the soul was more real than the external world. It is this that makes Wordsworth the most spiritual and most spiritualizing of all English poets.”—*George*.
 - (3) Besides these two poems to the cuckoo, Wordsworth's tribute to the cuckoo at Laverna may be quoted :

“ List—'twas the Cuckoo. O with what delight
Heard I that voice ! and catch it now though faint,
Far off and faint, and melting into air,
Yet not to be mistaken. Hark again !
Those louder cries give notice that the Bird,
Although invisible as Echo's self,
Is wheeling hitherward ! ”

FIDELITY.

On his tour through Scotland in 1803 Wordsworth had visited Scott. In 1805 this visit was returned by Scott. It was during this visit that Scott's lines on “ Helvellyn ” and Wordsworth's “ Fidelity ” were written *à propos* of the sad incident of a young tourist's death and the fidelity of his dog. In the ascent of the mountain the two poets were accompanied by Sir Humphrey Davy. In speaking of this occasion, Wordsworth says that it would be difficult to express the feelings with which he, who so often had climbed Helvellyn alone, found himself standing on the summit with two such men as Scott and Davy.

Of the incident that gave rise to this poem, Wordsworth says : “ The young man whose death gave occasion to this poem was named Charles Gough, and had come early in the spring to Patterdale for the sake of angling. While attempting to cross over Helvellyn to Grasmere, he slipped from a steep part of the rock where the ice was not thawed, and perished. His body was discovered as described in this

poem. Walter Scott heard of the accident, and both he and I, without either of us knowing that the other had taken up the subject, each wrote a poem in admiration of the dog's fidelity. His contains a most beautiful stanza, 'How long did'st thou think,' etc."

The young student would do well to compare "Fidelity" and "Helvellyn," as to the style of the authors and the mode in which the sad incident has been treated.

HELVELLYN.

"I climbed the dark brow of the mighty Helvellyn,
Lake and mountain beneath me gleamed misty and white;
All was still, save, by fits, when the eagle was yelling,
And starting around me the echoes replied.
On the right, Striden-edge round the Red-tarn was bending,
And Catechicam its left verge was defending,
One huge nameless rock in the front was ascending,
When I marked the sad spot where the wanderer had died.

Dark-green was that spot 'mid the brown mountain-heather,
Where the Pilgrim of Nature lay stretched in decay,
Like the corpse of an outcast abandoned to weather,
Till the mountain-winds wasted the tenantless clay.
Not yet quite deserted, though lonely extended,
For, faithful in death, his mute favourite attended,
The much-loved remains of her master defended,
And chased the hill-fox and the raven away.

How long didst thou think that his silence was slumber?
When the wind waved his garment, how oft didst thou start?
How many long days and long nights didst thou number,
Ere he faded before thee, the friend of thy heart?
And, O! was it meet, that, no requiem read o'er him,
No mother to weep, and no friend to deplore him,
And thou, little guardian, alone stretched before him,—
Unhonoured the Pilgrim from life should depart?

When a Prince to the fate of a Peasant has yielded,
The tapestry waves dark round the dim-lighted hall;
With scutcheons of silver the coffin is shielded,
And pages stand mute by the canopied pall:
Through the courts, at deep midnight, the torches are gleaming;
In the proudly arched chapel the banners are beaming;
Far adown the long aisle sacred music is streaming,
Lamenting a Chief of the People should fall.

But meeter for thee, gentle lover of nature,
To lay down thy head like the meek mountain lamb,
When, wildered, he drops from some cliff huge in stature,
And draws his last sob by the side of his dam.
And more stately thy couch by this desert lake lying,
Thy obsequies sung by the gray plover flying,
With one faithful friend but to witness thy dying,
In the arms of Helvellyn and Catechicam."

PEELE CASTLE.

This poem was written in 1805 at Town-End, Grasmere. Early in the year Wordsworth had lost his brother, Captain John Wordsworth, who was drowned at sea. The poet's sorrow at the death of his brother supplies the key-note of these beautiful and characteristic stanzas.

Wordsworth's friendship with Sir George Beaumont began in the year 1803. Beaumont, as a descendant of the Elizabethan dramatist, had an hereditary appreciation of poetry, and was one of the first men of rank and influence who saw in the new poet signs of transcendent genius. He was a lover and a patron of art, and indeed himself a painter of some reputation.

The brother whose death is lamented in these verses has been thus described by Wordsworth: "Of all human beings whom I ever met he was the man of the most rational desires, the most sedate habits, and the most perfect self-command. He was modest and gentle, and shy even to disease, but this was wearing off. In everything his judgment was sound and original and his eye for the beauties of nature was as fine and delicate as ever poet or painter was gifted with. . . . I never heard an oath or even an indelicate expression or allusion from him in my life; his modesty was equal to that of the purest woman."

Peele is on the west coast of the Isle of Man. The castle is on a small rocky islet, separated from the mainland by a narrow channel. Beaumont's picture of the castle in a storm as contrasted with the peaceful picture in Wordsworth's memory is to him like a parable of the change which his brother's death brought into his own life.

vv. 15, 16.—These famous lines are an emendation of the original reading:

—“And add the gleam
Of lustre known to neither sea or land,
But borrowed from the youthful poet's dream.”

vv. 21-24: The following stanza appears as the sixth in early editions:

“Thou shouldst have seemed a treasure-house divine
Of peaceful years, a chronicle of heaven;
Of all the sunbeams that did ever shine
The very sweetest had to thee been given.”

A chronicle of Heaven.—A record of happiness more than earth alone could give.

The soul of truth.—Before his bereavement the poet would have seen nothing false in such a picture of perfect peace.

A steadfast peace, etc.—A peace so secure as to defy change. The earlier reading of this line was: “A faith, a trust that could not be betrayed,” *i.e.*, such a peaceful picture would have produced such a faith in the happiness of human life as could never be lost.

—

Palgrave compares the *Lines on Peele Castle* with Shelley's *Poet's Dream*. “Each,” he says, “is the most perfect expression of the innermost spirit of his art given by these great

poets; of that idea which, as in the case of the true painter, subsists only in the mind; the sight never beheld it, nor has the hand expressed it. It is an idea residing in the breast of the artist, which he is always laboring to impart, and which he dies at last without imparting."

In addition to the present poem Wordsworth wrote three others relating to the death of his brother, "The Happy Warrior," the elegiac verses beginning "The sheep-boy whistled loud," etc., and "To the Daisy," beginning "Sweet Flower," etc.

FRENCH REVOLUTION.

During the vacation of 1790 Wordsworth visited France and had all his sympathies enlisted in favor of the Girondist party of the French Revolution, then in its full tide of progress. In the beginning of 1791 he went over again to France, where he resided, partly at Blois, Orleans, and Paris, for about thirteen months, "showing such active sympathy, and maintaining such intimate relations with some of the leading Girondists, that it is not improbable his career might have been cut short by the guillotine, had he not been obliged to return to England a little before King Louis suffered death."

Auxiliars.—Compare below: "The meek and lofty did both find *helpers*."

When Reason, etc.—Myers says: "The course of affairs in France was such as seemed by an irony of fate to drive the noblest and firmest hearts into the worst aberrations. For first of all in that Revolution, Reason had appeared, as it were, in visible shape, and hand in hand with Pity and Virtue; then, as the welfare of the oppressed peasantry began to be lost sight of amidst the brawls of the factions of Paris, all that was attractive and enthusiastic in the great movement seemed to disappear, but yet Reason might still be thought to find a closer realization here than among scenes more serene and fair; and, lastly, Reason set in blood and tyranny, and there was no more hope for France."

The whole earth, etc.—The independence of the United States had been recognized in 1784. The spirit of republicanism was strong in the Netherlands. The whole world seemed on the brink of change.

The budding rose, etc.—"The budding rose" has a beauty of suggestiveness and promise that makes it more attractive than "the rose full-blown."

Some lurking right, etc.—For the effect produced upon man's spirit by the freedom existing "among the grandest objects of the sense," see Coleridge's *France* :

O ye loud Waves ! and O ye Forests high !
 And O ye Clouds that far above me soar'd !
 Thou rising Sun ! thou blue-rejoicing Sky !
 Yea, everything that is and will be free !
 Bear witness for me, whereso'er ye be,
 With what deep worship I have still ador'd
 The spirit of divinest Liberty."

Secreted island.—Compare the Latin *secretus*, 'apart,' 'remote.'

Wordsworth soon learned that the French Revolution had failed to produce the fruits which enthusiasts had expected from it. The hopes of social regeneration with which he had greeted the fall of the Bastille and his subsequent disenchantment and sorrow and shame he describes in the history of the "Solitary" in *The Excursion*, Book III. :

"For lo! the dread Bastille,
 With all the chambers in its horrid towers,
 Fell to the ground, by violence o'erthrown
 Of indignation, and with shouts that down'd
 The crash it made in falling! From the wreck
 A golden palace rose, or seem'd to rise,
 The appointed seat of equitable law
 And mild paternal sway. The potent shock
 I felt; the transformation I perceived,
 As marvellously seized as in that moment
 When, from the blind mist issuing, I beheld
 Glory, beyond all glory ever seen—
 Confusion infinite of heaven and earth,
 Dazzling the soul! Meanwhile prophetic harps
 In every grove were ringing, 'War shall cease;
 Did ye not hear that conquest is abjured?
 Bring garlands, bring forth choicest flowers to deck
 The tree of liberty.'

* * * * *
 The powers of song
 I left not uninvoked; and, in still groves
 Where mild enthusiasts tuned a pensive lay
 Of thanks and expectation, in accord
 With their belief I sang Saturnian rule
 Return'd, a progeny of golden years
 Permitted to descend and bless mankind."

* * * * *

"Scorn and contempt forbid me to proceed !
 But History, Time's slavish scribe, will tell
 How rapidly the zealots of the cause
 Disbanded—or in hostile ranks appeared :
 Some, tired of honest service! these, outdone,
 Disgusted, therefore, or appall'd, by aims
 Of fiercer zealots—so confusion reign'd,
 And the more faithful were compell'd to exclaim,
 As Brutus did to Virtue, 'Liberty,
 I worshipp'd thee, and find thee but a shade!'"

ODE TO DUTY.

This Ode was written in 1805, and published in 1807. Wordsworth says of it: "This ode is on the model of Gray's *Ode to Adversity*, which is copied from Horace's *Ode to Fortune*. Many and many a time have I been twitted by my wife and sisters for having forgotten this dedication of myself to the stern lawgiver. Transgressor indeed I have been, from hour to hour, from day to day: I would fain hope, however, not more flagrantly or in a worse way than most of my tuneful brethren. But these last words are in a wrong strain. We should be rigorous to ourselves and forbearing, if not indulgent, to others, and, if we make comparisons at all, it ought to be with those who have morally excelled us."

The Latin sentence at the head of this ode may be translated: "No longer good by resolve, but so educated by habit that not only can I do right, but I cannot do otherwise than right."

Stern daughter.—Gray's *Hymn to Adversity* begins: "Daughter of Jove, relentless power."

Thou, who art victory, etc.—When imaginary terrors attack us our sense of right gains the victory by showing us that we need be afraid of nothing but the law of right.

There are who.—This is a Latinism (*Sunt qui*.)

The genial sense of youth.—The natural impulses of youth towards acts of goodness.

Security.—This word has something of its original meaning, 'freedom from care,' (*se*, apart, and *cura*, care.)

Even now.—Even in this life.

This creed.—Reliance on "the genial sense of youth."

Untried.—Inexperienced.

The quietness of thought.—As opposed to 'disturbance of soul' and 'strong compunction.'

Unchartered.—Unrestricted.

Stern Lawgiver! yet, etc.—Stern....yet....benignant.

Flowers laugh, etc.—Shairp says: "The obedience of nature to physical law is beautifully compared to man's obedience to moral law. It is in keeping with Wordsworth's conception of nature as having 'a true life of her own,' and as being 'the

shape and image of right reason—reason in the highest sense, embodied and made visible in order, in stability, in conformity to eternal law.”

The confidence of reason.—As opposed to his blind confidence in his own nature as a guide.

“In Wordsworth’s ideal of human life the ‘genial sense of youth’ is strengthened and confirmed by mature reason; the truths of early intuitions become the fixed principles of later life.”—*George*.

These are the principal variants in the ode :

- (1) v. 8. The edition of 1807 reads, “From strife and from despair; a glorious ministry.”

- (2) vv. 15, 16. The original reading was :

“May joy be theirs while life shall last!
And thou,” etc.

The reading of the text is that of 1827. In 1836 the poet altered thus :

“Oh! if through confidence misplaced
They fail, thy saving arms, dread Power! around them cast.”

- (3) vv. 21, 22. The original reading was :

“And blest are they who in the main
This faith, even now, do entertain.”

- (4) v. 24. The original reading was : “Yet find that other strength, according to their need.” In 1836 this was changed to : “Yet find they firm support.” The present is the reading of 1815.

- (5) vv. 29-31. The original reading was :

“Resolved that nothing e’er should press
Upon my present happiness,
I shoved unwelcome tasks away;
But thee,” etc.

In 1815 the text became :

“And oft when in my heart was heard
Thy timely mandate, I deferred
The task imposed from day to day.”

The present reading dates from 1827.

- (6) v. 40. The line originally read : “Which ever is the same,”

ODE ON INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY.

Of this poem, published in 1807, the poet wrote as follows in 1843: "This was composed during my residence at Town-End, Grasmere. Two years at least passed between the writing of the four first stanzas and the remaining part. To the attentive and competent reader the whole sufficiently explains itself; but there may be no harm in adverting here to particular feelings or *experiences* of my own mind on which the structure of the poem partly rests. Nothing was more difficult for me in childhood than to admit the notion of death as a state applicable to my own being. I have said elsewhere:

'A simple child,
That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?'

But it was not so much from feelings of animal vivacity that *my* difficulty came as from a sense of the indomitableness of the spirit within me. I used to brood over the stories of Enoch and Elijah, and almost to persuade myself that, whatever might become of others, I should be translated, in something of the same way, to heaven. With a feeling congenial to this, I was often unable to think of external things as having external existence, and I communed with all that I saw as something not apart from, but inherent in, my own immaterial nature. Many times while going to school have I grasped at a wall or tree to recall myself from this abyss of idealism to reality. At that time I was afraid of such processes. In later periods of life I have deplored, as we all have reason to do, a subjugation of an opposite character, and have rejoiced over the remembrances, as is expressed in the lines:

'Obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;' etc.

'To that dream-like vividness and splendour which invest objects of sight in childhood, every one, I believe, if he would look back, could bear testimony, and I need not dwell upon it here; but having in the poem regarded it as presumptive evidence of a prior state of existence, I think it right to protest against a conclusion, which has given pain to some good and pious persons, that I meant to inculcate such a belief. It is far too shadowy a notion to be recommended to faith, as more than an element in our instincts of immortality. But let us bear in mind that, though the idea is not advanced in revelation, there is nothing there to contradict it, and the fall of man presents an analogy in its favour. Accordingly, a pre-existent state has entered into the popular creeds of many nations, and, among all persons acquainted with classic literature, is known as an ingredient in Platonic philosophy.

Archimedes said that he could move the world if he had a point whereon to rest his machine. Who has not felt the same aspirations as regards the world of his own mind? Having to wield some of its elements when I was impelled to write this poem on the "Immortality of the Soul," I took hold of the notion of pre-existence as having sufficient foundation in humanity for authorizing me to make for my purpose the best use of it I could as a poet."

To me alone, etc.—I alone had thoughts of sadness on account of the loss of a loved one, but I obtained ease by giving a voice to my grief.

The fields of sleep.—"The regions of sleep, the early dawn." Hales says: "The yet reposeful, slumbering country side."

Coronal.—A reference to the classic custom of crowning the head with flowers.

Our birth is but a sleep, etc.—"This ode, and especially this and the following stanza, are frequently called 'Platonic.' It must, however, be remembered that although Wordsworth coincides with Plato in assigning to mankind a life previous to their human one, he differs from him in making life 'a sleep and a forgetting,' while Plato makes life a tedious and imperfect process of *ἀνάμνησις*, or reminding. With Wordsworth the infant, with Plato the philosopher, approaches nearest to the previous more glorious state."—*Turner*.

Heaven lies about us, etc.—This line has no rhyme. Is there any other instance of the kind in this poem?

Nature's Priest.—This may refer to one who approaches near to a divinity, or it may mean a worshipper.

Yearnings she hath, etc.—"Earthly things cause yearnings which earthly things can satisfy, in accordance with natural laws."—(*T.*)

Foster-child.—Man is looked upon as a sojourner on earth, —a pilgrim from heaven.

Behold the child, etc.—Wordsworth had especially in view little Hartley Coleridge. See the lines "To H. C., Six Years Old."

Fretted.—The word implies frequency. The notion of vexation would be alien to the passage.

Humorous stage.—The poet seems to have in mind the famous passage in *As You Like It*, II. 7.: "All the world's a stage," etc., though the words quoted do not occur there. The "humorous stage" is that "on which are exhibited the humors of mankind, that is, their whims, follies, caprices, odd manners."

Persons—*Dramatis Personæ*.—Actors in a play.

The best Philosopher.—Stopford Brooke says of this passage: "We can only catch the main idea among expressions of the child as the best philosopher, the eye among the blind . . . the mighty prophet, the seer blest—expressions which taken separately have scarcely any recognizable meaning. By taking them all together, we feel rather than see that Wordsworth intended to say that the child, having lately come from a perfect existence, in which he saw truth directly, and was at home with God, retains, unknown to us, that vision—and, because he does, is the best philosopher, since he sees at once that which we through philosophy are endeavoring to reach; is the mighty prophet, because in his actions and speech he tells unconsciously the truths he sees, but the sight of which we have lost; is more closely haunted by God, more near to the immortal life, more purely and brightly free, because he half shares in the pre-existent life and glory out of which he has come."

Those who care for such reading will find an adverse criticism on this passage in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, chapter XXII.

Who yet dost keep.—'Yet'='still', though thou art destined soon to lose it.

Deaf and silent.—It is a somewhat daring use of language to connect 'deaf and blind' with the apostrophised *eye*. If the words are referred to the preceding "philosopher" the syntax is peculiar.

—The little child, though deaf and dumb, understands the secrets of eternity.

Haunted.—Thus again below (v. 120): "A presence that is not to be put by."

Prophet.—In the earlier sense of 'one who tells forth.'

The darkness of the grave.—Our human life is as a grave to the heavenly soul.

Of heaven-born freedom, etc.—Turner says: "Childhood is, as it were, the mountain-top, the natural type of freedom and nearest heaven, from which men descend by easy steps into the vale of manhood."

Most worthy.—Exceedingly worthy.

Fallings from us, etc.—Knight says: "The outward sensible universe, visible and tangible, seeming to fall away from us as unreal, to vanish in unsubstantiality."

See Wordsworth's introductory note for his own interpretation of the passage.

Blank misgivings.—'Undefined and unmeaning.'

Nor man nor boy.—That is, neither manhood nor boyhood.

That immortal sea.—"Wordsworth pictures the human soul drifting across the ocean of eternity to be tossed in its human birth upon the shore of the earth."—(T.)

Our loves.—Our love for Nature and her love for us.

One delight.—See stanzas I. and II., and the four lines beginning "What though the radiance."

Your more habitual sway.—See the ten lines beginning "At length the man perceives it die away."

The clouds that gather, etc.—Turner says: "This passage is rather obscure. The meaning seems to be: The falling sun, with his bright train of coloured clouds, yet brings the sobering thought of the race of men who, even in the poet's lifetime, had sunk to their setting, that their fellows may lord it in the zenith, crowned with victorious palms."

A few variants in the poem may be noticed :

- (1) v. 6. The edition of 1807 read "as it has been."
- (2) v. 48. This is the original reading. In 1827 it was changed to "While the earth itself," and in 1832 to "When the earth herself," and in 1836 to "When earth herself."
- (3) In 1836 "pulling" was changed to "culling," but neither word rhymes perfectly with "sullen."
- (4) v. 120. In the earlier editions these lines follow "not to be put by":

"To whom the grave
Is but a lowly bed without the sense or sight
Of day in the warm light,
A place of thought where we in waiting lie."
- (5) v. 122. The reading of 1807 was :

"Of untamed pleasures, on thy being's height."
- (6) v. 131. The earlier reading was "benedictions."
- (7) v. 137, 138. The earlier reading was :

"Of childhood, whether fluttering or at rest,
With new-born hope forever in his breast."
- (8) v. 153. The reading of 1807 was simply

"Uphold us, cherish us, and make."
- (9) v. 188. This is the original reading. That of 1836 is :

"Forbode not any severing of our loves."

- (1) "Observe throughout the ode the changes in the metre to suit the variations in the poet's mood."
- (2) "Point out the appropriateness of the time of day and of the year at which the poet is supposed to give utterance to his thoughts."
- (3) "Wordsworth seems to use *Immortality* in the title rather in the sense of *Eternality*, perhaps because the latter properer word is scarcely now current."
- (4) "The Ode on Immortality marks the highest limit which the tide of poetic inspiration has reached in England within this century, or indeed since the days of Milton."
—*Shairp*.
- (5) "Alone in his time he treated the human mind well, and with an absolute trust. His adherence to his poetic creed rested on real inspiration. The *Ode on Immortality* is the high-water mark which the intellect has reached in this age."
—*Emerson*.
- (6) Coleridge says: "The ode was intended for such readers only as had been accustomed to watch the flux and reflux of their inmost nature, to venture at times into the twilight realms of consciousness, and to feel a deep interest in modes of inmost being, to which they know that the attributes of time and space are inapplicable and alien, but which yet cannot be conveyed, save in symbols of time and space. For such readers the sense is sufficiently plain, and they will be as little disposed to charge Mr. Wordsworth with believing the Platonic pre-existence in the ordinary interpretation of the words, as I am to believe that Plato himself ever meant or taught it."
- (7) "To those familiar with Wordsworth's work before this date, the philosophy of this ode will seem what in truth it is,—'the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge.' The two moods in which the poet is represented are but a reflection of what we have so often seen in his poetry,—the relation of the soul to sense, and the possibility that the former may forget its celestial birth. The subject of the poem—the origin, development, and destiny of the human soul—has seldom been absent from his poetry, while in treatment we find the same gathering from his former methods. The total effect is perhaps the grandest in the literature of the century, so that the term 'inspired' is not forced when applied to the Poet who could produce such a result."
—*George*.
- (8) "The chief value of the poem arises from the fact that it never descends to the plane of mere argument; it ever keeps on the high ground of the essential identity of our childish instincts and our enlightened reason. The

deepest truths of the soul cannot be argued, they must be *lived*. In the first four stanzas we have the experience of our common humanity. Doomed as we are to go in company with fear and sorrow,—‘miserable train,’—how are we to prevent ourselves from ‘wronging the joy of the life that is about us?’ The Poet, in the next four stanzas, answers the question by reviewing the history of the soul, and tracing the steps by which it reached that stage. He finds that it is because the soul has become centred in the seen and the temporal, and has thus lost its glory and its beauty; it has well-nigh destroyed its spiritual vision. In the concluding stanzas he shows us that this may be regained and that the melancholy fear may be subdued by a return to those simple ways in which our childhood walked. We must become as little children in this life of the soul, and by blending early intuition and mature reason we shall be able to see into the life of things. Every line of the poem is worthy of the closest study.—*George.*”

- (9) The main idea of this ode will be found in a fine poem by Henry Vaughan, a Platonic poet of the 17th century. The former part of this piece—*The Retreat*—is here quoted :

“Happy those early days, when I
 Shln'd in my angel-infancy!
 Before I understood this place
 Appointed for my second race,
 Or taught my soul to fancy aught
 But a white, celestial thought;
 When yet I had not walked above
 A mile or two, from my first love,
 And looking back—at that short space—
 Could see a glimpse of His bright face;
 When on some gilded cloud or flower
 My gazing soul would dwell an hour,
 And in those weaker glories spy
 Some shadows of eternity;
 Before I taught my tongue to wound
 My conscience with a sinful sound,
 Or had the black art to dispense
 A sev'ral sin to ev'ry sense,
 But felt through all this fleshly dress,
 Bright shoots of everlastingness.”

THE HAPPY WARRIOR.

This poem was written in 1806, and published in 1807. In his MS. notes on his poems Wordsworth says :

“The course of the great war with the French naturally fixed one's attention upon the military character, and, to the honour of our country, there were many illustrious instances of the qualities that constitute its highest excellence. Lord

Nelson carried most of the virtues that the trials he was exposed to in his department of the service necessarily call forth and sustain, if they do not produce the contrary vices. But his public life was stained with one great crime, so that, though many passages of these lines were suggested by what was generally known as excellent in his conduct, I have not been able to connect his name with the poem as I could wish, or even to think of him with satisfaction in reference to the idea of what a warrior ought to be. For the sake of such of my friends as may happen to read this note I will add, that many elements of the character here portrayed were found in my brother John, who perished by shipwreck as mentioned elsewhere. His messmates used to call him the Philosopher, from which it must be inferred that the qualities and dispositions I allude to had not escaped their notice. He often expressed his regret, after the war had continued some time, that he had not chosen the Naval, instead of the East India Company's Service, to which his family connection had led him. He greatly valued moral and religious instruction for youth, as tending to make good sailors. The best, he used to say, came from Scotland; the next to them, from the North of England, especially from Westmoreland and Cumberland, where, thanks to the piety and local attachments of our ancestors, endowed, or, as they are commonly called, free, schools abound."

In the notes on *Peele Castle* will be found a reference to Wordsworth's other poems connected with the character and fate of his brother John.

The edition of 1807 has the following quotation from Chaucer, introduced to illustrate lines 75, 76 ("Persevering to the last," etc.):

"For Knightes ever should be persevering,
To seek honour without feintisse or siouth,
Fro wele to better in all manner thing."

A few variants in the poem must be noticed:

- (1) v. 2. The edition of 1807 had "Whom every man."
- (2) v. 5. The present reading "childish thought," was changed in 1815 to "boyish thought."
- (3) v. 7. The original reading was "that make."
- (4) v. 33. This is the original reading, changed in 1836 to "He labours good on good to fix."
- (5) v. 79. This is the original reading. The edition of 1836 gives: "Or he must fall, and sleep without his fame." That of 1842 has: "Or he must fall to sleep," etc.
- (6) v. 85. The original reading again. In 1845 it was changed to "That every man."

- (1) "Nor is there any portrait fitter than that of *The Happy Warrior* to go forth to all lands as representing the English character at its height—a figure not ill-matching with 'Plutarch's men' For indeed this short poem is in itself a manual of greatness; there is a Roman majesty in its simple and weighty speech. And what eulogy was ever nobler than that passage where, without definite allusion or quoted name, the poet depicts, as it were, the very summit of glory in the well-remembered aspect of the Admiral (Nelson) in his last and greatest hour?

'Is happy as a lover, and attired
With sudden brightness, like a man inspired.'

or again, where the hidden thought of Nelson's womanly tenderness, of his constant craving for the green earth and home affections in the midst of storm and war, melts the stern verses into a sudden change of tone:

'Is yet a soul whose master-bias leans
To homefelt pleasures and to gentle scenes.'

—Myers.

- (2) "Wordsworth's experience in connection with the French Revolution made him a close observer of the effect of war upon character. In the *Sonnets to Liberty* we have a gallery of illustrious portraits. Wordsworth's poetry is a great store-house of political and patriotic eloquence, for although the homely Poet was as 'retired as noon-tide dew,' he had a nature which was capable of manifesting a Roman fortitude."—George.
- (3) Mrs. Jameson suggests the experiment of "substituting the word *woman* for the word *warrior*, and changing the masculine for the feminine pronoun" in the first 56 lines of this poem. She says it will read equally well: "In all these 56 lines there is only one which cannot be feminized in its significance and which is totally at variance with our ideal of a Happy Woman. It is the line 'And in himself possess his own desire.' No woman could exist happily or virtuously in such complete independence of all external affections as these words express."

RESOLUTION AND INDEPENDENCE.

This poem was written at Town-End, Grasmere, May 7th 1802, and published in 1807. The poet's prefatory note says: "This old man I met a few hundred yards from my cottage; and the account of him is taken from his own mouth. I was in the state of feeling described in the beginning of the poem,

while crossing over Barton Fell from Mr. Clarkson's at the foot of Ullswater, towards Askham. The image of the hare I then observed on the ridge of the Fell."

Wordsworth further refers to this poem thus: "I describe myself as having been exalted to the highest pitch of delight by the joyousness and beauty of Nature; and then as depressed, even in the midst of those beautiful objects, to the lowest dejection and despair. A young poet in the midst of the happiness of Nature is described as overwhelmed by the thoughts of the miserable reverses which have befallen the happiest of all men, namely, poets. I think of this till I am so deeply impressed with it that I consider the manner in which I am rescued from my dejection and despair almost as an interposition of Providence. A person reading the poem with feelings like mine will have been awed and controlled, expecting something spiritual or supernatural. What is brought forward? A lonely place, 'a pond, by which an old man *was*, far from all house or home: 'not *stood*, nor *sat*, but *was*—the figure presented in the most naked simplicity possible. The feeling of spirituality or supernaturalness is again referred to as being strong in my mind in this passage. How came he here? thought I, or what can he be doing? I then describe him, whether ill or well is not for me to judge with perfect confidence; but this I *can* confidently affirm, that though I believe God has given me a strong imagination, I cannot conceive a figure more impressive than that of an old man like this, the survivor of a wife and ten children, travelling alone among the mountains and all lonely places, carrying with him his own fortitude, and the necessities which an unjust state of society has laid upon him. You speak of his speech as tedious. Everything is tedious when one does not read with the feelings of the author. . . . It is in the character of the old man to tell his story, which an impatient reader must feel tedious. But, good heavens! such a figure, in such a place; a pious, self-respecting, miserably infirm and pleased old man, telling such a tale!"

Chatterton.—Thomas Chatterton, born in 1752. His career is one of the most romantic in English literature. His forgeries of old English poetry for a time deceived the scholars and critics. If any man ever had consummate genius it was Chatterton. All his work was done before he had completed his 18th year, for on the verge of starvation he ended his life by arsenic in August, 1770.

Him who walked in glory.—Robert Burns.

As a huge stone, etc.—This passage is used by Wordsworth in the preface to the 1815 edition of his poems to illustrate one of the ways in which the imagination acts: "I pass from the

imagination acting upon an individual image to a consideration of the same faculty employed upon images in a conjunction by which they modify each other. . . . Take these images separately, and how unaffecting the picture compared with that produced by their being thus connected with, and opposed to each other! In these images, the conferring, the abstracting, and the modifying powers of the imagination, immediately and mediately acting, are all brought into conjunction. The stone is endowed with something of the power of life to approximate it to the sea-beast; and the sea-beast stripped of some of its vital qualities to assimilate it to the stone; which intermediate image is thus treated for the purpose of bringing the original image, that of the stone, to a nearer resemblance to the figure and condition of the aged Man; who is divested of so much of the indications of life and motion as to bring him to the point where the two objects unite and coalesce in just comparison."

Many variants occur in this poem :

- (1) v. 13. The early reading was "which, glittering."
- (2) v. 29. Till 1820 the reading was "singing in the sky."
- (3) v. 44. The original reading was "its pride."
- (4) v. 46. The early reading was "Behind his plough, upon the mountain-side."
- (5) vv. 53, 54. The original reading was :
 "When up and down my fancy thus was driven,
 And I with these untoward thoughts had striven."
 After this stanza appeared the following in the early editions :
 "My course I stopped as soon as I espied
 The old man in that naked wilderness;
 Close by a pond, upon the further side,
 He stood alone; a minute's space I guess
 I watch'd him, he continuing motionless;
 To the pool's further margin then I drew,
 He being all the while before me in full view."
- (6) v. 67. Originally "their pilgrimage."
- (7) v. 71. This is the early reading, altered in 1836 to "limbs, body, and pale face."
- (8) v. 74. The original reading was "Beside the little pond or moorish flood."
- (9) v. 82. Originally the line read "And now such freedom as I could I took."
- (10) v. 88. The reading of 1807 was "What kind of work is that which you pursue?"

- (11) vv. 90, 91. This the reading of 1820. The edition of 1807 read thus :

" He answered me with pleasure and surprise :
And there was, while he spoke, a fire about his eyes."

The reading of 1836 is :

" Ere he replied a flash of mild surprise
Broke from the sable orbs of his yet vivid eyes."

- (12) v. 99. Till 1827 the line was " He told me that he to this pond had come."
(13) v. 112. The original reading was "and strong admonishment." In 1820 *and became by*, and in 1827 *strong* became *apt*.
(14) v. 117. The original reading was " And now, not knowing what the old man said." In 1818 the line became " But now perplexed by what the old man said." The present is the version of 1820.
(15) v. 123. " The Pools" is the reading of 1827, the earlier reading being " the ponds."

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- (1) " As to style, we might almost say there is none. By the simplest language, in the absence of all color, with no complexity of incident, we have one of the most harmonious and determined of sketches,—the beauty and the strength of repose."—*George*.
(2) Of this piece Coleridge says : " This fine poem is especially characteristic of the author : there is scarce a defect or excellence in his writings of which it would not present a specimen."
(3) " On the whole, the poem is certainly marked by that emphatic visual imagination, that delight in the power of the eye, that strength of reserve, that occasional stiffness of feeling, and that immense rapture of reverie, which characterize the earlier period, though it wants the more rapid and buoyant movement of that period."—*Hutton*.

YARROW VISITED.

This poem was written in September, 1814, and published in 1820.

In his MS. notes of 1813 Wordsworth says : " As mentioned in my verses on the death of the Ettrick Shepherd, my first visit to Yarrow was in his company. . . . I seldom read or think of this poem without regretting that my dear sister was

not of the party, as she would have had so much delight in recalling the time when, travelling together in Scotland, we declined going in search of this celebrated stream, not altogether, I will frankly confess, for the reasons assigned in the poem on the occasion."

[The verses on the death of James Hogg contain this stanza :

" When first, descending from the moorlands,
I saw the stream of Yarrow glide
Along a bare and open valley,
The Ettrick Shepherd was my guide."]

[See *Yarrow Unvisited* for the reason given by the poet why the celebrated stream was not viewed by himself and his sister in their Scottish tour of 1803.]

" There is no place in Scotland so rich in tender associations and natural beauty as the vale of Yarrow. It has been the subject of those nameless singers whose ballads were first caught and given to the world by Scott in his *Border Minstrelsy*."

—

Saint Mary's Lake.—This lake is the source of the Yarrow. In Scott's *Marmion*, II. 147, the lake is thus described :

" By lone Saint Mary's silent lake :
Thou know'st it well,—nor fern nor sedge,
Pollute the pure lake's crystal edge ;
Abrupt and sheer, the mountains sink
At once upon the level brink,
And just a trace of silver sand
Marks where the water meets the land."

Famous Flower of Yarrow.—Mary Scott, daughter of Philip Scott of Dryhope (situated at the extremity of Saint Mary's Lake), from whom was descended Sir Walter Scott. In commenting on this passage Shairp says: "Wordsworth fell into an inaccuracy; for Mary Scott, the real 'Flower of Yarrow,' never did lie bleeding on Yarrow, but became the wife of Wat of Harden and the mother of a wide-branching race. Yet Wordsworth speaks of *his* bed, evidently confounding the lady 'Flower of Yarrow' with that 'slaughtered youth' for whom so many ballads had sung lament. This slight divergence from fact, however, no way mars the truth of feeling, which makes the poet long to pierce into the dumb past, and know something of the pathetic histories that have immortalized these braes."

The water-wraith, etc.—The allusion is explained by a stanza in Logan's poem *The Braes of Yarrow* :

" Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost ;
It vanished with a shriek of sorrow ;
Thrice did the water-wraith ascend
And gave a doleful groan through Yarrow."

Meek loveliness, etc.—Of these four lines Shairp says: "No words in the language penetrate more truly and deeply into the heart of nature. It was one of Wordsworth's great gifts to be able to concentrate the whole feeling of a wide scene into a few words, simple, strong, penetrating to the very core. Many a time, and for many a varied scene, he has done this, but perhaps he has never put forth this power more happily than in the four lines in which he has summed up for all time the true quality of Yarrow. You look on Yarrow, you repeat these four lines over to yourself, and you feel that the finer, more subtle essence of nature has never been more perfectly uttered in human words. There it stands complete. No poet coming after Wordsworth need try to do it again, for it has been done once, perfectly and forever."

Newark's Towers.—This is the scene of Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. The roofless ruin of a tower, and an outward wall, are all that remains of the ancient castle. It is situated on the banks of the Yarrow, about three miles from Selkirk.

Will dwell with me.—This is a constant solace to the poet.

"In spots like these it is we prize
Our memory, feel that she hath eyes."

(1) vv. 62-64 in the edition of 1820 had this form:

"It promises protection
To all the nestling brood of thoughts
Sustained by chaste affection."

(2) v. 66 in the early edition read thus:

"The wild wood's fruits to gather."

(1) "The metre is that in which the old Yarrow ballads are cast, with the second and fourth lines in each stanza ending in double rhymes."

(2) "In purity, sweetness, and pathos; in inimitable ease and grace of metre; in intense realization of the secret of Nature,—these Yarrow poems are simply perfect. It is no wonder that with such weapons Wordsworth could put to flight the literary gladiators who could not distinguish poetry from verse."—*George*.

TO A SKYLARK.

This poem was written at Rydal Mount in 1825, and published in 1827. Until 1813 it appeared as in this edition, when the second stanza was removed from it and introduced as the eighth stanza of another poem, *A Morning Exercise*,

written in 1828. In a note to the latter poem Wordsworth says: "I could wish the last five stanzas of this to be read with the poem addressed to the skylark."

These stanzas, accordingly, are quoted here:

"The daisy sleeps upon the dewy lawn,
Not lifting yet the head that evening bowed;
But *he* is risen, a later star of dawn,
Glittering and twinkling near yon rosy cloud;
Bright gem instinct with music, vocal spark;
The happiest bird that sprang out of the Ark!
Hail, blest above all kinds!—Supremely skilled
Restless with fixed to balance, high with low,
Thou leav'st the halcyon free her hopes to bulki
On such forbearance as the deep may show;
Perpetual flight, unchecked by earthly ties,
Leav'st to the wandering bird of Paradise.
Faithful, though swift as lightning, the meek dove;
Yet more hath Nature reconciled in thee;
So constant with thy downward eye of love,
Yet, in aerial singleness, so free;
So humble, yet so ready to rejoice
In power of wing and never-wearied voice.
[*"To the last point of vision, and beyond,"* etc.]
How would it please old Ocean to partake,
With sailors longing for a breeze in vain,
The harmony thy notes most gladly make
Where earth resembles most his own domain!
Urania's self might welcome with pleased ear
These matins mounting towards her native sphere.
Chanter, by heaven attracted, whom no bars
To daylight known deter from that pursuit,
'Tis well that some sage instinct, when the stars
Come forth at evening, keeps thee still and mute:
For not an eyelid could to sleep incline
Wert thou among them, singing as they shine!"

The student should read Shelley's *Ode to a Skylark*, written in 1820, five years before this. In more than one passage of the present poem Wordsworth is under the influence of Shelley's Ode.

With instinct.—Until 1832 the verse had "with rapture."

The kindred points, etc.—Turner says: "The lark is compared to the magnetic needle, which never swerves from the two poles."

Of the last line of this poem Stopford Brooke remarks: "It is one of Wordsworth's poetic customs to see things in the ideal and the real, and to make each make the other poetical. He places the lark in a 'privacy of glorious light,' but he brings him home at last to his 'nest upon the dewy ground.' It is the very thing that he always does for man."

Wordsworth's other poem "To a Skylark," on page 143 of this volume, was written in 1805. Of it George remarks:

"Of all Wordsworth's poems this seems the most inevitable ; it is as spontaneous as the lark's own song. The idea that the life of Nature is one of enjoyment, of love and praise to the Almighty Giver, characterizes that spirit of religious awe in which the Poet always walked with Nature. The beauty of all such work as this consists in its deep poetic rapture, and its high moral purpose, yet free from any taint of didacticism."

A POET'S EPITAPH.

This is one of the poems written at Goslar, in Germany, in 1799.

Art thou a Statesman.—The first two lines once ran thus :

" Art thou a Statist, in the van
Of public conflicts trained and bred ? "

As the word 'statist' now means 'statistician' the present reading is preferable.

A man of purple cheer.—This seems to be a Doctor of Medicine. A Doctor of Divinity should have more sympathy for poetry, and he would be less likely to make a cushion of a grave.

A soldier.—The poet in the "Character of the Happy Warrior" shows his admiration for the military profession.

Physician.—This is the French word *physicien*, a natural philosopher.

That abject thing.—Another reading is "Thy ever-dwindling soul away."

Moralist.—This is the French *moraliste*, a mental philosopher.

One to whose, etc.—This poem shows clearly what a stinging satirist Wordsworth could have become if he had chosen to cultivate the spirit here displayed.

And you must love him, etc.—This is the key to the interpretation of poetry in general and especially of Wordsworth's poetry. As Ruskin says: "You must love these people, if you are to be among them. No ambition is of any use. They scorn your ambition. You must love them and show your love."

But he is weak, etc.—This is explained by a passage in *The Leech Gatherer* :

" My whole life I have lived in pleasant thought,
As if life's business were a summer mood."

Contented if he might enjoy, etc.—Compare these verses of *To My Sister* :

“ Love, now a universal birth,
From heart to heart is stealing,
From earth to man, from man to earth :
—It is the hour of feeling.

One moment now may give us more
Than years of toiling reason :
Our minds shall drink at every pore
The spirit of the season.”

- (1) “In this portrait of Wordsworth's ideal poet we find clearly marked those characteristics which he himself possessed, and which rendered it impossible for the world to listen to him until it had learned that the sphere of poetry was not limited to the extraordinary in the life of man and Nature.”—*George*.
- (2) “Here lies the great difficulty of our age ; that it is an age of cant without love, of criticism without reverence. . . . What we want is the old spirit of our forefathers ; the firm conviction that not by criticism, but by sympathy, we must understand.”—*F. W. Robertson*.

SONNET III.

This sonnet was written in 1802 and published in 1807.

Once did she hold.—The result of the Fourth Crusade, undertaken by the French and the Venetians in 1202, was that the Morea, a portion of Thessaly, the Cyclades, some of the Byzantine cities, and nearly half of Constantinople, fell to the share of Venice.

The safeguard of the West.—On account of the development of her naval power Venice was Mistress of the Mediterranean for many years.

The eldest child of liberty.—Attila invaded the district of Venetia, and destroyed its Capital (Aquileia), in 452. Many refugees fled from the mainland to the islands in the lagoons and the Gulf of Venice, where a Republic soon grew up.

Espouse, etc.—“In 1177 she gained a great victory over Otho, son of Frederick Barbarossa ; in gratitude for this the Pope, Alexander III., gave the Doge Ziani a ring, and instituted the ceremony of ‘marrying the Adriatic,’ by which was signified the supremacy of Venice.” The ceremony here referred to was performed on Ascension Day, when the Doge threw a ring into the sea from the State-galley.

The Venetian Republic became extinct in 1797, five years before the writing of this poem. The French troops took the city, and the territories of Venice were divided between the Emperor Francis and Napoleon.

The situation and romantic history of Venice have made her a prominent figure in literature. Several of Shakespeare's plays are connected with that city. The student should read Shelley's lines written in the Euganean Hills and the opening of Canto IV. of *Childe Harold*.

SONNET VI.

This sonnet was written in 1807, the year in which Napoleon was making gigantic preparations to invade England. In 1802 he had crushed the liberty of Switzerland.

SONNET XVII.

This sonnet also belongs to 1807, the year in which the slave trade was declared illegal.

Clarkson began his fight against slavery while he was a student at St. John's College, Cambridge. He selected as the subject for a Latin essay: "Anne liceat invitos in servitutum dare?" He devoted his life to the abolition of slavery. His efforts met with the most powerful opposition. At last, on the accession of Fox, in 1806, his cause made headway, and in the following year success crowned his determined efforts.

SONNET XIX.

The sonnet, a form of verse originating in Italy, consists of fourteen lines divided into two unequal parts,—the major consisting of eight lines and called the "octave,"—the minor consisting of six lines and called the "sestet."

The rhymes of the Petrarchan sonnet may be represented by this formula:

a-b-b-a-a-b-b-a : c-d-e ; c-d-e

While this formula was rigidly observed in the octave, much freedom in regard to the number and arrangement of the rhymes was allowed in the sestet.

The rhymes of the Shakespearian sonnet run thus :

a-b-a-b ; c-d-c-d ; e-f-e-f ; g-g.

The sonnet, besides having the peculiar technique described above, must obey these two conditions: (1) It must have an unbroken continuity of motive,—it must be absolutely complete in itself,—it must be the evolution of *one* thought, or *one* emotion, or *one* poetically-apprehended fact. (2) Continuous sonority must be maintained from the first phrase to the last.

“ A sonnet is a wave of melody
From heaving waters of the impassioned soul
A billow of tidal music one and whole
Flows in the “octave;” then returning free,
Its ebbing surges in the “sestet” roll
Back to the depth of Life’s tumultuous sea.”

It will be noticed that Wordsworth’s sonnets are nearly all variations of the Petrarchan mould. He frequently, however, introduces a new rhyme in the sixth and seventh lines. The sonnet at present under consideration has a very strange structure, a combination of the Petrarchan and the Shakespearian modes.

This sonnet, the poet tells us, was composed almost extempore, in 1827, in a short walk on the western side of Rydal Lake.

—

Shakespeare unlocked his heart.—Browning disputes this:

“ ‘Holly-tolty! A street to explore,
Your house the exception! “With this same key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart” once more!’
Did Shakespeare? If so, the less Shakespeare he!”

Notwithstanding Browning’s notion it is generally believed that Shakespeare’s Sonnets are autobiographical. Swinburne replies thus to Browning: “No whit the less like Shakespeare, but undoubtedly the less like Browning.”

Petrarch’s wound.—In his sonnets Petrarch has told the tale of his hopeless love for Laura de Noves.

Tasso.—He belongs to the 16th century. His sonnets are addressed to Leonora, the sister of the Duke of Ferrara. Goethe has told the story of his mad passion.

Camoens.—A Portuguese poet of the 16th century, author of the great epic, the *Lusiad*. The lady of his sonnets was Catherine d’Ataide, a grand lady of the court, for whose sake he was banished.

Dante.—Born in Florence in the 13th century. His first work, the *Vita Nuova*, testifies the strength of his love for Beatrice Portinaci.

His visionary brow.—The well-known picture of Dante by Giotto illustrates this.

Spenser.—His *Amoretti*, or love sonnets, describe the wooing and winning of his wife, Elizabeth. The work of his life, the *Mariae Queens*, was in progress at the same time. In his 80th Sonnet he says :

" After so long a race as I have run
Through Faery land, which those six books compile,
Give leave to rest me being halfe fordonne,
And gather to myselfe new breath awhile."

Dark ways.—This refers to his life in Ireland, where he held the position of Clerk to the Council of Munster. During one of the Irish rebellions his castle was burnt and with difficulty he escaped with his wife and children.

Milton.—He wrote only twenty-three Sonnets, including those in Italian.

-
- (1) " For the concise expression of an isolated poetic thought—an intellectual or sensuous 'wave' keenly felt, emotionally and rhythmically,—the sonnet would seem to be the best medium, the means apparently prescribed by certain radical laws of melody and harmony, in other words, of nature."—*Sharp*.
 - (2) " It is generally agreed that 'sonnet' is an abbreviation of the Italian *sonetto*, a short strain (literally, a little sound), that word being the diminutive of *suono*, sound. The *Sonetto* was originally a poem recited with sound, that is, with a musical accompaniment."
 - (3) " The Shakespearian Sonnet is like a red-hot bar being moulded upon a forge till—in the closing couplet—it receives the final clinching blow from the heavy hammer; while the Petrarchan, on the other hand, is like a wind gathering in volume and dying away again immediately on attaining a culminating force,—or rather like an oratorio, where the musical divisions are distinct, and where the close is a grand swell, the culmination of the foregoing harmonies."—*Sharp*.
 - (4) " Recognising the rhythmical beauty of the normal Italian type he [Milton] adopted its rhyme arrangement, but he did not regard as essential or appropriate the break in the melody between octave and sestet. . . . Any sonnet, whether in the Petrarchan or Shakespearian mould, is Miltonic, if it has, metrically or otherwise, *unbroken continuity*."
 - (5) " No poet of our own or any language could show ten sonnets equal in breadth of thought, verity of poetry, and beauty of expression, to the ten greatest of Wordsworth."—*Sharp*.

SONNET XX.

This sonnet was written in 1806, and published the following year as a Prefatory Sonnet to a series.

Pensive citadels.—Citadels of thought.

Furness Fells.—Furness is a district in the northern part of Lancashire, adjoining Cumberland.

In truth the prison, etc.—Compare Lovelace's *To Althea from Prison* :

" Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage :
Minds innocent and quiet take
These for a hermitage."

Hence to me.—In 1849 changed to "Hence for me."

Too much liberty.—Compare "Ode to Duty" :

" Me this unchartered freedom tires," etc.

Brief solace.—Until 1827 the reading was "short solace."

SONNET XXIII.

"Wordsworth found a new use for the Sonnet. While others had addressed several sonnets to the same person, no one until his time had so united a series that, while each sonnet was complete in itself, it at the same time formed a stanza of a larger poem."—*George*.

These three Sonnets on "Personal Talk" were written in 1806.

SONNET XXIV.

There find I, etc.—The reading of 1827. The original lines were as follows :

" There do I find a never-falling store
Of personal themes, and such as I love best ;
Matter wherein right voluble I am.
Two will I mention dearer than the rest."

The gentle lady.—Desdemona in Shakespeare's *Othello*.

Heavenly Una.—See the "Dedication" to *The White Doe of Rylstone* :

"In trellised shed with clustering roses gay,
And, Mary ! oft beside our blazing fire,
When years of wedded life were as a day
Whose current answers to the heart's desire,
Did we together read in Spenser's Lay
How Una, sad of soul—in sad attire,
The gentle Una, of celestial birth,
To seek her Knight went wandering o'er the earth.

And then, Belovèd ! pleasing was the smart,
And the tear precious in compassion shed
For Her, who pierced by sorrow's thrilling dart,
Did meekly bear the pang unmerited ;
Meek as that emblem of her lowly heart
The milk-white Lamb which in a line she led,—
And faithful, loyal in her innocence,
Like the brave Lion slain in her defence."

SONNET XXV.

Lines 9, 10, 11, and 12 of this Sonnet are carved upon the pedestal of Wordsworth's statue in Westminster Abbey.

SONNET XXVI.

By turns, etc.—This is the reading of 1827. Other readings are :

1807.—"I've thought of all by turns, and still I lie"—

1831.—"I thought of all by turns, and yet I lie"—

1845.—"I have thought of all by turns, and yet do lie"—

The young student should collect from Shakespeare and other poets the many fine passages on sleep.

SONNET XXIX.

Wordsworth tells us that this sonnet was written on the roof of a coach while he was on his way to France.

See the quotation from Myers in the notes on "The Reverie of Poor Susan."

DOROTHY AND WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Dorothy Wordsworth was one year and nine months younger than her brother William, and the only girl in a family of five children. When she was little more than six years old her mother died, and the children were separated. William was sent to school, and Dorothy to live with various relations in turn; but never again for any length of time was she with William till 1795, when she was four-and-twenty, and kept house for him at Racedown Lodge, Dorsetshire; and they began at once to live the lives of true poets, feeding their eyes and minds with fair sights and great thoughts, and content with daily bread. Here began the work of Dorothy's life. Wordsworth is at this time described by himself and others as utterly bewildered and dejected. He had hoped for great results from the French Revolution, and instead he was haunted by the remembrance of scenes of horror; he had abandoned all thought of the clerical profession which had been marked out for him, yet he did not seem able to take any other. "I have been doing," he writes, "and still continue to do, nothing. What is to become of me I know not." At this juncture a friend left him 900*l.*, which enabled him to realize his wish of living with Dorothy, who had never ceased to have faith in him. She at once became his guardian angel. Her helpful and healing sympathy came to his aid, we are told: by her tact she led him from the distracting cares of political agitation to those more elevating and satisfying influences which an ardent and contemplative love of nature and poetry cultivate.

It is not easy to lead a person to an influence, and the word "tact" very inadequately describes the secret of Dorothy's power over her brother. It was rather that of an overmastering current of enthusiasm for all that was good and beautiful which swept her more prosaic and sluggish brother along with it:—

" She gave me eyes, she gave me ears;
And humble cares, and delicate fears;
A heart, the fountain of sweet tears,
And love, and thought, and joy."

Henceforth has it been said, "Wordsworth was the spokesman to the world of two souls."

The Wordsworths now made the acquaintance of Coleridge, and soon became great friends. Dorothy tells us of Coleridge's first visit, and "how the first thing that was read was William's new poem *The Ruined Cottage*, with which Coleridge was delighted, and after tea he repeated to us two acts and a half of *Osorio*. The next morning William read his tragedy *The Borderers*." The Wordsworths moved to Alfox-

den, near Nether Stowey, to be nearer to Coleridge, and there Dorothy Wordsworth, who herself had the eye and mind of a poet, lived a happy outdoor life, with the two poets for her constant companions. Sometimes they explored the neighborhood; sometimes they made short tours, putting the contents of their scantily filled purses together to pay their way, or drawing on their brains and sending a poem to the magazines to make up the deficiency. *The Ancient Mariner*, or, as its author used to call it, *The Old Navigator*, was thought out when the three friends were journeying to Lynton, and they combined to invent picturesque details for it. Coleridge has left a description of Dorothy Wordsworth about this time:—

“Wordsworth and his exquisite sister are with me. She is a woman, indeed!—in mind, I mean, and heart; for her person is such that, if you expected to see a pretty woman, you would think her ordinary; if you expected to see an ordinary woman, you would think her pretty; but her manners are simple, ardent, impressive. In every motion her most innocent soul outbeams so brightly that who saw her would say:

‘Guilt was a thing impossible in her.

Her information various, her eye watchful in minutest observation of Nature, and her taste a perfect electrometer. It bends, protrudes, and draws in at subtlest beauties, and most recondite faults.”

De Quincey hints that the happiness of the three friends was not entirely to the satisfaction of Mrs. Coleridge, who had no sympathy with poetry and less with the ways of poets, and who was, and felt herself to be, left out in the cold. It certainly was a perfectly innocent friendship, but it was one which cost poor Dorothy, and possibly Coleridge also, intense suffering. She bore the marks of it for years, and it was perhaps the reason why she never married and why Coleridge was a moody and desponding man.

The Wordsworths' residence at Alfoxden came to an amusing end. Somersetshire is not a county that has produced many poets, and it did not show itself capable of appreciating those who found their way to it by accident. Coleridge and the Wordsworths seem to have been regarded as vagabonds. They had no fixed occupation, but went roaming about under sun and stars, comporting themselves more or less strangely. They were believed by many to be traitors in league with the Jacobins over the sea. If not they were smugglers, and Wordsworth, as he prowled about the coast, was considered to be the chief of the gang, and received notice to quit the place.

It was not until 1799 that the brother and sister resolved to find a settled home. Grasmere was the spot they chose, and they set out from Sockburn-on-Tees on their way thither,

They walked from Wensleydale to Kendal, "accomplishing as much as twenty miles a day, over uneven roads frozen into rocks, in the teeth of a keen wind and driving snow," and arriving at Grasmere on the shortest day of the last year of last century. They took up their abode in the cottage which may still be seen standing at a little distance from the main road from Rydal. It was but a laborer's cottage, but it was all they wanted. It contained three low rooms and two garrets under the roof, but it sheltered them when they were indoors, and held the books so dear to both. They made it neat and comfortable inside and very pretty outside. One of its windows was a long low one with small diamond panes through which roses looked in almost every season of the year, and there was a small orchard and still smaller garden rising up behind, with rocks and a small spring, being in reality a bit of the mountain which had been captured and enclosed.

"Fields, goods, and far off chattels we have none;
These narrow bounds contain our private store
Of things earth makes, and sun doth shine upon:
Here are they in our sight—we have no more."

They made the most of their small domain, constructed an arbor, cut steps in the rock, brought "chosen plants and blossoms blown among the distant mountains" to deck their "happy garden," and settled down blissfully in their cottage,

"with its own dear brook,
Its own small pasture, almost its own sky."

One servant of sixty, taken partly out of charity, "very ignorant, very foolish, and very difficult to teach" ministered to their wants. It is painful to think what poor Dorothy must have had to contend with. From the day she was reunited to her beloved brother her one thought had been how best to foster and develop his genius. She herself had, as is admitted by men well able to judge, genius enough to raise her to a high place in literature, yet she quietly resigned all thought of distinction for herself, and devoted her life to smoothing his path. She lived with him in a spiritual union as close as that of man and wife, and worked for him like a servant of the good old-fashioned sort. She tramped along dirty highways, scaled rough fell sides, and thought nothing of walking twenty miles at a stretch, and yet she found time to keep pace with him in his mental excursions too. As a writer in *Blackwood* says:—

"This union was so close, that in many instances it becomes difficult to discern which is the brother and which is the sister. She was part not only of his life, but of his imagination. He saw by her, felt through her, at her touch the strings of the instrument began to thrill, the great

melodies awoke. Her journals are Wordsworth in prose, just as his poems are Dorothy in verse."

One of the prettiest bits in her journals is the description of a birch tree:—

"As we went along we were stopped at once, at a distance of, perhaps, fifty yards from our favorite birch tree. It was yielding to a gust of wind, with all its tender twigs; the sun shone upon it, and it glanced in the wind like a flying sunshiny shower. It was a tree in shape, with stem and branches, but it was like a spirit of water."

Lockhart says of these journals:—

"Few poets ever lived who could have written a description so simple and original, so vivid and picturesque. Her words are scenes and something more."

Five or six of her poems are printed with her brothers, and make us wish for more. "Which way does the wind come?" is admirable. No one will ever know how much of hers is incorporated in his. Another bit of Dorothy's writing may be quoted to show that she was highly practical, and her mind active and observant all round. She was furnishing the Town-End cottage for De Quincey after her brother had left it, and chose mahogany for his bookshelves instead of plain deal, because "native woods are dear, and in case De Quincey should quit the country and have a sale, no sort of wood sells so well as mahogany."

When a man and woman undertake to lead together a life of "plain living and high thinking," the brunt of the struggle always must fall on the woman. William no doubt was pacing about his "sweet garden orchard eminently fair," writing pretty poems to his green linnets and robin red-breasts, while Dorothy was in the kitchen struggling with the preparation of dinner; but one thing is most sure, and that is that whatever she underwent of suffering would be repaid when she read such words as these:—

"And she who dwells with me, whom I have loved
With such communion, that no place on earth
Can ever be a solitude to me," etc.

She herself says, "He was never afraid of comforting his sister—he never left her in anger, he always met her with joy—he preferred her society to every other pleasure."

And yet what contrasts life must have presented to this woman endowed with such exquisite perception of beauty, though probably the beauty she saw made her insensible to all that was at variance with it. "How did Wordsworth get about?" asked Mr. Rawnsley of an aged man who had been in the poet's service.

"He and Mrs. Wordsworth and Dorothy and me we went a great deal by cart." "What sort of a cart?" "Why a dung cart to be sure, just a dung cart wi' a seat in front and a bit


o' bracken in t' bottom, comfortable as owt. We could go that way for days and far enough." "But you must have gone precious slowly." "Ay, ay, slow enough, but that was Mr. Wordsworth's fancy."

Other old folks from whom Mr. Rawsley tried to extract reminiscences had a pronounced opinion about the poet's indebtedness to his sister.

"Why, why, but she was a ter'ble clever woman was that! She did as much of his poetry as he did," said one. "You've heard tell of Miss Dorothy, happen? Well, folks said she was the cleverest mon of the two at his job, and he allays went to her when he was puzzlet. Dorothy had the wits, though she went wrang ye knaw," said another. "Mrs. Wordsworth was a manager, never a studier, yet for a' that, there's no doubt he and she was truly companionable, and they were ter'ble fond of one another, but Dorothy had the wits on 'em both," said a third.

In 1802 Wordsworth married, but Dorothy did not cease to be all she had been; she only took one more person to her heart. Her brother's children were her children, their home hers till the end. Wordsworth once said that he did not "believe her tenderness of heart was ever exceeded by any of God's creatures—her loving kindness had no bounds."

His life after his marriage was comparatively calm and uneventful. Two young children died in 1812, but happy was the man who could say, "We lived without further sorrow till 1836, when my sister became a confirmed invalid." This, from the sad nature of her illness, must have been the greatest sorrow of his life. The malady had for some years shown signs of its existence, but at last it was seen that there was no hope. Wordsworth died in 1850. His sister was not with him during his illness, nor did she see him die, and when she realized her loss she said, "There is now nothing to live for!" She, however, survived him nearly five years, and died January 25th, 1855. She lies at her brother's right hand, fit resting-place for one who had been the mainstay of his life.
—*The Athenæum*.



THE ESTHETIC USE OF WORDSWORTH'S POETRY.

BY

WM. HOUSTON, M.A.

The term "esthetic" originally meant "perceptive" of things in general; it has become conventionally limited so as to signify "perceptive" of beauty in particular. The "esthetic faculty" is that faculty by which we discern the beautiful in what comes under our observation, and through the exercise of which we are able to derive enjoyment from the contemplation of what gives us pleasure. The term "taste" is frequently applied to it, no doubt from the analogy between its exercise and that of the physical taste by means of which we perceive and enjoy flavors. In a well-known passage of his poem on "The Pleasures of Imagination," Akenside says:

What then is taste, but these Internal powers
Active and strong and feelingly alive
To each fine Impulse? A discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
From things deform'd, or disarranged, or gross
In species?

The kind of perception here spoken of is different from a merely intellectual perception, which discerns scientific truth. Some natural object that by its beauty attracts the attention of one observer arouses only the scientific curiosity of another. To the one it is a source of esthetic satisfaction, to the other it is the subject matter of an inquiry into the nature of things. Longfellow in his tribute to Robert Burns says:

For him the ploughing of those fields
A more ethereal harvest yields
Than sheaves of grain;
Songs flush with purple bloom the rye,
The plover's call, the curlew's cry,
Sing in his brain.
Touch'd by his hand the wayside weed
Becomes a flower; the lowliest reed
Beside the stream
Is clothed with beauty; gorse, and grass,
And heather, where his footsteps pass,
The brighter seem.

But art, rather than nature, is the field for esthetic observation and enjoyment. Without attempting any adequate explanation of this fact it is obvious that by means of selection, arrangement, and other modes of treatment the artist can enhance the beauty of a natural scene, retaining what is agreeable, omitting what is the reverse, and introducing order and symmetry where only disorder was before discernible. This applies to such arts as architecture, sculpture, and painting, and, less obviously but not less really, to music and poetry.

Art has been defined by Professor Seeley as "the natural language of joy." Its function is to communicate pleasure. This it does by affording scope for the exercise of the esthetic faculty, and whatever fails to do this is not art in any useful sense of that term.

Wordsworth said in prose much that contradicts this view, but in his own poetic moods he came nearer to the truth. It is needless to cite passages in an essay prefixed to a selection made from his poems for esthetic study; let it suffice to call attention to the fact that such poems as the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," "Lines Composed above Tintern Abbey," "A Poet's Epitaph," "A Picture of Peele Castle," and several of his sonnets, contain a far sounder philosophy of art, and of poetry as a mode of art, than is anywhere to be found in his prose expositions.

Poetry is written primarily because the writing of it gives pleasure to the poet. It is the expression of his more intense moods, and whatever other motives may be present to his mind he must be consciously or unconsciously impelled to give artistic utterance to his feelings. He may think he is writing for gain. His conscious purpose may be to teach a moral lesson. Shakespeare may have had both purposes in view when he wrote his plays. He certainly had the former, but the artist rose superior to the playwright or his dramas would have been something other than and far inferior to what they are. Only poetry that has its real origin in the prompting of artistic genius can appeal successfully to the esthetic faculty of the reader, and only such poetry should be selected for esthetic study.

Is it justifiable to devote any considerable portion of school time to such a study of Wordsworth's poems? And what relation should this use of them bear to any other use that might be made? It has been objected that his poetry is of such a character that it is not likely to appeal strongly to the youthful mind on its esthetic side. For answer I can only express my strong conviction that, given a fair chance, school pupils will become very fond of Wordsworth's poetry, and add the fact that this opinion has been strongly held by eminent teachers of literature. It is not necessary, nor wise, to be always searching for moral truths in his, or any other poetry. The search should be for the beauty, and the morality may safely be left for the most part to take care of itself. The object deliberately set before the pupils should be enjoyment, and the poems should be so treated as to get as much of this as possible out of them. Dealt with in this spirit, the study of these poems will be its own rich reward, and they will take on new and deeper meanings to those who are most familiar with them.

The justification of the esthetic use of poetry in general and of Wordsworth's poetry in particular, lies chiefly in the fact that a large part of human life, constituted as human nature is, must be given up to the getting of pleasure, to amusement, to relaxation. It is impossible to fill the whole of one's waking hours with work, without shortening life by at least as much as should have been given up to enjoyment. The question, whether life is worth living, can be best answered from this point of view. Whatever may be said of life without pleasure, there can be no doubt that in so far as it is filled with enjoyment that is rational, moral, and thorough, it is not open to the celebrated query. It is not a choice of having relaxation or none; all that is left to us is a choice of pastimes. In making this choice, those selected should have the qualities above mentioned—rationalness, morality, and effectiveness—and applying these as tests it is easy to see that the study of poetry takes the foremost place.

Mere physical amusements stand no chance in the comparison, and they are only too apt to degenerate into savagery as in the cases of drunkenness, prize-fighting, and field sports. *Facilis descensus Averni*. Intellectual relaxations are far superior to those that are merely physical, but their power to charm away care and trouble is weak compared with that which appeals to the imagination and affects us through the emotions. Apart from the consolations of religion, of which there is here no question, art is the great moderator of life and the source of its highest and noblest pleasures. And of all the arts poetry is the most available for this purpose. Scarcity of great paintings and statuary makes it impossible for any, except the few fortunate ones, to appreciate them. Great buildings are rare over the whole world, and he who wishes to see them must make long journeys and content himself with few opportunities for study. Great musical performances are seldom heard except in large centres of population, and there only occasionally. But the grandest specimens of the poetic art are within the reach of all. Each can have enough of them in his own tongue to afford material for esthetic culture for a lifetime of activity. And on its merits, poetry must be admitted to have a title to pre-eminence. It has no real rival except music, and it excels music in its use of articulate speech as the appropriate expression of noble thoughts.

If true culture is inseparable from the study of poetry, or if the best culture is most effectively reached by this road, it becomes a most important matter to find out how it should be dealt with in schools. So far as the spirit and motive are concerned enough has already been said. The aim should be to get enjoyment, and the method should be determined by the aim. If the poetry is to be used simply as matter for parsing,

or etymological analysis, or rhetorical inquiry, it would be just as profitable to stick to good prose, and more so. Parsing may be useful at times to enable the teacher to find out whether a pupil understands a passage. Tracing the history of words may be useful as a means of discovering some recondite meaning, the grasping of which is essential to the comprehension of the poem. The unfolding of rhetorical structure may serve a similarly useful purpose whenever it promotes esthetic appreciation. But all these, and many other modes of erudition, must in the study of poetry be kept strictly subordinate to the main purpose—enjoyment. This is equally true of moral teachings, as we have already seen. The poetry was written to afford enjoyment if it is true poetry at all, and to get this out of it should be the main purpose in giving up time and work to becoming acquainted with it.

It is impossible, here, to enter into the details of method. No two teachers will deal with a piece of poetry in the same way. But there are a few general rules which may be usefully borne in mind, and they are given here in a certain order, not because that order is an indication of their relative importance, but because some order of statement had to be chosen, and this will serve as well as another.

1. Only the best poetry should be selected for school work. This takes place at a time of life when deep impressions are made, and there can be no doubt that much of the prevailing indifference to or dislike of poetry is due to the unwise selection of poems for school reading. In the case of Wordsworth's poems here printed, I am in a position to say that the utmost care was exercised. Arnold's selection was made the basis, but within that compass only those were chosen that appear in one or more of the other admirable anthologies culled from his works. The intention was to give a wide variety, and yet to give only what has high artistic merit and will bear close esthetic study.

2. The pupil should be required to make himself thoroughly familiar with the text of the poem under investigation. There is not time for this in the class, he must do it by private reading beforehand. Moreover, he should do this reading without previous direction of any kind. Let him make what he can of the text, but let him do it alone. The teacher can insist on familiar acquaintance with it and that is all he should insist on at the outset. Memorization of shorter pieces is of course useful for purposes of study and invaluable for life.

3. The teacher must see that the pupil at some stage acquires a thorough comprehension of the meaning of the text. The residuum from the pupil's own study of it must be resolved by the teacher's aid. The meanings of words, the structures of

sentences, and the use of figures of speech must all be attended to just in so far as the neglect of them would interfere with the pupils' esthetic appreciation of the poem.

4. Each poem should be read by the pupil, and afterwards discussed by the class, as a whole, before it is dealt with analytically. A poem is a work of art. The poet-artist, if he did his work intelligently, attended to points of structure which cannot be discerned unless the whole work is kept in view. The most important artistic questions relate to the poem as a whole, and not to its separate parts. How far the analysis is to be subsequently carried will depend largely on the nature of the poem. No one would subject "Michael" or "Hart-Leap Well" to an analysis so minute as he would "Peele Castle," "To the Cuckoo," or one of the Sonnets.

5. The pupils should be encouraged to form and to give their own opinions on all points of artistic structure. These opinions will of necessity be formed inductively as the result of frequent perusal, if ready-made opinions are not thrust upon the class either by some critic or by the teacher. There will always be ample room for differences of opinion and for comparisons of views, and many valuable, suggestive, and original thoughts on art subjects occur to even young pupils when they are trained in habits of mental and critical independence. All this implies the constant use of the Socratic method, the only one that is worth anything in teaching any subject, but especially a subject with respect to which the thing pre-eminently desirable is originality of opinion in matters of taste.

6. The pupils should be trained to read and analyse, not for the purpose of picking out flaws, but with a view to comprehending artistic effects. The former object would defeat the aim to make the reading a source of enjoyment; the latter is the surest means of both intellectual and esthetic culture. In this connection it is necessary to discuss the question, how much attention should be given to verse-forms? The correct answer, from my point of view is, just as much as the importance of form in any particular poem seems to demand. In an exquisite lyric the form is relatively far more important than it is in a simply constructed epic. Form is always important in the sonnet, and indeed it cannot be ignored. It is very important in the "Ode on Intimations of Immortality," especially in view of the great variety of rhythmical effects which nevertheless easily adapt themselves to the changes of thought and feeling. On the other hand "Michael" is a plain tale written in the simplest of blank verse, and the relative importance of form is in it reduced to a minimum. Wordsworth's own theories of poetry so far correspond to his practice that in his language there are few tone-color effects. To

appreciate this one need only compare, say, his "To the Cuckoo," with Tennyson's bugle song in the "Princess," or his "Happy Warrior," with Tennyson's "Sir Galahad." Rhythm is the most important element in verse form, and though Wordsworth's use of it is not so varied and masterly as is Tennyson's or Swinburne's, it is still of great importance. In the case of iambic pentameter verse the poet's use of various well-known devices to obviate "sing-song," effects are well worthy of close study. Given the problem—to create a poetical form elevated far above common-place prose by the use of regular rhythm, and yet make it in every part subtly suggestive of prose effects by freedom from rhythmical monotony—how has Wordsworth accomplished its solution? How did Shakespeare, and Milton, and Tennyson, and Browning do it?

7. The biography—the personal evolution—of the poet can never be unimportant, but it need not, perhaps should not, be systematically considered till after the poems have been all taken up. The poet's personality will by that time be more or less familiar to the pupils through his work, and it will be useful, and, still more important, enjoyable to supplement and correct their conceptions of him by a consideration of the facts of his actual life. Biographical discussions, however, like linguistic discussions, need not, and should not, be evaded if they are likely to prove useful when and where they force themselves on the class. Kept in strict subordination to the main purpose they are, like a motion to adjourn a meeting, in order at any time.



SOME POETIC TRIBUTES TO WORDSWORTH.

(SHELLEY'S "TO WORDSWORTH.")

Poet of Nature, thou hast wept to know
 That things depart which never may return :
 Childhood and youth, friendship and love's first glow.
 Have fled like sweet dreams, leaving thee to mourn.
 These common woes I feel. One loss is mine,
 Which thou too feel'st, yet I alone deplore.
 Thou wert as a lone star, whose light did shine
 On some frail bark in winter's midnight roar ;
 Thou hast like to a rock-built refuge stood
 Above the blind and battling multitude :
 In honoured poverty thy voice did weave
 Songs consecrate to truth and liberty.
 Deserting these, thou leavest me to grieve,
 Thus, having been, that thou shouldst cease to be.

(FROM MATTHEW ARNOLD'S "MEMORIAL VERSES.")

" And Wordsworth ! Ah, pale ghosts, rejoice !
 For never has such soothing voice
 Been to your shadowy world conveyed,
 Since erst, at morn, some wandering shade
 Heard the clear song of Orpheus come
 Through Hades and the mournful gloom.
 Wordsworth has gone from us ; and ye,
 Ah, may ye feel his voice as we !
 He too, upon a wintry clime
 Had fallen,—on this iron time
 Of doubts, disputes, distractions, fears.
 He found us when the age had bound
 Our souls in its benumbing round ;
 He spoke, and loosed our hearts in tears.
 He laid us as we lay at birth :
 On the cool flowery lap of earth ;
 Smiles broke from us, and we had ease ;
 The hills were round us, and the breeze
 Went o'er the sunlit fields again ;
 Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
 Our youth returned ; for there was shed
 On spirits that had long been dead,
 Spirits dried up and closely furled,
 The freshness of the early world.

Ah! since dark days still bring to light
 Man's prudence and man's fiery might,
 Time may restore us in his course
 Goethe's sage mind and Byron's force;
 But when will Europe's latter hour
 Again find Wordsworth's healing power?
 Others will teach us how to dare,
 And against fear our breast to steel:
 Others will strengthen us to bear—
 But who, ah! who will make us feel?
 The cloud of mortal destiny,
 Others will front it fearlessly;
 But who, like him, will put it by?
 Keep fresh the grass upon his grave,
 O Rotha, with thy living wave!
 Sing him thy best! for few or none
 Hear thy voice right, now he is gone."

(WHITTIER'S POEM TO WORDSWORTH.)

Dear friends, who read the world aright,
 And in its common forms discern
 A beauty and a harmony
 The many never learn!

Kindred in soul of him who found
 In simple flower and leaf and stone
 The impulse of the sweetest lays
 Our Saxon tongue has known,—

Accept this record of a life
 As sweet and pure, as calm and good,
 As a long day of blandest June
 In green field and in wood.

How welcome to our ears, long pain'd
 By strife of sect and party noise,
 The brook-like murmur of his song
 Of nature's simple joys!

The violet by its mossy stone,
 The primrose by the river's brim,
 The chance-sown daffodil, have found
 Immortal life through him.

The sunrise on his breezy lake,
 The rosy tints his sunset brought,
 World-seen, are gladdening all the vales
 And mountain-peaks of thought.

Art builds on sand, the works of pride
 And human passions change and fall ;
 But that which shares the life of God
 With Him surviveth all.

(FROM WATSON'S "WORDSWORTH'S GRAVE.")

" It may be that his manly chant, beside
 More dainty numbers, seems a rustic tune ;
 It may be thought has broadened since he died
 Upon the century's noon ;
 It may be that we can no longer share
 The faith which from his fathers he received ;
 It may be that our doom is to despair
 Where he with joy believed,—
 Enough that there is none since risen who sings
 A song so gotten of the immediate soul,
 So instant from the vital fount of things
 Which is our source and goal ;
 And though at touch of later hands there float
 More artful tunes than from his lyre he drew,
 Ages may pass ere thrills another note
 So sweet, so great, so true."

" Poet who sleepest by this wandering wave,
 When thou wast born, what birth-gift hadst thou then ?
 To thee what wealth was that the Immortals gave
 The wealth thou gavest in thy turn to men ?

Not Milton's keen, translunar music thine ;
 Not Shakespeare's cloudless, boundless human view ;
 Not Shelley's flush of rose on peaks divine ;
 Nor yet the wizard twilight Coleridge knew.

What hadst thou that could make so large amends
 For all thou hadst not and thy peers possessed,
 Motion and fire, swift means to radiant end ?—
 Thou hadst, for weary feet, the gift of rest.

From Shelley's dazzling glow or thunderous haze,
 From Byron's tempest-anger, tempest-mirth,
 Men turned to thee and found—not blast and blaze,
 Tumult of tottering heavens,—but peace on earth.

Nor peace that grows by Lethe, scentless flower,
 There in white languors to decline and cease ;
 But peace whose names are also rapture, power,
 Clear sight, and love : for these are parts of peace."

" No word-mosaic artificer, he sang
 A lofty song of lowly weal and dole,
 Right from the heart, right to the heart it sprang,
 Or from the soul leapt instant to the soul.

He felt the charm of childhood, grace of youth,
 Grandeur of age, insisting to be sung,
 The impassioned argument was simple truth
 Half wondering at its own melodious tongue.

Impassioned? Ay, to the song's ecstatic core!
 But far removed were clangour, storm, and feud;
 For plenteous health was his, exceeding store
 Of joy, and an impassioned quietude."

(FROM WATSON'S POEM "TO EDWARD DOWDEN.")

" And then a third voice, * long unheeded—held
 Claustral and cold, and dissonant and tame—
 Found me at last with ears to hear. It sang
 Of lowly sorrows and familiar joys,
 Of simple manhood, artless womanhood,
 And childhood fragrant as the limpid morn;
 And from the homely matter nigh at hand
 Ascending and dilating, it disclosed
 Spaces and avenues, calm heights and breadths
 Of vision, whence I saw each blade of grass
 With roots that groped about eternity,
 And in each drop of dew upon each blade
 The mirror of the inseparable All.
 The first voice, then the second, in their turns
 Had sung me captive. This voice sang me free.
 Therefore, above all vocal sons of men,
 Since him whose sightless eyes saw hell and heaven,
 To Wordsworth be my homage, thanks, and love."

* The preceding lines of this poem deal with Shelley and Keats.



EXAMINATION QUESTIONS.

BY

WILLIAM HOUSTON, M.A.

The fact that the questions set at academical examinations exercise an important influence on the teaching of those who prepare candidates for them has long been admitted, but it has not for all that been allowed its proper weight in determining the kind of treatment to which literary texts should be subjected in the school-room. Far too much prominence has in these examinations been given to the kind of information which is included in what is usually called "side reading," far too little to the kind of knowledge which can be secured only by thorough familiarity with and comprehension of the texts themselves. This evil is partly the cause and partly the consequence of the elaborate annotations with which both teachers and pupils are only too familiar. The general tendency of such annotations is to draw attention away from what is essential and direct it to what is merely accidental in poetry as one of the fine arts—to give prominence to mere information about a poem and throw into the background all considerations of artistic structure and technique. No student makes such a mistake about works of art in the spheres of architecture, sculpture, painting, or music. The personality of the great artists in these spheres has become of little moment in comparison with their work, and by allowing them to drop into this kind of obscurity we unconsciously pay the highest possible tribute to their marvellous genius. For the purposes of the art student it matters little whether the plays of Shakespeare were written by Shakespeare or by Bacon; it matters a great deal how they are put together and worked up by the dramatic artist whoever he was. The personality of the authors of the "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" has been lost beyond recovery, and so has that of the author of the "Book of Job;" is the esthetic value of these great works lessened thereby? Not a whit. Why then should the

mind of the student be so persistently drawn away from those things that are of real artistic and esthetic value and be so persistently directed to what has for the most part only historic or scientific importance?

The following examination questions have been framed mainly with a view to suggest the kind of treatment to which the poetry should be subjected in the class-room. I have not arranged them into "examination papers," preferring to give a brief statement of what should, in my opinion, be kept in view by the examiner in the construction of a paper.

There should be optional questions on every paper. This is equivalent to saying that more questions should be asked on the paper than the candidate can reasonably be expected to answer, and this fact should be made known to him by a plain and absolute prohibition from attempting more than the number of questions selected as the basis of the maximum number of marks. For example, if ten questions, with an average of ten marks for each, make the maximum, then there should be fifteen questions on the paper, the candidate being forbidden to attempt more than ten, but allowed to take any ten. The chief advantages of this plan are, (1) that the examiner is allowed freedom to make his questions instructive to teachers without subjecting candidates to undue risk of failure; (2) that he can introduce "bonus" questions by giving the candidates a chance to draw on their knowledge of literary texts not prescribed. Several specimens of such questions will be found below (6, 8, 10, 17, 19, 20, 21, 25, 27, 29).

Questions that can be answered from an editor's notes, or from any other outside source, might well be avoided altogether, and if introduced at all they should be allowed so little prominence that the attention of teachers and pupils would no longer be pointedly and almost irresistibly diverted from what is essential and valuable to what is accidental and comparatively worthless. There is not time enough in the school term to subject the prescribed texts to a sufficiently thorough artistic treatment, and teachers should not be misled into wasting any of it on work that has no value for esthetic purposes. It should be assumed by the examiner that it is the teacher's function to make his pupils acquainted with the poems themselves, and not to fill them with all sorts of information about either the poems or their author. The amount of time and effort spent in teaching biography, bibliography, history, philology, and science in the name of poetry is as amazing as it is discouraging. Why should there be any surprise felt when a pupil at the close of the school term throws aside his texts and revels in his sense of freedom from intolerable and useless drudgery? Teaching that does not instil a love of poetry is a failure, and a style of examination

that misdirects the teachers so as to produce if not compel such a result is one of those blunders that are worse than crimes.

It almost goes without saying that if the above contentions are sound, competitive examinations cannot fail to prove an obstruction to good teaching. In a competitive examination there must be no optional questions, and the pedagogical value of the papers is thus greatly impaired. Competition is apt to become unfair, is certain to prove unsatisfactory, to the candidates, if the nature of the work is not so clearly defined beforehand as to enable both teachers and candidates to know how to apply themselves with the greatest advantage to the achievement of their aim—a high position for the latter in the class list. In the absence of competition the examiner may examine and the teacher may teach with no other end in view than culture, primarily esthetic but also ethical and intellectual. It would be a fair ground for fault-finding on the part of a disappointed candidate for a prize if he were asked to compare "Michael" with "The Lady of the Lake," or "Evangeline," or "Enoch Arden;" no candidate would have any reasonable ground of complaint at being allowed to choose such a question in preference to some other in a merely qualifying examination if not more than one of the kind is put on each paper. This does not imply that it is objectionable to rank candidates in classes. On the contrary that practice has much to commend it, provided the grouping is intelligently done and the candidates are ranked alphabetically in each class.

The questions here given have been framed on the supposition that those who answer them have the texts of the poems before them. This would be absolutely necessary to secure anything like thorough treatment of the various topics suggested by the questions. It is to be hoped that in the near future an adequate supply, in the examination hall, of texts without notes or comments may be available for the purpose of making written examinations what they should be—a fair test of the character of work done in the past and a useful indication of the manner in which it should be carried on in the future.

1. Wordsworth places "Michael" in a group of "poems founded on the affections." Arnold places it in a group of "narrative poems." Which title is the better one for this poem, and why?

2. Arnold says: "The greatness of a poet lies in his powerful and beautiful application of ideas to life. . . . Wordsworth deals with it (*i. e.* Life), and his greatness lies in his dealing with it so powerfully."

(a) Select any one of the three poems—"Michael," "Resolution and Independence," or "Hart-Leap Well"—and write

a note on it either from Arnold's point of view or from an opposite one.

(b) Quote any passage from Wordsworth's poems in which he gives his own theory of poetry, and compare that theory with Arnold's above quoted.

3. (a) Account on artistic grounds for the disproportionate lengths of the two parts into which "Michael" is divided by the mention of the son's bad conduct: "Meantime Luke began, etc."

(b) Give reasons for holding that the shortness of the latter part is a merit, or that it is a defect.

4. Arnold quotes, as exhibiting Wordsworth's "true and most characteristic form of expression," the line,

"And never lifted up a single stone."

On what grounds can this view of it be defended or refuted?

5. Write a note on Wordsworth's use of iambic pentameter blank verse in "Michael," with special reference to (a) adherence to the typical rhythmical form of the line, (b) use of the sense pause, and (c) the sacrificing of matter to form or of form to matter.

6. Compare "Michael" with any one of the following epics, in (a) artistic motive, (b) suitability of theme for poetical treatment, (c) metrical form, and (d) rhetorical style:

- (1) The Lady of the Lake.
- (2) Evangelina.
- (3) Enoch Arden.
- (4) Dora.

7. Arnold says that the ballad is a low kind of poetry, and that the "didactic kind" is still lower. In another part of his essay he says of "Resolution and Independence," that "it is bald as the bare mountain tops are bald, with a baldness which is full of grandeur."

In view of the fact that "Resolution and Independence" is a didactic poem, reconcile the two opinions quoted above, or show that they are irreconcilable.

8. (a) What reason have we to believe that Wordsworth really intended to teach by means of "Hart-Leap Well" the doctrine that Nature actually punishes cruelty to animals; or to teach by means of the "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" the doctrine of pre-existence?

(b) On the assumption that he did not really believe either doctrine, discuss the artistic legitimacy of making a poetical use of it.

(c) On the same assumption, cite an analogous instance of the use by any other poet of a doctrine which he did not really hold as part of his philosophical or scientific creed.

9. (a) Give a summary of the argument of the "Intimations of Immortality."

(b) Discuss the appropriateness of the various changes of metrical form to the transitions of thought throughout the poem.

(c) Emerson described this ode as "the high-water mark of English thought" in the nineteenth century. Arnold says that the idea of the "Intimations" has not "the character of poetic truth of the best kind."

Which of these opinions do you prefer, and why?

10. (a) Compare the three odes—"Character of the Happy Warrior," "To Duty," and "Intimations of Immortality"—with each other, (1) as to metrical form, (2) as to ethical teaching, (3) as to esthetic value, and (4) as to autobiographical element.

(b) Compare any one of these odes, as to the first three of the above aspects, with any one of the following:

Gray's "Bard."

Tennyson's "Death of Wellington."

Milton's "Nativity."

11. Wordsworth calls "Tintern Abbey" a poem of the imagination; Arnold classes it among "reflective and elegiac" poems. Which is the preferable classification, and why?

12. (a) Write, with special reference to the Tintern Abbey, a note on Wordsworth's use of nature, (1) as a subject for descriptive poetry, (2) as a source of moral or spiritual influence, and (3) as a repertoire of analogies between the real and the ideal.

(b) Compare the "Tintern Abbey" with "Intimations of Immortality" as to the various uses made of Nature for poetical purposes.

13. "Tintern Abbey" is said to have been composed by Wordsworth in a very short time, immediately after the visit of which it speaks.

(a) Point out any defects of form which may be regarded as traceable to haste in composition.

(b) Does the shortness of time in this case warrant us in calling the poem an *extempore* one?

14. Write a note on each of the following quotations from the "French Revolution":—

(a) "When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights."

(b) "that which sets
The budding rose above the rose full blown."

(c) "Not in Utopia, subterranean fields,
Or some secreted island."

15. (a) Trace carefully the elegiac element in "The Fountain."

(b) Compare it in respect of this element with Tennyson's "Brook" lyric, or with his "Bugle Song."

(c) Compare it with either of these lyrics as regards the use of nature.

16. (a) Define accurately Wordsworth's theory or philosophy of poetry, as embodied in his "Poet's Epitaph."

(b) How far is that theory consistent with the life he actually led?

(c) To what extent is his ideal realized in his poetical writings?

(d) Can Wordsworth's strong preference for his own calling to others be justified on the grounds here set forth, or on any other grounds?

17. (a) Wordsworth, looking at a picture of Peelo Castle and recalling its appearance as he had once seen it, compares the actual picture with the imaginary one. From the data supplied by this poem show which of the two arts, painting or poetry, is superior to the other as a means of representing a scene in nature to one who does not actually see it.

(b) Cite, and (if you can) quote the opinion of any other poetical artist on this point.

(c) Justify or condemn, on purely artistic grounds, the introduction into the poem by Wordsworth of his own elegiac mood in connection with the above comparison.

18. (a) On what does Arnold base his distinction between a "narrative poem" and a "poem of ballad form," taking "Fidelity" as the former and "Lucy Gray" as the latter.

(b) "Lucy Gray," he says, "is a beautiful success." Can this be said of "We are seven?" Give reasons for your answer.

19. (a) Wordsworth calls "The Reverie of Poor Susan" a poem of the imagination; Arnold calls it a poem of ballad form. Which is the more appropriate title, and why?

(b) Elaborate in a short essay the idea embodied in this little poem.

(c) Compare it with any other imaginative poem you know, such as Longfellow's "Arsenal at Springfield" or his "Rope-walk," or Tennyson's "Bugle Song" or "Crossing the Bar," in artistic beauty and poetical suggestiveness.

20. (a) Compare Wordsworth's two poems "To a Skylark" with each other in beauty and appropriateness of metrical form.

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(b) Compare either of them in these same respects with either Hogg's poem or Shelley's on the same subject.

(c) Which poem of Wordsworth's two is on the higher plane as to treatment of theme?

(d) Compare them in this respect also with Hogg's and Shelley's.

21. (a) Explain fully all that is implied in calling the lines "To the Daisy" a lyric poem.

(b) It is an exposition of the poet's thoughts and feelings throughout; does this fact make the epithet "lyric" more appropriate, or less so?

(c) Arnold says that "Wordsworth owed much to Burns." What illustrations does this poem afford of the truth of this statement?

22. (a) The two poems on the cuckoo differ greatly from each other as to the relative proportions they exhibit of the esthetic and the ethic element; compare them in this respect, tracing each element in each poem.

(b) Give, with reasons, your opinion as to their relative merits from this point of view, as poems.

(c) Prof. Dowden, mentioning the fact that Wordsworth produced at various times several versions of one stanza of the poem beginning "O blithe new conner," remarks that it took the poet half a century to produce "this dew-drop of literature." Which stanza of the poem seems most clearly entitled to this distinction on the ground of poetic beauty?

23. (a) Compare the three pictures of womanhood in the three poems, "A Highland Girl," "Stepping Westward," and "The Solitary Reaper."

(b) Account, by means of the conditions of Wordsworth's life for the production of such pictures as the result of impressions made on him by passing strangers.

(c) In so far as these poems are evidence of a general and abiding interest in humanity, show how they agree with others of Wordsworth's poems.

24. "Yarrow Visited" is a continuous blending of the sprightly with the elegiac. "Profitless dejection" is excluded but "pensive recollection" is admittal.

Discuss the question whether such a mingling of strains is (a) appropriate to the occasion, (b) in keeping with Wordsworth's prevalent mood, (c) legitimate as a treatment of a poetic theme as shown by the example of other poets, and (d) in harmony with human life generally.

25. Discuss the tribute paid to Burns in the two poems addressed to him:—

(a) As poetical effusions, showing the advantages and disadvantages of poetry as compared with prose for such a purpose ;

(b) As an estimate of the poetical genius of Burns, taking account of acknowledged indebtedness ;

(c) As embodiments of ethical teaching in connection with the events of Burns' life ;

(d) As compared with any other tribute to Burns you know—such as Carlyle's essay, or Longfellow's poem on the same subject.

26. (a) Write a descriptive note on the sonnet as a mode of poetical composition, dealing with it as to both matter and form.

(b) By a careful analysis of any one of Wordsworth's sonnets make clear the correctness of your description.

27. (a) Explain fully the grounds on which Wordsworth himself in his sonnets justifies his use of this highly artificial form of composition.

(b) Compare any one of his sonnets with any one by Shakespeare, Spenser, or Milton, of whom he speaks, or by any other English writer of sonnets.

28. (a) Discuss the appropriateness of the Sonnet as a vehicle for such lofty themes as those dealt with in III., VI., and XVII.

(b) Discuss its appropriateness in connection with a simple topic like that treated in XXVI. or XXIX.

29. (a) Compare the three sonnets on "Personal Talk" minutely with each other in artistic structure.

(b) Develop in a brief essay the line of argument that runs through them.

(c) Show whether this train of thought agrees with the autobiographical element in Wordsworth's poems generally.

30. Select from the poems anywhere five specimens as perfect as possible of each of the following modes of tone-color:—

(a) Rime.

(b) Alliteration.

(c) Vowel-distribution through the line.

(d) Consonant-distribution through the line.

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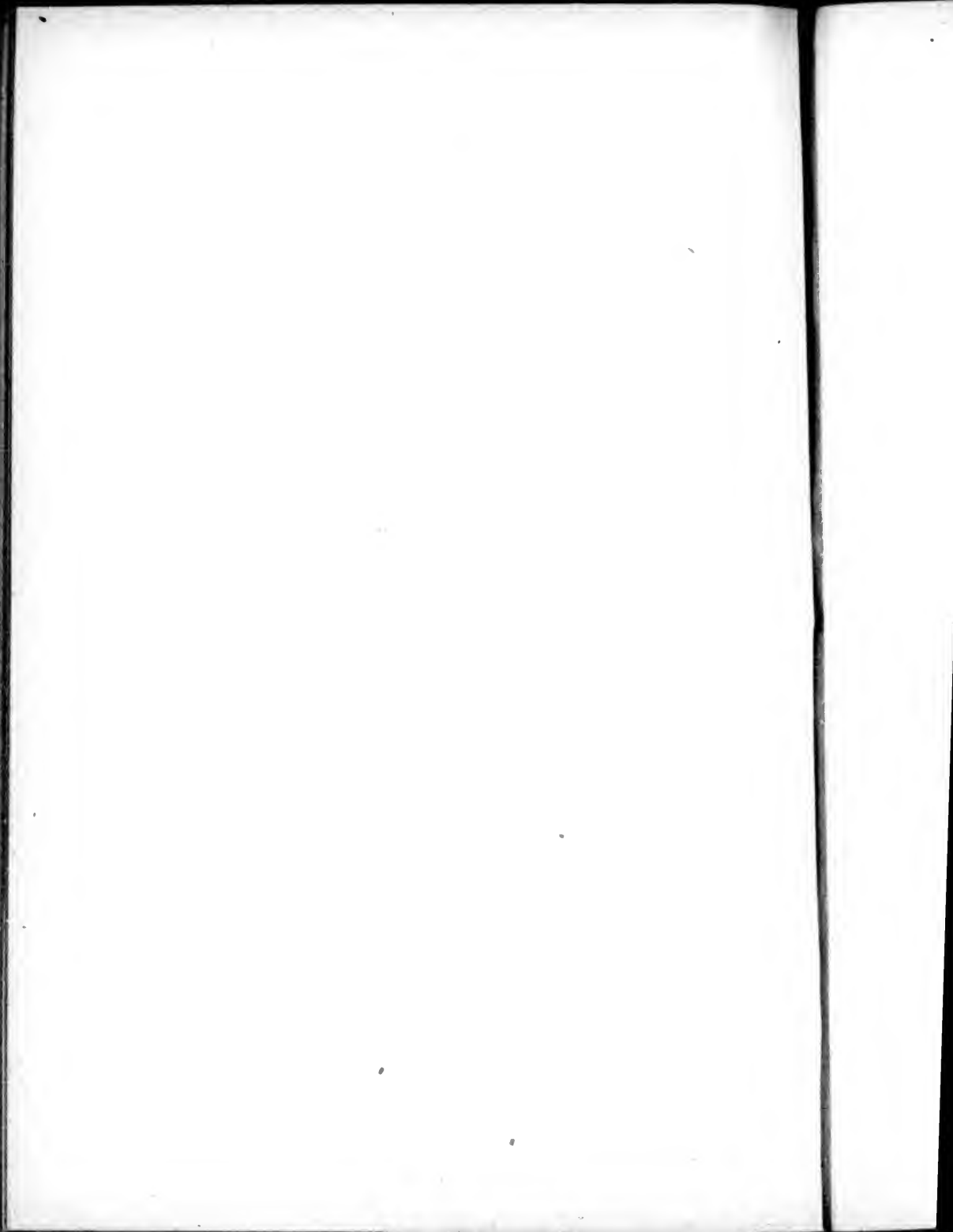
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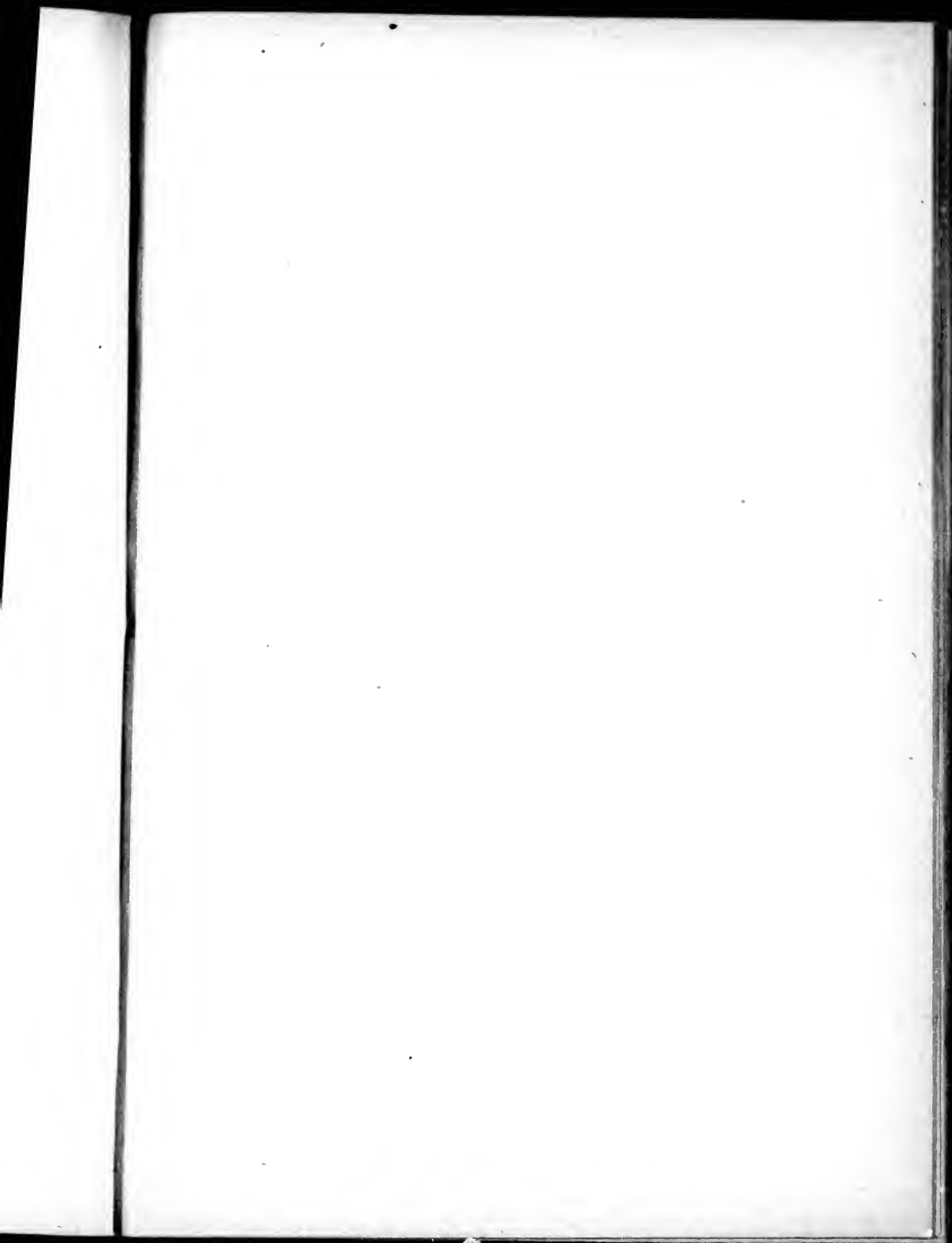
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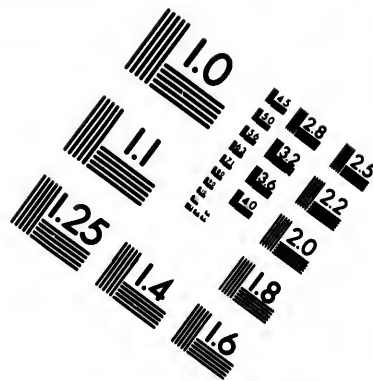
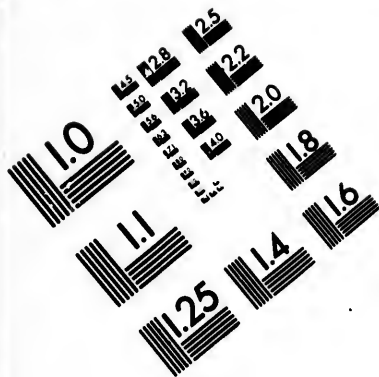
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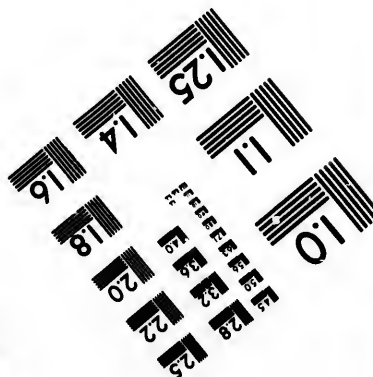
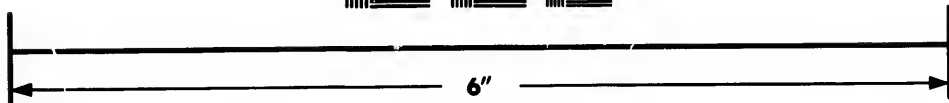
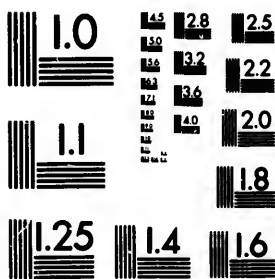








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Sketch of Author's Life,

Compositional, Critical and Explanatory Notes.

By G. A. CHASE, B.A.

AND

AN INTRODUCTION TO TALISMAN

By CHARLOTTE M. YONGE,

With NOTES AND GLOSSARY.

GAGE'S EDITION OF
IRVING'S SKETCH-BOOK.

Sketch of Life.

In addition to a sketch of Irving's Life, Gage's edition has appended to it annotations of different kinds, consisting of the usual explanatory notes, various criticisms upon the different pieces as they pass under review, remarks upon the place of literature in connection with the teaching of language with suggestions as to methods to be pursued, and a compositional analysis of some of the typical "sketches."

Annotations.

While all the annotations have a compositional bearing—the criticisms being directed to the character and use of the author's matter rather than to what is commonly called his style—the compositional analysis is an attempt to show the author's method of work—his thought, his aim, his plan, and the development of his plan. It is hoped that this last feature will be found useful, especially to the younger teachers of composition, by calling attention to the *conscious* frame-work of an author's production, in such a way, however, that the pupils taste for literature will not be injured, but rather increased. The author's *art* will thereby be brought clearly to view and a new source of pleasure pointed out.

Type.

The Type in this edition is large and distinct, a most important matter in any book intended for use in schools.

GAGE'S EDITION OF
IRVING'S SKETCH-BOOK.



SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION.

(FROM INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO SKETCH-BOOK.)

The annotations appended to this volume are almost wholly of a compositional character; the style of the author is so simple, the allusions are to objects of such every-day knowledge, that little of an explanatory nature is needed. The analytical notes are an attempt, in reference to a few of the pieces, to show the author's methods of work—his thought, his aim, his plan, his development of his plan; they are not intended as a model for an analysis of the remaining pieces of the volume, though it is advisable to have the pupils give outline sketches of some of these, such sketches containing much of the same matter as the analysis but without the author's *consciousness* of his plan.

The process to which the pieces referred to have been submitted may seem opposed to what is said below in regard to the treatment of literature. But every piece of literature is a work of art ; it has a plan and a development, a frame-work which has a beauty of its own independent of the covering. But this analysis is a separate thing, and must be taken up by itself, not when the piece is being read for enjoyment, otherwise a distaste for literature will certainly follow. We pull a flower to pieces only when we wish to examine its structure ; usually we gaze on it, we smell it, that we may receive pleasure from its beauty and its fragrance.

Nothing is said about the author's structure of sentences or paragraphs ; should information on these be required, it is readily attainable ; the page is open to inspection by all. It is to be feared that the author's practice in reference to paragraphs will not, in all cases, be held up as worthy of imitation. Little blame is to be attached to him therefor ;— literature does not exist for paragraphs.

G. A. CHASE.



(IN ONE VOLUME WITH IRVING'S SKETCH-BOOK.)

INTRODUCTION TO TALISMAN

BY

CHARLOTTE M. YONGE.

With a view of making this edition of the Sketch Book still more valuable, the publishers have decided to republish, along with the annotated edition of the Sketch Book, a valuable Introduction to the Talisman by MISS CHARLOTTE M. YONGE, giving an outline to the plan and scope of the Talisman. Along with this Introduction has been added Notes and Glossary to supplement those not found in Black's new edition of Talisman.

Introduction to Talisman.

By CHARLOTTE M. YONGE, gives appropriate information of the great historical personages and events mentioned in this work.

Character of Walter Scott.

This brief article has been reprinted from Lockhart's "Life of Walter Scott," and will be found of interest to all readers of Scott.

Notes and Glossary.

The Notes and Glossary will be found to be useful to supplement those in Black's Cheap Edition of the Talisman —this edition being the one commonly used in school work.



SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATION.

CÆSAR'S GALLIC WAR.

BOOKS III. AND IV.

Edited, with Notes, Vocabulary, etc., by J. C. ROBERTSON, B.A., Classical Master, Owen Sound Collegiate Institute.

BOOK III., 50 CENTS. BOOKS III. AND IV., 75 CENTS.

LEADING FEATURES.

The following may be noted as among the important features of the new Text on Cæsar.

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This consists of five sections written for the capacity of the students who will use the book; a life of Cæsar; a description of Gaul and the Gauls; a summary of each book of the Gallic war, that students beginning with Book III.

or IV. may understand the previous course of events; a description of the Commentaries as a work of literature; a sketch of the Roman Army and methods of warfare.

The Text, Maps and Illustrations.



For convenience of reference the subsections of chapters are indicated in the margin and in the notes. Two maps are given, one from Kraner's edition, the most complete yet published in a Canadian text, the other a sketch map giving the main features needed to understand the story of Cæsar's campaigns. A number of illustrations have been prepared to make more

vivid the pupils' conception of Roman warfare.

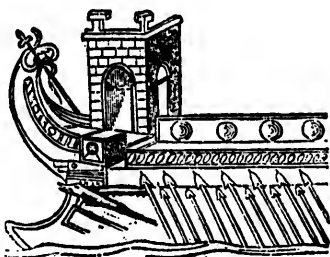
The Appendices.

The first contains a series of exercises in translation at sight, of sentences chosen from Cæsar and illustrating the constructions and vocabulary used in each chapter.

An equally valuable feature, serving as an introduction to these exercises, is a series of hints and suggestions for the translation of Cæsar's Latin. These hints are arranged according to syntactical order, but deal solely with the best idiomatic rendering of such forms and usages as are common in Cæsar.

The second Appendix gives a graded series of exercises in prose composition. These are not sentences in which Cæsar's phrases are reproduced in much the same form as given in the text, but will both test and develop the power to use a given phrase in an entirely new setting. Instead of the pupil merely selecting, he must combine a phrase and a construction, both occurring in the text, but separately.

In all these exercises idioms and usages rarely occurring are avoided.



SPECIMEN ILLUSTRATIONS.

The Notes.

The notes to each chapter are divided into two parts, the first for the average student, containing all that is necessary to the understanding and idiomatic translation of the text, and not a word more; the second for the development of scholarship in the more advanced pupils.

Apart from the exercise of common sense selection, the editor has tried to avoid the extremes of giving too much and giving too little help by two devices. First, in most cases only such parts of a sentence are translated as con-

tain the difficulty; second and more important still, constant reference is made to the hints for the translation of Cæsar referred to above. By this means, in case of difficulty, the pupil can readily find, within the same covers, just the help he wants; while on the other hand, where the pupil is proficient enough to do without any explanation, the assistance needed for a weaker student is not directly before his eyes, tempting him to use it instead of depending on his own resources.

Marginal Space.

A new feature is introduced in printing the text, so as to leave ample room for the making of marginal notes by students.

Briefly the Book is specially Noteworthy as containing:

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Hints and suggestions for the rendering of Cæsar's Latin.

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Notes divided into two parts for the different classes of student.

An illustrated introduction.

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Vocabulary that will be found complete and accurate.

NEW FRENCH LITERATURE FOR 1893.

EDITED BY SQUAIR AND MACGILLIVRAY,

LES FRÈRES COLOMBE,

BY PEYREBRUNE,

AND

LA FÉE,

BY FEUILLET (in one volume.)

Prescribed for High School Leaving and University Matriculation for 1893.
Edited by J. SQUAIR, B.A., University College, Toronto, and PROF. MACGILLIVRAY, Ph.D. Queen's University, Kingston.

The plan of this carefully prepared text is in the main that of the Editors' "Sardou and De Maistre" of last year. consists of a general introduction, critical biographical notices of the authors, texts, notes—grammatical and literary—with reference to the High School Grammar, complete vocabulary, and continuous composition exercises based on the texts.

NOTES.

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The Vocabulary contains every word in the text with its more general meanings in addition to its particular one in the text, indication of irregularities, and examples of idiomatic uses. For greater simplicity the derivations follow the explanatory and illustrative matter.

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