

Or all the labours of a grateful lay ?
Oh, no ! whene'er my breast forgets the deed,
That instant, DAVUS, it deserves to bleed.

LYCUS !* on me thy claims are justly great :
Thy milder virtues could my muse relate,
To thee alone, unrivall'd, would belong
The feeble efforts of my lengthen'd song,
Well canst thou boast, to lead in senates fit,
A Spartan firmness with Athenian wit :
Though yet in embryo these perfections shine,
LYCUS ! thy father's fame will soon be thine.
Where learning nurtures the superior mind,
What may we hope from genius thus refined !
When time at length matures thy growing years,
How wilt thou tower above thy fellow peers !
Prudence and sense, a spirit bold and free,
With honour's soul, united beam in thee.

Shall fair EURYALUS† pass by unsung ?
From ancient lineage, not unworthy sprung :
What though one sad dissension bade us part,
That name is yet embalm'd within my heart ;
Yet at the mention does that heart rebound,
And palpitate responsive to the sound.
Envy dissolved our ties, and not our will :
We once were friends,—I'll think we are so still.
A form unmatched in nature's partial mould,
A heart untainted, we in thee behold :
Yet not the senate's thunder thou shalt wield,
Nor seek for glory in the tented field ;
To minds of ruder texture these be given—
Thy soul shall nearer soar its native heaven.
Haply, in polish'd courts might be thy seat,
But that thy tongue could never forge deceit :
The courtier's supple bow and sneering smile,
The flow of compliment, the slippery wile,
Would make that breast with indignation burn,
And all the glittering snares to tempt thee spurn.
Domestic happiness will stamp thy fate ;
Sacred to love, unclouded e'er by hate ;
The world admire thee, and thy friends adore ;—
Ambition's slave alone would toil for more.

Now last, but nearest, of the social band,
See honest, open, generous CLEON‡ stand ;
With scarce one speck to cloud the pleasing scene,
No vice degrades that purest soul serene.
On the same day our studious race begun,
On the same day our studious race was run ;
Thus side by side we pass'd our first career,
Thus side by side we strove for many a year ;
At last concluded our scholastic life,
We neither conquer'd in the classic strife :

* The Earl of Clare. † The Earl of Delaware.
‡ Edward Noel Long, Esq. a Serjeant of the Coldstream Guards, (a poem p. 75
addressed to him.)

As speakers* each supports an equal name,
And crowds allow to both a partial fame :
To soothe a youthful rival's early pride,
Though Cleon's candour would the palm divide,
Yet candour's self compels me now to own,
Justice awards it to my friend alone.

Oh ! friends regretted, scenes for ever dear,
Remembrance hails you with her warmer tear !
Drooping, she bends o'er pensive Fancy's urn,
To trace the hours which never can return ;
Yet with the retrospection loves to dwell,
And soothe the sorrows of her last farewell !
Yet greets the triumph of my boyish mind,
As infant laurels round my head were twined,
When PROBUS' praise repaid my lyric song,
Or placed me higher in the studious throng ;
Or when my first harangue received applause,
His sage instruction the primeval cause,
What gratitude to him my soul possess,
While hope of dawning honours fill'd my breast !
For all my humble fame, to him alone
The praise is due, who made that fame my own.
Oh ! could I soar above these feeble lays,
These young effusions of my early days,
To him my muse her noblest strain would give :
The song might perish, but the theme might live.
Yet why for him the needless verse essay ?
His honour'd name requires no vain display :
By every son of grateful IDA blest,
It finds an echo in each youthful breast ;
A fame beyond the glories of the proud,
Or all the plaudits of the venal crowd.

IDA ! not yet exhausted is the theme,
Nor closed the progress of my youthful dream.
How many a friend deserves the grateful strain
What scenes of childhood still unsung remain !
Yet let me hush this echo of the past,
This parting song, the dearest and the last ;
And brood in secret o'er those hours of joy,
To me a silent and a sweet employ,
While future hope and fear alike unknown,
I think with pleasure on the past alone ;
Yes, to the past alone my heart confine,
And chase the phantom of what once was mine.

IDA ! still o'er thy hills in joy preside,
And proudly steer through time's eventful tide ;
Still may thy blooming sons thy name revere,
Smile in thy bower, but quit thee with a tear,—
That tear, perhaps the fondest which will flow,
O'er their last scene of happiness below.
Tell me, ye hoary few, who glide along,

* This alludes to the public speeches delivered at the school where the author
was educated.—B.

The feeble veterans of some former throng,
Whose friends, like autumn leaves by tempests whirl'd,
Are swept for ever from this busy world;
Revolve the fleeting moments of your youth,
While Care as yet withheld her venom'd tooth;
Say if remembrance days like these endears
Beyond the rapture of succeeding years?
Say, can ambition's fever'd dream bestow
So sweet a balm to soothe your hours of woe?
Can treasures, hoarded for some thankless son,
Can royal smiles, or wreathes by slaughter won,
Can stars or ermine, man's maturer toys,
(For glittering baubles are not left to boys)
Recall one scene so much beloved to view,
As those where youth her garland twined for you
Ah, no! amidst the gloomy calm of age
You turn with faltering hand life's varied page;
Peruse the record of your days on earth,
Un sullied only where it marks your birth;
Still lingering pause above each chequer'd leaf,
And blot with tears the sable lines of grief;
Where passion o'er the theme her mantle threw,
Or weeping Virtue sigh'd a faint adieu;
But bless the seroll which fairer words adorn,
Traced by the rosy finger of the morn;
When Friendship bow'd before the shrine of truth,
And Love, without his pinion,* smiled on youth.

ANSWER TO A BEAUTIFUL POEM, ENTITLED
"THE COMMON LOT."†

MONTGOMERY! true the common lot
Of mortals lies in Lethe's wave;
Yet some shall never be forgot—
Some shall exist beyond the grave.

"Unknown the region of his birth,"
The hero rolls the tide of war;
Yet not unknown his martial worth,
Which glares a meteor from afar.

His joy or grief, his weal or woe,
Perchance may 'scape the page of fame;
Yet nations now unborn will know
The record of his deathless name.

The patriot's and the poet's frame
Must share the common tomb of all:

* "L'Amilié est l'Amour sans ailes," is a French proverb.—B.

† Written by James Montgomery, author of "The Wanderer in Switzerland," &c.—B.

‡ No particular hero is here alluded to. The exploits of Bayard, Nemours, Edward the Black Prince, and in more modern times the fame of Marlborough, Frederick the Great, Count Saxe, Charles of Sweden, &c. are familiar to every historical reader but the exact places of their birth are known to a very small proportion of their admirers.—B.

Their glory will not sleep the same;
That will arise, though empires fall.

The lustre of a beauty's eye
Assumes the ghastly stare of death;
The fair, the brave, the good must die,
And sink the yawning grave beneath.

Once more the speaking eye revives,
Still beaming through the lover's strain;
For Petrarch's Laura still survives:
She died, but ne'er will die again.

The rolling seasons pass away,
And Time, untiring waves his wing;
Whilst honour's laurels ne'er decay,
But bloom in fresh, unfading spring.

All, all must sleep in grim repose,
Collected in the solemn tomb;
The old and young, with friends and foes,
Festering alike in shrouds, consume.

The mouldering marble lasts its day,
Yet falls at length an useless fane;
To ruin's ruthless fangs a prey,
The wrecks of pillar'd pride remain.

What, though the sculpture be destroy'd,
From dark oblivion meant to guard;
A bright renown shall be enjoy'd
By those whose virtues claim reward.

Then do not say the common lot
Of all lies deep in Lethe's wave;
Some few who ne'er will be forgot
Shall burst the bondage of the grave.

1806

LINES

ADDRESSED TO THE REV. J. T. BECHER ON HIS ADVISING THE
AUTHOR TO MIX MORE WITH SOCIETY.

DEAR Becher, you tell me to mix with mankind;—
I cannot deny such a precept is wise;
But retirement accords with the tone of my mind:
I will not descend to a world I despise.

Did the senate or camp my exertions require,
Ambition might prompt me at once to go forth;
When infancy's years of probation expire,
Perchance I may strive to distinguish my birth.

The fire in the cavern of Etna conceal'd,
Still mantles unseen in its secret recess;—
At length, in a volume terrific reveal'd,
No torrent can quench it, no bounds can repress.

Oh! thus the desire in my bosom for fame
 Bids me live but to hope for posterity's praise.
 Could I soar with the phoenix on pinions of flame,
 With him I would wish to expire in the blaze.

For the life of a Fox, of a Chatham the death,
 What censure, what danger, what woe would I brave!
 Their lives did not end when they yielded their breath!
 Their glory illumines the gloom of their grave.

Yet why should I mingle in Fashion's full herd?
 Why crouch to her leaders, or cringe to her rules?
 Why bend to the proud, or applaud the absurd?
 Why search for delight in the friendship of fools?

I have tasted the sweets and the bitter of love;
 In friendship I early was taught to believe;
 My passion the matrons of prudence reprove;
 I have found that a friend may profess, yet deceive.

To me what is wealth?—it may pass in an hour,
 If tyrants prevail, or if Fortune should frown;
 To me what is title?—the phantom of power;
 To me what is fashion?—I seek but renown.

Deceit is a stranger as yet to my soul;
 I still am unpractised to varnish the truth;
 Then why should I live in a hateful control?
 Why waste upon folly the days of my youth?

1806.

THE DEATH OF CALMAR AND ORLA.

AN IMITATION OF MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN.*

DEAR are the days of youth! Age dwells on their remembrance
 through the mist of time. In the twilight he recalls the sunny
 hours of morn. He lifts his spear with trembling hand. "Not
 thus feebly did I raise the steel before my fathers!" Past is the
 race of heroes! But their fame rises on the harp; their souls ride
 on the wings of the wind; they hear the sound through the sighs
 of the storm, and rejoice in their hall of clouds! Such is Calmar.
 The gray stone marks his narrow house. He looks down from
 eddy tempests: he rolls his form in the whirlwind, and hovers
 on the blast of the mountain.

In Morven dwelt the chief; a beam of war to Fingal. His steps
 in the field were marked in blood. Lochlin's sons had fled before
 his angry spear; but mild was the eye of Calmar; soft was the
 flow of his yellow locks: they streamed like the meteor of the
 night. No maid was the sigh of his soul: his thoughts were given
 to friendship,—to dark-haired Orla, destroyer of heroes! Equal
 were their swords in battle; but fierce was the pride of Orla:—
 gentle alone to Calmar. Together they dwelt in the cave of
 Oithona.

From Lochlin, Swaran bounded o'er the blue waves. Erin's

* It may be necessary to observe, that the story, though considerably varied in
 the catastrophe, is taken from "Nisus and Euryalus," of which episode a transla-
 tion is already given in the present volume, p. 38.—E.

sons fell beneath his might. Fingal roused his chiefs to combat
 Their ships cover the ocean. Their hosts throng on the green
 hills. They come to the aid of Erin.

Night rose in clouds. Darkness veils the armies; but the blaz-
 ing oaks gleam through the valley. The sons of Lochlin slept:
 their dreams were of blood. They lift the spear in thought, and
 Fingal flies. Not so the host of Morven. To watch was the post
 of Orla. Calmar stood by his side. Their spears were in their
 hands. Fingal called his chiefs: they stood around. The king
 was in the midst. Gray were his locks, but strong was the arm
 of the king. Age withered not his powers. "Sons of Morven,"
 said the hero, "to-morrow we meet the foe. But where is Cuth-
 ullin, the shield of Erin? He rests in the halls of Tura; he knows
 not of our coming. Who will speed through Lochlin to the hero,
 and call the chief to arms? The path is by the swords of foes;
 but many are my heroes. They are thunderbolts of war. Speak,
 ye chiefs! Who will arise?"

"Son of Tremmor! mine be the deed," said dark-haired Orla,
 "and mine alone. What is death to me? I love the sleep of the
 mighty, but little is the danger. The sons of Lochlin dream. I
 will seek ear-borne Cuthullin. If I fall, raise the song of bards;
 and lay me by the stream of Lubar."—"And shalt thou fall alone?"
 said fair-haired Calmar. "Wilt thou leave thy friend a-far?
 Chief of Oithona! not feeble is my arm in fight. Could I see thee
 die, and not lift the spear? No, Orla! ours has been the chase
 of the roebuck, and the feast of shells; ours be the path of danger;
 ours has been the cave of Oithona; ours be the narrow dwelling
 on the banks of Lubar." "Calmar," said the chief of Oithona,
 "why should thy yellow locks be darkened in the dust of Erin?
 Let me fall alone. My father dwells in his hall of air: he will
 rejoice in his boy; but the blue-eyed Mora spreads the feast for
 her son in Morven. She listens to the steps of the hunter on the
 heath, and thinks it is the tread of Calmar. Let him not say,
 'Calmar has fallen by the steel of Lochlin: he died with gloomy
 Orla, the chief of the dark brow.' Why should tears dim the azure
 eye of Mora? Why should her voice curse Orla, the destroyer of
 Calmar? Live, Calmar! Live to raise my stone of moss; live
 to revenge me in the blood of Lochlin. Join the song of bards
 above my grave. Sweet will be the song of death to Orla from
 the voice of Calmar. My ghost shall smile on the notes of praise."
 "Orla," said the son of Mora, "could I raise the song of death
 to my friend? Could I give his fame to the winds? No, my
 heart would speak in sighs: faint and broken are the sounds of
 sorrow. Orla! our souls shall hear the song together. One cloud
 shall be ours on high: the bards will mingle the names of Orla
 and Calmar."

They quit the circle of the chiefs. Their steps are to the host
 of Lochlin. The dying blaze of oak dim twinkles through the
 night. The northern star points the path to Tura. Swaran, the
 king, rests on his lonely hill. Here the troops are mixed: they
 frown in sleep; their shields beneath their heads. Their swords
 gleam at distance in heaps. The fires are faint; their embers fail
 in smoke. All is hush'd; but the gale sighs on the rocks above.
 Lightly wheel the heroes through the slumbering band. Half the

journey is past, when Mathon, resting on his shield, meets the eye of Orla. It rolls in flame, and glistens through the shade. His spear is raised on high. "Why dost thou bend thy brow, chief of Oithona?" said fair-haired Calmar: "we are in the midst of foes. Is this a time for delay?" "It is a time for vengeance," said Orla of the gloomy brow. "Mathon of Lochlin sleeps: seest thou his spear? Its point is dim with the gore of my father. The blood of Mathon shall reek on mine; but shall I slay him sleeping, son of Mora? No! he shall feel his wound: my fame shall not soar on the blood of slumber. Rise, Mathon, rise! The son of Conna calls; thy life is his; rise to combat." Mathon starts from sleep; but did he rise alone? No: the gathering chiefs bound on the plain. "Fly, Calmar, fly," said dark-haired Orla. "Mathon is mine. I shall die in joy; but Lochlin crowds around. Fly through the shade of night." Orla turns. The helm of Mathon is cleft; his shield falls from his arm: he shudders in his blood. He rolls by the side of the blazing oak. Strumon sees him fall: his wrath rises: his weapon glitters on the head of Orla; but a spear pierced his eye. His brain gushes through the wound, and foams on the spear of Calmar. As roll the waves of the ocean on two mighty barks of the north, so pour the men of Lochlin on the chiefs. As, breaking the surge in foam, proudly steer the barks of the north, so rise the chiefs of Morven on the scattered crests of Lochlin. The din of arms came to the ear of Fingal. He strikes his shield; his sons throng around; the people pour along the heath. Ryno bounds in joy. Ossian stalks in his arms. Oscar shakes the spear. The eagle wing of Fillan floats on the wind. Dreadful is the clang of death! many are the widows of Lochlin! Morven prevails in its strength.

Morn glimmers on the hills: no living foe is seen; but the sleepers are many; grim they lie on Erin. The breeze of ocean lifts their locks; yet they do not wake. The hawks scream above their prey.

Whose yellow locks wave o'er the breast of a chief? Bright as the gold of the stranger, they mingle with the dark hair of his friend. 'Tis Calmar: he lies on the bosom of Orla. Theirs is one stream of blood. Fierce is the look of the gloomy Orla. He breathes not; but his eye is still a flame. It glares in death unclosed. His hand is grasped in Calmar's; but Calmar lives! he lives, though low. "Rise," said the king, "rise son of Mora: 'tis mine to heal the wounds of heroes. Calmar may yet bound on the hills of Morven."

"Never more shall Calmar chase the deer of Morven with Orla," said the hero. "What were the chase to me alone? Who would share the spoils of battle with Calmar? Orla is at rest! Rough was thy soul, Orla! yet soft to me as the dew of morn. It glared on others in lightning: to me a silver beam of night. Bear my sword to blue-eyed Mora; let it hang in my empty hall. It is not pure from blood: but it could not save Orla. Lay me with my friend. Raise the song when I am dark!"

They are laid by the stream of Lubar. Four gray stones mark the dwelling of Orla and Calmar. When Swaran was bound, our sails rose on the blue waves. The winds gave our barks to Morven;—the bards raised the song,

"What form rises on the roar of clouds? Whose dark ghost gleams on the red streams of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder. 'Tis Orla, the brown chief of Oithona. He was unmatched in war. Peace to thy soul, Orla! thy fame will not perish. Nor thine, Calmar! Lovely wast thou, son of blue-eyed Mora; but not harmless was thy sword. It hangs in thy cave. The ghosts of Lochlin shriek around its steel. Hear thy praise, Calmar! It dwells on the voice of the mighty. Thy name shakes on the echoes of Morven. Then raise thy fair locks, son of Mora. Spread them on the arch of the rainbow; and smile through the tears of the storm."*

TO EDWARD NOEL LONG, ESQ.

Nil ego contulerim jucundo sanus amico.—HOR.

DEAR LONG, in this sequester'd scene,

While all around in slumber lie,
The joyous days which ours have been

Come rolling fresh on Fancy's eye;

Thus if amidst the gathering storm,

While clouds the darken'd noon deform,

Yon heaven assumes a varied glow,

I hail the sky's celestial bow,

Which spreads the sign of future peace,

And bids the war of tempests cease.

Ah! though the present brings but pain.

I think those days may come again!

Or if, in melancholy mood,

Some lurking envious fear intrude,

To check my bosom's fondest thought,

And interrupt the golden dream,

I crush the fiend with malice fraught,

And still indulge my wonted theme.

Although we ne'er again can trace,

In Granta's vale, the pedant's lore;

Nor through the groves of Ida chase,

Our raptur'd visions as before,

Though Youth has flown on rosy pinion,

And manhood claims his stern dominion—

Age will not every hope destroy,

But yield some hours of sober joy.

Yes, I will hope that Time's broad wing

Will shed around some dews of spring:

But if his scythe must sweep the flowers

Which bloom among the fairy bowers,

Where smiling youth delights to dwell,

And hearts with early rapture swell;

* I fear Laing's late edition has completely overthrown every hope that Macpherson's Ossian might prove the translation of a series of poems complete in themselves; but, while the imposture is discovered, the merit of the work remains undisputed, though not without faults—particularly, in some parts, turgid and bombastic diction. The present humble imitation will be pardoned by the admirers of the original as an attempt, however inferior, which evinces an attachment to their favourite author.—B.

If frowning Age, with cold control,
 Confines the current of the soul,
 Congeals the tear of Pity's eye,
 Or checks the sympathetic sigh,
 Or hears unmoved misfortune's groan,
 And bids me feel for self alone ;
 Oh may my bosom never learn

To soothe its wonted heedless flow ;
 Still, still despise the censor stern,
 But ne'er forgot another's woe.
 Yes, as you knew me in the days
 O'er which Remembrance yet delays,
 Still may I rove, untutor'd, wild,
 And even in age at heart a child.

Though now on airy visions borne,
 To you my soul is still the same.
 Oft has it been my fate to mourn,
 And all my former joys are tame.

But, hence ! ye hours of sable hue !
 Your frowns are gone, my sorrows o'er
 By every bliss my childhood knew,
 I'll think upon your shade no more.

Thus, when the whirlwind's rage is past,
 And eaves their sullen roar enclose,
 We heed no more the wintry blast,
 When lull'd by zephyrs to repose.

Full often has my infant muse
 Attuned to love her languid lyre ;
 But now without a theme to choose,
 The strains in stolen sighs expire.

My youthful nymphs, alas ! are flown ;
 E— is a wife, and C— a mother,
 And Carolina sighs alone,
 And Mary's given to another ;
 And Cora's eye, which roll'd on me,
 Can now no more my love recall :

In truth, dear LONG, 'twas time to flee
 For Cora's eye will shine on all.
 And though the sun, with genial rays,
 His beams alike to all displays,
 And every lady's eye's a sun,
 These last should be confined to one.
 The soul's meridian don't become her,
 Whose sun displays a general summer !
 Thus faint is every former flame,
 And passion's self is now a name.

As when the ebbing flames are low,
 The aid which once improved their light,
 And bade them burn with fiercer glow,
 Now quenches all their sparks in night ;
 Thus has it been with passion's fires,
 As many a boy and girl remembers,
 While all the force of love expires,
 Extinguish'd with the dying embers.

But now, dear LONG, 'tis midnight's noon,
 And clouds obscure the watery moon,
 Whose beauties I shall not rehearse,
 Described in every stripling's verse ;
 For why should I the path go o'er,
 Which every bard has trod before ?
 Yet ere yon silver lamp of night

Has thrice performed her stated round,
 Has thrice retraced her path of light,
 And chased away the gloom profound,
 I trust that we, my gentle friend,
 Shall see her rolling orbit wend
 Above the dear-loved peaceful seat
 Which once contain'd our youth's retreat ;*
 And then with those our childhood knew,
 We'll mingle in the festive crew ;
 While many a tale of former day
 Shall wing the laughing hours away
 And all the flow of souls shall pour
 The sacred intellectual shower,
 Nor cease till Luna's waning horn
 Scarcely glimmers through the mist of morn.

TO A LADY.†

Oh ! had my fate been join'd with thine,
 As once this pledge appear'd a token,
 These follies had not then been mine,
 For then my peace had not been broken.

To thee these early faults I owe,
 To thee, the wise and old reproving ;
 They know my sins, but do not know
 'Twas thine to break the bonds of loving

For once my soul, like thine, was pure,
 And all its rising fires could smother ;
 But now thy vows no more endure,
 Bestow'd by thee upon another.

Perhaps his peace I could destroy,
 And spoil the blisses that await him ;
 Yet let my rival smile in joy,
 For thy dear sake I cannot hate him.

Ah ! since thy angel form is gone,
 My heart no more can rest with any ;
 But what it sought in thee alone,
 Attempts, alas ! to find in many.

Then fare thee well, deceitful maid !
 'Twere vain and fruitless to regret thee ;
 Nor Hope, nor Memory, yield their aid,
 But Pride may teach me to forget thee.

* Long was one of his chief companions at Harrow.
 † Mary Chaworth, written shortly before her marriage with Mr. Mustard.

Yet all this giddy waste of years,
This tiresome round of palling pleasures;
These varied loves, these matron's fears,
These thoughtless strains to passion's measures—

If thou wert mine, had all been hush'd :—
This cheek, now pale from early riot,
With passion's hectic ne'er had flush'd,
But bloom'd in calm domestic quiet.

Yes, once the rural scene was sweet,
For Nature seem'd to smile before thee ;
And once my breast abhor'd deceit,—
For then it beat but to adore thee.

But now I seek for other joys :
To think would drive my soul to madness,
In thoughtless throngs and empty noise ;
I conquer half my bosom's sadness.

Yet, even in these a thought will steal,
In spite of every vain endeavour,—
And fiends might pity what I feel,—
To know that thou art lost for ever.

I WOULD I WERE A CARELESS CHILD.

I WOULD I were a careless child,
Still dwelling in my Highland cave,
Or roaming through the dusky wild,
Or bounding o'er the dark blue wave ;
The cumbrous pomp of Saxon* pride
Accords not with the freeborn soul,
Which loves the mountain's craggy side,
And seeks the rock where billows roll.

Fortune ! take back these cultured lands,
Take back this name of splendid sound !
I hate the touch of servile hands,
I hate the slaves that cringe around.
Place me along the rocks I love,
Which sound to Ocean's wildest roar ;
I ask but this—again to rove
Through scenes my youth hath known before.

Few are my years, and yet I feel
The world was ne'er designed for me :
Ah ! why do dark'ning shades conceal
The hour when man must cease to be ?
Once I beheld a splendid dream,
A visionary scene of bliss :
Truth !—wherefore did thy hated beam
A wake me to a world like this ?

* Sassenach or Saxon, a Gaelic word, signifying either Lowland or English.—E

I loved—but those I loved are gone ;
Had friends—my early friends are fled :
How cheerless feels the heart alone
When all its former hopes are dead !
Though gay companions o'er the bowl
Dispel awhile the sense of ill ;
Though pleasure stirs the maddening soul,
The heart—the heart—is lonely still.

How dull to hear the voice of those
Whom rank or chance, or wealth or power,
Have made, though neither friends nor foes,
Associates of the festive hour.
Give me again a faithful few,
In years and feelings still the same,
And I will fly the midnight crew,
Where bois'trous joy is but a name.

And woman, lovely woman ! thou,
My hope, my comforter, my all !
How cold must be my bosom now,
When e'en thy smiles begin to pall !
Without a sigh would I resign
This busy scene of splendid woe,
To make that calm contentment mine,
Which virtue knows, or seems to know.

Fain would I fly the haunts of men—
I seek to shun, not hate mankind ;
My breast requires the sullen glen,
Whose gloom may suit a darken'd mind.
Oh ! that to me the wings were given
Which bear the turtle to her nest !
Then would I cleave the vault of heaven,
To flee away, and be at rest.*

WHEN I ROVED A YOUNG HIGHLANDER.

WHEN I roved a young Highlander o'er the dark heath,
And climb'd thy steep summit, oh Morven, of snow ! †
To gaze on the torrent that thunder'd beneath,
Or the mist of the tempest that gather'd below, ‡
Untutor'd by science, a stranger to fear,
And rude as the rocks where my infancy grew,
No feeling, save one, to my bosom was dear ;
Need I say, my sweet Mary, § 'twas center'd in you ?

* " And I said, Oh ! that I had wings like a dove : for then would I fly away, and be at rest."—*Psalm* lv. 6. This verse also constitutes a part of the most beautiful anthem in our language.—B.

† Morven, a lofty mountain in Aberdeenshire. " Gormal of snow" is an expression frequently to be found in Ossian.—B.

‡ This will not appear extraordinary to those who have been accustomed to the mountains. It is by no means uncommon, on attaining the top of Ben-e-vis, Ben-y-bourd, &c. to perceive, between the summit and the valley, clouds pouring down rain, and occasionally accompanied by lightning, while the spectator literally looks down upon the storm, perfectly secure from its effects.—B.

§ Mary Duff, to whom he was passionately attached while in Aberdeen, and when he was not quite eight years old.

Yet it could not be love, for I knew not the name,—
 What passion can dwell in the heart of a child?
 But still I perceive an emotion the same
 As I felt, when a boy, on the crag-cover'd wild;
 One image alone on my bosom impress'd,
 I loved my bleak regions, nor panted for new;
 And few were my wants, for my wishes were bless'd;
 And pure were my thoughts, for my soul was with you.

I arose with the dawn; with my dog as my guide,
 From mountain to mountain I bounded along;
 I breasted the billows of Dee's* rushing tide,
 And heard at a distance the Highlander's song:
 At eve, on my heath-cover'd couch of repose,
 No dreams, save of Mary, were spread to my view;
 And warm to the skies my devotions arose,
 For the first of my prayers was a blessing on you.

I left my bleak home, and my visions are gone;
 The mountains are vanish'd, my youth is no more;
 As the last of my race, I must wither alone,
 And delight but in days I have witness'd before:
 Ah! splendour has raised, but embitter'd, my lot;
 More dear were the scenes which my infancy knew;
 Though my hopes may have fail'd, yet they are not forgot
 Though cold is my heart, still it lingers with you.

When I see some dark hill point its crest to the sky,
 I think of the rocks that o'ershadow Colbeen; †
 When I see the soft blue of a love-speaking eye,
 I think of those eyes that endear'd the rude scene;
 When, haply, some light-waving locks I behold,
 That faintly resembles my Mary's in hue,
 I think on the long flowing ringlets of gold,
 The locks that were sacred to beauty and you.

Yet the day may arrive when the mountains once more
 Shall rise to my sight in their mantles of snow:
 But while these soar above me, unchanged as before,
 Will Mary be there to receive me?—ah, no!
 Adieu, then, ye hills, where my childhood was bred!
 Thou sweet flowing Dee, to thy waters adieu!
 No home in the forest shall shelter my head,—
 Ah! Mary, what home could be mine but with you?

TO GEORGE, EARL DELAWARR.

Oh! yes, I will own we were dear to each other;
 The friendships of childhood, though fleeting, are true;
 The love which you felt was the love of a brother,
 Nor less the affection I cherished for you.

** Breasting the lofty surge."—SHAKESPEARE. The Dee is a beautiful river which rises near Mar Lodge, and falls into the sea at New Aberdeen.—B.
 † Colbeen is a mountain near the verge of the Highlands, not far from the ruins of Dee Castle.—B.

But Friendship can vary her gentle dominion;
 The attachment of years in a moment expires:
 Like Love, too, she moves on a swift-waving pinion,
 But glows not, like Love, with unquenchable fires.
 Full oft have we wander'd through Ida together,
 And blest were the scenes of our youth I allow:
 In the spring of our life, how serene is the weather!
 But winter's rude tempests are gathering now.
 No more with affection shall memory blending,
 The wonted delights of our childhood retrace:
 When pride steals the bosom, the heart is unbending,
 And what would be justice appears a disgrace.
 However, dear George, for I still must esteem you—
 The few whom I love I can never upbraid—
 The chance which has lost may in future redeem you,
 Repentance will cancel the vow you have made.
 I will not complain, and though chill'd is affection,
 With me no corroding resentment shall live:
 My bosom is calm'd by the simple reflection,
 That both may be wrong, and that both should forgive
 You knew that my soul, that my heart, my existence,
 If danger demanded, were wholly your own;
 You knew me unalter'd by years or by distance,
 Devoted to love and to friendship alone.
 You knew,—but away with the vain retrospection!
 The bond of affection no longer endures:
 Too late you may droop o'er the fond recollection,
 And sigh for the friend who was formerly yours.
 For the present we part,—I will hope not for ever;
 For time and regret will restore you at last:
 To forget our dissension we both should endeavour,
 I ask no atonement, but days like the past.

TO THE EARL OF CLARE

"Tu semper amoris
 Sis memor, et cari comitis ne abscedat imago."—VAL. FLAC.

FRIEND of my youth! when young we roved,
 Like striplings, mutually beloved,
 With friendship's purest glow,
 The bliss which wing'd those rosy hours
 Was such as pleasure seldom showers
 On mortals here below.
 The recollection seems alone
 Dearer than all the joys I've known,
 When distant far from you:
 Though pain, 'tis still a pleasing pain,
 To trace those days and hours again,
 And sigh again, adieu!
 My pensive memory lingers o'er
 Those scenes to be enjoy'd no more,

Those scenes regretted ever;
The measure of our youth is full,
Life's evening dream is dark and dull,
And we may meet—ah! never!

As when one parent spring supplies
Two streams which from one fountain rise,
Together join'd in vain;
How soon, diverging from their source,
Each, murmuring, seeks another course,
Till mingled in the main!

Our vital streams of weal or woe,
Though near, alas! distinctly flow,
Nor mingle as before:
Now swift or slow, now black or clear,
Till death's unfathom'd gulf appear,
And both shall quit the shore.

Our souls, my friend! which once supplied
One wish, nor breathed a thought beside,
Now flow in different channels:
Disdaining humbler rural sports,
'Tis yours to mix in polish'd courts,
And shine in fashion's annals;

'Tis mine to waste on love my time,
Or vent my reveries in rhyme,
Without the aid of reason;
For sense and reason (critics know it)
Have quitted every amorous poet,
Nor left a thought to seize on.

Now, Clare, I must return to you,
And, sure, apologies are due:
Accept, then, my concession.
In truth, dear Clare, in fancy's flight
I soar along from left to right!
My muse admires digression.

I think I said 'twould be your fate
To add one star to royal state;—
May regal smiles attend you!
And should a noble monarch reign,
You will not seek his smiles in vain,
If worth can recommend you.

Yet since in danger courts abound,
Where specious rivals glitter round,
From snares may saints preserve you;
And grant your love or friendship ne'er
From any claim a kindred care,
But those who best deserve you!

Not for a moment may you stray
From truth's secure, unerring sway!
May no delight decoy!
O'er roses may your footsteps move,
Your smiles be ever smiles of love,
Your tears be tears of joy!

Oh! if you wish that happiness
Your coming days and years may bless,
And virtues crown your brow;
Be still as you were wont to be,
Spotless as you've been known to me,—
Be still as you are now.

And though some trifling share of praise,
To cheer my last declining days,
To me were doubly dear;
Whilst blessing your beloved name,
I'd waive at once a poet's fame,
To prove a prophet here.

LINES WRITTEN BENEATH AN ELM IN THE
CHURCHYARD OF HARROW.*

SPOT of my youth! whose hoary branches sigh,
Swept by the breeze that fans thy cloudless sky;
Where now alone I muse, who oft have trod,
With those I loved, thy soft and verdant sod:
With those who, scatter'd far, perchance deplore,
Like me, the happy scenes they knew before:
Oh! as I trace again thy winding hill,
Mine eyes admire, my heart adores thee still,
Thou drooping Elm! beneath whose boughs I lay,
And frequent mused the twilight hours away;
Where, as they once were wont, my limbs recline,
But, ah! without the thoughts which then were mine:
How do thy branches, moaning to the blast,
Invite the bosom to recall the past,
And seem to whisper, as they gently swell,
"Take, while thou canst, a lingering, last farewell!"

When fate shall chill, at length, this fever'd breast,
And calm its cares and passions into rest,
Oft have I thought, 'twould soothe my dying hour,—
If aught may soothe when life resigns her power,—
To know some humbler grave, some narrow cell,
Would hide my bosom where it loved to dwell;
With this fond dream, methinks, 'twere sweet to die—
And here it linger'd, here my heart might lie;
Here might I sleep where all my hopes arose,
Scene of my youth, and couch of my repose;
For ever stretch'd beneath this mantling shade,
Press'd by the turf where once my childhood play'd;
Wrapt by the soil that veils the spot I loved,
Mix'd with the earth o'er which my footsteps moved;
Blest by the tongues that charm'd my youthful ear,
Mourn'd by the few my soul acknowledged here;
Deplored by those in early days allied,
And unremember'd by the world beside.

September 2, 1807

* Harrow-on-the-Hill, a village in the county of Middlesex, ten miles N.W. from London.

THE FOLLOWING CRITICISM APPEARED IN THE
EDINBURGH REVIEW,* FOR JANUARY 1808.

Hours of Idleness; a Series of Poems, original and translated.
By George Gordon, Lord Byron, a Minor. 8vo, pp. 200.
Newark, 1807.

THE poesy of this young lord belongs to the class which neither gods nor men are said to permit. Indeed, we do not recollect to have seen a quantity of verse with so few deviations in either direction from that exact standard. His effusions are spread over a dead flat, and can no more get above or below the level, than if they were so much stagnant water. As an extenuation of this offence, the noble author is peculiarly forward in pleading minority. We have it in the title-page, and on the very back of the volume; it follows his name like a favourite part of his *style*. Much stress is laid upon it in the preface; and the poems are connected with this general statement of his case, by particular dates substantiating the age at which each was written. Now, the law upon the point of minority we hold to be perfectly clear. It is a plea available only to the defendant; no plaintiff can offer it as a supplementary ground of action. Thus, if any suit could be brought against Lord Byron, for the purpose of compelling him to put into court a certain quantity of poetry, and if judgment were given against him, it is highly probable that an exception would be taken, were he to deliver for poetry the contents of this volume. To this he might plead *minority*; but, as he now makes voluntary tender of the article, he hath no right to sue, on that ground, for the price in good current praise, should the goods be unmarketable. This is our view of the law on the point; and, we dare to say, so will it be ruled. Perhaps, however, in reality all that he tells us about his youth is rather with a view to increase our wonder than to soften our censures. He possibly means to say, "See how a minor can write! This poem was actually composed by a young man of eighteen, and this by one of only sixteen!" But, alas! we all remember the poetry of Cowley at ten, and Pope at twelve; and so far from hearing, with any degree of surprise, that very poor verses were written by a youth from his leaving school to his leaving college, inclusive, we really believe this to be the most common of all occurrences; that it happens in the life of nine men in ten who are educated in England; and that the tenth man writes better verse than Lord Byron.

His other plea of privilege our author rather brings forward in order to waive it. He certainly, however, does allude frequently to his family and ancestors—sometimes in poetry, sometimes in notes; and while giving up his claim on the score of rank, he takes care to remember us of Dr Johnson's saying, that when a nobleman appears as an author, his merit should be handsomely acknowledged. In truth, it is this consideration only that induces us to give Lord Byron's poems a place in our review, beside our desire to counsel him, that he do forthwith abandon poetry, and turn his talents, which are considerable, and his opportunities, which are great, to better account.

* It is generally understood that this article was written by Lord Brougham.

With this view, we must beg leave seriously to assure him, that the mere rhyming of the final syllable, even when accompanied by the presence of a certain number of feet,—nay, although (which does not always happen) those feet should scan regularly, and have been all counted accurately upon the fingers,—is not the whole art of poetry. We would entreat him to believe, that a certain portion of liveliness, somewhat of fancy, is necessary to constitute a poem, and that a poem in the present day, to be read, must contain at least one thought, either in a little degree different from the ideas of former writers, or differently expressed. We put it to his candour, whether there is anything so deserving the name of poetry, in verses like the following, written in 1806; and whether, if a youth of eighteen could say anything so uninteresting to his ancestors, a youth of nineteen should publish it:—

"Shades of heroes, farewell! your descendant, departing
From the seat of his ancestors, bids you adieu!
Abroad or at home, your remembrance imparting
New courage, he'll think upon glory and you.
"Though a tear dim his eye at this sad separation,
'Tis nature, not fear, that excites his regret:
Far distant he goes, with the same emulation;
The fame of his fathers he ne'er can forget.
"That fame, and that memory, still will he cherish,
He vows that he ne'er will disgrace your renown;
Like you will he live, or like you will he perish;
When decay'd, may he mingle his dust with your own."

Now, we positively do assert, that there is nothing better than these stanzas in the whole compass of the noble minor's volume.

Lord Byron should also have a care of attempting what the greatest poets have done before him, for comparisons (as he must have had occasion to see at his writing-master's) are odious. Gray's Ode on Eton College should really have kept out the ten hobbling stanzas "On a distant View of the Village and School of Harrow."

"Where fancy yet joys to retrace the resemblance
Of comrades, in friendship or mischief allied,
How welcome to me your ne'er-fading remembrance,
Which rests in the bosom, though hope is denied."

In like manner, the exquisite lines of Mr Rogers, "*On a Tear*," might have warned the noble author off those premises, and spared us a whole dozen such stanzas as the following:—

"Mild Charity's glow, to us mortals below,
Shows the soul from barbarity clear;
Compassion will melt where this virtue is felt,
And its dew is diffused in a Tear.
"The man doom'd to sail with the blast of the gale,
Through billows Atlantic to steer,
As he bends o'er the wave, which may soon be his grave,
The green sparkles bright with a Tear."

And so of instances in which former poets have failed. Thus, we do not think a Lord Byron was made for translating, during his nonage, "Adrian's Address to his Soul," when Pope succeeded

so indifferently in the attempt. If our readers, however, are of another opinion, they may look at it.

" Ah! gentle, fleeting, wavering sprite
Friend and associate of this clay!
To what unknown region borne
Wilt thou now wing thy distant flight?
No more with wonted humour gay,
But pallid, cheerless, and forlorn."

However, be this as it may, we fear his translations and imitations are great favourites with Lord Byron. We have them of all kinds, from Anacreon to Ossian; and, viewing them as school exercises, they may pass. Only, why print them after they have had their day and served their turn? And why call the thing in p. 11 (from Anacreon) a translation, where *two* words (*ἑὶς καὶ ἄλλος*) of the original are expanded into four lines, and the other thing in p. 12 where *μισοσηκταίης πρὸς ἄρσιν* is rendered by means of six hobbling verses? As to his Ossianic Poesy, we are not very good judges, being, in truth, so moderately skilled in that species of composition, that we should, in all probability, be criticising some bit of the genuine Macpherson itself, were we to express our opinion of Lord Byron's rhapsodies. If, then, the following beginning of a "Song of Bards" is by his lordship, we venture to object to it as far as we can comprehend it. "What form rises on the roar of clouds? whose dark ghost gleams on the red stream of tempests? His voice rolls on the thunder: 'tis Orla, the brown chief of Oithona. He was," &c. After detaining this "brown chief" some time, the bards conclude by giving him their advice to "raise his fair locks;" then to "spread them on the arch of the rainbow;" and "to smile through the tears of the storm." Of this kind of thing there are no less than *nine* pages; and we can so far venture an opinion in their favour, that they look very like Macpherson; and we are positive they are pretty nearly as stupid and tiresome.

It is a sort of privilege of poets to be egotists; but they should "use it as not abusing it;" and particularly one who piques himself (though indeed at the ripe age of nineteen) on being "an infant bard,"—"The artless Helicon I boast is youth"—should either not know, or should seem not to know, so much about his own ancestry. Besides a poem above cited, on the family seat of the Byrons, we have another of eleven pages, on the self-same subject, introduced with an apology, "he certainly had no intention of inserting it," but really "the particular request of some friends," &c., &c. It concludes with five stanzas on himself, "the last and youngest of a noble line." There is a good deal also about his maternal ancestors, in a poem on Lachin y Gair, a mountain where he spent part of his youth, and might have learnt that pibroch is not a bagpipe, any more than duet means a fiddle.

As the author has dedicated so large a part of his volume to immortalize his employments at school and college, we cannot possibly dismiss it without presenting the reader with a specimen of these ingenious effusions. In an ode with a Greek motto, called *Granta*, we have the following magnificent stanzas:—

"There, in apartments small and damp,
The candidate for college prizes

Sits poring by the midnight lamp,
Goes late to bed, yet early rises.

"Who reads false quantities in Sele,
Or puzzles o'er the deep triangle,
Deprived of many a wholesome meal,
In barbarous Latin doom'd to wrangle

"Renouncing every pleasing page,
From authors of historic use,
Preferring to the letter'd sage,
The square of the hypotenusa.

"Still harmless are these occupations,
That hurt none but the hapless student,
Compared with other recreations,
Which bring together the imprudent."

We are sorry to hear so bad an account of the college psalmody as is contained in the following Attic stanzas:—

"Our choir would scarcely be excused
Even as a band of raw beginners;
All mercy now must be refused
To such a set of croaking sinners.

"If David, when his toils were ended,
Had heard these blockheads sing before him
To us his psalms had ne'er descended:
In furious mood he would have tore 'em!"

But, whatever judgment may be passed on the poems of this noble minor, it seems we must take them as we find them, and be content; for they are the last we shall ever have from him. He is, at best, he says, but an intruder into the groves of Parnassus: he never lived in a garret, like thorough-bred poets; and, "though he once roved a careless mountaineer in the Highlands of Scotland," he has not of late enjoyed this advantage. Moreover he expects no profit from his publication; and, whether it succeeds or not, "it is highly improbable, from his situation and pursuits hereafter," that he should again condescend to become an author. Therefore, let us take what we get and be thankful. What right have we poor devils to be nice? We are well off to have got so much from a man of this lord's station, who does not live in a garret, but "has the sway" of Newstead Abbey. Again, we say, let us be thankful; and, with honest Sancho, bid God bless the giver, nor look the gift-horse in the mouth.*

* Byron says, "When I first saw the review of my 'Hours of Idleness,' I was furious; in such a rage as I never have been since. I dined that day with Scroope Davies, and drank three bottles of claret to drown it; but it only boiled the more. That critique was a masterpiece of low wit, a tissue of scurrilous abuse. I remember there was a great deal of vulgar trash in it, which was meant for humour, 'about people being thankful for what they could get,—not looking a gift-horse in the mouth,' and such stable expressions. The severity of 'the Quarterly' killed poor Keats; and neglect, Kirke White; but I was made of different stuff, of tougher materials. So far from their bullying me, or deterring me from writing, I was bent on falsifying their raven predictions, and determined to show them, croak as they would, that it was not the last time they should hear from me. I set to work immediately, and in good earnest, and produced in a year, 'The English Bards and Scotch Reviewers.' There were many things in that satire which I was afterwards sorry for, and I wished to cancel it. I did my utmost to suppress the publication not only in England but in Ireland."

ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH
REVIEWERS.

A SATIRE.

"I had rather be a kitten, and cry mew!
Than one of these same metre ballad-mongers."—SHAKESPEARE.

"Such shameless bards we have; and yet 'tis true,
There are as mad, abandon'd critics too."—POPE.

PREFACE.

ALL my friends, learned and unlearned, have urged me not to publish this Satire with my name. If I were to be "turned from the career of my humour by quibbles quick, and paper bullets of the brain," I should have complied with their counsel. But I am not to be terrified by abuse, or bullied by reviewers, with or without arms. I can safely say that I have attacked none personally, who did not commence on the offensive. An author's works are public property: he who purchases may judge, and publish his opinion if he pleases; and the authors I have endeavoured to commemorate may do by me as I have done by them. I dare say they will succeed better in condemning my scribblings than in mending their own. But my object is not to prove that I can write well, but, if possible, to make others write better.

As the poem has met with far more success than I expected, I have endeavoured in this edition to make some additions and alterations, to render it more worthy of public perusal.

In the first edition of this satire, published anonymously, fourteen lines on the subject of Bowle's Pope were written by, and inserted at the request of, an ingenious friend of mine,* who has now in the press a volume of poetry. In the present edition they are erased, and some of my own substituted in their stead; my only reason for this being that which I conceive would operate with any other person in the same manner,—a determination not to publish with my name any production, which was not entirely and exclusively my own composition.†

* Sir John Hobhouse, Bart.

† The preface, up to this point, was written for the second edition. The preface to the first edition commenced with what follows.

With regard to the real talents of many of the poetical persons whose performances are mentioned or alluded to in the following pages, it is presumed by the author that there can be little difference of opinion in the public at large; though, like other sectaries, each has his separate tabernacle of proselytes, by whom his abilities are over-rated, his faults overlooked, and his metrical canons received without scruple and without consideration. But the unquestionable possession of considerable genius by several of the writers here censured renders their mental prostitution the more to be regretted. Imbecility may be pitied, or, at worst, laughed at and forgotten; perverted powers demand the most decided reprehension. No one can wish more than the author that some known and able writer had undertaken their exposure; but Mr Gifford has devoted himself to Massinger; and, in the absence of the regular physician, a country practitioner may, in cases of absolute necessity, be allowed to prescribe his nostrum to prevent the extension of so deplorable an epidemic, provided there be no quackery in his treatment of the malady. A caustic is here offered; as it is to be feared that nothing short of actual cautery can recover the numerous patients afflicted with the present prevalent and distressing *rabies* for rhyming.—As to the Edinburgh Reviewers, it would indeed require an Hercules to crush the Hydra; but if the author succeeds in merely "bruising one of the heads of the serpent," though his own hand should suffer in the encounter, he will be amply satisfied.

ENGLISH BARDS AND SCOTCH REVIEWERS.*

STILL must I hear?—shall hoarse Fitzgerald bawl
His creaking couplets in a tavern hall,†
And I not sing, lest, haply, Scotch reviews
Should dub me scribbler, and denounce my muse?
Prepare for rhyme—I'll publish, right or wrong:
Fools are my theme, let satire be my song.

Oh! nature's noblest gift—my gray goose-quill!
Slave of my thoughts, obedient to my will,
Torn from thy parent bird to form a pen,
That mighty instrument of little men!
The pen! foredoom'd to aid the mental throes
Of brains that labour, big with verse or prose,
Though nymphs forsake, and critics may deride,
The lover's solace, and the author's pride.
What wits! what poets dost thou daily raise!
How frequent is thy use, how small thy praise!
Condemn'd at length to be forgotten quite,
With all the pages which 'twas thine to write.
But thou, at least, mine own especial pen!
Once laid aside, but now assumed again,
Our task complete, like Hamet's,‡ shall be free;
Though spurn'd by others, yet beloved by me:
Then let us soar to-day; no common theme,
No eastern vision, no distemper'd dream
Inspires—our path, though full of thorns, is plain;
Smooth be the verse, and easy be the strain.

When Vice triumphant holds her sov'reign sway,
Obey'd by all who nought beside obey;
When Folly, frequent harbinger of crime,
Bedecks her cap with bells of every clime;
When knaves and fools combined o'er all prevail,
And weigh their justice in a golden scale;

* Written at Newstead in 1808.

† *IMIT.*—

"Semper ego auditor tantum! nunquamne reponam,
Vexatus toties ranci Theseide Codri?"—*Juv. Sat. 1.—E.*

‡ Mr Fitzgerald, facetiously termed by Cobbett the "Small Beer Poet," inflicts his annual tribute of verse on the Literary Fund; not content with writing, he spouts in person, after the company have imbibed a reasonable quantity of bad port, to enable them to sustain the operation.—*B.*

§ Cid Hamet Benengell promises repose to his pen, in the last chapter of *Don Quixotte*. Oh! that our voluminous gentry would follow the example of Cid Hamet Benengell.—*B.*

E'en then the boldest start from public sneers,
Afraid of shame, unknown to other fears,
More darkly sin, by satire kept in awe,
And shrink from ridicule, though not from law.

Such is the force of wit! but not belong
To me the arrows of satiric song;
The royal vices of our age demand
A keener weapon, and a mightier hand.
Still there are follies, e'en for me to chase,
And yield at least amusement in the race:
Laugh when I laugh, I seek no other fame;
The cry is up, and scribblers are my game.
Speed, Pegasus!—ye strains of great and small,
Ode, epic, elegy, have at you all!
I too can scrawl, and once upon a time
I pour'd along the town a flood of rhyme,
A schoolboy freak, unworthy praise or blame;
I printed—older children do the same.
'Tis pleasant, sure, to see one's name in print;
A book's a book, although there's nothing in't,
Not that a title's sounding charm can save
Or scrawl or scribbler from an equal grave:
This Lambe must own, since his patrician name
Fail'd to preserve the spurious farce from shame.*
No matter, George continues still to write,†
Though now the name is veil'd from public sight.
Moved by the great example, I pursue
The self-same road, but make my own review:
Not seek great Jeffrey's, yet like him, will be
Self-constituted judge of poesy.

A man must serve his time to ev'ry trade
Save censure—critics all are ready made.
Take hackney'd jokes from Miller, got by rote,
With just enough of learning to misquote;
A mind well skill'd to find or forge a fault;
A turn for punning, call it Attic salt;
To Jeffrey go, be silent and discreet,
His pay is just ten sterling pounds per sheet.
Fear not to lie, 'twill seem a sharper hit;
Shrink not from blasphemy, 'twill pass for wit:
Care not for feeling—pass your proper jest,
And stand a critic, hated yet caress'd.

And shall we own such judgment? no—as soon
Seek roses in December—ice in June;
Hope constancy in wind, or corn in chaff;
Believe a woman or an epitaph,
Or any other thing that's false, before
You trust in critics, who themselves are sore;
Or yield one single thought to be misled

* This ingenuous youth is mentioned more particularly, with his production, in another place.—*B.*
† In the *Edinburgh Review*.—*B.*

By Jeffrey's heart, or Lambe's Bœotian head,*
 To these young tyrants,† by themselves misplaced,
 Combined usurpers on the throne of taste;
 To these, when authors bend in humble awe,
 And hail their voice as truth, their word as law—
 While these are censors, 'twould be sin to spare;
 While such are critics, why should I forbear?
 But yet, so near all modern worthies run,
 'Tis doubtful whom to seek, or whom to shun;
 Nor know we when to spare, or where to strike,
 Our bards and censors are so much alike.

Then should you ask me,‡ why I venture o'er
 The path which Pope and Gifford§ trod before:
 If not yet sicken'd, you can still proceed:
 Go on; my rhyme will tell you as you read.
 "But hold!" exclaims a friend,—"here's some neglect:
 This—that—and t'other line seem incorrect."
 What then? the self same blunder Pope has got,
 And careless Dryden—"Aye, but Pye has not."
 Indeed!—'tis granted, faith!—but what care I?
 Better to err with Pope, than shine with Pye. ||

Time was, ere yet in these degenerate days
 Ignoble themes obtain'd mistaken praise,
 When sense and wit with poesy allied,
 No fabled graces, flourish'd side by side;
 From the same fount their inspiration drew,
 And, rear'd by taste, bloom'd fairer as they grew.
 Then, in this happy isle, a Pope's pure strain
 Sought the rapt soul to charm, nor sought in vain;
 A polish'd nation's praise aspir'd to claim,
 And raised the people's, as the poet's fame.
 Like him great Dryden pour'd the tide of song,
 In stream less smooth, indeed, yet doubly strong.
 Then Congreve's¶ scenes could cheer, or Otway's melt—††
 For nature then an English audience felt.
 By why these names, or greater still, retrace,
 When all to feebler bards resign their place?
 Yet to such times our lingering looks are cast,
 When taste and reason with those times are past.
 Now look around, and turn each trifling page,
 Survey the precious works that please the age;
 This truth at least let satire's self allow,
 No dearth of bards can be complain'd of now.
 The loaded press beneath her labour groans,

* Messrs Jeffrey and Lambe are the alpha and omega, the first and the last of the Edinburgh Review; the others are mentioned hereafter.—B.

† IMIT.—

"Stulta est Clementia, cum tot ubique

—occurras peritura parcere chartæ."—*Juv. Sat. I.*—B.

‡ IMIT.—

"Cur tamen hoc libeat potius decurrere campo

Per quem magnus equos Aurunce flexit alumnus:

Si vacat, et placidi rationem admittitis, edam."—*Juv. Sat. I.*—B.

§ William Gifford, founder and first editor of the Quarterly Review, and author of *The Baviad*, the *Mæviad*, &c.

|| Poet Laureate from 1799 till 1813.

¶ William Congreve, author of "Love for Love," "The Mourning Bride," &c.

†† Thomas Otway, author of "The Orphan," "Venice Preserved," &c.

And printer's devils shake their weary bones;
 While Southey's epics cram the creaking shelves
 And Little's lyrics shine in hot-pressed twelves.
 Thus saith the Preacher: "Nought beneath the sun
 Is new:" yet still from change to change we run:
 What varied wonders tempt us as they pass!
 The cow-pox, tractors, galvanism, and gas,
 In turns appear to make the vulgar stare,
 Till the swollen bubble bursts—and all is air!
 Nor less new schools of Poetry arise,
 Where dull pretenders grapple for the prize:
 O'er taste awhile these pseudo-bards prevail;
 Each country book-club bows the knee to Baal,
 And, hurling lawful genius from the throne,
 Erects a shrine and idol of its own:
 Some leaden calf—but whom it matters not,
 From soaring Southey down to grovelling Stott.*

Behold! in various throngs the scribbling crew,
 For notice eager, pass in long review:
 Each spurs his jaded Pegasus apace,
 And rhyme and blank maintain an equal race:
 Sonnets on sonnets crowd, and ode on ode;
 And tales of terror jostle on the road;
 Immeasurable measures move along;
 For simpering folly loves a varied song.
 To strange mysterious dulness still the friend
 Admires the strain she cannot comprehend.
 Thus Lays of Minstrels—may they be the last!—
 On half-strung harps whine mournful to the blast.†
 While mountain spirits prate to river sprites,

* Stott, better known in the "Morning Post" by the name of Hafz. This personage is at present the most profound explorer of the bathos. I remember, when the reigning family left Portugal, a special Ode of Master Stott's, beginning thus:—(*Stott loquitur quoad Hibernia.*)—

"Princely offspring of Braganza,

Erin greets thee with a stanza," &c.

Also, a Sonnet to Rats, well worthy of the subject, and a most thundering Ode, commencing as follows:—

"Oh! for a Lay, loud as the surge

That lashes Lapland's sounding shore."

the "Lay of the Last Minstrel" was nothing to this.—B.

† See the "Lay of the Last Minstrel," *passim*. Never was any plan so incongruous and absurd as the groundwork of this production. The entrance of Thunder and Lightning, prologuising to Bayes' tragedy, unfortunately takes away the merit of originality from the dialogue between Messieurs the Spirits of Flood and Fell in the first canto. Then we have the amiable William of Deloraine, "a stark moss-trooper," videlicet, a happy compound of poacher, sheep-stealer, and highwayman. The propriety of his magical lady's injunction not to read can only be equalled by his candid acknowledgment of his independence of the trammels of spelling, although to use his own elegant phrase, "twas his neck verse at Harribee," i. e. the gallows.—The biography of Gilpin Horner, and the marvellous pedestrian page, who travelled twice as fast as his master's horse, without the aid of seven-legged boots, are *chef-d'œuvres* in the improvement of taste. For incident, we have the invisible, but by no means sparing, box on the ear bestowed on the page, and the entrance of a knight and charger into the castle, under the very natural disguise of a wain of hay. Marmion, the hero of the latter romance, is exactly what William of Deloraine would have been, had he been able to read and write. The poem was manufactured for Messrs Constable, Murray, and Miller, worshipful booksellers, in consideration of the receipt of a sum of money; and truly, considering the inspiration, it is a very creditable production. If Mr Scott will write for hire, let him do his best for his pay-masters, but not disgrace his genius, which is undoubtedly great, by a repetition of black-letter ballad imitations.—B.

That dames may listen to the sound at nights;
 And goblin brats of Gilpin Horner's brood,
 Decoy young border-nobles through the wood,
 And skip at every step, — knows how high,
 And frighten foolish babes, — knows why;
 While high-born ladies in their magic cell,
 Forbidding knights to read who cannot spell,
 Despatch a courier to a wizard's grave,
 And fight with honest men to shield a knave.

Next, view in state, proud prancing on his roan,
 The golden-crested haughty Marmion,
 Now forging scrolls, now foremost in the fight,
 Not quite a felon, yet but half a knight,
 The gibbet or the field prepared to grace;
 A mighty mixture of the great and base.
 And think'st thou, Scott! by vain conceit perchance,
 On public taste to foist thy stale romance,
 Though Murray with his Miller may combine
 To yield thy muse just half-a-crown per line?
 No! when the sons of song descend to trade,
 Their bays are sear, their former laurels fade.
 Let such forego the poet's sacred name,
 Who rack their brains for lucre, not for fame:
 Still for stern Mammon may they toil in vain!
 And sadly gaze on gold they cannot gain!
 Such be their meed, such still the just reward
 Of prostituted muse and hireling bard!
 For this we spurn Apollo's venal son,
 And bid a long "good night to Marmion!"*

These are the themes that claim our plaudist now;
 These are the bards to whom the muse must bow;
 While Milton, Dryden, Pope, alike forgot,
 Resign their hallow'd bays to Walter Scott.

The time has been, when yet the muse was young,
 When Homer swept the lyre, and Maro† sung,
 An epic scarce ten centuries could claim,
 While awe-struck nations hail'd the magic name;
 The work of each immortal bard appears
 The single wonder of a thousand years.‡
 Empires have moulder'd from the face of earth,
 Tongues have expired with those who gave them birth,
 Without the glory such a strain can give,
 As even in ruin bids the language live.
 Not so with us, though minor bards content,
 On one great work a life of labour spent:
 With eagle pinion soaring to the skies,
 Behold the ballad-monger Southey rise!

* "Good night to Marmion"—the pathetic and also prophetic exclamation of Henry Bount, Esquire, on the death of honest Marmion.—E.

† As the *Odyssey* is so closely connected with the story of the *Iliad*, they may almost be classed as one grand historical poem. In alluding to Milton and Tasso, we consider the "Paradise Lost," and "Giusalemme Liberata," as their standard efforts; since neither the "Jerusalem Conquered" of the Italian, nor the "Paradise Regained" of the English bard, obtained a proportionate celebrity to their former poems. Query: Which of Mr Southey's will survive!—E.

To him let Camoëns,* Milton, Tasso yield,
 Whose annual strains, like armies, take the field
 First in the ranks see Joan of Arc advance,
 The scourge of England and the boast of France!
 Though burnt by wicked Bedford for a witch,
 Behold her statue placed in glory's niche;
 Her fetters burst, and just released from prison,
 A virgin phoenix from her ashes risen.
 Next see tremendous Thalaba come on,†
 Arabia's monstrous, wild and wondrous son;
 Domdaniel's dread destroyer, who o'erthrew
 More mad magicians than the world e'er knew.
 Immortal hero! all thy foes o'ercome,
 For ever reign—the rival of Tom Thumb!
 Since startled metre fled before thy face,
 Well wert thou doom'd the last of all thy race!
 Well might triumphant genii bear thee hence,
 Illustrious conqueror of common sense!
 Now, last and greatest, Madoc spreads his sails,
 Cacique in Mexico, and prince in Wales;
 Tells us strange tales, as other travellers do,
 More old than Mandeville's,‡ and not so true.
 Oh Southey! Southey!§ cease thy varied song!
 A bard may chant too often and too long:
 As thou art strong in verse, in mercy, spare!
 A fourth, alas! were more than we could bear.
 But if, in spite of all the world can say,
 Thou still wilt verseward plod thy weary way;
 If still in Berkley ballads|| most uncivil,
 Thou wilt devote old women to ———,
 The babe unborn thy dread intent may rue:
 "— help thee," Southey, and thy readers too.

Next comes the dull disciple of thy school,
 That mild apostate from poetic rule,
 The simple Wordsworth, framer of a lay
 As soft as evening in his favourite May,
 Who warns his friend "to shake off toil and trouble,
 And quit his books, for fear of growing double;"¶
 Who, both by precept and example, shows
 That prose is verse, and verse is merely prose;

* A celebrated poet of Portugal.

† "Thalaba." Mr Southey's second poem, is written in open defiance of precedent and poetry. Mr S. wished to produce something novel, and succeeded to a miracle "Joan of Arc" was marvellous enough, but "Thalaba" was one of those poems "which," in the words of Porson, "will be read when Homer and Virgil are forgotten, but—not till then."—E.

‡ Sir John Mandeville, the traveller.

§ We beg Mr Southey's pardon: "Madoc disdains the degrading title of epic." See his preface. Why is epic degraded? and by whom? Certainly the late romaunts of Masters Cottle, Laureate Pye, Ogilvy, Hole, and gentle Mistress Cowley, have not exalted the epic muse; but as Mr Southey's poem "disdains the appellation," allow us to ask—has he substituted anything better in his stead? or must he be content to rival Sir Richard Blackmore in the quantity as well as quality of his verse?—E.

|| See "The Old Woman of Berkley," a ballad, by Mr Southey, wherein an aged gentlewoman is carried away by Beelzebub, on a "high-trotting horse."—E.

¶ Lyrical Ballads p. 4.—"The Tables Turned." Stanza 1.

"Up, up, my friend, and clear your looks;

Why all this toil and trouble?

Up, up, my friend, and quit your books.

Or surely you'll grow double"—E.

Convincing all, by demonstration plain,
Poetic souls delight in prose insane;
And Christmas stories tortured into rhyme
Contain the essence of the true sublime.
Thus, when he tells the tale of Betty Foy,
The idiot mother of an "idiot boy,"
A moon-struck silly lad, who lost his way,
And, like his bard, confounded night with day;
So close on each pathetic part he dwells,
And each adventure so sublimely tells,
That all who view the "idiot in his glory,"
Conceive the bard the hero of the story.

Shall gentle Coleridge pass unnoticed here,
To turgid ode and tumid stanza dear?
Though themes of innocence amuse him best,
Yet still obscurity's a welcome guest.
If Inspiration should her aid refuse
To him who takes a pixy for a muse,
Yet none in lofty numbers can surpass
The bard who soars to elegise an ass.
So well the subject suits his noble mind,
He brays, the laureate of the long-ear'd kind.

Oh! wonder-working Lewis! monk, or bard,
Who fain wouldst make Parnassus a churchyard!
Lo! wreaths of yew, not laurel, bind thy brow,
Thy muse a sprite, Apollo's sexton thou!
Whether on ancient tombs thou tak'st thy stand,
By gibb'ring spectres hail'd, thy kindred band;
Or tracest chaste descriptions on thy page,
To please the females of our modest age;
All hail, M.P.! † from whose infernal brain
Thin sheeted phantoms glide, a grisly train;
At whose command "grim women" throng in crowds,
And kings of fire, of water, and of clouds,
With "small gray men," "wild yagars," and what not,
To crown with honour thee and Walter Scott;
Again all hail! if tales like thine may please,
St Luke alone can vanquish the disease:

Who in soft guise, * * *
Strikes his wild lyre, whilst listening dames are hush'd?
'Tis Little! young Catullus of his day,
As sweet, but as immoral, in his lay!
Grieved to condemn, the muse must still be just,
Nor spare melodious advocates of lust.

* Mr W. in his preface labours hard to prove, that prose and verse are much the same; and certainly his precepts and practice are strictly conformable:—

† And thus to Betty's questions he

Made answer, like a traveller bold,

The cock did crow, to-whoo, to-whoo,

And the sun did shine so cold." &c. &c., p. 129.—B.

† Coleridge's Poems, Songs of the Pixies, i.e. Devonshire fairies [in that country they are called Piskeyes,] we have "Lines to a young Lady;" and, "Lines to a young Ass."—B.

† "For every one knows little Matt's an M.P."—See a poem to Mr Lewis, in "The Statesman," supposed to be written by Mr Jekyll.—B.

Pure is the flame which o'er her altar burns;
From grosser incense with disgust she turns:
Yet kind to youth, this expiation o'er,
She bids thee "mend thy line, and sin no more."

For thee, translator of the tinsel song,
To whom such glittering ornaments belong,
Hibernian Strangford!* with thine eyes of blue,
And boasted locks of red or auburn hue,
Whose plaintive strain each love-sick miss admires,
And o'er harmonious fustian half expires,
Learn if thou can'st, to yield thine author's sense,
Nor vend thy sonnets on a false pretence.
Think'st thou to gain thy verse a higher place,
By dressing Camoëns† in a suit of lace?
Mend, Strangford! mend thy morals and thy taste;
Be warm, but pure; be amorous, but be chaste:
Cease to deceive; thy pilfer'd harp restore,
Nor teach the Lusian bard to copy Moore.

Behold!—ye tarts! one moment spare the text—
Hayley's last work, and worst—until his next;
Whether he spin poor couplets into plays,
Or—the dead with purgatorial praise,
His style in youth or age is still the same,
For ever feeble and for ever tame.
Triumphant first see "Temper's Triumph" shine!
At least I'm sure they triumph'd over mine.
Of "Music's Triumph," all who read may swear,
That luckless music never triumph'd there.‡

Moravians, rise! bestow some meet reward
On dull devotion—Lo! the Sabbath bard,
Sepulchral Grahame,§ pours his notes sublime
In mangled prose, nor e'en aspires to rhyme;
Breaks into blank the gospel of St Luke,
And boldly pilfers from the Pentateuch;
And, undisturb'd by conscientious qualms,
Perverts the Prophets, and purloins the Psalms.

Hail, Sympathy! thy soft idea brings
A thousand visions of a thousand things,
And shows, still whimpering through threescore of years,
The maudlin prince of mournful sonneteers.
And art thou not their prince, harmonious Bowles!
Thou first, great oracle of tender souls?
Whether thou sing'st with equal ease, and grief,

* The reader, who may wish for an explanation of this, may refer to "Strangford's Camoëns," p. 127, note to p. 56, or to the last page of the Edinburgh Review of Strangford's Camoëns.—B.

† It is also to be remarked, that the things given to the public as poems of Camoëns are no more to be found in the original Portuguese than in the Song of Solomon.—B.

‡ Hayley's two most notorious verse productions are "Triumphs of Temper," and "The Triumph of Music." He has also written much comedy in rhyme, epistles, &c. &c. As he is rather an elegant writer of notes and biography, let us recommend Pope's advice to Wycherley to Mr H's consideration, viz. "to convert his poetry into prose," which may be easily done by taking away the final syllable of each couplet.—B.

§ Mr Grahame has poured forth two volumes of cant, under the name of "Sabbath Walks," and "Biblical Pictures."—B.

The fall of empires, or a yellow leaf;
Whether thy muse most lamentably tells
What merry sounds proceed from Oxford bells,*
Or, still in bells delighting, finds a friend
In every chime that jingled from Ostend;
Ah! how much juster were thy muse's hap,
If to thy bells thou wouldst but add a cap!
Delightful Bowles! still blessing and still blest,
All love thy strain, but children like it best.

* * * * *
Now to soft themes thou scornest to confine
The lofty numbers of a harp like thine;
"Awake a louder and a loftier strain,"[†]
Such as none heard before, or will again!
Where all Discoveries jumbled from the flood
Since first the leaky ark reposed in mud,
By more or less, are sung in every book,
From Captain Noah down to Captain Cook.
Nor this alone; but, pausing on the road,
The bard sighs forth a gentle episode;‡
And gravely tells—attend, each beauteous miss!—
When first Madeira trembled to a kiss.
Bowles! in thy memory let this precept dwell,
Stick to thy sonnets, man!—at least they sell.
But if some new-born whim, or larger bribe,
Prompt thy crude brain, and claim thee for a scribe;
If chance some bard, though once by dunces fear'd,
Now, prone in dust, can only be revered;
If Pope, whose fame and genius, from the first,
Have foil'd the best of critics, needs the worst,
Do thou essay; each fault, each failing scan,
The first of poets was, alas! but man.
Rake from each ancient dunghill every pearl,
Consult Lord Fanny, and confide in Curll;§
Let all the scandals of a former age
Perch on thy pen, and flutter o'er thy page
Affect a candour which thou canst not feel,
Clothe envy in the garb of honest zeal;
Write as if St John's|| soul could still inspire,
And do from hate what Mallet¶ did for hire:

* Bowles' "Sonnet to Oxford," and "Stanzas on hearing the Bells of Ostend."—B.
† "Awake a louder," &c., is the first line in Bowles' "Spirit of Discovery," a very spirited and pretty dwarf-epic. Among other exquisite lines we have the following:—

"A kiss

Stole on the list'ning silence, never yet
Here heard: they trembled even as if the power," &c. &c.,

That is, the woods of Madeira trembled to a kiss; very much astonished, as well they might be, at such a phenomenon.—B.

‡ The episode above alluded to is the story of "Robert a Machin" and "Anna d'Arfet," a pair of constant lovers, who performed the kiss above mentioned, that startled the woods of Madeira.—B.

§ Curll is one of the heroes of the Dunciad, and was a bookseller. Lord Fanny is the poetical name of Lord Hervey, author of "Lines to the Imitator of Horace."—B.

|| St John, Viscount Bolingbroke.

¶ Lord Bolingbroke hired Mallet to traduce Pope after his decease, because the poet had retained some copies of a work by Lord Bolingbroke—"the Patriot King,"—which that splendid but malignant genius had ordered to be destroyed.—B.

Oh! hadst thou lived in that congenial time,
To rave with Dennis, and with Ralph to rhyme;^{*}
Throng'd with the rest around his living head,
Nor raised thy hoof against the lion dead;†
A meet reward had crown'd thy glorious gains,
And link'd thee to the Dunciad for thy pains.

Another epic! who inflicts again
More books of blank upon the sons of men?
Bœotian Cottle, rich Bristowa's boast,
Imports old stories from the Cambrian coast,
And sends his goods to market—all alive!
Lines forty thousand, cantos twenty-five!
Fresh fish from Helicon! who'll buy? who'll buy?
The precious bargain's cheap—in faith, not I.
Your turtle-feeder's verse must needs be flat,
Though Bristol bloat him with the verdant fat;
If Commerce fills the purse, she clogs the brain,
And Amos Cottle strikes the lyre in vain.
In him an author's luckless lot behold,
Condemn'd to make the books which once he sold.
Oh, Amos Cottle!—Phœbus! what a name,
To fill the speaking-trump of future fame!—
Oh, Amos Cottle! for a moment think,
What meagre profits spring from pen and ink!
When thus devoted to poetic dreams,
Who will peruse thy prostituted reams?
Oh pen perverted! paper misapplied!
Had Cottle still adorn'd the counter's side,
Bent o'er the desk, or, born to useful toils,
Been taught to make the paper which he soils,
Plough'd, delved, or plied the oar with lusty limb,
He had not sung of Wales, nor I of him.

As Sisyphus against the infernal steep
Rolls the huge rock whose motions ne'er may sleep,
So up thy hill, ambrosial Richmond, heaves
Dull Maurice§ all his granite weight of leaves:
Smooth, solid monuments of mental pain!
The petrifications of a plodding brain,
That ere they reach the top, fall lumbering back again.

With broken lyre, and cheek serenely pale,
Lo! sad Alcæus wanders down the vale;

* Dennis the critic, and Ralph the rhymster.—

† Silence, ye wolves! while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
Making night hideous; answer him, ye owls!"—

Dunciad.—B.

‡ See Bowles' late edition of Pope's Works, for which he received three hundred pounds. Thus Mr B. has experienced how much easier it is to profit by the reputation of another than to elevate his own.—B.

§ Mr Cottle, Amos, Joseph, I don't know which, but one or both, once sellers of books they did not write, and now writers of books they do not sell, have published a pair of epics.—"Alfred,"—(poor Alfred! Pye has been at him too)—"Alfred" and the "Fall of Cambria"—B.

¶ Mr Maurice hath manufactured the component parts of a ponderous quarto, upon the beauties of "Richmond Hill," and the like:—It also takes in a charming view of Turnham Green, Hammersmith, Brentford, Old and New, and the parts adjacent.—B.