

And mine's the guilt, and mine the hell,
This bosom's desolation dooming;
And I have earn'd those tortures well,
Which unconsumed are still consuming

ON THE DAY OF THE DESTRUCTION OF
JERUSALEM BY TITUS.

FROM the last hill that looks on thy once holy dome
I beheld thee, O Sion! when render'd to Rome:
'Twas thy last sun went down, and the flames of thy fall
Flash'd back on the last glance I gave to thy wall.

I look'd for thy temple, I look'd for my home,
And forgot for a moment my bondage to come;
I beheld but the death-fire that fed on thy fane,
And the fast-fetter'd hands that made vengeance in vain.

On many an eve, the high spot whence I gazed
Had reflected the last beam of day as it blazed;
While I stood on the height, and beheld the decline
Of the rays from the mountain that shone on thy shrine.

And now on that mountain I stood on that day,
But I mark'd not the twilight beam melting away;
Oh! would that the lightning had glared in its stead,
And the thunderbolt burst on the conqueror's head!

But the gods of the Pagan shall never profane
The shrine where Jehovah disdain'd not to reign;
And scatter'd and scorn'd as thy people may be,
Our worship, O Father, is only for thee.

BY THE RIVERS OF BABYLON WE SAT DOWN
AND WEPT.

We sate down and wept by the waters
Of Babel, and thought of the day
When our foe, in the hue of his slaughters,
Made Salem's high places his prey;
And ye, oh her desolate daughters!
Were scatter'd all weeping away.

While sadly we gazed on the river
Which roll'd on in freedom below,
They demanded the song; but, oh never
That triumph the stranger shall know!
May this right hand be wither'd for ever,
Ere it string our high harp for the foe!

On the willow that harp is suspended,
O Salem! its sound should be free;
And the hour when thy glories were ended
But left me that token of thee:
And ne'er shall its soft tones be blended
With the voice of the spoiler by me!

THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB.

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen:
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown.

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heav'd, and for ever grew still!

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his pride:
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock-beating surf.

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his mail;
And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

And the widows of Asshur are loud in their wail,
And the idols are broke in the temple of Baal:
And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord!

A SPIRIT PASS'D BEFORE ME.

FROM JOB.

A SPIRIT pass'd before me: I beheld
The face of immortality unveil'd—
Deep sleep came down on every eye save mine—
And there it stood,—all formless—but divine:
Along my bones the creeping flesh did quake;
And as my damp hair stiffen'd, thus it spake:

“Is man more just than God? Is man more pure
Than he who deems even seraphs insecure?
Creatures of clay—vain dwellers in the dust!
The moth survives you, and are ye more just?
Things of a day! you wither ere the night,
Heedless and blind to Wisdom's wasted light?”

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.

TO
JOHN HOBHOUSE, ESQ.,

THIS POEM IS INSCRIBED

BY HIS
FRIEND.

January 22, 1816.

ADVERTISEMENT.

* THE grand army of the Turks (in 1715), under the Prime Vizier, to open to themselves a way into the heart of the Morea, and to form the siege of Napoli di Romania, the most considerable place in all that country,* thought it best in the first place to attack Corinth, upon which they made several storms. The garrison being weakened, and the governor seeing it was impossible to hold out against so mighty a force, thought it fit to beat a parley: but while they were treating about the articles, one of the magazines in the Turkish camp, wherein they had six hundred barrels of powder, blew up by accident, whereby six or seven hundred men were killed; which so enraged the infidels, that they would not grant any capitulation, but stormed the place with so much fury, that they took it, and put most of the garrison, with Signior Minotti, the governor, to the sword. The rest, with Antonio Bembo, provveditor extraordinary, were made prisoners of war.—*History of the Turks*, vol. iii., p. 151.

* Napoli di Romania is not now the most considerable place in the Morea, but Tripolitza, where the Pacha resides, and maintains his government. Napoli is near Argos. I visited all three in 1810-11; and in the course of journeying through the country from my first arrival in 1803, I crossed the Isthmus eight times in my way from Attica to the Morea, over the mountains, or in the other direction, when passing from the Gulf of Athens to that of Lepanto. Both the routes are picturesque and beautiful, though very different: that by sea has more sameness; but the voyage being always within sight of land, and often very near it, presents many attractive views of the islands Salamis, Ægina, Poros, &c., and the coast of the Continent.—B

THE SIEGE OF CORINTH.

In the year since Jesus died for men,
Eighteen hundred years and ten,
We were a gallant company,
Riding o'er land, and sailing o'er sea.
Oh! but we went merrily!
We forded the river, and clomb the high hill,
Never our steeds for a day stood still;
Whether we lay in the cave or the shed,
Our sleep fell soft on the hardest bed;
Whether we couch'd in our rough capote,
Or the rougher plank of our gliding boat,
Or stretch'd on the beach, or our saddles spread
As a pillow beneath the resting head,
Fresh we woke upon the morrow:

All our thoughts and words had scope,
We had health, and we had hope,
Toil and travel, but no sorrow.
We were of all tongues and creeds;—
Some were those who counted beads,
Some of mosque, and some of church,
And some, or I mis-say, of neither;
Yet through the wide world might ye search,
Nor find a motlier crew nor blither.

But some are dead, and some are gone,
And some are scatter'd and alone,
And some are rebels on the hills*
That look along Epirus' valleys,
Where freedom still at moments rallies,
And pays in blood oppression's ills;
And some are in a far countree,
And some all restlessly at home;
But never more, Oh! never, we
Shall meet to revel and to roam.
But those hardy days flew cheerily,
And when they now fall drearily,
My thoughts, like swallows, skim the main,
And bear my spirit back again
Over the earth, and through the air,
A wild bird and a wanderer.

* The last tidings recently heard of Dervish (one of the Arnauts who followed me) state him to be in revolt upon the mountains, at the head of some of the bands common in that country in times of trouble.—B. 1815.

'Tis that ever wakes my strain,
 And oft, too oft, implores again
 The few who may endure my lay,
 To follow me so far away.
 Stranger—will thou follow now,
 And sit with me on Acro-Corinth's brow?

I.

Many a vanish'd year and age,
 And tempest's breath, and battle's rage,
 Have swept o'er Corinth; yet she stands,
 A fortress form'd to Freedom's hands.
 The whirlwind's wrath, the earthquake's shock,
 Have left untouch'd her hoary rock,
 The keystone of a land, which still,
 Though fallen, looks proudly on that hill,
 The landmark to the double tide
 That purpling rolls on either side,
 As if their waters chafed to meet,
 Yet pause and crouch beneath her feet.
 But could the blood before her shed
 Since first Timoleon's brother bled,
 Or baffled Persia's despot fled,
 Arise from out the earth which drank
 The stream of slaughter as it sank,
 That sanguine ocean would o'erflow
 Her isthmus idly spread below:
 Or could the bones of all the slain,
 Who perish'd there, be piled again,
 That rival pyramid would rise
 More mountain-like, through those clear skies,
 Than yon tower-capp'd Acropolis,
 Which seems the very clouds to kiss.

II.

On dun Cithæron's ridge appears
 The gleam of twice ten thousand spears;
 And downward to the Isthmian plain,
 From shore to shore of either main,
 The tent is pitch'd, the crescent shines
 Along the Moslem's leaguering lines;
 And the dusk Spahi's bands* advance
 Beneath each bearded pacha's glance;
 And far and wide as eye can reach
 The turban'd cohorts through the beach;
 And there the Arab's camel kneels,
 And there his steed the Tartar wheels,
 The Turcooman hath left his herd,
 The sabre round his loins to gird;
 And there the volleying thunders pour,
 Till waves grow smoother to the roar.
 The trench is dug, the cannon's breath
 Wings the far hissing globe of death;
 Fast whirl the fragments from the wall,

* Turkish Cavalry.

} The life of the Turcomans is wandering and patriarchal; they dwell in tents

Which crumbles with the ponderous ball;
 And from that wall the foe replies,
 O'er dusty plain and smoky skies,
 With fires that answer fast and well
 The summons of the Infidel.

III.

But near and nearest to the wall
 Of those who wish and work its fall,
 With deeper skill in war's black art,
 Than Othman's sons, and high of heart
 As any chief that ever stood
 Triumphant in the fields of blood;
 From post to post, and deed to deed,
 Fast spurring on his reeking steed,
 Where sallying ranks the trench assail,
 And make the foremost Moslem quail;
 Or where the battery guarded well,
 Remains as yet impregnable,
 Alighting cheerily to inspire
 The soldier slackening in his fire;
 The first and freshest of the host
 Which Stamboul's sultan there can boast,
 To guide the follower o'er the field,
 To point the tube, the lance to wield,
 Or whirl around the bickering blade;—
 Was Alp, the Adrian renegade!

IV.

From Venice—once a race of worth
 His gentle sires—he drew his birth;
 But late an exile from her shore,
 Against his countrymen he bore
 The arms they taught to bear; and now
 The turban girt his shaven brow.
 Through many a change had Corinth pass'd
 With Greece to Venice' rule at last;
 And here, before her walls, with those
 To Greece and Venice equal foes,
 He stood a foe with all the zeal
 Which young and fiery converts feel,
 Within whose heated bosom throngs
 The memory of a thousand wrongs.
 To him had Venice ceased to be
 Her ancient civic boast—"the Free;"
 And in the palace of St Mark
 Unnamed accusers in the dark
 Within the "Lion's mouth" had placed
 A charge against him uneffaced:
 He fled in time, and saved his life,
 To waste his future years in strife,
 That taught his land how great her loss
 In him who triumph'd o'er the Cross,
 'Gainst which he rear'd the Crescent high,
 And battled to avenge or die.

V.

Coumourgi*—he whose closing scene
Adorn'd the triumph of Eugene,
When on Carlowitz' bloody plain,
The last and mightiest of the slain,
He sank, regretting not to die,
But curs'd the Christian's victory—
Coumourgi—can his glory cease,
That latest conqueror of Greece,
Till Christian hands to Greece restore
The freedom Venice gave of yore?
A hundred years have roll'd away
Since he refix'd the Moslem's sway,
And now he led the Mussulman,
And gave the guidance of the van
To Alp, who well repaid the trust
By cities levell'd with the dust;
And proved, by many a deed of death,
How firm his heart in novel faith.

VI.

The walls grew weak; and fast, and hot
Against them pour'd the ceaseless shot,
With unabating fury sent
From battery to battlement;
And thunder-like the pealing din
Rose from each heated culverin:
And here and there some crackling dome
Was fired before the exploding bomb:
And as the fabric sank beneath
The shattering shell's volcanic breath,
In red and wreathing columns flash'd
The flame as loud the ruin crash'd,
Or into countless meteors driven,
Its earth-stars melted into heaven;
Whose clouds that day grew doubly dun,
Impervious to the hidden sun,
With volumed smoke that slowly grew
To one wide sky of sulphurous hue.

VII.

But not for vengeance, long delay'd,
Alone, did Alp, the renegade,
The Moslem warriors sternly teach
His skill to pierce the promised breach:
Within these walls a maid was pent
His hope would win, without consent
Of that inexorable sire,

* All Coumourgi, the favourite of three sultans, and Grand Vizier to Achmet III., after recovering Peloponnesus from the Venetians in one campaign, was mortally wounded in the next, against the Germans, at the battle of Peterwaradin (in the plain of Carlowitz), in Hungary, endeavouring to rally his guards. He died of his wounds next day. His last order was the decapitation of General Breuner, and some other German prisoners; and his last words, "Oh that I could thus serve all the Christian dogs!" a speech and act not unlike one of Caligula. He was a young man of great ambition and unbounded presumption: on being told that Prince Eugene, then opposed to him, "was a great general," he said, "I shall become a greater, and at his expense."—B.

Whose heart refused him in its ire,
When Alp, beneath his Christian name,
Her virgin hand aspir'd to claim.
In happier mood, and earlier time,
While unimpeach'd for traitorous crime,
Gayest in gondola or hall,
He glitter'd through the Carnival;
And tun'd the softest serenade
That e'er on Adria's waters play'd
At midnight to Italian maid.

VIII.

And many deem'd her heart was won:
For sought by numbers, given to none,
Had young Francesca's hand remain'd
Still by the church's bonds unchain'd:
And when the Adriatic bore
Lanciotto to the Paynim shore,
Her wonted smiles were seen to fail,
And pensive wax'd the maid and pale;
More constant at confessional,
More rare at masque and festival;
Or seen at such, with downcast eyes,
Which conquer'd hearts they ceased to prize:
With listless look she seems to gaze;
With humbler care her form arrays;
Her voice less lively in the song;
Her step, though light, less fleet among
The pairs, on whom the Morning's glance
Breaks, yet unsated with the dance.

IX.

Sent by the state to guard the land,
(Which, wrested from the Moslem's hand,
While Sobieski* tamed his pride
By Buda's wall and Danube's side,
The chiefs of Venice wrung away
From Patra to Euboea's bay,
Minotti held in Corinth's towers
The Doge's delegated powers.
While yet the pitying eye of Peace
Smiled o'er her long forgotten Greece:
And ere that faithful truce was broke
Which freed her from the unchristian yoke.
With him his gentle daughter came;
Nor there, since Menelaus' dame†
Forsook her lord and land, to prove
What woes await on lawless love,
Had fairer form adorn'd the shore
Than she, the matchless stranger, bore.

X.

The wall is rent, the ruins yawn;
And, with to-morrow's earliest dawn,

John Sobieski, King of Poland.
Helen, whose elopement led to the siege and destruction of Troy.

O'er the disjointed mass shall vault
The foremost of the fierce assault.
The bands are rank'd; the chosen van
Of Tartar and of Mussulman,
The full of hope, misnamed "forlorn,"
Who hold the thought of death in scorn,
And win their way with falchion's force,
Or pave the path with many a corse,
O'er which the following brave may rise,
Their stepping-stone—the last who dies!

XI.

'Tis midnight: on the mountains brown
The cold, round moon shines deeply down
Blue roll the waters, blue the sky
Spreads like an ocean hung on high,
Bespangled with those isles of light,
So wildly, spiritually bright;
Who ever gazed upon them shining
And turn'd to earth without repining,
Nor wish'd for wings to flee away,
And mix with their eternal ray?
The waves on either shore lay there
Calm, clear, and azure as the air;
And scarce their foam the pebbles shook,
But murmur'd meekly as the brook.
The winds were pillow'd on the waves;
The banners droop'd along their staves,
And, as they fell around them furling,
Above them shone the crescent curling;
And that deep silence was unbroke,
Save where the watch his signal spoke,
Save where the steed neigh'd oft and shrill,
And echo answer'd from the hill,
And the wide hum of that wild host
Rustled like leaves from coast to coast,
As rose the Muezzin's* voice in air
In midnight call to wonted prayer;
It rose, that chanted mournful strain,
Like some lone spirit's o'er the plain:
'Twas musical, but sadly sweet,
Such as when winds and harp-strings meet,
And take a long unmeasured tone,
To mortal minstrelsy unknown.
It seem'd to those within the wall
A cry prophetic of their fall:
It struck even the besieger's ear
With something ominous and drear,
An undefined and sudden thrill,
Which makes the heart a moment still,
Then beat with quicker pulse, ashamed
Of that strange sense its silence framed;
Such as a sudden passing-bell
Wakes, though but for a stranger's knell.

* Announcing the hour of prayer from the minaret.

XII.

The tent of Alp was on the shore;
The sound was hush'd, the prayer was o'er;
The watch was set, the night-round made,
All mandates issued and obey'd:
'Tis but another anxious night,
His pains the morrow may requite
With all revenge and love can pay,
In guerdon for their long delay.
Few hours remain, and he hath need
Of rest, to nerve for many a deed
Of slaughter: but within his soul
The thoughts like troubled waters roll.
He stood alone among the host;
Not his the loud fanatic boast
To plant the crescent o'er the cross,
Or risk a life with little loss,
Secure in paradise to be
By Houris loved immortally:
Nor his, what burning patriots feel,
The stern exaltedness of zeal,
Profuse of blood, untired in toil,
When battling on the parent soil.
He stood alone—a renegade
Against the country he betray'd;
He stood alone amidst his band,
Without a trusted heart or hand:
They follow'd him, for he was brave,
And great the spoil he got and gave;
They crouch'd to him, for he had skill
To warp and wield the vulgar will:
But still his Christian origin
With them was little less than sin.
They envied even the faithless fame
He earn'd beneath a Moslem name;
Since he, their mightiest chief, had been
In youth a bitter Nazarene.
They did not know how pride can stoop,
When baffled feelings withering droop;
They did not know how hate can burn
In hearts once changed from soft to stern;
Nor all the false and fatal zeal
The convert of revenge can feel.
He ruled them—man may rule the worst,
By ever daring to be first:
So lions o'er the jackal sway:
The jackal points, he fells the prey,
Then on the vulgar yelling press,
To gorge the relics of success.

XIII.

His head grows fever'd, and his pulse
The quick successive throbs convulse;
In vain from side to side he throws
His form, in courtship of repose;

Or if he dozed, a sound, a start
 Awoke him with a sunken heart.
 The turban on his hot brow press'd,
 The mail weigh'd lead-like on his breast,
 Though oft and long beneath its weight
 Upon his eyes had slumber sate,
 Without or couch or canopy,
 Except a rougher field and sky
 Than now might yield a warrior's bed,
 Than now along the heaven was spread.
 He could not rest, he could not stay
 Within his tent to wait for day,
 But walk'd him forth along the sand,
 Where thousand sleepers strew'd the strand.
 What pillow'd them? and why should he
 More wakeful than the humblest be,
 Since more their peril, worse their toil?
 And yet they fearless dream of spoil;
 While he alone, where thousands pass'd
 A night of sleep, perchance their last,
 In sickly vigil wander'd on,
 And envied all he gazed upon.

XIV.

He felt his soul become more light
 Beneath the freshness of the night.
 Cool was the silent sky, though calm,
 And bathed his brow with airy balm:
 Behind, the camp—before him lay,
 In many a winding creek and bay,
 Lepanto's gulf; and, on the brow
 Of Delphi's hill, unshaken snow,
 High and eternal, such as shone
 Through thousand summers brightly gone,
 Along the gulf, the mount, the clime;
 It will not melt, like man, to time:
 Tyrant and slave are swept away,
 Less form'd to wear before the ray;
 But that white veil, the lightest, frailest,
 Which on the mighty mount thou ballest,
 While tower and tree are torn and rent,
 Shines o'er its craggy battlement;
 In form a peak, in height a cloud,
 In texture like a hovering shroud,
 Thus high by parting Freedom spread,
 As from her fond abode she fled,
 And linger'd on the spot, where long
 Her prophet spirit spake in song.
 Oh! still her step at moments falters
 O'er wither'd fields, and ruin'd altars,
 And fain would wake, in souls too broken,
 By pointing to each glorious token:
 But vain her voice till better days
 Dawn in those yet remember'd rays,

Which shone upon the Persian flying,
 And saw the Spartan smile in dying.

XV.

Not mindless of these mighty times
 Was Alp, despite his flight and crimes;
 And through this night, as on he wander'd,
 And o'er the past and present ponder'd,
 And thought upon the glorious dead
 Who there in better cause had bled,
 He felt how faint and feebly dim
 The fame that could accrue to him,
 Who cheer'd the band, and waved the sword,
 A traitor in a turban'd horde;
 And led them to the lawless siege,
 Whose best success were sacrilege.
 Not so had those his fancy number'd,
 The chiefs whose dust around him slumber'd;
 Their phalanx marshall'd on the plain,
 Whose bulwarks were not then in vain.
 They fell devoted, but undying;
 The very gale their names seem'd sighing:
 The waters murmur'd of their name;
 The woods were peopled with their fame;
 The silent pillar, lone and gray,
 Claim'd kindred with their sacred clay;
 Their spirits wrapp'd the dusky mountain,
 Their memory sparkled o'er the fountain;
 The meanest rill, the mightiest river
 Roll'd mingling with their fame for ever.
 Despite of every yoke she bears,
 That land is glory's still and theirs!
 'Tis still a watch-word to the earth:
 When man would do a deed of worth
 He points to Greece, and turns to tread,
 So sanction'd, on the tyrant's head:
 He looks to her, and rushes on
 Where life is lost, or freedom won.

XVI.

Still by the shore Alp mutely mused,
 And woo'd the freshness Night diffused.
 There shrinks no ebb in that tideless sea,*
 Which changeless rolls eternally;
 So that wildest of waves, in their angriest mood,
 Scarce break on the bounds of the land for a rood;
 And the powerless moon beholds them flow,
 Heedless if she come or go:
 Calm or high, in main or bay,
 On their course she hath no sway.
 The rock unworn its base doth bare,
 And looks o'er the surf, but it comes not there;
 And the fringe of the foam may be seen below,
 On the line that it left long ages ago:

* The reader need hardly be reminded that there are no perceptible tides in the Mediterranean.—B.

A smooth short space of yellow sand
Between it and the greener land.
He wander'd on, along the beach,
Till within the range of a carbine's reach
Of the leaguer'd wall; but they saw him not,
Or how could he 'scape from the hostile shot?
Did traitors lurk in the Christian's hold?
Were their hands grown stiff, or their hearts wax'd cold?
I know not, in sooth; but from yonder wall
There flash'd no fire, and there hiss'd no ball,
Though he stood beneath the bastion's frown,
That flank'd the seaward gate of the town;
Though he heard the sound, and could almost tell
The sullen words of the sentinel,
As his measured step on the stone below
Clank'd, as he paced it to and fro;
And he saw the lean dogs beneath the wall
Hold o'er the dead their carnival,
Gorging and growling o'er carcass and limb;
They were too busy to bark at him!
From a Tartar's skull they had stripp'd the flesh,
As ye peel the fig when its fruit is fresh;
And their white tusks crunch'd o'er the whiter skull,*
As it slipp'd through their jaws, when their edge grew dull,
As they lazily mumbled the bones of the dead,
When they scarce could rise from the spot where they fed;
So well had they broken a lingering fast
With those who had fallen for that night's repast.
And Alp knew, by the turbans that roll'd on the sand,
The foremost of these were the best of his band:
Crimson and green were the shawls of their wear,
And each scalp had a single long tuft of hair,†
All the rest was shaven and bare.
The scalps were in the wild dog's maw,
The hair was tangled round his jaw.

But close by the shore, on the edge of the gulf,
There sat a vulture flapping a wolf,
Who had stolen from the hills, but kept away,
Scared by the dogs, from the human prey;
But he seized on his share of a steed that lay,
Pick'd by the birds, on the sands of the bay.

XVII.

Alp turn'd him from the sickening sight:
Never had shaken his nerves in fight;
But he better could brook to behold the dying,
Deep in the tide of their warm blood lying,
Scorch'd with the death-thirst, and writhing in pain,
Than the perishing dead who are past all pain.
There is something of pride in the perilous hour,
Whate'er be the shape in which death may lower;

* This spectacle I have seen, such as described, beneath the walls of the Seraglio at Constantinople, in the little cavities worn by the Bosphorus in the rock a narrow terrace of which projects between the wall and the water. I think the fact is also mentioned in Hobhouse's Travels. The bodies were probably those of some refractory Janizaries.—B.

† This tuft or long lock, is left, from a superstition that Mahomet will draw them into Paradise by it.—B.

For Fame is there to say who bleeds,
And Honour's eye on daring deeds!
But when all is past, it is humbling to tread
O'er the weltering field of the tombless dead,
And see worms of the earth, and fowls of the air,
Beasts of the forest, all gathering there;
All regarding man as their prey,
All rejoicing in his decay.

XVIII.

There is a temple in ruin stands,
Fashioned by long forgotten hands;
Two or three columns, and many a stone,
Marble and granite, with grass o'ergrown!
Out upon Time! it will leave no more
Of the things to come than the things before!
Out upon Time! who for ever will leave
But enough of the past for the future to grieve
O'er that which hath been, and o'er that which must be:
What we have seen, our sons shall see;
Remnants of things that have pass'd away,
Fragments of stone rear'd by creatures of clay!

XIX.

He sate him down at a pillar's base,
And pass'd his hand athwart his face;
Like one in dreary musing mood,
Declining was his attitude;
His head was drooping on his breast,
Fever'd, throbbing, and oppress'd:
And o'er his brow, so downward bent,
Oft his beating fingers went,
Hurriedly, as you may see
Your own run over the ivory key,
Ere the measured tone is taken
By the chords you would awaken.
There he sate all heavily,
As he heard the night-wind sigh,
Was it the wind through some hollow stone,
Sent that soft and tender moan?*

He lifted his head, and he look'd on the sea,
But it was unrippled as glass may be;
He look'd on the long grass—it waved not a blade,
How was that gentle sound convey'd?
He look'd to the banners—each flag lay still,
So did the leaves on Cithæron's hill,
And he felt not a breath come over his cheek;
What did that sudden sound bespeak?

* I must here acknowledge a close, though unintentional, resemblance in these twelve lines to a passage in an unpublished poem of Mr Coleridge, called "Christabel." It was not till after these lines were written that I heard that wild and singularly original and beautiful poem recited; and the MS. of that production I never saw till very recently, by the kindness of Mr Coleridge himself, who, I hope, is convinced that I have not been a wilful plagiarist. The original idea undoubtedly pertains to Mr Coleridge, whose poem has been composed about fourteen years. Let me conclude by a hope that he will not longer delay the publication of a production, of which I can only add my mite of approbation to the applause of far more competent judges.—B. 1815.

He turn'd to the left—is he sure of sight?
There sate a lady, youthful and bright!

XX.

He started up with more of fear
Than if an armed foe were near.
"God of my fathers! what is here?
Who art thou, and wherefore sent
So near a hostile armament?"
His trembling hands refused to sign
The cross he deem'd no more divine:
He had resumed it in that hour,
But conscience wrung away the power.
He gazed, he saw: he knew the face
Of beauty, and the form of grace;
It was Francesca by his side,
The maid who might have been his bride!
The rose was yet upon her cheek,
But mellow'd with a tenderer streak:
Where was the play of her soft lips fled?
Gone was the smile that enliven'd their red.
The ocean's calm within their view,
Beside her eye had less of blue;
But like that cold wave it stood still,
And its glance, though clear, was chill.
Around her form a thin robe twining,
Nought conceal'd her bosom shining;
Through the parting of her hair,
Floating darkly downward there,
Her rounded arm show'd white and bare:
And ere yet she made reply,
Once she raised her hand on high;
It was so wan, and transparent of hue,
You might have seen the moon shine through.

XXI.

"I come from my rest to him I love best,
That I may be happy, and he may be bless'd.
I have pass'd the guards, the gate, the wall;
Sought thee in safety through foes and all.
'Tis said the lion will turn and flee
From a maid in the pride of her purity;
And the Power on high that can shield the good
Thus from the tyrant of the wood,
Hath extended its mercy to guard me as well
From the hands of the leaguering infidel.
I come—and if I come in vain,
Never, oh never, we meet again!
Thou hast done a fearful deed
In falling away from thy father's creed:
But dash that turban to earth, and sign
The sign of the cross, and for ever be mine;
Wring the black drop from thy heart,
And to-morrow unites us no more to part."
"And where should our bridal couch be spread?
In the midst of the dying and the dead?"

For to-morrow we give to the slaughter and flame
The sons and the shrines of the Christian name.
None, save thou and thine, I've sworn,
Shall be left upon the morn:
But thee will I bear to a lovely spot,
Where our hands shall be join'd, and our sorrow forgot.
There thou yet shalt be my bride,
When once again I've quell'd the pride
Of Venice; and her hated race
Have felt the arm they would debase;
Scourge, with a whip of scorpions, those
Whom vice and envy made my foes."

Upon his hand she laid her own—
Light was the touch, but it thrill'd to the bone,
And shot a chillness to his heart,
Which fix'd him beyond the power to start
Though slight was that grasp so mortal cold,
He could not loose him from its hold;
But never did clasp of one so dear
Strike on the pulse with such feeling of fear,
As those thin fingers, long and white,
Froze through his blood by their touch that night.
The feverish glow of his brow was gone,
And his heart sank so still that it felt like stone,
As he look'd on the face, and beheld its hue,
So deeply changed from what he knew:
Fair but faint—without the ray
Of mind, that made each feature play
Like sparkling waves on a sunny day;
And her motionless lips lay still as death,
And her words came forth without her breath,
And there rose not a heave o'er her bosom's swell,
And there seem'd not a pulse in her veins to dwell.
Though her eye shone out, yet the lids were fix'd,
And the glance that it gave was wild and unmix'd
With aught of change, as the eyes may seem
Of the restless who walk in a troubled dream,
Like the figures on arras, that gloomily glare,
Stirr'd by the breath of the wintry air,
So seen by the dying lamp's fitful light,
Lifeless, but life-like, and awful to sight;
As they seem, through the dimness, about to come down
From the shadowy wall where their images frown;
Fearfully flitting to and fro,
As the gusts on the tapestry come and go.

"If not for love of me be given
Thus much, then, for the love of heaven,—
Again I say—that turban tear
From off thy faithless brow, and swear
Thine injured country's sons to spare,
Or thou art lost, and never shalt see—
Not earth—that's past—but heaven or me.
If this thou dost accord, albeit
A heavy doom 'tis thine to meet.

That doom shall half absolve thy sin,
 And mercy's gate may receive thee within:
 But pause one moment more, and take
 The curse of Him thou didst forsake:
 And look once more to heaven, and see
 Its love for ever shut from thee.
 There is a light cloud by the moon*—
 'Tis passing, and will pass full soon—
 If, by the time its vapoury sail
 Hath ceased her shaded orb to veil,
 Thy heart within thee is not changed,
 Then God and man are both avenged;
 Dark will thy doom be, darker still
 Thine immortality of ill."

Alp look'd to heaven, and saw on high
 The sign she spake of in the sky;
 But his heart was swollen, and turn'd aside,
 By deep interminable pride.
 This first false passion of his breast
 Roll'd like a torrent o'er the rest.
He sue for mercy! *He* dismay'd
 By wild words of a timid maid!
He, wrong'd by Venice, vow to save
 Her sons, devoted to the grave!
 No—though that cloud were thunder's worst,
 And charged to crush him—let it burst!

He look'd upon it earnestly,
 Without an accent of reply;
 He watch'd it passing; it is flown:
 Full on his eye the clear moon shone,
 And thus he spoke—"Whate'er my fate,
 I am no changeling—'tis too late:
 The reed in storms may bow and quiver,
 Then rise again; the tree must shiver.
 What Venice made me, I must be,
 Her foe in all, save love to thee:
 But thou art safe: Oh, fly with me!"

He turn'd, but she is gone!
 Nothing is there but the column stone.
 Hath she sunk in the earth, or melted in air?
 He saw not—he knew not—but nothing is there.

XXII.

The night is past, and shines the sun
 As if that morn were a jocund one.
 Lightly and brightly breaks away
 The Morning from her mantle gray,
 And the Noon will look on a sultry day.
 Hark to the trump and the drum,

* I have been told that the idea expressed in this and the five following lines has been admired by those whose approbation is valuable. I am glad of it; but it is not original—at least not mine; it may be found much better expressed in pages 123-4 of the English version of "Vathek" (I forget the precise page of the French), a work to which I have before referred; and never recur to, *read* without a renewal of gratification.—B.

And the mournful sound of the barbarous horn,
 And the flap of the banners, that fit as they're borne,
 And the neigh of the steed, and the multitude's hum,
 And the clash, and the shout, "They come! they come!"
 The horsetails* are pluck'd from the ground, and the
 sword
 From its sheath; and they form, and but wait for the word.
 Tartar, and Spahi, and Turcoman,
 Strike your tents, and throng to the van;
 Mount ye, spur ye, skirr the plain,
 That the fugitive may fly in vain,
 When he breaks from the town; and none escape,
 Aged or young, in the Christian's shape;
 While your fellows on foot, in a fiery mass,
 Bloodstain the breach through which they pass.
 The steeds are all bridled, and snort to the rein;
 Curved is each neck, and flowing each mane;
 White is the foam of their champ on the bit:
 The spears are uplifted; the matches are lit;
 The cannon are pointed, and ready to roar,
 And crush the wall they have crumbled before:
 Forms in his phalanx each Janiziar;
 Alp at their head; his right arm is bare,
 So is the blade of his scimitar;
 The khan and the pachas are all at their post
 The vizier himself at the head of the host.
 When the culverin's signal is fired, then on
 Leave not in Corinth a living one—
 A priest at her altars, a chief in her halls,
 A hearth in her mansions, a stone on her walls,
 God and the prophets—Alla Hu!
 Up to the skies with that wild halloo!
 "There the breach lies for passage, the ladder to scale;
 And your hands on your sabres, and how should you fail
 He who first downs with the red cross may crave
 His heart's dearest wish; let him ask it, and have!"
 Thus utter'd Coumourgi, the dauntless vizier;
 The reply was the brandish of sabre and spear,
 And the shout of fierce thousands in joyous ire:—
 Silence—hark to the signal—fire!

XXII.

As the wolves that headlong go
 On the stately buffalo,
 Though with fiery eyes, and angry roar,
 And hoofs that stamp, and horns that gore,
 He tramples on earth, or tosses on high
 The foremost, who rush on his strength but to die:
 Thus against the wall they went,
 Thus the first were backward bent;
 Many a bosom sheathed in brass,
 Strew'd the earth like broken glass,
 Shiver'd by the shot, that tore
 The ground whereon they moved no more:

* The horsetails, fixed upon a lance, a pacha's standard.—B.

Even as they fell, in files they lay,
Like the mower's grass at the close of day,
When his work is done on the levell'd plain;
Such was the fall of the foremost slain.

XXIV.

As the spring-tides, with heavy plash,
From the cliffs invading dash
Huge fragments, sapp'd by the ceaseless flow,
Till white and thundering down they go,
Like the avalanche's snow
On the Alpine vales below;
Thus at length, outbreathed and worn,
Corinth's sons were downward borne
By the long and oft renew'd
Charge of the Moslem multitude.
In firmness they stood, and in masses they fell,
Heap'd by the host of the infidel,
Hand to hand, and foot to foot:
Nothing there, save death, was mute;
Stroke, and thrust, and flash, and cry
For quarter, or for victory,
Mingle there with the volleying thunder,
Which makes the distant cities wonder
How the sounding battles goes,
If with them, or for their foes;
If they must mourn, or may rejoice
In that annihilating voice,
Which pierces the deep hills through and through
With an echo dread and new:
You might have heard it, on that day,
O'er Salamis and Megara;
(We have heard the hearers say,
Even unto Piræus' bay.

XXV

From the point of encountering blades to the hilt,
Sabres and swords with blood were gilt;
But the rampart is won, and the spoil begun,
And all but the after carnage done.
Shriller shrieks now mingling come
From within the plunder'd dome:
Hark to the haste of flying feet,
That splash in the blood of the slippery street;
But here and there, where 'vantage ground
Against the foe may still be found,
Desperate groups, of twelve or ten,
Make a pause, and turn again—
With banded backs against the wall,
Fiercely stand, or fighting fall.
There stood an old man—his hairs were white,
But his veteran arm was full of might:
So gallantly bore he the brunt of the fray,
The dead before him, on that day,
In a semicircle lay;

Still he combated unwounded,
Though retreating, unsurrounded.
Many a scar of former fight
Lurk'd beneath his corslet bright;
But of every wound his body bore,
Each and all had been ta'en before:
Though aged, he was so iron of limb,
Few of our youth could cope with him;
And the foes, whom he singly kept at bay,
Outnumber'd his thin hairs of silver grey.
From right to left his sabre swept:
Many an Othman mother wept
Sons that were unborn, when dipp'd
His weapon first in Moslem gore,
Ere his years could count a score.
Of all he might have been the sire
Who fell that day beneath his ire;
For, sonless left long years ago,
His wrath made many a childless foe;
And since the day, when in the strait*
His only boy had met his fate,
His parent's iron hand did doom
More than a human hecatomb.
If shades by carnage be appeased,
Patroclus' spirit less was pleased
Than his, Minotti's son, who died
Where Asia's bounds and ours divide.
Buried he lay, where thousands before
For thousands of years were inhumed on the shore;
What of them is left, to tell
Where they lie, and how they fell?
Not a stone on their turf, nor a bone in their graves;
But they live in the verse that immortally saves.

XXVI.

Hark to the Allah shout! a band
Of the Mussulman bravest and best is at hand:
Their leader's nervous arm is bare,
Swifter to smite, and never to spare—
Unclothed to the shoulder it waves them on;
Thus in the fight is he ever known:
Others a gaudier garb may show,
To tempt the spoil of the greedy foe;
Many a hand's on a richer hilt,
But none on a steel more ruddily gilt;
Many a loftier turban may wear,—
Alp is but known by the white arm bare;
Look through the thick of the fight, 'tis there!
There is not a standard on that shore
So well advanced the ranks before;
There is not a banner in the Moslem war
Will lure the Delhis half so far;
It glances like a falling star!
Where'er that mighty arm is seen,

* In the naval battle at the mouth of the Dardanelles, between the Venetians and the Turks.—

The bravest be, or late have been ;
 There the craven cries for quarter
 Vainly to the vengeful Tartar ;
 Or the hero, silent lying,
 Scorns to yield a groan in dying
 Mustering his last feeble blow
 'Gainst the nearest level'd foe,
 Though faint beneath the mutual wound,
 Grappling on the gory ground.

XXVII.

Still the old man stood erect,
 And Alp's career a moment check'd.
 "Yield thee, Minotti; quarter take,
 For thine own, thy daughter's sake."
 "Never, renegado, never!
 Though the life of thy gift would last for ever."
 "Francesca!—Oh, my promised bride!
 Must she too perish by thy pride?"
 "She is safe."—"Where? where?"—"In heaven;
 From whence thy traitor soul is driven—
 Far from thee, and undefiled."
 Grimly then Minotti smiled,
 As he saw Alp staggering bow
 Before his words, as with a blow.
 "Oh God! when died she?"—"Yesternight—
 Nor weep I for her spirit's flight:
 None of my pure race shall be
 Slaves to Mahomet and thee—
 Come on!"—That challenge is in vain—
 Alp's already with the slain!
 While Minotti's words were wreaking
 More revenge in bitter speaking
 Than his falchion's point had found,
 Had the time allow'd to wound,
 From within the neighbouring porch
 Of a long defended church,
 Where the last and desperate few
 Would the falling fight renew,
 The sharp shot dash'd Alp to the ground,
 Ere an eye could view the wound
 That crash'd through the brain of the infidel,
 Round he spun, and down he fell;
 A flash like fire within his eyes
 Blazed, as he bent no more to rise,
 And then eternal darkness sunk
 Through all the palpitating trunk;
 Nought of life left, save a quivering
 Where his limbs were slightly shivering:
 They turn'd him on his back; his breast
 And brow were stain'd with gore and dust,
 And through his lips his life-blood oozed,
 From its deep veins lately loosed:

But in his pulse there was no throb,
 Nor on his lips one dying sob;
 Sigh, nor word, nor struggling breath
 Heralded his way to death:
 Ere his very thought could pray,
 Unaneled he pass'd away,
 Without a hope from mercy's aid,—
 To the last—a Renegade.

XXVIII.

Fearfully the yell arose
 Of his followers, and his foes;
 These in joy, in fury those:
 Then again in conflict mixing,
 Clashing swords, and spears transfixing,
 Interchanged the blow and thrust,
 Hurling warriors in the dust.
 Street by street, and foot by foot,
 Still Minotti dares dispute
 The latest portion of the land
 Left beneath his high command;
 With him, aiding heart and hand,
 The remnant of his gallant band.
 Still the church is tenable,
 Whence issued late the fated ball
 That half avenged the city's fall.
 When Alp, her fierce assailant, fell:
 Thither bending sternly back,
 They leave before a bloody track;
 And, with their faces to the foe,
 Dealing wounds with every blow,
 The chief, and his retreating train,
 Join to those within the fane;
 There they yet may breathe awhile,
 Shelter'd by the massy pile.

XXIX.

Brief breathing-time! the turban'd host,
 With adding ranks and raging boast,
 Press onwards with such strength and heat,
 Their numbers balk their own retreat;
 For narrow the way that led to the spot
 Where still the Christians yielded not;
 And the foremost, if fearful, may vainly try
 Through the massy column to turn and fly;
 They perform must do or die.
 They die; but ere their eyes could close,
 Avengers o'er their bodies rose;
 Fresh and furious, fast they fill
 The ranks unthinn'd, though slaughter'd still
 And faint the weary Christians wax
 Before the still renew'd attacks:
 And now the Othmans gain the gate;
 Still resists its iron weight,
 And still, all deadly aim'd and hot,
 From every crevice comes the shot;

From every shatter'd window pour
The volleys of the sulphurous shower ;
But the portal wavering grows and weak—
The iron yields, the hinges creak—
It bends—it falls—and all is o'er ;
Lost Corinth may resist no more !

XXX.

Darkly, sternly, and all alone,
Minotti stood o'er the altar stone :
Madonna's face upon him shone,
Painted in heavenly hues above,
With eyes of light and looks of love ;
And placed upon that holy shrine
To fix our thoughts on things divine,
When pictured there, we kneeling see,
Her, and the boy-God on her knee,
Smiling sweetly on each prayer
To heaven, as if to waft it there.
Still she smiled ; even now she smiles,
Though slaughter streams along her aisles :
Minotti lifted his aged eye,
And made the sign of a cross with a sigh,
Then seized a torch which blazed thereby ;
And still he stood, while, with steel and flame,
Inward and onward the Mussulman came.

XXXI.

The vaults beneath the mosaic stone
Contain'd the dead of ages gone ;
Their names were on the graven floor,
But now illegible with gore ;
The carved crests, and curious hues
The varied marble's veins diffuse,
Were smear'd, and slippery—stain'd, and strewn
With broken swords, and helms o'erthrown :
There were dead above, and the dead below
Lay cold in many a coffin'd row ;
You might see them piled in sable state,
By a pale light through a gloomy grate ;
But War had enter'd their dark caves,
And stored along the vaulted graves
Her sulphurous treasures, thickly spread
In masses by the fleshless dead :

Here, throughout the siege, had been
The Christians' chiefest magazine ;
To these a late form'd train now led,
Minotti's last and stern resource
Against the foe's o'erwhelming force.

XXXII.

The foe came on, and few remain
To strive, and those must strive in vain
For lack of further lives, to slake
The thirst of vengeance now awake,
With barbarous blows they gash the dead,
And lop the already lifeless head,

And fell the statues from their niche,
And spoil the shrines of offerings rich,
And from each other's rude hands wrest
The silver vessels saints had bless'd.
To the high altar on they go ;
Oh, but it made a glorious show !
On its table still behold
The cup of consecrated gold ;
Massy and deep, a glittering prize,
Brightly it sparkles to plunderers' eyes :
That morn it held the holy wine,
Converted by Christ to his blood so divine,
Which his worshippers drank at the break of day
To shrive their souls ere they join'd in the fray.
Still a few drops within it lay ;
And round the sacred table glow
Twelve lofty lamps, in splendid row
From the purest metal cast ;
A spoil—the richest, and the last.

XXXIII.

So near they came, the nearest stretch'd
To grasp the spoil he almost reach'd,
When old Minotti's hand
Touch'd with the torch the train—
'Tis fired !
Spire, vaults, the shrine, the spoil, the slain,
The turban'd victors, the Christian band,
All that of living or dead remain,
Hurl'd on high with the shiver'd fane,
In one wild roar expired !
The shatter'd town—the walls thrown down—
The waves a moment backward bent—
The hills that shake, although unrent,
As if an earthquake pass'd—
The thousand shapeless things all driven
In cloud and flame athwart the heaven,
By that tremendous blast—
Proclaim'd the desperate conflict o'er
On that too long afflicted shore :
Up to the sky like rockets go
All that mingled there below :
Many a tall and goodly man,
Scorch'd and shrivell'd to a span,
When he fell to earth again
Like a cinder strew'd the plain :
Down the ashes shower like rain ;
Some fell in the gulf, which received the sprinkles
With a thousand circling wrinkles ;
Some fell on the shore, but, far away,
Scatter'd o'er the isthmus lay ;
Christian or Moslem, which be they ?
Let their mothers see and say !
When in cradled rest they lay,
And each nursing mother smiled

On the sweet sleep of her child,
 Little deem'd she such a day
 Would rend those tender limbs away.
 Not the matrons that them bore
 Could discern their offspring more;
 That one moment left not trace
 More of human form or face
 Save a scatter'd scalp or bone:
 And down came blazing rafters, strown
 Around, and many a falling stone,
 Deeply dinted in the clay,
 All blacken'd there and reeking lay.
 All the living things that heard
 That deadly earth-shock disappear'd:
 The wild birds flew; the wild dogs fled,
 And howling left the unburied dead;
 The camels from their keepers broke;
 The distant steer forsook the yoke—
 The nearer steed plunged o'er the plain,
 And burst his girth, and tore his rein;
 The bull-frog's note, from out the marsh
 Deep-mouth'd arose, and doubly harsh;
 The wolves yell'd on the cavern'd hill
 Where echo roll'd in thunder still;
 The jackal's troop, in gather'd cry,
 Bay'd from afar complainingly,
 With a mix'd and mournful sound,
 Like crying babe, and beaten hound:
 With sudden wing, and ruffled breast,
 The eagle left his rocky nest,
 And mounted nearer to the sun,
 The clouds beneath him seem'd so dun;
 Their smoke assail'd his startled beak,
 And made him higher soar and shriek
 Thus was Corinth lost and won!

PARISINA.
 TO
 SCROPE BERDMORE DAVIES, ESQ.,
 THE FOLLOWING POEM IS INSCRIBED
 BY ONE WHO HAS LONG ADMIR'D HIS TALENTS AND VALUED HIS
 FRIENDSHIP
 January 22, 1816

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following poem is grounded on a circumstance mentioned in Gibbon's "Antiquities of the House of Brunswick." I am aware that in modern times the delicacy or fastidiousness of the reader may deem such subjects unfit for the purposes of poetry. The Greek dramatists, and some of the best of our old English writers, were of a different opinion: as Alfieri and Schiller have also been, more recently, upon the Continent. The following extract will explain the facts on which the story is founded. The name of *Azo* is substituted for *Nicholas*, as more metrical.

"Under the reign of *Nicholas III.* Ferrara was polluted with a domestic tragedy. By the testimony of an attendant, and his own observation, the Marquis of *Este* discovered the incestuous loves of his wife *Parisina* and *Hugo* his bastard son, a beautiful and valiant youth. They were beheaded in the castle by the sentence of a father and husband, who published his shame, and survived their execution. He was unfortunate, if they were guilty: if they were innocent, he was still more unfortunate; nor is there any possible situation in which I can sincerely approve the last act of the justice of a parent."—GIBBON'S *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. iii. p. 470.

PARISINA.

I.

It is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whisper'd word:
And gentle winds, and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear.
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.*

II.

But it is not to list to the waterfall
That *Parisina* leaves her hall,
And it is not to gaze on the heavenly light
That the lady walks in the shadow of night;
And if she sits in *Este's* bower,
'Tis not for the sake of its full-blown flower—
She listens—but not for the nightingale—
Though her ear expects as soft a tale.
There glides a step through the foliage thick,
And her cheek grows pale—and her heart beats quick.
There whispers a voice through the rustling leaves,
And her blush returns, and her bosom heaves;
A moment more—and they shall meet—
'Tis past—her lover's at her feet.

III.

And what unto them is the world beside,
With all its change of time and tide?
Its living things—its earth and sky—
Are nothing to their mind and eye.

* The lines contained in this section were printed as set to music some time since, but belonged to the poem where they now appear; the greater part of which was composed prior to "*Lara*."—B.

And heedless as the dead are they
Of aught around, above, beneath
And if all else had pass'd away,
They only for each other breathe
Their very sighs are full of joy
So deep, that did it not decay,
That happy madness would destroy
The hearts which feel its fiery sway:
Of guilt, of peril, do they deem
In that tumultuous tender dream?
Who that have felt that passion's power,
Or paused, or feared in such an hour?
Or thought how brief such moments last?
But yet—they are already past!
Alas! we must awake before
We know such vision comes no more.

IV.

With many a lingering look they leave
The spot of guilty gladness past;
And though they hope, and vow, they grieve,
As if that parting were the last.
The frequent sigh—the long embrace—
The lip that there would cling for ever,
While gleams on Parisina's face
The Heaven she fears will not forgive her,
As if each calmly conscious star
Beheld her frailty from afar—
The frequent sigh, the long embrace,
Yet binds them to their trysting-place.
But it must come, and they must part
In fearful heaviness of heart,
With all the deep and shuddering chill
Which follows fast the deeds of ill.

V.

And Hugo is gone to his lonely bed,
To covet there another's bride;
But she must lay her conscious head
A husband's trusting heart beside.
But fever'd in her sleep she seems,
And red her cheek with troubled dreams,
And mutters she in her unrest
A name she dare not breathe by day,
And clasps her lord unto the breast
Which pants for one away:
And he to that embrace awakes,
And, happy in the thought, mistakes
That dreaming sigh, and warm caress,
For such as he was wont to bless;
And could in very fondness weep
O'er her who loves him even in sleep.

VI.

He clasp'd her sleeping to his heart,
And listened to each broken word:

He hears—Why doth Prince Azo start,
As if the Archangel's voice he heard?
And well he may—a deeper doom
Could scarcely thunder o'er his tomb,
When he shall wake to sleep no more,
And stand the eternal throne before.
And well he may—his earthly peace
Upon that sound is doom'd to cease.
That sleeping whisper of a name
Bespeaks her guilt and Azo's shame.
And whose that name? that o'er his pillow
Sounds fearful as the breaking billow,
Which rolls the plank upon the shore,
And dashes on the pointed rock
The wretch who sinks to rise no more,—
So came upon his soul the shock.
And whose that name? 'tis Hugo's,—his—
In sooth he had not deem'd of this!—
'Tis Hugo's,—he, the child of one
He loved—his own all-evil son—
The offspring of his wayward youth,
When he betray'd Bianca's truth,
The maid whose folly could confide
In him who made her not his bride.

VII.

He pluck'd his poniard in its sheath,
But sheathed it ere the point was bare—
Howe'er unworthy now to breathe,
He could not slay a thing so fair—
At least, not smiling—sleeping—there—
Nay more:—he did not wake her then,
But gazed upon her with a glance
Which, had she roused her from her trance,
Had frozen her sense to sleep again—
And o'er his brow the burning lamp
Gleam'd on the dew-drops big and damp.
She spake no more—but still she slumber'd—
While, in his thought, her days are number'd.

VIII.

And with the morn he sought, and found,
In many a tale from those around,
The proof of all he fear'd to know,
Their present guilt, his future woe;
The long-conniving damsels seek
To save themselves, and would transfer
The guilt—the shame—the doom—to her:
Concealment is no more—they speak
All circumstance which may compel
Full credence to the tale they tell:
And Azo's tortured heart and ear
Have nothing more to feel or hear.

IX.

He was not one who brook'd delay:
Within the chamber of his state,

The chief of Este's ancient sway
 Upon his throne of judgment sate;
 His nobles and his guards are there,—
 Before him is the sinful pair;
 Both young,—and one how passing fair!
 With swordless belt, and fetter'd hand,
 Oh, ———! that thus a son should stand
 Before a father's face!
 Yet thus must Hugo meet his sire,
 And hear the sentence of his ire,
 The tale of his disgrace!
 And yet he seems not overcome,
 Although, as yet his voice be dumb.

X.

And still, and pale, and silently
 Did Parisina wait her doom;
 How changed since last her speaking eye
 Glanced gladness round the glittering room,
 Where high-born men were proud to wait—
 Where Beauty watch'd to imitate
 Her gentle voice—her lovely mien—
 And gather from her air and gait
 The graces of its queen:
 Then,—had her eye in sorrow wept,
 A thousand warriors forth had leapt,
 A thousand swords had sheathless shone,
 And made her quarrel all their own.
 Now,—what is she? and what are they?
 Can she command, or these obey?
 All silent and unheeding now,
 With downcast eyes and knitting brow,
 And folded arms, and freezing air,
 And lips that scarce their scorn forbear,
 Her knights and dames, her court—is there:
 And he, the chosen one, whose lance
 Had yet been couch'd before her glance,
 Who—were his arm a moment free—
 Had died or gain'd her liberty;
 The minion of his father's bride,—
 He, too, is fetter'd by her side;
 Nor sees her swoln and full eyes swim
 Less for her own despair than him:
 Those lids—o'er which the violet vein
 Wandering, leaves a tender stain,
 Shining through the smoothest white
 That e'er did softest kiss invite—
 Now seem'd with hot and livid glow
 To press, not shade, the orbs below;
 Which glance so heavily, and fill,
 As tear on tear grows gathering still.

XI.

And he for her had also wept,
 But for the eyes that on him gazed:

His sorrow, if he felt it, slept;
 Stern and erect his brow was raised.
 Whate'er the grief his soul avow'd,
 He would not shrink before the crowd
 But yet he dared not look on her:
 Remembrance of the hours that were—
 His guilt—his love—his present state—
 His father's wrath—all good men's hate—
 His earthly, his eternal fate—
 And hers,—Oh, hers! he dared not throw
 One look upon that deathlike brow!
 Else had his rising heart betray'd
 Remorse for all the wreck it made.

XII.

And Azo spake:—"But yesterday
 I gloried in a wife and son;
 That dream this morning pass'd away;
 Ere day declines, I shall have none,
 My life must linger on alone;
 Well,—let that pass,—there breathes not one
 Who would not do as I have done;
 Those ties are broken—not by me;
 Let that too pass:—the doom's prepared!
 Hugo, the priest awaits on thee,
 And then—thy crime's reward!
 Away! address thy prayers to Heaven,
 Before its evening stars are met—
 Learn if thou there canst be forgiven;
 Its mercy may absolve thee yet,
 But here, upon the earth beneath,
 There is no spot where thou and I
 Together, for an hour could breathe:
 Farewell! I will not see thee die—
 But thou, frail thing! shalt view his head—
 Away! I cannot speak the rest:
 Go! woman of the wanton breast;
 Not I, but thou his blood dost shed:
 Go! if that sight thou canst outlive,
 And joy thee in the life I give."

XIII.

And here stern Azo hid his face—
 For on his brow the swelling vein
 Throbb'd as if back upon his brain
 The hot blood ebb'd and flow'd again;
 And therefore bow'd he for a space,
 And pass'd his shaking hand along
 His eye, to veil it from the throng;
 While Hugo raised his chained hands,
 And for a brief delay demands
 His father's ear: the silent sire
 Forbids not what his words require.
 "It is not that I dread the death—
 For thou hast seen me by thy side

All redly through the battle ride,
And that not once a useless brand
Thy slaves have wrested from my hand,
Hath shed more blood in cause of thine,
Than e'er can stain the axe of mine :

Thou gav'st, and may'st resume my breath,
A gift for which I thank thee not ;
Nor are my mother's wrongs forgot,
Her slighted love and ruin'd name,
Her offspring's heritage of shame ;
But she is in the grave, where he,
Her son, thy rival, soon shall be,
Her broken heart—my sever'd head—
Shall witness for thee from the dead
How trusty and how tender were
Thy youthful love—paternal care.

'Tis true that I have done thee wrong—
But wrong for wrong :—this, deem'd thy bride,
The other victim of thy pride,
Thou know'st for me was destined long.
Thou saw'st, and covetest her charms—
And with thy very crime—my birth,
Thou tauntest me—as little worth ;
A match ignoble for her arms,
Because, forsooth, I could not claim
The lawful heirship of thy name,
Nor sit on Este's lineal throne :

Yet, were a few short summers mine,
My name should more than Este's shine
With honours all my own.

I had a sword—and have a breast
That should have won as haught* a crest
As ever waved along the line
Of all these sovereign sires of thine.
Not always knightly spurs are worn
The brightest by the better borne ;
And mine have lanced my courser's flank
Before proud chiefs of princely rank,
When charging to the cheering cry
Of " Este and of Victory !"

I will not plead the cause of crime,
Nor sue thee to redeem from time
A few brief hours or days that must
At length roll o'er my reckless dust ;—
Such maddening moments as my past,
They could not, and they did not, last.
Albeit my birth and name be base,
And thy nobility of race
Disdain'd to deck a thing like me—

Yet in my lineaments they trace
Some features of my father's face,
And in my spirit—all of thee.
From thee—this tamelessness of heart—

* Haught—haughty.—"Away, haught man, thou art insulting me." SHAKESPEARE.—B.

From thee—nay, wherefore dost thou start ?—
From thee in all their vigour came
My arm of strength—my soul of flame—
Thou didst not give me life alone,
But all that made me more thine own.
See what thy guilty love hath done !
Repaid thee with too like a son !
I am no bastard in my soul,
For that, like thine, abhorr'd contro.
And for my breath, that hasty boon
Thou gav'st and wilt resume so soon,
I valued it no more than thou,
When rose thy casque above thy brow,
And we, all side by side, have striven,
And o'er the dead our coursers driven !
The past is nothing—and at last
The future can but be the past ;
Yet would I that I then had died ;
For though thou work'dst my mother's ill,
And made thy own my destined bride,
I feel thou art my father still ;
And, harsh as sounds thy hard decree,
'Tis not unjust, although from thee.
Begot in sin, to die in shame,
My life begun and ends the same :
As err'd the sire, so err'd the son,
And thou must punish both in one.
My crime seems worst to human view,
But God must judge between us too !"

XIV.

He ceased—and stood with folded arms,
On which the circling fetters sounded ;
And not an ear but felt as wounded,
Of all the chiefs that there were rank'd,
When those dull chains in meeting clank'd :
Till Parisina's fatal charms
Again attracted every eye—
Would she thus hear him doom'd to die !
She stood, I said, all pale and still,
The living cause of Hugo's ill :
Her eyes unmoved, but full and wide,
Not once had turn'd to either side—
Nor once did those sweet eyelids close,
Or shade the glance o'er which they rose,
But round their orbs of deepest blue
The circling white dilated grew—
And there with glassy gaze she stood
As ice were in her curdled blood ;
But every now and then a tear
So large and slowly gather'd slid
From the long dark fringe of that fair lid,
It was a thing to see, not hear !
And those who saw, it did surprise,
Such drops could fall from human eyes.

To speak she thought—the imperfect note
 Was choked within her swelling throat,
 Yet seem'd in that low hollow groan
 Her whole heart gushing in the tone.
 It ceased—again she thought to speak,
 Then burst her voice in one long shriek,
 And to the earth she fell like stone
 Or statue from its base o'erthrown,
 More like a thing that ne'er had life,—
 A monument of Azo's wife,—
 Than her, that living guilty thing,
 Whose every passion was a sting,
 Which urged to guilt, but could not bear
 That guilt's detection and despair.
 But yet she lived—and all too soon
 Recover'd from that death-like swoon—
 But scarce to reason—every sense
 Had been o'erstrung by pangs intense ;
 And each frail fibre of her brain
 (As bowstrings, when relax'd by rain,
 The erring arrow launch aside)
 Sent forth her thoughts all wild and wide—
 The past a blank, the future black,
 With glimpses of a dreary track,
 Like lightning on the desert pata,
 When midnight storms are mustering wrath
 She fear'd—she felt that something ill
 Lay on her soul, so deep and chill—
 That there was sin and shame she knew ;
 That some one was to die—but who ?
 She had forgotten :—did she breathe ?
 Could this be still the earth beneath,
 The sky above, and men around ?
 Or were they fiends who now so frown'd
 On one, before whose eyes each eye
 Till then had smiled in sympathy ?
 All was confused and undefined
 To her all-jarr'd and wandering mind ;
 A chaos of wild hopes and fears :
 And now in laughter, now in tears,
 But madly still in each extreme,
 She strove with that convulsive dream ;
 For so it seem'd on her to break :
 Oh ! vainly must she strive to wake

xv.

The Convent bells are ringing,
 But mournfully and slow ;
 In the gray square turret swinging,
 With a deep sound, to and fro.
 Heavily to the heart they go !
 Hark ! the hymn is singing—
 The song for the dead below,
 Or the living who shortly shall be so !
 For a departing being's soul
 The death-hymn peals and the hollow bells knoll :

He is near his mortal goal ;
 Kneeling at the friar's knee ;
 Sad to hear—and piteous to see—
 Kneeling on the bare cold ground,
 With the block before and the guards around—
 And the headman with his bare arm ready,
 That the blow may be both swift and steady,
 Feels if the axe be sharp and true—
 Since he set its edge anew :
 While the crowd in a speechless circle gather
 To see the Son fall by the doom of the Father !

xvi.

It is a lovely hour as yet
 Before the summer sun shall set,
 Which rose upon that heavy day,
 And mock'd it with his steadiest ray ;
 And his evening beams are shed
 Full on Hugo's fated head,
 As his last confession pouring
 To the monk, his doom deploring
 In penitential holiness,
 He bends to hear his accents bless
 With absolution such as may
 Wipe our mortal stains away.
 That high sun on his head did glisten
 As he there did bow and listen—
 And the rings of chestnut hair
 Curl'd half down his neck so bare ;
 But brighter still the beam was thrown
 Upon the axe which near him shone
 With a clear and ghastly glitter—
 Oh ! that parting hour was bitter !
 Even the stern stood chill'd with awe :
 Dark the crime, and just the law—
 Yet they shudder'd as they saw.

xvii.

The parting prayers are said and over
 Of that false son—and daring lover !
 His beads and sins are all recounted,
 His hours to their last minute mounted—
 His mantling cloak before was stripp'd,
 His bright brown locks must now be clipp'd ;
 'Tis done—all closely are they shorn—
 The vest which till this moment worn—
 The scarf which Parisina gave—
 Must not adorn him to the grave.
 Even that must now be thrown aside,
 And o'er his eyes the kerchief tied ;
 But no—that last indignity
 Shall ne'er approach his haughty eye.
 All feelings seemingly subdued,
 In deep disdain were half renew'd,
 When headman's hands prepared to bind
 Those eyes which would not brook such blind.

As if they dared not look on death.
 "No—yours my forfeit blood and breath—
 These hands are chain'd—but let me die
 At least with an unshackled eye—
 "Strike:"—and as the word he said,
 Upon the block he bow'd his head;
 These the last accents Hugo spoke:
 "Strike:"—and flashing fell the stroke—
 Roll'd the head—and, gushing, sunk
 Back the stain'd and heaving trunk,
 In the dust, which each deep vein
 Slaked with its ensanguined rain;
 His eyes and lips a moment quiver,
 Convulsed and quick—then fix for ever.
 He died, as erring man should die,
 Without display, without parade;
 Meekly had he bow'd and pray'd,
 As not disdaining priestly aid,
 Nor desperate of all hope on high.
 And while before the prior kneeling,
 His heart was wean'd from earthly feeling:
 His wrathful sire—his paramour—
 What were they in such an hour?
 No more reproach—no more despair;
 No thought but heaven—no word but prayer—
 Save the few which from him broke,
 When, bared to meet the headman's stroke,
 He claim'd to die with eyes unbound,
 His sole adieu to those around.

XVIII.

Still as the lips that closed in death,
 Each gazer's bosom held his breath:
 But yet, afar, from man to man,
 A cold electric shiver ran,
 As down the deadly blow descended
 On him whose life and love thus ended;
 And, with a hushing sound compress'd,
 A sigh shrunk back on every breast;
 But no more thrilling noise rose there,
 Beyond the blow that to the block
 Pierced through with force and sullen shock,
 Save one:—what cleaves the silent air
 So madly shrill—so passing wild?
 That, as a mother's o'er her child,
 Done to death by sudden blow,
 To the sky these accents go,
 Like a soul's in endless woe.
 Through Azo's palace-lattice driven,
 That horrid voice ascends to heaven,
 And every eye is turn'd thereon
 But sound and sight alike are gone!
 It was a woman's shriek—and ne'er
 In madlier accents rose despair;

And those who heard it, as it past,
 In mercy wish'd it were the last.

XIX.

Hugo is fallen; and, from that hour,
 No more in palace, hall, or bower,
 Was Parisina heard or seen:
 Her name—as if she ne'er had been—
 Was banish'd from each lip and ear,
 Like words of wantonness or fear;
 And from Prince Azo's voice, by none
 Was mention heard of wife or son:
 No tomb—no memory had they;
 Theirs was unconsecrated clay;
 At least the knight's who died that day.
 But Parisina's fate lies hid:
 Like dust beneath the coffin lid:
 Whether in convent she abode,
 And won to heaven her dreary road,
 By blighted and remorseful years
 Of scourge, and fast, and sleepless tears;
 Or if she fell by bowl or steel,
 For that dark love she dared to feel;
 Or if, upon the moment smote,
 She died by tortures less remote;
 Like him she saw upon the block,
 With heart that shared the headman's shock,
 In quicken'd brokenness that came,
 In pity, o'er her shatter'd frame,
 None knew—and none can ever know:
 But whatso'er its end below,
 Her life began and closed in woe.

XX.

And Azo found another bride,
 And goodly sons grew by his side:
 But none so lovely and so brave
 As him who wither'd in the grave:
 Or if they were—on his cold eye
 Their growth but glanced unheeded by,
 Or noticed with a smother'd sigh.
 But never tear his cheek descended,
 And never smile his brow unbended;
 And o'er that fair broad brow were wrought
 The intersected lines of thought;
 Those furrows which the burning share
 Of Sorrow ploughs untimely there;
 Scars of the lacerating mind
 Which the Soul's war doth leave behind.
 He was past all mirth or woe:
 Nothing more remain'd below
 But sleepless nights and heavy days,
 A mind all dead to scorn or praise,
 A heart which shunn'd itself—and yet
 That would not yield—nor could forget,
 Which, when it least appear'd to melt,

Intently thought—intensely felt :
 The deepest ice which ever froze
 Can only o'er the surface close—
 The living stream lies quick below,
 And flows—and cannot cease to flow.
 Still was his seal'd-up bosom haunted
 By thoughts which Nature hath implanted ;
 Too deeply rooted thence to vanish,
 Howe'er our stifled tears we banish ;
 When, struggling as they rise to start,
 We check those waters of the heart,
 They are not dried—those tears unshed
 But flow back to the fountainhead,
 And resting in their spring more pure,
 For ever in its depth endure,
 Unseen, unwept, but uncongeal'd,
 And cherish'd most where least reveal'd.
 With inward starts of feeling left,
 To throb o'er those of life bereft ;
 Without the power to fill again
 The desert gap which made his pain ;
 Without the hope to meet them where
 United souls shall gladness share,
 With all the consciousness that he
 Had only pass'd a just decree ;
 That they had wrought their doom of ill ;
 Yet Azo's age was wretched still.
 The tainted branches of the tree,
 If lopp'd with care, a strength may give
 By which the rest shall bloom and live
 All greenly fresh and wildly free :
 But if the lightning, in its wrath,
 The waving boughs with fury scathe,
 The massy trunk the ruin feels,
 And never more a leaf reveals.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON ;

A FABLE.

SONNET ON CHILLON.

ETERNAL Spirit of the chainless Mind !
 Brightest in dungeons, Liberty ! thou art,
 For there thy habitation is the heart—
 The heart which love of thee alone can bind ;
 And when thy sons to fetters are consign'd—
 To fetters, and the damp vault's dayless gloom,
 Their country conquers with their martyrdom,
 And Freedom's fame finds wings on every wind.
 Chillon ! thy prison is a holy place,
 And thy sad floor an altar—for 'twas trod,
 Until his very steps have left a trace
 Worn, as if thy cold pavement were a sod,
 By Bonnivard !—May none those marks efface !
 For they appeal from tyranny to God.

THE PRISONER OF CHILLON.

I.

My hair is gray, but not with years,
 Nor grew it white
 In a single night,*
 As men's have grown from sudden fears :
 My limbs are bow'd, though not with toil,
 But rusted with a vile repose,
 For they have been a dungeon's spoil,
 And mine has been the fate of those
 To whom the goodly earth and air
 Are bann'd, and barr'd—forbidden fare ;
 But this was for my father's faith
 I suffer'd chains and courted death ;
 That father perish'd at the stake
 For tenets he would not forsake ;

* Ludovico Sforza, and others.—The same is asserted of Marie Antoinette's, the wife of Louis the Sixteenth, though not in quite so short a period. Grief is said to have the same effect : to such, and not to fear, this change in *hærs* was to be attributed.—A.

And for the same his lineal race
In darkness found a dwelling-place;
We were seven—who now are one,
Six in youth, and one in age,
Finish'd as they had begun,
Proud of persecution's rage;
One in fire, and two in field,
Their belief with blood have seal'd;
Dying as their father died,
For the God their foes denied;
Three were in a dungeon cast,
Of whom this wreck is left the last.

II.

There are seven pillars of Gothic mould,
In Chillon's dungeons deep and old,
There are seven columns massy and gray,
Dim with a dull imprison'd ray,
A sunbeam which hath lost its way,
And through the crevice and the cleft
Of the thick wall is fallen and left;
Creeping o'er the floor so damp,
Like a marsh's meteor lamp:
And in each pillar there is a ring,
And in each ring there is a chain;
That iron is a cankering thing,
For in these limbs its teeth remain,
With marks that will not wear away,
Till I have done with this new day,
Which now is painful to these eyes,
Which have not seen the sun so rise
For years—I cannot count them o'er,
I lost their long and heavy score,
When my last brother droop'd and died,
And I lay living by his side.

III.

They chain'd us each to a column stone,
And we were three—yet each, alone;
We could not move a single pace,
We could not see each other's face,
But with that pale and livid light
That made us strangers in our sight;
And thus together—yet apart,
Fetter'd in hand, but pined in heart;
'Twas still some solace, in the dearth
Of the pure elements of earth,
To hearken to each other's speech,
And each turn comforter to each
With some new hope or legend old,
Or song heroically bold;
But even these at length grew cold,
Our voices took a dreary tone,
An echo of the dungeon stone,
A grating sound—not full and free
As they of yore were wont to be:

It might be fancy—but to me
They never sounded like our own.

IV.

I was the eldest of the three,
And to uphold and cheer the rest
I ought to do—and did my best—
And each did well in his degree.
The youngest, whom my father loved,
Because our mother's brow was given
To him—with eyes as blue as heaven,
For him my soul was sorely moved:
And truly might it be distress'd
To see such bird in such a nest;
For he was beautiful as day—
(When day was beautiful to me
As to young eagles being free)—
A polar day, which will not see
A sunset till its summer's gone,
Its sleepless summer of long light,
The snow-clad offspring of the sun:
And thus he was as pure and bright,
And in his natural spirit gay,
With tears for nought but others' ills,
And then they flow'd like mountain rills,
Unless he could assuage the woe
Which he abhorr'd to view below.

V.

The other was as pure of mind,
But form'd to combat with his kind;
Strong in his frame, and of a mood
Which 'gainst the world in war had stood,
And perish'd in the foremost rank
With joy:—but not in chains to pine.
His spirit wither'd with their clank,
I saw it silently decline—
And so perchance in sooth did mine:
But yet I forced it on to cheer
Those relics of a home so dear.
He was a hunter of the hills,
Had follow'd there the deer and wolf;
To him this dungeon was a gulf,
And fetter'd feet the worst of ills.

VI.

Lake Lemman lies by Chillon's* walls:

* The Château de Chillon is situated between Clarens and Villeneuve, which last is at one extremity of the Lake of Geneva. On its left are the entrances of the Rhone, and opposite are the heights of Mellerie and the range of Alps above Boveret and St Gingo. Near it, on a hill behind, is a torrent; below it, washing its walls, the Lake has been fathomed to the depth of 800 feet French measure: within it are a range of dungeons, in which the early reformers, and subsequently prisoners of state, were confined. Across one of the vaults is a beam black with age, on which we were informed that the condemned were formerly executed. In the cells are seven pillars, or rather eight, one being half merged in the wall; in some of these are rings for the fetters and the fettered; in the pavement the steps of Bonnivard have left their traces. He was confined here several years. It is by this castle that Rousseau has fixed the catastrophe of his Héloïse, in the rescue of one of her children by Julie from the water; the shock of which, and the illness produced by the immersion, is the cause of her death. The château is large, and seen along the lake for a great distance. The walls are white.—B. T.

A thousand feet in depth below
 Its massy waters meet and flow;
 Thus much the fathom-line was sent
 From Chillon's snow-white battlement,
 Which round about the wave enthral:
 A double dungeon wall and wave
 Have made—and like a living grave.
 Below the surface of the lake
 The dark vault lies wherein we lay,
 We heard it ripple night and day;
 Sounding o'er our heads it knock'd;
 And I have felt the winter's spray
 Wash through the bars when winds were high
 And wanton in the happy sky;
 And then the very rock hath rock'd,
 And I have felt it shake, unshock'd,
 Because I could have smiled to see
 The death that would have set me free.

VII.

I said my nearer brother pined,
 I said his mighty heart declined,
 He loathed and put away his food;
 It was not that 'twas coarse and rude,
 For we were used to hunter's fare,
 And for the like had little care:
 The milk drawn from the mountain goat
 Was changed for water from the moat,
 Our bread was such as captive's tears
 Have moistened many a thousand years.
 Since man first pent his fellow men
 Like brutes within an iron den;
 But what were these to us or him?
 These wasted not his heart or limb;
 My brother's soul was of that mould
 Which in a palace had grown cold,
 Had his free breathing been denied
 The range of the steep mountain's side;
 But why delay the truth?—he died.
 I saw, and could not hold his head,
 Nor reach his dying hand—nor dead,—
 Though hard I strove, but strove in vain,
 To rend and gnash my bonds in twain.
 He died—and they unlock'd his chain,
 And scoop'd for him a shallow grave
 Even from the cold earth of our cave.
 I begg'd them, as a boon, to lay
 His corse in dust whereon the day
 Might shine—it was a foolish thought,
 But then within my brain it wrought,
 That even in death his freeborn breast
 In such a dungeon could not rest.
 I might have spared my idle prayer—
 They coldly laugh'd—and laid him there:

The flat and turfless earth above
 The being we so much did love;
 His empty chain above it leant,
 Such murder's fitting monument!

VIII.

But he, the favourite and the flower,
 Most cherish'd since his natal hour,
 His mother's image in fair face,
 The infant love of all his race,
 His martyr'd father's dearest thought,
 My latest care, for whom I sought
 To hoard my life, that his might be
 Less wretched now, and one day free;
 He, too, who yet had held untired
 A spirit natural or inspired—
 He, too, was struck, and day by day
 Was wither'd on the stalk away.
 Oh, —! it is a fearful thing
 To see the human soul take wing
 In any shape, in any mood:—
 I've seen it rushing forth in blood,
 I've seen it on the breaking ocean
 Strive with a swoln convulsive motion.
 I've seen the sick and ghastly bed
 Of Sin delirious with its dread:
 But these were horrors—this was woe
 Unmix'd with such—but sure and slow:
 He faded, and so calm and meek,
 So softly worn, so sweetly weak,
 So tearless, yet so tender—kind,
 And grieved for those he left behind;
 With all the while a cheek whose bloom
 Was as a mockery of the tomb,
 Whose tints as gently sunk away
 As a departing rainbow's ray—
 An eye of most transparent light,
 That almost made the dungeon bright,
 And not a word of murmur—not
 A groan o'er his untimely lot,—
 A little talk of better days,
 A little hope my own to raise,
 For I was sunk in silence—lost
 In this last loss, of all the most;
 And then the sighs he would suppress
 Of fainting nature's feebleness,
 More slowly drawn, grew less and less:
 I listen'd, but I could not hear—
 I call'd, for I was wild with fear;
 I knew 'twas hopeless, but my dread
 Would not be thus admonish'd;
 I call'd, and thought I heard a sound—
 I burst my chain with one strong bound,
 And rush'd to him:—I found him not,
 I only stirr'd in this black spot.