

**The Complete
Poetical Works
VOL.I**

**By
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Freeditorial 

THE COMPLETE POETICAL WORKS

POETICAL WORKS

POEMS

EASTER HOLIDAYS

Verse 1st

Hail! festal Easter that dost bring
Approach of sweetly-smiling spring,
When Nature's clad in green:
When feather'd songsters through the grove
With beasts confess the power of love 5
And brighten all the scene.

Verse 2nd

Now youths the breaking stages load
That swiftly rattling o'er the road
To Greenwich haste away:
While some with sounding oars divide 10
Of smoothly-flowing Thames the tide
All sing the festive lay.

Verse 3rd

With mirthful dance they beat the ground,
Their shouts of joy the hills resound
And catch the jocund noise: 15
Without a tear, without a sigh
Their moments all in transports fly
Till evening ends their joys.

Verse 4th

But little think their joyous hearts
Of dire Misfortune's varied smarts 20
Which youthful years conceal:
Thoughtless of bitter-smiling Woe
Which all mankind are born to know
And they themselves must feel.

Verse 5th

Yet he who Wisdom's paths shall keep 25

And Virtue firm that scorns to weep
At ills in Fortune's power,
Through this life's variegated scene
In raging storms or calm serene
Shall cheerful spend the hour. 30

Verse 6th

While steady Virtue guides his mind
Heav'n-born Content he still shall find
That never sheds a tear:
Without respect to any tide
His hours away in bliss shall glide 35
Like Easter all the year.

1787.

DURA NAVIS2:1

To tempt the dangerous deep, too venturous youth,
Why does thy breast with fondest wishes glow?
No tender parent there thy cares shall sooth,
No much-lov'd Friend shall share thy every woe.
Why does thy mind with hopes delusive burn? 5
Vain are thy Schemes by heated Fancy plann'd:
Thy promis'd joy thou'lt see to Sorrow turn
Exil'd from Bliss, and from thy native land.
Hast thou foreseen the Storm's impending rage,
When to the Clouds the Waves ambitious rise, 10
And seem with Heaven a doubtful war to wage,
Whilst total darkness overspreads the skies;
Save when the lightnings darting wingéd Fate
Quick bursting from the pitchy clouds between
In forkéd Terror, and destructive state2:2 15
Shall shew with double gloom the horrid scene?

Shalt thou be at this hour from danger free?
Perhaps with fearful force some falling Wave
Shall wash thee in the wild tempestuous Sea,
And in some monster's belly fix thy grave; 20
Or (woful hap!) against some wave-worn rock
Which long a Terror to each Bark had stood
Shall dash thy mangled limbs with furious shock
And stain its craggy sides with human blood.

Yet not the Tempest, or the Whirlwind's roar 25
Equal the horrors of a Naval Fight,
When thundering Cannons spread a sea of Gore
And varied deaths now fire and now affright:
The impatient shout, that longs for closer war,
Reaches from either side the distant shores; 30
Whilst frighten'd at His streams ensanguin'd far
Loud on his troubled bed huge Ocean roars.3:1
What dreadful scenes appear before my eyes!
Ah! see how each with frequent slaughter red,
Regardless of his dying fellows' cries 35
O'er their fresh wounds with impious order tread!
From the dread place does soft Compassion fly!
The Furies fell each alter'd breast command;
Whilst Vengeance drunk with human blood stands by
And smiling fires each heart and arms each hand. 40
Should'st thou escape the fury of that day
A fate more cruel still, unhappy, view.
Opposing winds may stop thy luckless way,
And spread fell famine through the suffering crew,
Canst thou endure th' extreme of raging Thirst 45
Which soon may scorch thy throat, ah! thoughtless Youth!
Or ravening hunger canst thou bear which erst
On its own flesh hath fix'd the deadly tooth?

Dubious and fluttering 'twixt hope and fear
With trembling hands the lot I see thee draw, 50
Which shall, or sentence thee a victim drear,
To that ghastly Plague which savage knows no law:
Or, deep thy dagger in the friendly heart,
Whilst each strong passion agitates thy breast,
Though oft with Horror back I see thee start, 55
Lo! Hunger drives thee to th' inhuman feast.
These are the ills, that may the course attend—
Then with the joys of home contented rest—
Here, meek-eyed Peace with humble Plenty lend
Their aid united still, to make thee blest. 60
To ease each pain, and to increase each joy—
Here mutual Love shall fix thy tender wife,
Whose offspring shall thy youthful care employ
And gild with brightest rays the evening of thy Life.

2:1 First published in 1893. The autograph MS. is in the British Museum.

2:2 State, Grandeur 1792. This school exercise, written in the 15th year of my age, does not contain a line that any clever schoolboy might not have written, and like most school poetry is a Putting of Thought into Verse; for such Verses as strivings of mind and struggles after the Intense and Vivid are a fair Promise of better things.—S. T. C. aetat. suae 51. 1823.

3:1 I well remember old Jemmy Bowyer, the plagose Orbilius of Christ's Hospital, but an admirable educer no less than Educator of the Intellect, bade me leave out as many epithets as would turn the whole into eight-syllable lines, and then ask myself if the exercise would not be greatly improved. How often have I thought of the proposal since then, and how many thousand bloated and puffing lines have I read, that, by this process, would have tripped over the tongue excellently. Likewise, I remember that he told me on the same occasion—'Coleridge! the connections of a Declamation are not the transitions of Poetry—bad, however, as they are, they are better than "Apostrophes" and "O thou's", for at the worst they are something like common sense. The others are the grimaces of Lunacy.'—S. T. Coleridge.

NIL PEJUS EST CAELIBE VITÂ4:1

IN CHRIST'S HOSPITAL BOOK

I

What pleasures shall he ever find?
What joys shall ever glad his heart?
Or who shall heal his wounded mind,
If tortur'd by Misfortune's smart?
Who Hymeneal bliss will never prove, 5
That more than friendship, friendship mix'd with love.

II

Then without child or tender wife,
To drive away each care, each sigh,
Lonely he treads the paths of life
A stranger to Affection's tye: 10
And when from Death he meets his final doom
No mourning wife with tears of love shall wet his tomb.

III

Tho' Fortune, Riches, Honours, Pow'r,
Had giv'n with every other toy,
Those gilded trifles of the hour, 15
Those painted nothings sure to cloy:
He dies forgot, his name no son shall bear
To shew the man so blest once breath'd the vital air.
1787.

TO THE AUTUMNAL MOON

Mild Splendour of the various-vested Night!
Mother of wildly-working visions! hail!
I watch thy gliding, while with watery light
Thy weak eye glimmers through a fleecy veil;
And when thou lovest thy pale orb to shroud 5
Behind the gather'd blackness lost on high;
And when thou dartest from the wind-rent cloud
Thy placid lightning o'er the awaken'd sky.
Ah such is Hope! as changeful and as fair!
Now dimly peering on the wistful sight; 10
Now hid behind the dragon-wing'd Despair:
But soon emerging in her radiant might
She o'er the sorrow-clouded breast of Care
Sails, like a meteor kindling in its flight.
1788.

Title Effusion xviii, To the, &c.: Sonnet xviii, To the, &c., 1803.

ANTHEM_{5:2}

FOR THE CHILDREN OF CHRIST'S HOSPITAL

Seraphs! around th' Eternal's seat who throng
With tuneful ecstasies of praise:
O! teach our feeble tongues like yours the song
Of fervent gratitude to raise—6
Like you, inspired with holy flame 5

To dwell on that Almighty name
 Who bade the child of Woe no longer sigh,
 And Joy in tears o'erspread the widow's eye.
 Th' all-gracious Parent hears the wretch's prayer;
 The meek tear strongly pleads on high; 10
 Wan Resignation struggling with despair
 The Lord beholds with pitying eye;
 Sees cheerless Want unpitied pine,
 Disease on earth its head recline,
 And bids Compassion seek the realms of woe 15
 To heal the wounded, and to raise the low.
 She comes! she comes! the meek-eyed Power I see
 With liberal hand that loves to bless;
 The clouds of Sorrow at her presence flee;
 Rejoice! rejoice! ye Children of Distress! 20
 The beams that play around her head
 Thro' Want's dark vale their radiance spread:
 The young uncultur'd mind imbibes the ray,
 And Vice reluctant quits th' expected prey.
 Cease, thou lorn mother! cease thy wailings drear; 25
 Ye babes! the unconscious sob forego;
 Or let full Gratitude now prompt the tear
 Which erst did Sorrow force to flow.
 Unkindly cold and tempest shrill
 In Life's morn oft the traveller chill, 30
 But soon his path the sun of Love shall warm;
 And each glad scene look brighter for the storm!
 1789.

IN CHRIST'S HOSPITAL BOOK

Medio de fonte leporum
 Surgit amari aliquid.

Julia was blest with beauty, wit, and grace:
 Small poets lov'd to sing her blooming face.
 Before her altars, lo! a numerous train
 Preferr'd their vows; yet all preferr'd in vain, 7
 Till charming Florio, born to conquer, came 5

And touch'd the fair one with an equal flame.
 The flame she felt, and ill could she conceal
 What every look and action would reveal.
 With boldness then, which seldom fails to move,
 He pleads the cause of Marriage and of Love: 10
 The course of Hymeneal joys he rounds,
 The fair one's eyes danc'd pleasure at the sounds.
 Nought now remain'd but 'Noes'—how little meant!
 And the sweet coyness that endears consent.
 The youth upon his knees enraptur'd fell: 15
 The strange misfortune, oh! what words can tell?
 Tell! ye neglected sylphs! who lap-dogs guard,
 Why snatch'd ye not away your precious ward?
 Why suffer'd ye the lover's weight to fall
 On the ill-fated neck of much-lov'd Ball? 20
 The favourite on his mistress casts his eyes,
 Gives a short melancholy howl, and—dies.
 Sacred his ashes lie, and long his rest!
 Anger and grief divide poor Julia's breast.
 Her eyes she fixt on guilty Florio first: 25
 On him the storm of angry grief must burst.
 That storm he fled: he wooes a kinder fair,
 Whose fond affections no dear puppies share.
 'Twere vain to tell, how Julia pin'd away:
 Unhappy Fair! that in one luckless day— 30
 From future Almanacks the day be crost!—
 At once her Lover and her Lap-dog lost.

1789.

IN CHRIST'S HOSPITAL BOOK

O! mihi praeteritos referat si Jupiter annos!

Oh! might my ill-past hours return again!
 No more, as then, should Sloth around me throw
 Her soul-enslaving, leaden chain!
 No more the precious time would I employ

In giddy revels, or in thoughtless joy, 5
A present joy producing future woe.

8

But o'er the midnight Lamp I'd love to pore,
I'd seek with care fair Learning's depths to sound,
And gather scientific Lore:
Or to mature the embryo thoughts inclin'd, 10
That half-conceiv'd lay struggling in my mind,
The cloisters' solitary gloom I'd round.
'Tis vain to wish, for Time has ta'en his flight—
For follies past be ceas'd the fruitless tears:
Let follies past to future care incite. 15
Averse maturer judgements to obey
Youth owns, with pleasure owns, the Passions' sway,
But sage Experience only comes with years.

1789.

Ye souls unus'd to lofty verse
Who sweep the earth with lowly wing,
Like sand before the blast disperse—
A Nose! a mighty Nose I sing!
As erst Prometheus stole from heaven the fire 5
To animate the wonder of his hand;
Thus with unhallow'd hands, O Muse, aspire,
And from my subject snatch a burning brand!
So like the Nose I sing—my verse shall glow—
Like Phlegethon my verse in waves of fire shall flow! 10
Light of this once all darksome spot
Where now their glad course mortals run,
First-born of Sirius begot
Upon the focus of the Sun—
I'll call thee! for such thy earthly name— 15
What name so high, but what too low must be?
Comets, when most they drink the solar flame
Are but faint types and images of thee! 9
Burn madly, Fire! o'er earth in ravage run,
Then blush for shame more red by fiercer — outdone! 20
I saw when from the turtle feast
The thick dark smoke in volumes rose!

I saw the darkness of the mist
Encircle thee, O Nose!
Shorn of thy rays thou shott'st a fearful gleam 25
(The turtle quiver'd with prophetic fright)
Gloomy and sullen thro' the night of steam:—
So Satan's Nose when Dunstan urg'd to flight,
Glowing from gripe of red-hot pincers dread
Athwart the smokes of Hell disastrous twilight shed! 30
The Furies to madness my brain devote—
In robes of ice my body wrap!
On billowy flames of fire I float,
Hear ye my entrails how they snap?
Some power unseen forbids my lungs to breathe! 35
What fire-clad meteors round me whizzing fly!
I vitrify thy torrid zone beneath,
Proboscis fierce! I am calcined! I die!
Thus, like great Pliny, in Vesuvius' fire,
I perish in the blaze while I the blaze admire. 40
1789.

Tho' no bold flights to thee belong;
And tho' thy lays with conscious fear,
Shrink from Judgement's eye severe,
Yet much I thank thee, Spirit of my song!
For, lovely Muse! thy sweet employ 5
Exalts my soul, refines my breast,
Gives each pure pleasure keener zest,
And softens sorrow into pensive Joy.
From thee I learn'd the wish to bless,
From thee to commune with my heart; 1010
From thee, dear Muse! the gayer part,
To laugh with pity at the crowds that press
Where Fashion flaunts her robes by Folly spun,
Whose hues gay-varying wanton in the sun.
1789.

I

Heard'st thou yon universal cry,
And dost thou linger still on Gallia's shore?
Go, Tyranny! beneath some barbarous sky

Thy terrors lost and ruin'd power deplore!
What tho' through many a groaning age 5
Was felt thy keen suspicious rage,
Yet Freedom rous'd by fierce Disdain
Has wildly broke thy triple chain,
And like the storm which Earth's deep entrails hide,
At length has burst its way and spread the ruins wide. 10

IV

In sighs their sickly breath was spent; each gleam
Of Hope had ceas'd the long long day to cheer;
Or if delusive, in some flitting dream,
It gave them to their friends and children dear—
Awaked by lordly Insult's sound 15
To all the doubled horrors round,
Oft shrunk they from Oppression's band
While Anguish rais'd the desperate hand
For silent death; or lost the mind's controul,
Thro' every burning vein would tides of Frenzy roll. 20

V

But cease, ye pitying bosoms, cease to bleed!
Such scenes no more demand the tear humane;
I see, I see! glad Liberty succeed
With every patriot virtue in her train!
And mark yon peasant's raptur'd eyes; 25
Secure he views his harvests rise;
No fetter vile the mind shall know,
And Eloquence shall fearless glow.
Yes! Liberty the soul of Life shall reign,
Shall throb in every pulse, shall flow thro' every vein! 30

VI

Shall France alone a Despot spurn?
Shall she alone, O Freedom, boast thy care?
Lo, round thy standard Belgia's heroes burn,
Tho' Power's blood-stain'd streamers fire the air,
And wider yet thy influence spread, 35
Nor e'er recline thy weary head,
Till every land from pole to pole
Shall boast one independent soul!
And still, as erst, let favour'd Britain be

First ever of the first and freest of the free! 40
? 1789.

As late I journey'd o'er the extensive plain
Where native Otter sports his scanty stream,
Musing in torpid woe a Sister's pain,
The glorious prospect woke me from the dream.
At every step it widen'd to my sight— 5
Wood, Meadow, verdant Hill, and dreary Steep,
Following in quick succession of delight,—
Till all—at once—did my eye ravish'd sweep!

May this (I cried) my course through Life portray!
New scenes of Wisdom may each step display, 10
And Knowledge open as my days advance!
Till what time Death shall pour the undarken'd ray,
My eye shall dart thro' infinite expanse,
And thought suspended lie in Rapture's blissful trance.
1789.

Deep in the gulph of Vice and Woe
Leaps Man at once with headlong throw?
Him inborn Truth and Virtue guide,
Whose guards are Shame and conscious Pride.
In some gay hour Vice steals into the breast; 5
Perchance she wears some softer Virtue's vest.
By unperceiv'd degrees she tempts to stray,
Till far from Virtue's path she leads the feet away.
Then swift the soul to disenthral
Will Memory the past recall, 10
And Fear before the Victim's eyes
Bid future ills and dangers rise.
But hark! the Voice, the Lyre, their charms combine—
Gay sparkles in the cup the generous Wine—
Th' inebriate dance, the fair frail Nymph inspires, 15
And Virtue vanquish'd—scorn'd—with hasty flight retires.
But soon to tempt the Pleasures cease;

Yet Shame forbids return to peace,
And stern Necessity will force
Still to urge on the desperate course. 2013
The drear black paths of Vice the wretch must try,
Where Conscience flashes horror on each eye,
Where Hate—where Murder scowl—where starts Affright!
Ah! close the scene—ah! close—for dreadful is the sight.
1790.

FIRST VERSION, IN CHRIST'S HOSPITAL BOOK—1790

Cold penury repress'd his noble rage,
And froze the genial current of his soul.
Now prompts the Muse poetic lays,
And high my bosom beats with love of Praise!
But, Chatterton! methinks I hear thy name,
For cold my Fancy grows, and dead each Hope of Fame.
When Want and cold Neglect had chill'd thy soul, 5
Athirst for Death I see thee drench the bowl!
Thy corpse of many a livid hue
On the bare ground I view,
Whilst various passions all my mind engage;
Now is my breast distended with a sigh, 10
And now a flash of Rage
Darts through the tear, that glistens in my eye.
Is this the land of liberal Hearts!
Is this the land, where Genius ne'er in vain
Pour'd forth her soul-enchancing strain? 15
Ah me! yet Butler 'gainst the bigot foe
Well-skill'd to aim keen Humour's dart,
Yet Butler felt Want's poignant sting;
And Otway, Master of the Tragic art,
Whom Pity's self had taught to sing, 2014
Sank beneath a load of Woe;
This ever can the generous Briton hear,
And starts not in his eye th' indignant Tear?
Elate of Heart and confident of Fame,
From vales where Avon sports, the Minstrel came, 25
Gay as the Poet hastes along

He meditates the future song,
How Ælla battled with his country's foes,
And whilst Fancy in the air
Paints him many a vision fair 30
His eyes dance rapture and his bosom glows.
With generous joy he views th' ideal gold:
He listens to many a Widow's prayers,
And many an Orphan's thanks he hears;
He soothes to peace the care-worn breast, 35
He bids the Debtor's eyes know rest,
And Liberty and Bliss behold:
And now he punishes the heart of steel,
And her own iron rod he makes Oppression feel.
Fated to heave sad Disappointment's sigh, 40
To feel the Hope now rais'd, and now deprest,
To feel the burnings of an injur'd breast,
From all thy Fate's deep sorrow keen
In vain, O Youth, I turn th' affrighted eye;
For powerful Fancy evernigh 45
The hateful picture forces on my sight.
There, Death of every dear delight,
Frowns Poverty of Giant mien!
In vain I seek the charms of youthful grace,
Thy sunken eye, thy haggard cheeks it shews, 50
The quick emotions struggling in the Face
Faint index of thy mental Throes,
When each strong Passion spurn'd controll,
And not a Friend was nigh to calm thy stormy soul.
Such was the sad and gloomy hour 55
When anguish'd Care of sullen brow
Prepared the Poison's death-cold power.
Already to thy lips was rais'd the bowl,
When filial Pity stood thee by, 15
Thy fixéd eyes she bade thee roll 60
On scenes that well might melt thy soul—
Thy native cot she held to view,
Thy native cot, where Peace ere long
Had listen'd to thy evening song;
Thy sister's shrieks she bade thee hear, 65
And mark thy mother's thrilling tear,
She made thee feel her deep-drawn sigh,

And all her silent agony of Woe.
 And from thy Fate shall such distress ensue?
 Ah! dash the poison'd chalice from thy hand! 70
 And thou had'st dash'd it at her soft command;
 But that Despair and Indignation rose,
 And told again the story of thy Woes,
 Told the keen insult of th' unfeeling Heart,
 The dread dependence on the low-born mind, 75
 Told every Woe, for which thy breast might smart,
 Neglect and grinning scorn and Want combin'd—
 Recoiling back, thou sent'st the friend of Pain
 To roll a tide of Death thro' every freezing vein.
 O Spirit blest! 80
 Whether th' eternal Throne around,
 Amidst the blaze of Cherubim,
 Thou pourest forth the grateful hymn,
 Or, soaring through the blest Domain,
 Enraptur'st Angels with thy strain,— 85
 Grant me, like thee, the lyre to sound,
 Like thee, with fire divine to glow—
 But ah! when rage the Waves of Woe,
 Grant me with firmer breast t'oppose their hate,
 And soar beyond the storms with upright eye elate! 15:1 90
 1790

ANNA AND HARLAND 16:2

Within these wilds was Anna wont to rove
 While Harland told his love in many a sigh,
 But stern on Harland roll'd her brother's eye,
 They fought, they fell—her brother and her love!
 To Death's dark house did grief-worn Anna haste, 5
 Yet here her pensive ghost delights to stay;
 Oft pouring on the winds the broken lay—
 And hark, I hear her—'twas the passing blast.
 I love to sit upon her tomb's dark grass,
 Then Memory backward rolls Time's shadowy tide; 10
 The tales of other days before me glide:
 With eager thought I seize them as they pass;
 For fair, tho' faint, the forms of Memory gleam,

Like Heaven's bright beauteous bow reflected in the stream.

? 1790.

TO THE EVENING STAR^{16:3}

O meek attendant of Sol's setting blaze,
I hail, sweet star, thy chaste effulgent glow;
On thee full oft with fixéd eye I gaze
Till I, methinks, all spirit seem to grow.¹⁷
O first and fairest of the starry choir, 5
O loveliest 'mid the daughters of the night,
Must not the maid I love like thee inspire
Pure joy and calm Delight?
Must she not be, as is thy placid sphere
Serenely brilliant? Whilst to gaze a while 10
Be all my wish 'mid Fancy's high career
E'en till she quit this scene of earthly toil;
Then Hope perchance might fondly sigh to join
Her spirit in thy kindred orb, O Star benign!

? 1790.

PAIN^{17:1}

Once could the Morn's first beams, the healthful breeze,
All Nature charm, and gay was every hour:—
But ah! not Music's self, nor fragrant bower
Can glad the trembling sense of wan Disease.
Now that the frequent pangs my frame assail, 5
Now that my sleepless eyes are sunk and dim,
And seas of Pain seem waving through each limb—
Ah what can all Life's gilded scenes avail?
I view the crowd, whom Youth and Health inspire,
Hear the loud laugh, and catch the sportive lay, 10
Then sigh and think—I too could laugh and play
And gaily sport it on the Muse's lyre,
Ere Tyrant Pain had chas'd away delight,
Ere the wild pulse throb'd anguish thro' the night!

? 1790.

IMITATION FROM THE LATIN OF NICOLAUS ARCHIUS

Lovely gems of radiance meek
Trembling down my Laura's cheek,
As the streamlets silent glide
Thro' the Mead's enamell'd pride,
Pledges sweet of pious woe, 5
Tears which Friendship taught to flow, 18
Sparkling in yon humid light
Love embathes his pinions bright:
There amid the glitt'ring show'r
Smiling sits th' insidious Power; 10
As some wingéd Warbler oft
When Spring-clouds shed their treasures soft
Joyous tricks his plumes anew,
And flutters in the fost'ring dew.
? 1790.

17:2 First published in 1893. From MS. O (c).

MONODY ON A TEA-KETTLE^{18:1}

O Muse who sangest late another's pain,
To griefs domestic turn thy coal-black steed!
With slowest steps thy funeral steed must go,
Nodding his head in all the pomp of woe:
Wide scatter round each dark and deadly weed, 5
And let the melancholy dirge complain,
(Whilst Bats shall shriek and Dogs shall howling run)
The tea-kettle is spoilt and Coleridge is undone!
Your cheerful songs, ye unseen crickets, cease!
Let songs of grief your alter'd minds engage! 10
For he who sang responsive to your lay,
What time the joyous bubbles 'gan to play,
The sooty swain has felt the fire's fierce rage;—
Yes, he is gone, and all my woes increase;
I heard the water issuing from the wound— 15
No more the Tea shall pour its fragrant steams around!
O Goddess best belov'd! Delightful Tea!

With thee compar'd what yields the madd'ning Vine?
 Sweet power! who know'st to spread the calm delight,
 And the pure joy prolong to midmost night! 20
 Ah! must I all thy varied sweets resign?
 Enfolded close in grief thy form I see;
 No more wilt thou extend thy willing arms,
 Receive the fervent Jove, and yield him all thy charms!19
 How sink the mighty low by Fate opprest!— 25
 Perhaps, O Kettle! thou by scornful toe
 Rude urg'd t' ignoble place with plaintive din.
 May'st rust obscure midst heaps of vulgar tin;—
 As if no joy had ever seiz'd my breast
 When from thy spout the streams did arching fly,— 30
 As if, infus'd, thou ne'er hadst known t' inspire
 All the warm raptures of poetic fire!
 But hark! or do I fancy the glad voice—
 'What tho' the swain did wondrous charms disclose—
 (Not such did Memnon's sister sable drest) 35
 Take these bright arms with royal face imprest,
 A better Kettle shall thy soul rejoice,
 And with Oblivion's wings o'erspread thy woes!
 Thus Fairy Hope can soothe distress and toil;
 On empty Trivets she bids fancied Kettles boil! 40
 1790.

GENEVIEVE19:1

Maid of my Love, sweet Genevieve!
 In Beauty's light you glide along:20
 Your eye is like the Star of Eve,
 And sweet your voice, as Seraph's song
 Yet not your heavenly beauty gives 5
 This heart with Passion soft to glow:
 Within your soul a voice there lives!
 It bids you hear the tale of Woe.
 When sinking low the sufferer wan
 Beholds no hand outstretch'd to save, 10
 Fair, as the bosom of the Swan
 That rises graceful o'er the wave,
 I've seen your breast with pity heave,

And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve!
1789-90.

SISTER'S DEATH WAS INEVITABLE^{20:1}

The tear which mourn'd a brother's fate scarce dry—
Pain after pain, and woe succeeding woe—
Is my heart destin'd for another blow?
O my sweet sister! and must thou too die?
Ah! how has Disappointment pour'd the tear 5
O'er infant Hope destroy'd by early frost!
How are ye gone, whom most my soul held dear!
Scarce had I lov'd you ere I mourn'd you lost;
Say, is this hollow eye, this heartless pain,
Fated to rove thro' Life's wide cheerless plain— 10
Nor father, brother, sister meet its ken—
My woes, my joys unshared! Ah! long ere then
On me thy icy dart, stern Death, be prov'd;—
Better to die, than live and not be lov'd!
1791.

ON SEEING A YOUTH AFFECTIONATELY WELCOMED BY A SISTER^{21:1}

I too a sister had! too cruel Death!
How sad Remembrance bids my bosom heave!
Tranquil her soul, as sleeping Infant's breath;
Meek were her manners as a vernal Eve.
Knowledge, that frequent lifts the bloated mind, 5
Gave her the treasure of a lowly breast,
And Wit to venom'd Malice oft assign'd,
Dwelt in her bosom in a Turtle's nest.
Cease, busy Memory! cease to urge the dart;
Nor on my soul her love to me impress! 10
For oh I mourn in anguish—and my heart
Feels the keen pang, th' unutterable distress.
Yet wherefore grieve I that her sorrows cease,
For Life was misery, and the Grave is Peace!
1791.

To the Rev. George Coleridge

Dear Brother,

I have often been surprised that Mathematics, the quintessence of Truth, should have found admirers so few and so languid. Frequent consideration and minute scrutiny have at length unravelled the cause; viz. that though Reason is feasted, Imagination is starved; whilst Reason is luxuriating in its proper Paradise, Imagination is wearily travelling on a dreary desert. To assist Reason by the stimulus of Imagination is the design of the following production. In the execution of it much may be objectionable. The verse (particularly in the introduction of the ode) may be accused of unwarrantable liberties, but they are liberties equally homogeneal with the exactness of Mathematical disquisition, and the boldness of Pindaric daring. I have three strong champions to defend me against the attacks of Criticism: the Novelty, the Difficulty, and the Utility of the work. I may justly plume myself that I first have drawn the nymph Mathesis from the visionary caves of abstracted idea, and caused her to unite with Harmony. The first-born of this Union I now present to you; with interested motives indeed—as I expect to receive in return the more valuable offspring of your Muse.

Thine ever,
S. T. C.

Christ's Hospital, March 31, 1791.

This is now—this was erst,
Proposition the first—and Problem the first.

I

On a given finite line
Which must no way incline;
To describe an equi—
—lateral Tri—
—A, N, G, L, E.22:1 5
Now let A. B.
Be the given line
Which must no way incline;
The great Mathematician
Makes this Requisition, 10
That we describe an Equi—

—lateral Tri—

—angle on it:

Aid us, Reason—aid us, Wit!

II

From the centre A. at the distance A. B. 15

Describe the circle B. C. D.

At the distance B. A. from B. the centre

The round A. C. E. to describe boldly venture.22:2

(Third postulate see.)

And from the point C. 20

In which the circles make a pother

Cutting and slashing one another,

Bid the straight lines a journeying go.23

C. A. C. B. those lines will show.

To the points, which by A. B. are reckon'd, 25

And postulate the second

For Authority ye know.

A. B. C.

Triumphant shall be

An Equilateral Triangle, 30

Not Peter Pindar carp, nor Zoilus can wrangle.

III

Because the point A. is the centre

Of the circular B. C. D.

And because the point B. is the centre

Of the circular A. C. E. 35

A. C. to A. B. and B. C. to B. A.

Harmoniously equal for ever must stay;

Then C. A. and B. C.

Both extend the kind hand

To the basis, A. B. 40

Unambitiously join'd in Equality's Band.

But to the same powers, when two powers are equal,

My mind forbodes the sequel;

My mind does some celestial impulse teach,

And equalises each to each. 45

Thus C. A. with B. C. strikes the same sure alliance,

That C. A. and B. C. had with A. B. before;

And in mutual affiance

None attempting to soar

Above another, 50

The unanimous three
C. A. and B. C. and A. B.
All are equal, each to his brother,
Preserving the balance of power so true:
Ah! the like would the proud Autocratrix^{23:1} do! 55
At taxes impending not Britain would tremble,
Nor Prussia struggle her fear to dissemble;
Nor the Mah'met-sprung Wight
The great Mussulman
Would stain his Divan 60
With Urine the soft-flowing daughter of Fright.

IV

But rein your stallion in, too daring Nine!
Should Empires bloat the scientific line?
Or with dishevell'd hair all madly do ye run
For transport that your task is done? 65
For done it is—the cause is tried!
And Proposition, gentle Maid,
Who soothly ask'd stern Demonstration's aid,
Has proved her right, and A. B. C.
Of Angles three 70
Is shown to be of equal side;
And now our weary steed to rest in fine,
'Tis rais'd upon A. B. the straight, the given line.
1791.

The fervid Sun had more than halv'd the day,
When gloomy on his couch Philedon lay;
His feeble frame consumptive as his purse,
His aching head did wine and women curse;
His fortune ruin'd and his wealth decay'd, 5
Clamorous his duns, his gaming debts unpaid,
The youth indignant seiz'd his tailor's bill,
And on its back thus wrote with moral quill:
'Various as colours in the rainbow shown,
Or similar in emptiness alone, 10
How false, how vain are Man's pursuits below!
Wealth, Honour, Pleasure—what can ye bestow?
Yet see, how high and low, and young and old

Pursue the all-delusive power of Gold.
Fond man! should all Peru thy empire own, 15
For thee tho' all Golconda's jewels shone,
What greater bliss could all this wealth supply?
What, but to eat and drink and sleep and die?
Go, tempt the stormy sea, the burning soil—
Go, waste the night in thought, the day in toil, 2025
Dark frowns the rock, and fierce the tempests rave—
Thy ingots go the unconscious deep to pave!
Or thunder at thy door the midnight train,
Or Death shall knock that never knocks in vain.
Next Honour's sons come bustling on amain; 25
I laugh with pity at the idle train.
Infirm of soul! who think'st to lift thy name
Upon the waxen wings of human fame,—
Who for a sound, articulated breath—
Gazest undaunted in the face of death! 30
What art thou but a Meteor's glaring light—
Blazing a moment and then sunk in night?
Caprice which rais'd thee high shall hurl thee low,
Or Envy blast the laurels on thy brow.
To such poor joys could ancient Honour lead 35
When empty fame was toiling Merit's meed;
To Modern Honour other lays belong;
Profuse of joy and Lord of right and wrong,
Honour can game, drink, riot in the stew,
Cut a friend's throat;—what cannot Honour do? 40
Ah me!—the storm within can Honour still
For Julio's death, whom Honour made me kill?
Or will this lordly Honour tell the way
To pay those debts, which Honour makes me pay?
Or if with pistol and terrific threats 45
I make some traveller pay my Honour's debts,
A medicine for this wound can Honour give?
Ah, no! my Honour dies to make my Honour live.
But see! young Pleasure, and her train advance,
And joy and laughter wake the inebriate dance; 50
Around my neck she throws her fair white arms,
I meet her loves, and madden at her charms.
For the gay grape can joys celestial move,
And what so sweet below as Woman's love?

With such high transport every moment flies, 55
 I curse Experience that he makes me wise;
 For at his frown the dear deliriums flew,
 And the changed scene now wears a gloomy hue.
 A hideous hag th' Enchantress Pleasure seems,
 And all her joys appear but feverous dreams. 6026
 The vain resolve still broken and still made,
 Disease and loathing and remorse invade;
 The charm is vanish'd and the bubble's broke,—
 A slave to pleasure is a slave to smoke!
 Such lays repentant did the Muse supply; 65
 When as the Sun was hastening down the sky,
 In glittering state twice fifty guineas come,—
 His Mother's plate antique had rais'd the sum.
 Forth leap'd Philedon of new life possest:—
 'Twas Brookes's all till two,—'twas Hackett's all the rest! 70
 1791.

ON IMITATION^{26:1}

All are not born to soar—and ah! how few
 In tracks where Wisdom leads their paths pursue!
 Contagious when to wit or wealth allied,
 Folly and Vice diffuse their venom wide.
 On Folly every fool his talent tries; 5
 It asks some toil to imitate the wise;
 Tho' few like Fox can speak—like Pitt can think—
 Yet all like Fox can game—like Pitt can drink.
 ? 1791

INSIDE THE COACH^{26:2}

'Tis hard on Bagshot Heath to try
 Unclos'd to keep the weary eye;
 But ah! Oblivion's nod to get
 In rattling coach is harder yet.
 Slumbrous God of half-shut eye! 5
 Who lovest with limbs supine to lie;

Soothe sweet of toil and care
Listen, listen to my prayer;
And to thy votary dispense
Thy soporific influence! 1027
What tho' around thy drowsy head
The seven-fold cap of night be spread,
Yet lift that drowsy head awhile
And yawn propitiously a smile;
In drizzly rains poppean dews 15
O'er the tired inmates of the Coach diffuse;
And when thou'st charm'd our eyes to rest,
Pillowing the chin upon the breast,
Bid many a dream from thy dominions
Wave its various-painted pinions, 20
Till ere the splendid visions close
We snore quartettes in ecstasy of nose.
While thus we urge our airy course,
O may no jolt's electric force
Our fancies from their steeds unhorse, 25
And call us from thy fairy reign
To dreary Bagshot Heath again!
1791.

The indignant Bard composed this furious ode,
As tired he dragg'd his way thro' Plimtree road!27:2
Crusted with filth and stuck in mire
Dull sounds the Bard's bemudded lyre;
Nathless Revenge and Ire the Poet goad 5
To pour his imprecations on the road.
Curst road! whose execrable way
Was darkly shadow'd out in Milton's lay,
When the sad fiends thro' Hell's sulphureous roads
Took the first survey of their new abodes; 10
Or when the fall'n Archangel fierce
Dar'd through the realms of Night to pierce,
What time the Bloodhound lur'd by Human scent
Thro' all Confusion's quagmires floundering went.
Nor cheering pipe, nor Bird's shrill note 15
Around thy dreary paths shall float;

Their boding songs shall scritch-owls pour
To fright the guilty shepherds sore,²⁸
Led by the wandering fires astray
Thro' the dank horrors of thy way! 20
While they their mud-lost sandals hunt
May all the curses, which they grunt
In raging moan like goaded hog,
Alight upon thee, damnéd Bog!

1791.

Hence, soul-dissolving Harmony
That lead'st th' oblivious soul astray—
Though thou sphere-descended be—
Hence away!—
Thou mightier Goddess, thou demand'st my lay, 5
Born when earth was seiz'd with choleric;
Or as more sapient sages say,
What time the Legion diabolic
Compell'd their beings to enshrine
In bodies vile of herded swine, 10
Precipitate adown the steep
With hideous rout were plunging in the deep,
And hog and devil mingling grunt and yell
Seiz'd on the ear with horrible obtrusion;—
Then if aright old legendaries tell, 15
Wert thou begot by Discord on Confusion!
What though no name's sonorous power
Was given thee at thy natal hour!—
Yet oft I feel thy sacred might,
While concords wing their distant flight. 20
Such Power inspires thy holy son
Sable clerk of Tiverton!
And oft where Otter sports his stream,
I hear thy banded offspring scream.
Thou Goddess! thou inspir'st each throat; 25
'Tis thou who pour'st the scritch-owl note!
Transported hear'st thy children all
Scrape and blow and squeak and squall;
And while old Otter's steeple rings,
Clappest hoarse thy raven wings! 30

1791.

SONNET29:1

ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR COLLEGE

Farewell parental scenes! a sad farewell!
To you my grateful heart still fondly clings,
Tho' fluttering round on Fancy's burnish'd wings
Her tales of future Joy Hope loves to tell.
Adieu, adieu! ye much-lov'd cloisters pale! 5
Ah! would those happy days return again,
When 'neath your arches, free from every stain,
I heard of guilt and wonder'd at the tale!
Dear haunts! where oft my simple lays I sang,
Listening meanwhile the echoings of my feet, 10
Lingering I quit you, with as great a pang,
As when erewhile, my weeping childhood, torn
By early sorrow from my native seat,
Mingled its tears with hers—my widow'd Parent lorn.

1791.

**A FAREWELL ODE ON QUITTING SCHOOL FOR JESUS
COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE**

Where graced with many a classic spoil
Cam rolls his reverend stream along,
I haste to urge the learned toil
That sternly chides my love-lorn song:
Ah me! too mindful of the days 5
Illumed by Passion's orient rays,
When Peace, and Cheerfulness and Health
Enriched me with the best of wealth.
Ah fair Delights! that o'er my soul
On Memory's wing, like shadows fly! 10
Ah Flowers! which Joy from Eden stole
While Innocence stood smiling by!—
But cease, fond Heart! this bootless moan:

Those Hours on rapid Pinions flown
Shall yet return, by Absence crown'd, 15
And scatter livelier roses round.30
The Sun who ne'er remits his fires
On heedless eyes may pour the day:
The Moon, that oft from Heaven retires,
Endears her renovated ray. 20
What though she leave the sky unblest
To mourn awhile in murky vest?
When she relumes her lovely light,
We bless the Wanderer of the Night.

1791.

HAPPINESS30:1

On wide or narrow scale shall Man
Most happily describe Life's plan?
Say shall he bloom and wither there,
Where first his infant buds appear;
Or upwards dart with soaring force, 5
And tempt some more ambitious course?
Obedient now to Hope's command,
I bid each humble wish expand,
And fair and bright Life's prospects seem.
While Hope displays her cheering beam, 10
And Fancy's vivid colourings stream,
While Emulation stands me nigh
The Goddess of the eager eye.
With foot advanc'd and anxious heart
Now for the fancied goal I start:— 15
Ah! why will Reason intervene
Me and my promis'd joys between!
She stops my course, she chains my speed,
While thus her forceful words proceed:—
Ah! listen, Youth, ere yet too late, 20
What evils on thy course may wait!
To bow the head, to bend the knee,
A minion of Servility,
At low Pride's frequent frowns to sigh,31
And watch the glance in Folly's eye; 25

To toil intense, yet toil in vain,
And feel with what a hollow pain
Pale Disappointment hangs her head
O'er darling Expectation dead!
'The scene is changed and Fortune's gale 30
Shall belly out each prosperous sail.
Yet sudden wealth full well I know
Did never happiness bestow.
That wealth to which we were not born
Dooms us to sorrow or to scorn. 35
Behold yon flock which long had trod
O'er the short grass of Devon's sod,
To Lincoln's rank rich meads transferr'd,
And in their fate thy own be fear'd;
Through every limb contagions fly, 40
Deform'd and choked they burst and die.
'When Luxury opens wide her arms,
And smiling woos thee to those charms,
Whose fascination thousands own,
Shall thy brows wear the stoic frown? 45
And when her goblet she extends
Which maddening myriads press around,
What power divine thy soul befriends
That thou should'st dash it to the ground?—
No, thou shalt drink, and thou shalt know 50
Her transient bliss, her lasting woe,
Her maniac joys, that know no measure,
And Riot rude and painted Pleasure;—
Till (sad reverse!) the Enchantress vile
To frowns converts her magic smile; 55
Her train impatient to destroy,
Observe her frown with gloomy joy;
On thee with harpy fangs they seize
The hideous offspring of Disease,
Swoln Dropsy ignorant of Rest, 60
And Fever garb'd in scarlet vest,
Consumption driving the quick hearse,
And Gout that howls the frequent curse,
With Apoplex of heavy head
That surely aims his dart of lead. 65
'But say Life's joys unmix'd were given

To thee some favourite of Heaven:
 Within, without, tho' all were health—
 Yet what e'en thus are Fame, Power, Wealth,
 But sounds that variously express, 70
 What's thine already—Happiness!
 'Tis thine the converse deep to hold
 With all the famous sons of old;
 And thine the happy waking dream
 While Hope pursues some favourite theme, 75
 As oft when Night o'er Heaven is spread,
 Round this maternal seat you tread,
 Where far from splendour, far from riot,
 In silence wrapt sleeps careless Quiet.
 'Tis thine with Fancy oft to talk, 80
 And thine the peaceful evening walk;
 And what to thee the sweetest are—
 The setting sun, the Evening Star—
 The tints, which live along the sky,
 And Moon that meets thy raptur'd eye, 85
 Where oft the tear shall grateful start,
 Dear silent pleasures of the Heart!
 Ah! Being blest, for Heaven shall lend
 To share thy simple joys a friend!
 Ah! doubly blest, if Love supply 90
 His influence to complete thy joy,
 If chance some lovely maid thou find
 To read thy visage in thy mind. 33
 'One blessing more demands thy care:—
 Once more to Heaven address the prayer: 95
 For humble independence pray
 The guardian genius of thy way;
 Whom (sages say) in days of yore
 Meek Competence to Wisdom bore,
 So shall thy little vessel glide 100
 With a fair breeze adown the tide,
 And Hope, if e'er thou 'ginst to sorrow,
 Remind thee of some fair to-morrow,
 Till Death shall close thy tranquil eye
 While Faith proclaims "Thou shalt not die!" 105

Ah! doubly blest, if Love supply
Lustre to this now heavy eye,
And with unwonted Spirit grace
That fat³²:A vacuity of face.
Or if e'en Love, the mighty Love
Shall find this change his power above;
Some lovely maid perchance thou'lt find
To read thy visage in thy mind.
MS. O, MS. O (c).

32:A The Author was at this time, aetat. 17, remarkable for a plump face. MS. O (c).

96-7
But if thou pour one votive lay
For humble, &c.
Letter, 1794.

96
Not in Letter.

101
adown Life's tide MS. O, MS. O (c).

102-3
Not in Letter, 1794.

A WISH³³:1

WRITTEN IN JESUS WOOD, FEB. 10, 1792

Lo! through the dusky silence of the groves,
Thro' vales irriguous, and thro' green retreats,
With languid murmur creeps the placid stream
And works its secret way.
Awhile meand'ring round its native fields
It rolls the playful wave and winds its flight:
Then downward flowing with awaken'd speed
Embosoms in the Deep!
Thus thro' its silent tenor may my Life
Smooth its meek stream by sordid wealth unclogg'd,
Alike unconscious of forensic storms,

And Glory's blood-stain'd palm!
And when dark Age shall close Life's little day,
Sate of sport, and weary of its toils,
E'en thus may slumbrous Death my decent limbs 15
Compose with icy hand!
1792.

AN ODE IN THE MANNER OF ANACREON^{33:2}

As late, in wreaths, gay flowers I bound,
Beneath some roses Love I found;
And by his little frolic pinion
As quick as thought I seiz'd the minion,³⁴
Then in my cup the prisoner threw, 5
And drank him in its sparkling dew:
And sure I feel my angry guest
Fluttering his wings within my breast!
1792.

TO DISAPPOINTMENT^{34:1}

Hence! thou fiend of gloomy sway,
That lov'st on withering blast to ride
O'er fond Illusion's air-built pride.
Sullen Spirit! Hence! Away!
Where Avarice lurks in sordid cell, 5
Or mad Ambition builds the dream,
Or Pleasure plots th' unholy scheme
There with Guilt and Folly dwell!
But oh! when Hope on Wisdom's wing
Prophetic whispers pure delight, 10
Be distant far thy cank'rous blight,
Demon of envenom'd sting.
Then haste thee, Nymph of balmy gales!
Thy poet's prayer, sweet May! attend!
Oh! place my parent and my friend 15
'Mid her lovely native vales.
Peace, that lists the woodlark's strains,
Health, that breathes divinest treasures,

Laughing Hours, and Social Pleasures
Wait my friend in Cambria's plains. 20
Affection there with mingled ray
Shall pour at once the raptures high
Of filial and maternal Joy;
Haste thee then, delightful May!
And oh! may Spring's fair flowerets fade, 25
May Summer cease her limbs to lave
In cooling stream, may Autumn grave
Yellow o'er the corn-cloath'd glade;
Ere, from sweet retirement torn,
She seek again the crowded mart: 30
Nor thou, my selfish, selfish heart
Dare her slow return to mourn!

1792.

A FRAGMENT FOUND IN A LECTURE-ROOM 35:1

Where deep in mud Cam rolls his slumbrous stream,
And bog and desolation reign supreme;
Where all Boeotia clouds the misty brain,
The owl Mathesis pipes her loathsome strain.
Far, far aloof the frightened Muses fly, 5
Indignant Genius scowls and passes by:
The frolic Pleasures start amid their dance,
And Wit congeal'd stands fix'd in wintry trance.
But to the sounds with duteous haste repair
Cold Industry, and wary-footed Care; 10
And Dulness, dosing on a couch of lead,
Pleas'd with the song uplifts her heavy head,
The sympathetic numbers lists awhile,
Then yawns propitiously a frosty smile. . . .
Caetera desunt.

1792.

Ye Gales, that of the Lark's repose
The impatient Silence break,

To yon poor Pilgrim's wearying Woes
 Your gentle Comfort speak!
 He heard the midnight whirlwind die, 5
 He saw the sun-awaken'd Sky
 Resume its slowly-purpling Blue:
 And ah! he sigh'd—that I might find
 The cloudless Azure of the Mind
 And Fortune's brightning Hue! 10
 Where'er in waving Foliage hid
 The Bird's gay Charm ascends,
 Or by the fretful current chid
 Some giant Rock impends—
 There let the lonely Cares respire 15
 As small airs thrill the mourning Lyre 36
 And teach the Soul her native Calm;
 While Passion with a languid Eye
 Hangs o'er the fall of Harmony
 And drinks the sacred Balm. 20
 Slow as the fragrant whisper creeps
 Along the lilied Vale,
 The alter'd Eye of Conquest weeps,
 And ruthless War grows pale
 Relenting that his Heart forsook 25
 Soft Concord of auspicious Look,
 And Love, and social Poverty;
 The Family of tender Fears,
 The Sigh, that saddens and endears,
 And Cares, that sweeten Joy. 30
 Then cease, thy frantic Tumults cease,
 Ambition, Sire of War!
 Nor o'er the mangled Corse of Peace
 Urge on thy scythéd Car.
 And oh! that Reason's voice might swell 35
 With whisper'd Airs and holy Spell
 To rouse thy gentler Sense,
 As bending o'er the chilly bloom
 The Morning wakes its soft Perfume
 With breezy Influence. 40

A LOVER'S COMPLAINT TO HIS MISTRESS^{36:1}

**WHO DESERTED HIM IN QUEST OF A MORE WEALTHY HUSBAND
IN THE EAST INDIES**

The dubious light sad glimmers o'er the sky:
'Tis silence all. By lonely anguish torn,
With wandering feet to gloomy groves I fly,
And wakeful Love still tracks my course forlorn.
And will you, cruel Julia! will you go? 5
And trust you to the Ocean's dark dismay?
Shall the wide wat'ry world between us flow?
And winds unpitying snatch my Hopes away?

37

Thus could you sport with my too easy heart?
Yet tremble, lest not unaveng'd I grieve! 10
The winds may learn your own delusive art,
And faithless Ocean smile—but to deceive!

1792.

WITH FIELDING'S 'AMELIA'^{37:1}

Virtues and Woes alike too great for man
In the soft tale oft claim the useless sigh;
For vain the attempt to realise the plan,
On Folly's wings must Imitation fly.
With other aim has Fielding here display'd 5
Each social duty and each social care;
With just yet vivid colouring portray'd
What every wife should be, what many are.
And sure the Parent^{37:2} of a race so sweet
With double pleasure on the page shall dwell, 10
Each scene with sympathizing breast shall meet,
While Reason still with smiles delights to tell
Maternal hope, that her loved progeny
In all but sorrows shall Amelias be!

? 1792.

WRITTEN AFTER A WALK BEFORE SUPPER^{37:3}

Tho' much averse, dear Jack, to flicker,
 To find a likeness for friend V—ker,
 I've made thro' Earth, and Air, and Sea,
 A Voyage of Discovery!
 And let me add (to ward off strife) 5
 For V—ker and for V—ker's Wife—
 She large and round beyond belief,
 A superfluity of beef!38
 Her mind and body of a piece,
 And both composed of kitchen-grease. 10
 In short, Dame Truth might safely dub her
 Vulgarity enshrin'd in blubber!
 He, meagre bit of littleness,
 All snuff, and musk, and politesse;
 So thin, that strip him of his clothing, 15
 He'd totter on the edge of Nothing!
 In case of foe, he well might hide
 Snug in the collops of her side.
 Ah then, what simile will suit?
 Spindle-leg in great jack-boot? 20
 Pismire crawling in a rut?
 Or a spigot in a butt?
 Thus I humm'd and ha'd awhile,
 When Madam Memory with a smile
 Thus twitch'd my ear—'Why sure, I ween, 25
 In London streets thou oft hast seen
 The very image of this pair:
 A little Ape with huge She-Bear
 Link'd by hapless chain together:
 An unlick'd mass the one—the other 30
 An antic small with nimble crupper—'
 But stop, my Muse! for here comes supper.

1792.

IMITATED FROM OSSIAN38:1

The stream with languid murmur creeps,
 In Lumin's flowery vale:
 Beneath the dew the Lily weeps

Slow-waving to the gale.

39

'Cease, restless gale!' it seems to say, 5

'Nor wake me with thy sighing!

The honours of my vernal day

On rapid wing are flying.

'To-morrow shall the Traveller come

Who late beheld me blooming: 10

His searching eye shall vainly roam

The dreary vale of Lumin.'

With eager gaze and wetted cheek

My wonted haunts along,

Thus, faithful Maiden! thou shalt seek 15

The Youth of simplest song.

But I along the breeze shall roll

The voice of feeble power;

And dwell, the Moon-beam of thy soul,

In Slumber's nightly hour. 20

1793.

THE COMPLAINT OF NINATHÓMA^{39:1}

FROM THE SAME

How long will ye round me be swelling,

O ye blue-tumbling waves of the sea?

Not always in caves was my dwelling,

Nor beneath the cold blast of the tree.

Through the high-sounding halls of Cathlóma 5

In the steps of my beauty I strayed;

The warriors beheld Ninathóma,

And they blesséd the white-bosom'd Maid!

A Ghost! by my cavern it darted!

In moon-beams the Spirit was drest— 1040

For lovely appear the Departed

When they visit the dreams of my rest!

But disturb'd by the tempest's commotion

Fleet the shadowy forms of delight—

Ah cease, thou shrill blast of the Ocean! 15

To howl through my cavern by night.

1793.

SONGS OF THE PIXIES^{40:1}

The Pixies, in the superstition of Devonshire, are a race of beings invisibly small, and harmless or friendly to man. At a small distance from a village in that county, half-way up a wood-covered hill, is an excavation called the Pixies' Parlour. The roots of old trees form its ceiling; and on its sides are innumerable cyphers, among which the author discovered his own cypher and those of his brothers, cut by the hand of their childhood. At the foot of the hill flows the river Otter.

To this place the Author, during the summer months of the year 1793, conducted a party of young ladies; one of whom, of stature elegantly small, and of complexion colourless yet clear, was proclaimed the Faery Queen. On which occasion the following Irregular Ode was written.

I

Whom the untaught Shepherds call
Pixies in their madrigal,
Fancy's children, here we dwell:
Welcome, Ladies! to our cell.
Here the wren of softest note 5
Builds its nest and warbles well;
Here the blackbird strains his throat;
Welcome, Ladies! to our cell.

II

When fades the moon to shadowy-pale,
And scuds the cloud before the gale, 10
Ere the Morn all gem-bedight
Hath streak'd the East with rosy light,
We sip the furze-flower's fragrant dews
Clad in robes of rainbow hues;
Or sport amid the shooting gleams 15
To the tune of distant-tinkling teams,
While lusty Labour scouting sorrow
Bids the Dame a glad good-morrow,
Who jogs the accustom'd road along,
And paces cheery to her cheering song. 20

III

But not our filmy pinion
We scorch amid the blaze of day,

When Noontide's fiery-tresséd minion
Flashes the fervid ray.
Aye from the sultry heat 25
We to the cave retreat
O'er-canopied by huge roots interwin'd
With wildest texture, blacken'd o'er with age:
Round them their mantle green the ivies bind,
Beneath whose foliage pale 30
Fann'd by the unfrequent gale
We shield us from the Tyrant's mid-day rage.

IV

Thither, while the murmuring throng
Of wild-bees hum their drowsy song,
By Indolence and Fancy brought, 35
A youthful Bard, 'unknown to Fame,'
Wooes the Queen of Solemn Thought,
And heaves the gentle misery of a sigh
Gazing with tearful eye,
As round our sandy grot appear 40
Many a rudely-sculptur'd name
To pensive Memory dear!
Weaving gay dreams of sunny-tinctur'd hue,
We glance before his view:
O'er his hush'd soul our soothing witcheries shed 45
And twine the future garland round his head.

V

When Evening's dusky car
Crown'd with her dewy star
Steals o'er the fading sky in shadowy flight;
On leaves of aspen trees 50
We tremble to the breeze
Veil'd from the grosser ken of mortal sight.
Or, haply, at the visionary hour,
Along our wildly-bower'd sequester'd walk,
We listen to the enamour'd rustic's talk; 55
Heave with the heavings of the maiden's breast,
Where young-eyed Loves have hid their turtle nest;
Or guide of soul-subduing power
The glance that from the half-confessing eye
Darts the fond question or the soft reply. 60

VI

Or through the mystic ringlets of the vale
We flash our faery feet in gamesome prank;
Or, silent-sandal'd, pay our defter court,
Circling the Spirit of the Western Gale,
Where wearied with his flower-caressing sport, 65
Supine he slumbers on a violet bank;
Then with quaint music hymn the parting gleam
By lonely Otter's sleep-persuading stream;
Or where his wave with loud unquiet song
Dash'd o'er the rocky channel froths along; 70
Or where, his silver waters smooth'd to rest,
The tall tree's shadow sleeps upon his breast.

VII

Hence thou lingerer, Light!
Eve saddens into Night.
Mother of wildly-working dreams! we view 75
The sombre hours, that round thee stand
With down-cast eyes (a duteous band!)
Their dark robes dripping with the heavy dew.
Sorceress of the ebon throne!
Thy power the Pixies own, 80
When round thy raven brow
Heaven's lucent roses glow, 44
And clouds in watery colours drest
Float in light drapery o'er thy sable vest:
What time the pale moon sheds a softer day 85
Mellowing the woods beneath its pensive beam:
For mid the quivering light 'tis ours to play,
Aye dancing to the cadence of the stream.

VIII

Welcome, Ladies! to the cell
Where the blameless Pixies dwell: 90
But thou, Sweet Nymph! proclaim'd our Faery Queen,
With what obeisance meet
Thy presence shall we greet?
For lo! attendant on thy steps are seen
Graceful Ease in artless stole, 95
And white-robed Purity of soul,
With Honour's softer mien;
Mirth of the loosely-flowing hair,

And meek-eyed Pity eloquently fair,
Whose tearful cheeks are lovely to the view, 100
As snow-drop wet with dew.

IX

Unboastful Maid! though now the Lily pale
Transparent grace thy beauties meek;
Yet ere again along the impurpling vale,
The purpling vale and elfin-haunted grove, 105
Young Zephyr his fresh flowers profusely throws,
We'll tinge with livelier hues thy cheek;
And, haply, from the nectar-breathing Rose
Extract a Blush for Love!

1793.

KISSES46:2

Cupid, if storying Legends tell aright,
Once fram'd a rich Elixir of Delight.
A Chalice o'er love-kindled flames he fix'd,
And in it Nectar and Ambrosia mix'd:
With these the magic dews which Evening brings, 5
Brush'd from the Idalian star by faery wings:
Each tender pledge of sacred Faith he join'd,
Each gentler Pleasure of th' unspotted mind—47
Day-dreams, whose tints with sportive brightness glow,
And Hope, the blameless parasite of Woe. 10
The eyeless Chemist heard the process rise,
The steamy Chalice bubbled up in sighs;
Sweet sounds transpired, as when the enamour'd Dove
Pours the soft murmuring of responsive Love.
The finish'd work might Envy vainly blame, 15
And 'Kisses' was the precious Compound's name.
With half the God his Cyprian Mother blest,
And breath'd on Sara's lovelier lips the rest.

1793.

THE GENTLE LOOK47:1

Thou gentle Look, that didst my soul beguile,
Why hast thou left me? Still in some fond dream
Revisit my sad heart, auspicious Smile!

As falls on closing flowers the lunar beam:
 What time, in sickly mood, at parting day 5
 I lay me down and think of happier years;48
 Of joys, that glimmer'd in Hope's twilight ray,
 Then left me darkling in a vale of tears.
 O pleasant days of Hope—for ever gone!
 Could I recall you!—But that thought is vain. 10
 Availeth not Persuasion's sweetest tone
 To lure the fleet-wing'd Travellers back again:
 Yet fair, though faint, their images shall gleam
 Like the bright Rainbow on a willowy stream.48:1
 ? 1793.

TO THE RIVER OTTER

Dear native Brook! wild Streamlet of the West!
 How many various-fated years have past,
 What happy and what mournful hours, since last
 I skimm'd the smooth thin stone along thy breast,
 Numbering its light leaps! yet so deep imprest 5
 Sink the sweet scenes of childhood, that mine eyes
 I never shut amid the sunny ray,
 But straight with all their tints thy waters rise,
 Thy crossing plank, thy marge with willows grey,
 And bedded sand that vein'd with various dyes 10
 Gleam'd through thy bright transparence! On my way,
 Visions of Childhood! oft have ye beguil'd
 Lone manhood's cares, yet waking fondest sighs:
 Ah! that once more I were a careless Child!
 ? 1793.

AN EFFUSION AT EVENING

WRITTEN IN AUGUST, 1792

Imagination, Mistress of my Love!
 Where shall mine Eye thy elfin haunt explore?
 Dost thou on yon rich Cloud thy pinions bright
 Embathe in amber-glowing Floods of Light?
 Or, wild of speed, pursue the track of Day 5

In other worlds to hail the morning Ray?
'Tis time to bid the faded shadowy Pleasures move
On shadowy Memory's wings across the Soul of Love;
And thine o'er Winter's icy plains to fling
Each flower, that binds the breathing Locks of Spring, 10
When blushing, like a bride, from primrose Bower
She starts, awaken'd by the pattering Shower!
Now sheds the setting Sun a purple gleam,
Aid, lovely Sorc'ress! aid the Poet's dream.
With faery wand O bid my Love arise, 15
The dewy brilliance dancing in her Eyes;
As erst she woke with soul-entrancing Mien
The thrill of Joy extatic yet serene,
When link'd with Peace I bounded o'er the Plain
And Hope itself was all I knew of Pain! 20
Propitious Fancy hears the votive sigh—
The absent Maiden flashes on mine Eye!
When first the matin Bird with startling Song
Salutes the Sun his veiling Clouds among,
I trace her footsteps on the

accustom'd

steaming Lawn, 25

I view her glancing in the gleams of Dawn!
When the bent Flower beneath the night-dew weeps
And on the Lake the silver Lustre sleeps,
Amid the paly Radiance soft and sad
She meets my lonely path in moonbeams clad. 30
With her along the streamlet's brink I rove;
With her I list the warblings of the Grove;
And seems in each low wind her voice to float,
Lone-whispering Pity in each soothing Note!
50As oft in climes beyond the western Main 35
Where boundless spreads the wildly-silent Plain,
The savage Hunter, who his drowsy frame
Had bask'd beneath the Sun's unclouded Flame,
Awakes amid the tempest-troubled air,
The Thunder's Peal and Lightning's lurid glare— 40
Aghast he hears the rushing Whirlwind's Sweep,
And sad recalls the sunny hour of Sleep!

So lost by storms along Life's wild'ring Way
 Mine Eye reverted views that cloudless Day,
 When, —! on thy banks I joy'd to rove 45
 While Hope with kisses nurs'd the infant Love!
 Sweet —! where Pleasure's streamlet glides
 Fann'd by soft winds to curl in mimic tides;
 Where Mirth and Peace beguile the blameless Day;
 And where Friendship's fixt star beams a mellow'd Ray; 50
 Where Love a crown of thornless Roses wears;
 Where soften'd Sorrow smiles within her tears;
 And Memory, with a Vestal's meek employ,
 Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of Joy!
 No more thy Sky Larks less'ning from my sight 55
 Shall thrill th' attuned Heartstring with delight;
 No more shall deck thy pensive Pleasures sweet
 With wreaths of sober hue my evening seat!
 Yet dear to My Fancy's Eye thy varied scene
 Of Wood, Hill, Dale and sparkling Brook between: 60
 Yet sweet to My Fancy's Ear the warbled song,
 That soars on Morning's wing thy fields among!
 Scenes of my Hope! the aching Eye ye leave,
 Like those rich Hues that paint the clouds of Eve!
 Tearful and saddening with the sadden'd Blaze 65
 Mine Eye the gleam pursues with wistful Gaze—
 Sees Shades on Shades with deeper tint impend,
 Till chill and damp the moonless Night descend!

1792.

ON AN AUTUMNAL EVENING

O thou wild Fancy, check thy wing! No more
 Those thin white flakes, those purple clouds explore!
 Nor there with happy spirits speed thy flight
 Bath'd in rich amber-glowing floods of light;
 Nor in yon gleam, where slow descends the day, 5
 With western peasants hail the morning ray!
 Ah! rather bid the perish'd pleasures move,
 A shadowy train, across the soul of Love!
 O'er Disappointment's wintry desert fling
 Each flower that wreath'd the dewy locks of Spring, 10
 When blushing, like a bride, from Hope's trim bower
 She leapt, awaken'd by the pattering shower.

Now sheds the sinking Sun a deeper gleam,
Aid, lovely Sorceress! aid thy Poet's dream!
With faery wand O bid the Maid arise, 15
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes;
As erst when from the Muses' calm abode
I came, with Learning's meed not unbestowed;
When as she twin'd a laurel round my brow,
And met my kiss, and half return'd my vow, 20
O'er all my frame shot rapid my thrill'd heart,
And every nerve confess'd the electric dart.
O dear Deceit! I see the Maiden rise,
Chaste Joyance dancing in her bright-blue eyes!
When first the lark high-soaring swells his throat, 25
Mocks the tir'd eye, and scatters the loud note,
I trace her footsteps on the accustom'd lawn,
I mark her glancing mid the gleam of dawn. 52
When the bent flower beneath the night-dew weeps
And on the lake the silver lustre sleeps, 30
Amid the paly radiance soft and sad,
She meets my lonely path in moon-beams clad.
With her along the streamlet's brink I rove;
With her I list the warblings of the grove;
And seems in each low wind her voice to float 35
Lone-whispering Pity in each soothing note!
Spirits of Love! ye heard her name! Obey
The powerful spell, and to my haunt repair.
Whether on clust'ring pinions ye are there,
Where rich snows blossom on the Myrtle-trees, 40
Or with fond languishment around my fair
Sigh in the loose luxuriance of her hair;
O heed the spell, and hither wing your way,
Like far-off music, voyaging the breeze!
Spirits! to you the infant Maid was given 45
Form'd by the wond'rous Alchemy of Heaven!
No fairer Maid does Love's wide empire know,
No fairer Maid e'er heav'd the bosom's snow.
A thousand Loves around her forehead fly;
A thousand Loves sit melting in her eye; 50
Love lights her smile—in Joy's red nectar dips
His myrtle flower, and plants it on her lips.
She speaks! and hark that passion-warbled song—

Still, Fancy! still that voice, those notes prolong.
As sweet as when that voice with rapturous falls 55
Shall wake the soften'd echoes of Heaven's Halls!
52:10 (have I sigh'd) were mine the wizard's rod,
Or mine the power of Proteus, changeful God!53
A flower-entangled Arbour I would seem
To shield my Love from Noontide's sultry beam: 60
Or bloom a Myrtle, from whose od'rous boughs
My Love might weave gay garlands for her brows.
When Twilight stole across the fading vale,
To fan my Love I'd be the Evening Gale;
Mourn in the soft folds of her swelling vest, 65
And flutter my faint pinions on her breast!
On Seraph wing I'd float a Dream by night,
To soothe my Love with shadows of delight:—
Or soar aloft to be the Spangled Skies,
And gaze upon her with a thousand eyes! 70
As when the Savage, who his drowsy frame
Had bask'd beneath the Sun's unclouded flame,
Awakes amid the troubles of the air,
The skiey deluge, and white lightning's glare—
Aghast he scours before the tempest's sweep, 75
And sad recalls the sunny hour of sleep:—
So tossed by storms along Life's wild'ring way,
Mine eye reverted views that cloudless day,54
When by my native brook I wont to rove,
While Hope with kisses nurs'd the Infant Love. 80
Dear native brook! like Peace, so placidly
Smoothing through fertile fields thy current meek!
Dear native brook! where first young Poesy
Stared wildly-eager in her noontide dream!
Where blameless pleasures dimple Quiet's cheek, 85
As water-lilies ripple thy slow stream!
Dear native haunts! where Virtue still is gay,
Where Friendship's fix'd star sheds a mellow'd ray,
Where Love a crown of thornless Roses wears,
Where soften'd Sorrow smiles within her tears; 90
And Memory, with a Vestal's chaste employ,
Unceasing feeds the lambent flame of joy!
No more your sky-larks melting from the sight
Shall thrill the attuned heart-string with delight—

No more shall deck your pensive Pleasures sweet 95
With wreaths of sober hue my evening seat.
Yet dear to Fancy's eye your varied scene
Of wood, hill, dale, and sparkling brook between!
Yet sweet to Fancy's ear the warbled song,
That soars on Morning's wing your vales among. 100
Scenes of my Hope! the aching eye ye leave
Like yon bright hues that paint the clouds of eve!
Tearful and saddening with the sadden'd blaze
Mine eye the gleam pursues with wistful gaze:
Sees shades on shades with deeper tint impend, 105
Till chill and damp the moonless night descend

1793.

O look, and smile! No common prayer
Solicits, Fortune! thy propitious care!
For, not a silken son of dress, 5
I clink the gilded chains of politesse,
Nor ask thy boon what time I scheme
Unholy Pleasure's frail and feverish dream;
Nor yet my view life's dazzle blinds—
Pomp!—Grandeur! Power!—I give you to the winds! 10
Let the little bosom cold
Melt only at the sunbeam ray of gold—
My pale cheeks glow—the big drops start—
The rebel Feeling riots at my heart!
And if in lonely durance pent, 15
Thy poor mite mourn a brief imprisonment—
That mite at Sorrow's faintest sound
Leaps from its scrip with an elastic bound!
But oh! if ever song thine ear
Might soothe, O haste with fost'ring hand to rear 20
One Flower of Hope! At Love's behest,
Trembling, I plac'd it in my secret breast:
And thrice I've view'd the vernal gleam,
Since oft mine eye, with Joy's electric beam,
Illum'd it—and its sadder hue 25
Oft moisten'd with the Tear's ambrosial dew!
Poor wither'd floweret! on its head
Has dark Despair his sickly mildew shed!
But thou, O Fortune! canst relume

Its deaden'd tints—and thou with hardier bloom 30
May'st haply tinge its beauties pale,
And yield the unsunn'd stranger to the western gale!
1793.

Freeditorial 