

Cumbrian Legends; or, Tales of Other Times.

Mrs. F. Ryves

Table of Contents

<u>Cumbrian Legends; or, Tales of Other Times</u>	1
<u>Mrs. F. Ryves</u>	1
<u>MRS RYVES, OF RYVES CASTLE</u>	1
<u>ADDRESS</u>	2
<u>ST BEGA, OR THE EVE OF ST JOHN</u>	3
<u>PART FIRST. SAINT BEGA</u>	3
<u>PART SECOND. WOE TO BANK; OR, THE WOLF</u>	11
<u>PART FIRST</u>	11
<u>PART SECOND</u>	18
<u>PART THIRD</u>	24
<u>SPIRIT OF AIR. AN IRREGULAR ODE</u>	29
<u>SECOND PART</u>	29
<u>FRAGMENT OF</u>	31
<u>CUMBRIA. MORNING</u>	32
<u>SPRING</u>	35
<u>MUSIC OF THE CHASE</u>	36
<u>LEGEND OF THE FLOATING ISLE</u>	39
<u>PART SECOND</u>	41
<u>STRANGER'S FAREWELL</u>	49

Cumbrian Legends; or, Tales of Other Times.

Mrs. F. Ryves

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- [MRS RYVES, OF RYVES CASTLE.](#)
- [ADDRESS.](#)
- [ST BEGA, OR THE EVE OF ST JOHN.](#)
 - [PART FIRST. SAINT BEGA.](#)
 - [PART SECOND. WOE TO BANK; OR, THE WOLF.](#)
 - [PART FIRST.](#)
 - [PART SECOND.](#)
 - [PART THIRD.](#)
 - [SPIRIT OF AIR. AN IRREGULAR ODE.](#)
 - [SECOND PART.](#)
 - [FRAGMENT OF](#)
 - [CUMBRIA. MORNING.](#)
 - [SPRING.](#)
 - [MUSIC OF THE CHASE.](#)
 - [LEGEND OF THE FLOATING ISLE.](#)
 - [PART SECOND.](#)
 - [STRANGER'S FAREWELL.](#)

DEDICATED TO
HER ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE OF WALES.

CONTAINING,
SAINT BEGA, OR THE EVE OF SAINT JOHN WOE TO BANK,
OR THE WOLF AN IRREGULAR ODE THE RECLUSE OF ST HERBERT'S
ISLE, A FRAGMENT WITH AN ADDRESS PREFIXED.

BY

MRS RYVES, OF RYVES CASTLE.

"While cloister'd piety displays
Her mouldering roll, the piercing eye explores
New manners, and the pomp of elder days,
Whence culls the pensive bard his pictured stores;
Nor rough nor barren are the winding ways
Of hoar antiquity, but stew'n with flowers."

Warton on Dugdale's Monasticon.

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ADDRESS.

IN these disastrous times, when Nature bends
Beneath the weight of Providence's ends;
When trembling nations wait on despot rage,
And horrors more than human shake the age;
When every crime and every death prevails,
And every woe and every wound assails
The subject Earth; and when, on every side,
Flames the red flash, and flows th' ensanguined tide,
Creeps th' insidious drug, and speeds the poniard wide;
Nature looks up, and, thro' the dark immense,
Beholds one ray to glad the sick'ning sense:
Nature looks up, and, from chaotic sway,
Beholds the Dove of Mercy's onward way:
Near and more near her liquid course she plies,
And bears the branch from Britain's favoured skies;
Britain, like th' Ararat of hallowed page,
Bears on her steady breast the sufferers of the age.

Illustrious Isle! 'mid emerald bounds inlaid,
Where freeborn genius woos the sacred shade;
Where fairest Liberty endears the scene,
And stamps a soul upon the native mien;
Where equal rights unequal ranks restrain,
And none is marked for privilege of pain,
Save the guilt-conscious, who, with crime opprest,
Endures the self-condemnings at his breast.
Exalted seat! emerging from the flood,
Extending wide the energies of good,
List'ning the voice of Justice' strong command,
And spreading charity from land to land!

Proud Throne! where piety and peace combined,
Have mixed their home-felt blessings to mankind,
While victory with mercy shared the palm,
And shed o'er foreign miseries a balm!
England beloved, still spread thy honoured fame,
Still bear the sacred standard of thy claim,
Standard of good, in Heaven's Almighty name.

Hail, Royal Birth! whose modest charms conceal
All that may prove a nation's woe or weal;
Whose youthful promise boasts the liberal hand,

ADDRESS.

And wins the vaunted learning of the land;
Still may true piety thy soul sustain,
With all the virgin virtues in thy train!

Be ye her guards, ye angels "bright and fair,"
And be her yielding heart your pleasing care!
Gift her with grace superior to her kind,
And be her every sense a sense refined!
Let soul-born courage quell her woman's fears,
And sacred justice rule her passing years!
Let mild benevolence o'er greatness shine,
Sweet grace, which renders royalty divine,
And majesty with mercy mingled still,
Temper with tenderness coercive will:
So, when the sun rolls on to distant reign,
Her name may vie with Britain's Virgin Queen;
So may she grasp the virtues of her line,
And still the Crown with added lustre shine!
Sweet Princess! be thy guide the Heavenly Maid,
And on thy breast her attributes displayed;
Still 'mid thy foes her Ægis guard thy head,
But 'mid thy friends her blue-eyed radiance shed!

F. RYVES.

ST BEGA, OR THE EVE OF ST JOHN.

PART FIRST. SAINT BEGA.

WHEN holy monkhood lived a life of prayer,
And sainted matrons gave to heaven their care;
When hymning choirs entranced the listening ear,
And chanted requiems quelled the conscious tear;
When through the narrow-lengthened lingering way,
Reposed in death, was borne the decent clay;
When paused the dirge till the last accents rose,
Franchise of souls released from earthly woes;
When virgin sisters silent sorrows shed,
Whose pale-ey'd peace scarce seem'd to shun the dead;
On CUMBRIA'S lofty height, and rocky shore,
Stood the proud pile, whose glory is no more,
A remnant now, of what it was before.
Bold 'mid the waves, the promontory rears
A sainted head, and wildest uproar dares;
While midnight tempests shriek along the vale,
While burst the thunders, and while beats the hail;
Alone, unmoved, while mingled fates assail

A holy sister once, as legends sing,
Came from the isle which boasts unfading spring;

Which boasts the precious gift of sainted hand,
The pious blessing on the happy land;
A pilgrim she, in humble garb arrayed,
Yet pilgrim weeds the gracious form displayed;
Inspiring ardour shone o'er all her frame,
And sacred charities confess'd her name.
Informed of heaven, and warned by mystic dreams,
She turned her course from Hesper's natal beams;
From where the sun declined, his bosom laves,
And sinks with Thetis 'mid the roseate waves.
When modest eve conceals the bridal feast,
And wraps in shade the gold besprinkled west;
Informed of heaven, she left her favour'd land,
A pilgrim she obeyed the high command.

Borne on the tide, her calm and patient soul
Feared not the rage of element's control;
Borne on th'insidious waves, which seemed to rest,
Pious to bear her, on their tranquil breast;
While not one hasty swell disturbs the scene,
Breaking in foam on the transparent green;
But conscious Nature seems 'mid ocean's sleep,
To hold enthralled the strugglings of the deep.
The sainted pilgrim raised her heaven-ward eyes,
And poured adoring accents to the skies;
High o'er the vault, whose mid-day glories shine,
Her finer eye explores the source divine;
Deep 'mid the waves whose deepest billows roll,
Her mind adores the all-protecting soul;
Collected inward, all serene she stood,
And owned the hand of Omnipresent good.

'Tis eve and now impatient of control,
The heaving tumult swells in lengthened roll;
Dark 'mid the gloom the western land retires,
And quenched the setting sun 'mid dusky fires.

Pensive the saint beheld the dread array,
Closing in shade upon the parting day;
Pensive she sought athwart the growing night,
The trembling beams of vesper's votive light;
In vain, for lost amid the gloom he lies,
Nor meets the search of her enquiring eyes.

Sunk was the starry sign 'mid murky damp,
Involved the lustre of the sacred lamp;
When the mild saint in evening's sacred strain,
Controlled the rising murmurs of the main;
Through the tall shrouds the shrilly gusts subside,
The half formed billows sink upon the tide;
While the rapt song of praise ascends on high,

Sweet hymning hosts seem bursting from the sky.

'Tis night the spirits of the storm arise,
And mount the waves embattled 'gainst the skies;
The tumult waves in wild confusion sweep,
And burst the hidden chambers of the deep:
Th'infuriate winds usurp the vast domain,
And strive with ocean for his monstrous reign;
Expell'd, th'indignant waves, in wild affright,
Burst over space, and flash upon the night:
Wheeling they roar, as fierce the winds return,
And waves and winds in mingled fury burn;
Equal the raging elements maintain,
And ocean melts amid his flaming main;
While his deep caverns with resounding roar,
Repeat the threatened death from shore to shore.

And now the struggling seamens' courage dies,
They seek the pilgrim, with imploring cries;
Humbly they pray to avert th'impending ill;
The pilgrim prays, yet bows to heavenly will.
While the dread blast o'ercame the voice of prayer,
It caught at heaven, and rose to mercy's ear!

Oh! grant those lives, the humble pilgrim prayed,
While the quick flash the present death displayed;
Oh! grant those lives, the shudd'ring pilgrim sighed,
While the fierce tempest to her sighs replied.

Through the long hours of night by death assailed,
The pious spirit of the saint prevailed;
Irrevocable vows her tongue exprest,
Where'er her steps might find the wished for rest;
There consecrate to heaven, to raise the shrine,
And yield the mortal cares for care divine.
Now fly the fateful tempests of the night,
Chased by the warnings of celestial light;
Sullen they sink in caves where ocean sleeps,
And mingle murmurs with the sounding deeps:
Or urge the distant whirlwinds wildest war,
Or sweep the hoar frost as it drives afar;
Or 'mid the snow-crowned Hecla's burning fire,
With mingled mysteries of fate conspire;
Where jarring elements for ever wage
The fruitless contest of eternal rage.

'Tis morn, Aurora opes her languid eye,
While rosy winged hours around her fly;
Softly they wipe the dews of heaven away,
And braid her lovely tresses as they stray;
Bind the soft tissues which her limbs enfold,

And gild the purpled sky with floating gold;
While youthful Zephyrus with softest sighs,
Perfumes the groves impervious to the skies;
Waiting the hour when glides the panting maid
Before the burning car, and seeks the shade.

Freed from the tempest's fierce and boisterous arms,
Tired Nature sinks amid her wasted charms;
Supine upon the plain she seems to rest,
While drowsy curtains mantle o'er her breast;
Serene her dreams, while floating visions play,
And shade her closing eye from beams of day;
But now the breeze unbinds her leaf-bound hair,
And breathes fresh fragrance through the tender air;
While brightening beams with penetrating ray,
Pierce through her lingering lids, and rouse the day
She wakes a thousand charms arise to view,
A thousand more, and still in beauty new;
Ten thousand starry gems adorn her breast,
Ten thousand hues enrich her glowing vest;
While round her head, in fresher beauty seen,
The exulting wreath, displays more vivid green.

The fainting breeze now dips upon the lake,
And now the herds the mid-day covert take;
Nature restored, beholds the favoured day,
Blest by the saint upon her sacred way;
Only unswayed, still roar the angry waves,
Breaking and chafing, 'mid th'engulphing caves;
'Till the fierce tide, restrained by high command,
Retreating, left the vessel on the strand.

No pendant floating in its various pride,
Proclaimed the wanderers through the briny tide:
But, on the prow, the pious pilgrim stood,
And blest the land which check'd th'impetuous flood:
Forth from her eye a sainted radiance shed,
And spread a chastened lustre round her head:
The land accepts the sign, unsent before,
And hails Saint Bega to the Cumbrian shore.
Amid the baruchs wide, and time-worn caves,
Where the wild surge a frowning buttress laves;
'Twas there the pilgrim, on her rugged bed,
Held heavenly converse with the sainted dead;
While to mysterious vision life was given,
She loved to commune with approving heaven.
There, legends say, th'ill boding bird of storm,
That blends with foam his mist-encircled form,
Wheeling 'mid wave, and spurning all the waste,
And screaming hoarse, the courier of the blast;
He to the holy saint his prey resigned,

Compelled by mystic shadowings of mind;
Spreading a table 'mid the samphired caves,
Of shell-bound tribute from the conscious waves:
There, legends say, the wolves of Cumbria's shore,
Whose fell jaws tinged the streams with human gore,
Crouched at her sainted feet, and ceased to roar.

 Simples and herbs she knew, of wond'rous power,
And when to cull them in their virtuous hour:
Ere yet the garish sun had drank the dew,
She plucked the honied cup of various hue;
And those whose secret virtues crown the eve,
Or twine the brake, or 'mid the waters weave;
And those which wildly cling from mountain head,
And those which love to linger near the dead:
All these she could combine with holy art,
To cool the burning fever at the heart;
To heal the aching pangs of mortal woe,
And bid life's renovated current flow;
Then consecrate to heaven with humble care,
She mingled sacred praise and pious prayer.

 Soon gathering rustics crowd the rock-built shrine,
The hollow caverns glow with flame divine;
The simple bosoms own a mild control,
And feel an heaven just opening on the soul.
But vain were simple piety's demand,
To win the suffrage of a stranger land;
The sainted pilgrim from the proud implores
An hallowed rest upon their haughty shores:
The proud reply, in all the pride of scorn,
While bows the head, which sacred vows adorn;
The meek eyed saint her struggling soul restrains,
And Christian patience chastens all her pains.
A miracle, a sign, the proud demand,
A sign, a miracle, from heaven's own hand;
Scorning, they ask a miracle from heaven,
But soon an answering miracle is given.

 'Twas at the time when Nature's genial spring
Tunes the sweet pipe, and plumes the sportive wing;
Paints all in blandished beauty to the view,
And binds the brows of love with chaplets ever new:
On the saint's hallowed eve, whose holy name
Strove with the humble for an humbler fame;
Himself a child of wonder-born in age,
Whose sire in speechless signal marked the page:
Who 'mid the desert raised the pious prayer,
Fed by heaven's hand, and led by heaven's care;
Sent forth the harbinger of life to prove,
And seek a path-way for the eternal love;

To him the inspired pilgrim breathed her sighs,
And wore the long lone vigil with her cries.
On the bold baruchs frowning head she stood,
And spread her hands, imploring, o'er the flood;
Upraised to heaven her eyes, uplift her arms,
Her veil displayed the saint in shadowy charms:
While scarce the fearful moon illumed the sight,
And simple shepherds fled in strange affright;
Her lengthened prayer preferred, she sought her bed,
Rough 'mid the rocks with scattered sea-weed spread;
Reposed in sleep, she smiles in vision blest,
And future glories rise upon her rest.

When, lo! behold the wond'rous work is done,
Mingling hoar winter with a summer sun;
Wide, and more wide, the miracle obtains,
Spreads o'er the heights, and mantles on the plains;
O'er land and wave, beyond the human scan,
Even to the isle which boasts the name of Man;
Nature beholds with awe her outraged laws,
And feels the presence of a mighty cause;
Insinuating snows her bosom thrill,
O'erspread the vale, and climb the verdant hill;
Woo to unkindly death the new blown flowers,
And hang the foliage with fresh frosted showers;
Warm Nature shrinks in winter's freezing arms,
And faints in temporary death's alarms.
But soon her genial bosom burst the tomb,
And waked the subjects of the hasty doom;
Sudden they wake, they live, they breathe around,
Sudden the frosted ruins strew the ground;
Winter's bright structures shivered on the sight,
And all dissolved in streams of living light.
Now smiling fields confess the halcyon reign,
Sweeter the liquid love-notes now complain;
While the soft mantle hung with living dews,
Reflects swift colouring of rainbow hues;
Loud wondering crowds the miracle proclaim,
And yield the glory to St Bega's name.

Hail to the holy labours of the land,
Hail to the effort of each pious hand;
All hail the hallowed fabric rears its head,
Devote to life, and sacred to the dead.

And soon the deepening arches distant show
A long perspective, lengthening as they grow;
Now rise the lofty pillars on the sight,
Majestic frowning through the dusky light;
Deep stretch the sounding aisles in sober shade,
And scarce confess the forms that seem to fade.

Here cloisters rise, where wearied monkhood slept;
Here rise the cells where meek-eyed sisters wept;
And there the sacred dome above the pile,
Spread o'er the sober gloom a sainted smile.

Rest for the silent dead with pious care,
An holy cemetery, blest by prayer,
Stretchers beneath a long sepulchral way,
Where the dim lamp affords a feeble ray;
Silent and slow, by times proceed the train,
To view the bed where soon they must remain:
While yet they gaze, the tyrant passions die,
And the calmed soul resigns into a sigh.

Now mild and sacred peace had blest the shrine;
And shed o'er pious breasts a grace divine;
Flowed through a lengthened line of convent years,
Remote from busy hopes and busy fears;
The pilgrim saint had blest the sister train,
Their forms confessed the robe unknown to stain;
The veil immaculate devote to heaven,
To their meek grace a meeker grace had given;
While bright conviction o'er their sense obtains,
And breathes sweet peace o'er penitential pains.
Still minist'ring to good, the saint addressed
Her humble balm to every wretch's breast;
And, when the suffering sinner sunk in woe,
She preached the thorn-bound anguish of the heavenly brow.

Soft on the wound the sisters' hands were laid,
And softer still the death-bed pillow spread;
While to the penitent, with humble trust,
They taught that heaven was good, as heaven was just:
And, when in death were burst the mortal bands,
The last sad duties rested in their hands.

Still toiling years the circling sun had traced,
And heaven had yet supplied what time defaced;
For, as the fading flame of life declined,
A brighter flame shone inward on the mind:
Till the last struggle of the fatal hour,
Which gave the saint to death's resistless power.

But still she lives on high, a sainted name,
Still piety preserves her sacred fame;
And when the ruined pile resounds with praise,
The sainted pilgrim still responds the lays.

Still, legends say, to prove her wond'rous right,
Still on the eve of mid-sun's sacred light,
When the deep shades have mantled o'er the skies,

The silent forms of shadowy shapes arise:
And the mild saint, amid her pious train,
Retakes with printless steps her course again,
And spreads her snow-white mantle o'er the plain.

Here, 'mid the vale, and marked with sacred fear,
The vast phenomena of mists appear;
In burnished glory o'er the sainted head,
They seem to bear the spirits of the dead:
For, oft while solemn sounding on the plain,
The ruined pile still breathes the pious strain;
Then shadowy forms arise from forth the tide,
And roll aloft in elemental pride;
Spread a wide curtain of illumined cloud,
And seem from man departed souls to shroud;
Such as might linger where in life they dwelt,
And feel what mingled natures once had felt:
Slowly they move, they gather round the dome,
While bends some sainted brow o'er every tomb.

Now curling volumes o'er the valley sweep,
And emulate the heavings of the deep;
Now, like the flame-tinged coursers of the air,
They seem to foam beneath a mystic car:
Or rapid rush athwart the sickening sky,
While their loose manes still dazzle on the eye;
And their bright hoofs, now shod with living light,
Strike in long streams of lustre on the sight.
The sun now dims, the blast now whizzes near,
And grows upon the vale with sacred fear;
Nature in shudderings owns a solemn sway,
The trembling leaves a rustling homage pay:
Awe-struck, the birds no longer dare to soar,
And even the fiercer animals adore;
The untaught hind sees danger in the gloom,
And hies to shelter from a hasty doom;
But the rapt soul resigns in wondering praise,
And owns the hand unseen by vulgar gaze.

Here, too, behold the modest wandering maid,
Who poured her silver urn 'mid sacred shade;
Unsung of poet, unextolled of fame,
Not Eridanus thou, of deathless name:
Yet still thy votive streams shall softly stray
Along the sainted plain, where moon beams play,
And mark the place where by the torch flung light,
The chanting train fulfilled the holy rite;
Nor, still unsung, shall all thy fame remain,
For thou shalt live, though ruin rack the fane;
While Nature lives, thy charms shall gently smile,
And spread-fresh beauty round the ruined pile.

'Twas when the River God, with powerful arms,
Embraced thy parent nymph in all her charms;
She gave thee birth, in modest grace arrayed,
And bound a primrose-wreath around thy head.
'Mid sacred scenes she bade thee wander still,
And taught thy tender voice a chastened thrill.
So timid thou, when first loud ocean's roar
Awakes strange echo's through thy pebbly shore;
Back on thyself recoiled, in dread repose,
No more thy race in soft meanderings flows.
Retiring deep, thou takest thy sedge-bound ways,
And tremblest, when the wing of Zephyr plays;
But soon assured, and shining on the sight,
Again are traced thy folds of azure light:
So timid thou, thy paths still love to stray
Around the ruined pile and mouldering way;
Fearful to wander, thy reluctant mind
Pursues the soft meandering's subtle wind;
Yet wanders still till now beyond the plain,
Thy modest charms are lost within the main,
And lost thy voice 'mid ocean's angry reign.

END OF SAINT BEGA.

PART SECOND. WOE TO BANK; OR, THE WOLF.

IN THREE PARTS.

PART FIRST.

SWIFT is the feathered foot of passing time,
And soft the grief untinged with a crime;
Retiring hours bequeathed returning calm,
And med'cined Nature's woe with Nature's balm;
Spreading around the pile a chastened grief,
And mingling precious tears with calm relief.
Resigned, though sorrowing, the sister train
Still softly to the sainted shrine complain;
Pour forth the heart's surcharge, corroding woe,
Sins unconfessed, and tears that need to flow;
With all the murm'ings of conventual care,
Pensive they offer to the sainted ear.
And thus the song, which, floating o'er the shrine,
Rose from the fane, and reached the breast benign;
Thus bowed the sisters, to the matron love,
Their guide on earth, their patroness above.

The Sisters' Song.

Sisters, sisters, let us pray,
And wear our pilgrimage away,
No sainted guide of sacred mind,
With human tenderness combined,
No gentle voice is near:
No sainted pilgrim's patient hand
Now rules the rigours of command,
No gentle pilgrim here.
No more her tones inspire the soul,
No more her gracious numbers roll.

Sisters, sisters, let us bend,
Heavenly accents soft descend,
Meekly, let us bow the head,
While pass the visions of the dead;
They come, they come, they melt, they thrill,
Their tones entrance, the bosoms fill,
The swelling heart can beat no more;
She speaks and, lo! the strife is o'er.
The form beatified, with softened smile
Spoke while sweet symphonies pervade the sounding isle:

Gentle sisters, weep no more,
Life's triumphant death is o'er;
Pious sisters, weep no more,
Mortal sorrows soon are o'er;
And still 'mid race of earthly pain,
Mortal joys and griefs are vain:
Faithful sisters, weep no more,
Time is, when sorrow should be o'er,
Time hastens on th'eventful way,
And gains on everlasting day;
 Soon you'll be,
 On high with me,
Till time melts in eternity.

Deeply entranced, and bending to the ground,
The sister train adore the gracious sound;
Beyond their straining sense the vision flew,
And shed from sainted wings a healing dew:
Still all amazed they seek, with uplift eyes,
To pierce the glories of the shining skies:
Silent they stand, scarce heaves their struggling breast,
No more those sounds their aching ears confest;
Listening, they linger long, till falling tears
Wake from the trance, and bid to convent cares.

Full many years rolled on the golden sun,
Still new, his gladsome race again to run;

Full many names had worn the sacred state,
And ruled with various rod the sisters' fate;
And still the lofty Sanctuary's pride,
Stood in vast gloom upon the rock-bound tide.
Now tribute titles woo the sacred shrine,
And earthly gifts are bartered for divine;
Man, unsophisticated man, no more,
Like the good shepherd, opes the friendly door:
Men, unsophisticated men, no more,
Like the true sheep, await the peaceful door;
But pomp and pride, with luxury combined,
Mingled their strife, and left a wreck behind.
'Twas then brave Lucie lived in martial fame,
Mingling bright love with glory's fiercer flame;
Tender he loved the tenderest female grace,
And blessed the charms which owned his warm embrace.
Soft as the modest morning of the sky,
So soft the chastened lustre of her eye;
Bright as the noon in highest hour of day,
So bright the virtues all her smiles display:
Mild as the eve, and mellow as the light,
Her peace so tranquil, and her smile so bright;
To vice alone a foe, her generous mind
Wept o'er the sinful sorrows of mankind:
And while she mourned the share of conscious shame,
Her soft tears washed away the guilty name.
Three beauteous pledges, formed with all her grace,
Already granted, blest the Lucie race;
But still the noble Lucie sighed to scan
In the young babe, the promise of the Man:
To bind his honours round the youthful head,
Ere he should mingle with the mouldering dead.
And still he sighed; that heaven might grant the joy,
And longed to press the lovely laughing boy;
When a new hope was whispered to his soul,
How fleet the passing moons of promise roll.
A growing hope the lady's heart confest,
And owned the conscious throbbings at her breast;
Then, in ill hour, the hero sought the field,
Broke from the fond embrace, and grasped the pond'rous shield.
And soon loud fame proclaims the boast of arms,
While to the blast responds the heart's alarms;
Though conquest come, in trophied triumph drest,
On the far field full many warriors rest;
Though conquest come, with living glory crowned,
Cold are the dead upon the conquered ground:
While loud exultings meet the anxious ear,
Groans many a heart, falls many a kindred tear;
And while the victors proudly rend the sky,
The noble dead shall bear their crowns on high.

But Lucie lived superior to the strife,
And bore on love's swift wings his favoured life;
As when the bridegroom sun with hasty ray
Wheels over space, and hurries on the day,
Impatient, till the flying hours invite,
To crown his brows, 'mid mysteries of night
So hasted Lucie; so his ardour strove
To lay his trophies where he gave his love:
Deceitful hopes now played around his breast,
By quick succeeding terrors now opprest;
Still distant from his heart's supremest care
His breast now glows, now chills, with strange despair.

'Twas then the lady sought the sainted pile,
And bent submissive to the holy smile;
Three beauteous infants blooming in her train,
Promise of joy, yet source of present pain:
Onward she led, while softest female grace
Formed every limb, and shone in every face;
She knelt, she prayed, she sunk before the shrine,
And placed her infant care 'mid care divine.
Lovely in youth, the noble dame appears
In prayer a saint, a mortal in her tears:
"Forgive," she cried, "ye servants of the skies,
"Forgive a mother's tears, a mother's sighs;
"Accept the sacred charge, nor chide my woe,
"Slow round my fainting heart the life-drops flow;
"Guard them, ye holy servants of the blessed,
"Till Lucie snatch them to his parent breast;
"Guard them from every ill, ye holy train,
"'Tis mine to meet my lord upon the plain."

More had she said, but a resistless sway
Rushed on her soul, and bore her sense away;
When, as she sinks, and all her spirits fail,
A sudden horror shook the gloomy aisle;
Low whispering winds the sacred vestments shake,
And e'en the mouldering dead appear to wake.
Deep, hollow groans arose from every tomb,
And murmured warnings of a fearful doom;
While from the trophied stone the helmet fell,
And spears reversed send forth a sullen knell.
Amazed, the holy train observe the signs,
While each on each her anxious eye declines;
Each her wrapt veil folds o'er her modest breast,
Her clasped hands humbly on her bosom prest,
While death usurps a temporary rest.
Silent they watch the ebb or flow of life,
And try the pausing pulses painful strife;
'Till frequent sighs returning soul impart,
And nature rallied round the labouring heart.

Now, first in age, superior of the place,
Heir of the sacred rank and sacred grace
The Abbess spoke, to offer comfort's ray,
But, while she spoke of comfort, felt dismay.
"Daughter, (she cried) remain within these walls,
"Till Lucie's banners float along his halls:
"Daughter, accept th' asylum of our rest,
"Join in our rites, and shelter in our breast;
"Resign thy soul, thy tender infants press,
"And holy Heaven, in Heaven's own season, bless."
"Ah! saint forbear forbear," the lady cries,
While to the saint's were lift her anxious eyes
"Ah! saint, forbear forbear, nor more oppose
"The solemn tribute of my matron vows:
"Behold my bended knees, and thus again
"I swear to Heaven, and all the sainted train,
"To meet my lord alone upon the plain."

The shuddering Abbess witnessed to the vow;
Silent she shrunk, her closing eyes o'erflow;
Her head declining, to the throne of grace
She bows submissive, and averts her face.

And now the holy fathers slow advance,
And bear the helm, and raise the prostrate lance:
Solemn they pass; their deep sepulchral tones
Call forth the voice of monumental stones;
Arrayed in functionary pomp, they stand,
And seem to spread dismay on every hand;
Dark are their eyes, their forehead browed with care,
And dark and skance their looks observe the fair:
Scarce human they, their robes assume the dead,
And bear dread honours from the shrouded bed.

The rites now past, and blessed the holy name,
A timely comfort soothes the sinking dame.
New consecrated, now, with pious rite,
The crested helmet frowns upon the sight;
And spears new raised, and gleaming through the gloom,
Tell how the Lucie fought, and found a tomb.

The crowding sisters now surround the fair,
Each emulous to soothe a parent's care;
For now the lady, on her journey bent,
Her beauteous face with tender tears besprent,
Hung o'er the babes; by turns her arms were flung,
And round each infant neck in fondness hung.
At length resolved, she burst soft nature's sway,
And measured from the pile her fateful way.
The beauteous children, now enclosed in glooms,
Tread the long aisles, and gaze upon the tombs;

With infant wonder sport amid the dead,
Nor own the kindred dust on which they tread:
Weary at length, 'mid scenes of solemn show,
Weeping, they call with tears of infant woe;
Starting, they catch the echoes of their cries,
And hurry where the sounds appear to rise;
Till baffled all, and drowsy as they stray,
'Mid friendly cares they lull their griefs away.

Sullen the angry eve obscures with clouds,
The mists of fate collect in dusky shrouds.
Arrived upon the plain, the lady stands,
And waves to distance her obedient bands,
Awed by her stedfast air and stern commands.

And now, with eager haste, she passed along,
Unconscious of the thorns her paths among;
Yet ever and anon she stayed to hear,
Should the far murmur grow upon the ear.
At length, convinced no sounds of martial train
Swept on the breeze, or wafted o'er the main,
Saddened she took again her heavy way,
Nor wist how long, till night o'ercame the day.

Dark, nameless terrors, soon invade her breast,
Almost she mourns the rash vow she profest:
Fain had she turned; but still the vow profane,
The saint offended, and the penance pain,
In angry terrors o'er her senses bore,
And urged her hasty steps upon the moor.

Sad visions now o'er all her fancy broke,
And all her frame with feeble falterings shook:
Her lord, her Lucie, on her lips expire,
Her parched lips fail to speak the dear desire.
Her lord, her tender babes, again she strove;
Her voice denies, while her sad features move:
Fainting, and sunk, to heavenly hosts she prayed,
And rested hopeful in the gracious aid.

But now the moon, unconscious of the woe,
Lights the wide landscape with a trembling glow;
Hangs the ethereal lamps o'er tufted groves,
And shifts and shivers as the foliage moves;
While the bleared sky with misty vapours drest,
Gave wildest phantoms to the troubled breast.
The lady gazed, with eye intent, to trace,
And thought she read dismay in nature's face:
Her feverish fancy pictured heroes slain,
Or swallowed deep amid the turgid main;
But, while she gazed, the mirror—curtain flew,

And from her eyes the changeful picture drew.
Though weak and faint, she blest the friendly light,
Whose silver rays direct her steps aright;
And still to Heaven commended, on her way
Pursues the banks of Enn, by moon's pale ray.
"Thou Moon (she cries) who mildly bend'st to earth,
"To cheer poor wanderers of mortal birth,
"Thy beams, O Moon! may reach my Lucie's breast,
"Haply may glitter on his burnished crest.
"Thou pitying Moon, direct this anxious haste,
"Shine round his pathway o'er th' uncertain waste;
"Sport on the fleeting waters of the Enn,
"And guide my lord to meet me on the plain:
"Tell him, my feet the wide waste moor have prest;
"Tell him, I weep, I faint, with fears opprest."
She said, and paused; the Moon, in bootless sign,
Bowed through the cloud, and seemed to smile benign.

Brave Lucie, late escaped from din of arms,
And hasting to his spouse in wedded charms,
Longs to encircle, in the fond embrace,
The tender matron, veiled with maiden grace:
Before his hardy troop the warrior sped,
With one tried friend, who followed as he led;
His forward ardour pressed redoubling speed,
And still he urged again his gen'rous steed.

'Twas now the moon, retiring, hid her light,
And drifting rain foretold a heavy night:
Red, angry vapours, swept the vaulted space,
Fled and pursued, and mixed in furious race:
The winds, which late had slumbered on the trees,
Or waked in drowsy whispers of the breeze,
Spread their dark wings, and flung dire tempest round,
While cold, chill damps o'erspread the fatal ground:
The blast now shrieks, and now a deepening growl
Breaks on the ear, and owns a savage howl.

Once more the moon restored the silver ray,
And cast her beams where now the lady lay,
All faint; yet still the neighing steeds' alarms,
The beat of hoofs, the sound of clanging arms,
Burst in warm rapture o'er her suffering soul,
And bade the tide of strong emotions roll.
Sudden her lord beheld the lovely dame,
Sudden he flew to clasp her trembling frame;
Recalled the life, just quivering at her breath,
And deemed o'ercome the fatal snares of death.

Much had they now to say, and much to hear;
Much wonder, and much love for either ear.

Again restored to life, the lady smiles,
The tender husband all her fear beguiles;
The prudent friend retires, unbade to stay,
And wends to find alone his homeward way.
Lovely and loved, they spoke of love and life,
And hushed the terrors of the late past strife;
Exchanged the heart, while every fair desire
Nursed the best passions to a virtuous fire:
Boastful of treasures, in the countless joy,
Their beauteous babes, their hoped, expected boy,
They smile in human pride, nor fear the near annoy.

Such, and so wise, is the Divine decree,
No eye can pierce the veiled futurity;
Else were no hope, no peace, no bliss for man,
All present good o'erwhelmed in future scan,
And reasoning creatures lost in Reason's plan.

PART SECOND.

TWO anxious nights the watch, by her command,
(At whose mild presence bowed the martial band),
Two anxious nights strict vigils ruled the halls,
And watch and warder paced the lofty walls:
In vain they seek the beacon's signal-light,
The well known herald of the prosperous fight;
In vain the courteous knights their arms prepare,
Try their good swords, their biting faulchions rear
No more to meet their lord. The third night's pace
Hastens the doom; the sisters urge the race:
'Twas then the lady passed along the plain,
And sunk upon the fatal Banks of Enn.

Thrice o'er the knights strange terror crept around,
Thrice on the arms new clots of blood were found;
Pale wandering flames ascend the lofty spear,
Strange voices seem to sound in every ear;
Winds, self-admitted, all the banners shake,
And firm-built bulwarks to their centre quake:
Appalled, the knights of Aigremont demand
The sacred bard and prophet of the land.
Loudly on Hubert's name they call;
His aged steps approach the hall;
As slow, with painful pace, he came,
He bore his harp of mighty fame.
Ranulphus and Huberto's line
Long ruled the harp with gift divine,
While fate hung round the mystic wood;
For as the tree with rapture thrilled,

From the burst bark the tears distilled
In living drops of warm and crimson blood.

With smiles the Minstrel's looks were crowned,
His grey hairs graceful flowed around;
His eye explored the anxious train;
He leans upon his harp, nor smiles again:
For, as he bent, a sullen breath
Swept o'er the strings in sounds of death.

The aged Minstrel starts to hear
The awful tones which meet his ear;
Thick coming fancies seize his mind;
He sinks upon his harp, reclined,
While symphonies of sad despair
Rush on the sounding wind.

The Harp.

"Fallen, fallen, low on earth,
"In bleeding death they lie;
"Fallen is the pride of mortal birth,
"But virtue wins the sky."

Amazed, the master tries his art
To wake some happier strain;
The sounds of death break o'er his heart,
And prove his labours vain.

Stiff'ning, he stands aghast,
And marks the passing blast,
While cold and deadly dew
Stood on his aged face,
And bristling hairs no longer threw
A venerable grace.

Maddened, he smites the fateful strings;
Maddened, the dome with terror rings:
Where'er he cast his trembling hand,
He wakes a funeral cry;
Th' inspired harp denies command,
And yields but to the sky.
The prophet minstrel inly groans,
The knights repeat with deep'ning moans;
In wild despair his harp he flung,
The bursting chords are all unstrung,
And loud and long the knell is rung.
Awe-struck, they heard, with fear distilled,
As on the dread vibration past;
Another still with horror thrilled,

And rushed upon the blast:
Another still, while wonder new
Hung on the third told sound,
For cries of unborn infant grew,
In sudden wailings round.

And now 'tis done, 'tis past, 'tis empty air;
As the sounds die, so fades the coward fear:
Each stirs the heart of courage in his breast,
And seems to hope, though still by dread opprest;
Each rushes forth to seek or save his lord,
While the quick gleam betrays the ready sword.
All pass the hall save him, so sore amazed,
Fixed on the harp his viewless eye—balls glazed,
And, grasped in strict embrace, his arms were raised.

While haste the knights, what dismal sounds assail,
In fearful madness mingling on the gale!
Sounds of strange horror, threat'nings of despair,
Fierce yells, and savage murmurs, strike their ear;
As souls which, bound in hell, their torments bear.
Already drawn an hundred falchions gleam,
Their woe—struck fancies with strange terrors teem;
Each to his saint a hasty prayer address,
And placed his lance more firm within its rest.

Nearer the sounds approach, and now more nigh
The dogs of Lucie's chase infuriate fly;
Burst from their keepers, foaming in their rage,
Their maddened fury strikes a dread presage.
Bristling erect, a rugged mane they wear,
Mysterious meanings look through every hair;
Furious they scrape the earth, with howling cry,
Till, faint and frothing, on the ground they lie.

'Twas now the Fates, intent on noble blood,
Urged the fond pair amid the gloomy wood:
'Twas now they bent to take their homeward way
By the green Bank where Enn's famed waters stray,
Famed still, in record of the blood—stained scene,
Where rolled th' ensanguined wave, where died the withered green.

On as they passed, still lingering on their steps,
Forth from his covert lured the monster leaps;
Springs with gaunt fury on the fairer part
Of Lucie's life, and strikes the bosomed heart:
'Twas then th' infuriate growl, from blood—stained fang,
Burst on the ear, and through the woodlands rang.

But who can paint what mighty madness moved
The widowed lord, bereaved of all he loved?

How the fierce monster, fell'd, still rose again,
While his dire growl resounded on the plain?
How the lost Lucie strove, with matchless power,
How his torn limbs sent forth the purple gore?
How mad he strove, and much he wished to die,
Mingled, in wedded love and death, to lie?
At length the mortal strife of man must fail,
While o'er his life high Heaven's behests prevail:
But, while the Lucie sinks, yet scorns to yield,
The monster life lies prostrate on the field.
Through the wide wounds obscene the brutal blood
Bursts from the heart, a black and clotted flood:
One vengeful growl, prolonged with lengthened roar,
Spread in sad echoes to the distant shore.
Low bends the hero, by his bride, in death
Lays his torn limbs, and pours his parting breath;
To Heaven he raised his dark and closing eyes,
Then on the dame, while life their light supplies
"Accept (he cried) the souls of wedded love,
"Grateful in death, united fate to prove."
Close to her lips the hero's lips he pressed,
And breathed his spirit on her clay-cold breast.

No longer spared to fight the fight of life,
Where vice may triumph, virtue yield the strife;
Where growing passions, swelling on the soul,
May riot o'er the sense, the mind control;
Where chastest pleasures may enslave the heart,
Weaning the will from virtue's nobler part;
Where life, with cloying labours, wears the day,
And falsely gilds the footsteps-of decay;
Let the soul ponder on the great design,
And own the hand that guides it is divine.

What sounds are those which break upon the night,
Hailing the hard-earned hopes of home delight?
What sounds are those, which, swelling to the sky,
Bear the frail boast of mortal hopes on high?
Onward the warriors sweep upon the plain,
Nor wist how fall'n the leader of their train;
When the sick moon still wildered on her way,
Gave to their view the scene of deep dismay.
Home to the heart, where faithful feelings live,
Crowd the thick struggling which no tongue can give:
No words, no sounds, express the bosomed grief;
No friendly tears afford a sad relief.
Deeply amazed, their blood forgets to flow,
Their wildered senses wander o'er the woe;
Silent they bend, each on his arms reclined,
While inward mournings fill the straining mind.
At length, o'er manly cheeks descending slow,

The mighty drops of sacred sorrow flow:
Solemn they circle round the awful bed,
And swear upon their arms to guard the dead.

As low they bend, with sad and tearful eye,
Sudden the anxious horn awakes the sky;
With lengthened blast it sounds upon the plain,
And floats in dying moanings to the main.
Louder again resounds the eager blast,
But deep the sleep which lingers to the last:
No well-known tones from Lucie's breath respire,
But far the chiding echoes faint retire.

At length, more near, the crowding numbers stand,
And friends press friends, unknown on either hand
So sad the greetings of the Lucie band.
Wide and more wide the circling numbers grow,
Wide as they spread so wide the spreading woe.
Closed round the fearful sight, the people bend;
Speechless their grief, their silent tears descend;
Till one supreme, by inward tempest shook,
Cast o'er the dead an agonizing look:
More wild than waves, more fierce than raging fires,
Thro' his wrought frame the struggling soul transpires;
Forth from his head he tore the rooted hair,
And beat the breast his anguish had laid bare;
Till, all subdued, his altered features fell,
And trickling tears a softer sorrow tell.

Oh woe! he cried, immeasurable woes!
Woe to thee, Bank! in mingled accents flows:
Woe to thee, Bank! woe to thee, sullen stream!
Your hated name's to woe an endless theme!
Woe to thee, Bank! burst forth from every breast;
Woe to thee, Bank! from labouring echoes pressed;
And still the curse of faithful friendship lives,
And still the Bank a lengthened curse receives.
Far from the hated scene young lovers fly,
And wipe the tear which swells in either eye;
And when the moon illumines the haunted scene,
The trembling rustics shun the fatal gleam.
The red torch glares, the spears are thickly laid,
A noble bearing for the lofty dead:
The martial bearers bend, with reverence move,
And fear to pay the duties of their love.

Lone, 'mid the hall, deserted by the crowd,
The Minstrel wakes, as one who bursts the shroud:
He wakes to life, he rouses into pain,
And feels the weight of all his woe again;
Sudden he starts, he hurries from the hall,

And climbs, with pain, the castellated wall.
Now from th' embattled Aigremont reclined,
He leans, and listens to the passing wind:
Rousing the drowsy sense, made dull by years,
He hangs upon the blast which meets his ears.
The noble harvest of his youth no more,
Age pressed upon the wintered years he bore;
Yet still he dared the sharp mount's utmost height,
Where oft his lord's return had blessed his sight;
And soon he saw, advancing from the plain,
While the fleared torch-lights flash upon the train
He saw the funeral bier approaching slow;
He saw, but tried to doubt his weight of woe,
Till close beneath the lofty vaulted dome
Are laid the early victims of the tomb:
Till the huge portals, with sepulchral sound,
Struck to their holds, and spread an earthquake round,
And the loud chimes, which witnessed woe or weal,
Untouched of man, rung out a fearful peal.

Amazement now o'er all his senses stole,
And worst confusion steeped his sick'ning soul;
Idiot he gazed, and strewed his whitened hair,
While idiot-laughter mock his sore despair.
"Oh woe! Oh woe!" the wretch unconscious cries
"Oh woe! Oh woe!" the saddened train replies;
Till, sunk in death, his accents ceased to flow,
And his last breath gave utterance to woe.
Closed is the eye where beamed the gen'rous smile,
Cold is the hand which grasped the warlike spoil;
Pale is the cheek, for ever fled the grace,
Which spread heaven's lustre o'er the beauteous face;
Gone are the hopes which late had blest the line,
Lost 'mid dim honours at the funeral shrine;
Gone are the hopes of Lucie's youthful name,
And th' unborn infant yields an untold fame;
Dark in the hall of death reposed they lie,
Nor mark the tear, nor hear the deep-drawn sigh.

Now, from the battlements, the web of woe
Wafts cumbrous, as the groaning axles go;
While the dire birds that hover o'er the dead,
Circling around, an hated umbrage spread;
Rising they scream, mid creaking hinges cry,
Flap their dark wings, and seem to shade the sky.
Cold in the hall, 'mid dim religion's gleams,
Set in quick night are morning's brightest beams;
O'er the loved forms the sable pall is spread;
Boasting in death, the ensigns of the dead,
High raised aloft, the haughty banners wave,
Vain remnant snatched from the usurping grave;

While, clothed in darkness, silent warriors stand,
And wait the duties which the dead demand.
And soon the mingled choirs of monks draw near, [7]
To guard, with holy rite, the threefold bier;
From far they crowd; they form a black'ning train;
They wind, in dim procession, on the plain;
Solemn they bend, to gain the sainted head,
Where, 'mid the sacred dust, are laid the dead.

And still the rustics tell, as seasons wear,
And prove the revolutions of the year,
As the night grows, revolving in its train,
The fateful record of the blood-stained plain:
"The ruined hall again invades the sky,
"The phantom warriors glance before the eye;
"Sudden the harp's wild symphonies ascend,
"In sad vibrations all the pauses end;
"Till soon the hurl-blast swells, the harp, unstrung,
"Howls to the wind, and now the knell is rung:
"Sudden, in awe, the mystic murmurs fade;
"The whirlwind wafts the crowd, and takes the glade;
"While, from the broken walls, the lambent light
"Flits in false flames before the dubious sight;
"Till, lost 'mid depths of castellated pride,
"It sinks in flashes 'mid the haunted tide."

PART THIRD.

'TIS night; and round the sacred aisles are spread
The sable symbols that announce the dead;
The sullen tapers shed a solemn day,
While the deep shadows cross the 'wilder'd way;
Slow through the gloom succeeding forms arise,
And seem to mock the search of human eyes;
Mysterious minglings of the light and shade
Startle on thought, but quick as thought they fade;
While every aisle and column adds to fear,
Casting a deeper gloom and falser glare.

And now, th' attending train of monks appears,
While each aloft a sacred symbol bears;
Within the shrine the dread processions rest,
The sable pall is folded on the breast;
Revealed, the features of the noble dead,
O'er the warm heart a chill suspension spread.

Reposed, the lady seemed to rest from care,
While o'er her lord was spread a great despair;
She seemed to smile already 'mid the blest,
While mortal strugglings seemed to heave his breast.
O'er his late open brow a fearful gloom

Had harrowed all the furrows of the tomb;
Sainted, she seemed in sculptured marble laid;
A suffering mortal he, among the dead.

And first, the first in age, whose shaven crowns,
Reclined in meekness, look for heavenly thrones;
Their gliding steps the shrouding garment shades,
And in the Monk, the mortal figure fades.
Countless they crowd, as silent shadows steal,
And seem a world of spirits to reveal;
Soundless their feet, they bend before the shrine,
With looks not human, tho' not yet divine.

And next the train that wears the dusky cowl,
Shading alike the proud and patient soul;
The cowl, contrived by wise and pious art,
Hiding the countenance, to hide the heart;
Worn first by those whose features dared to speak,
And o'er whose soul the struggling passions break;
Those hooded foldings shade from vulgar eye
The wayward strife, compelled the world to fly,
Leading to cloistered cells and holy choirs,
To quench the mortal 'mid immortal fires.

Peaceful the cowl presents an outward rest,
Though inward canker may consume the breast;
For not till heaven has shed its latest balm,
Can wounded spirits wear a sainted calm;
Not till in age composed, the peace-bound face
Tells that no passion lives its lines to trace.

Now slow appears, the train of sin a type,
While on the flesh is laid the wholesome stripe,
Still for the dead they render penance due,
And shrink before the strokes they still renew;
Their breast still heaves with penitential sighs,
While trickling blood their fault'ring footsteps dyes;
Bending, they kneel around the sacred dead,
And scatter dust on their devoted head;
And while they groan beneath the anguish given,
Again they wound, and think they gain on heaven.

Still, still they crowd, they grow on every side,
While the dark arches half their numbers hide;
Exhaustless still, while on the labouring breast,
Crowding infinitude appears to rest,
And the checked heart shrunk back upon its seat,
Suspends with fitful throb the vital beat.

Sudden full chauntings wake the slumb'ring mind,
Which seem'd to reach at heav'n, yet droop'd behind;

While deep and sonorous the solemn sound
Swells thro' each arch and sweeps each cloister round,
Seizing resistless on the awe-struck soul,
And telling of the grave with vast controul.

But soon opposed, is heard the sister train,
Mingling heaven's melody with human pain:
Responding sweetly to the deeper tones,
They whisper to the dead of living thrones;
Soft through their tears the thrilling accents swell,
And though they falter, still of life they tell.
Their purer tones, pervading every part,
Like mercy's softest dews, drop on the heart;
And while the fathers chaunt of sacred fears,
The tender sisters expiate with tears.

Three times the train, dividing to the view,
Revealed the holy sign, in mystic shew;
When one supreme from each procession moved,
And bore an orphan of the pair beloved;
Each to her bosom prest a beauteous face,
And tender tears bedewed each infant grace;
As paused the choir, they bore the orphans near,
And shewed the quick transition to the bier.

Deep silence sat upon the solemn scene,
And breathless awe opprest the crowding train.
Sudden swift shudderings of nature spread;
Instinctive terror shuns the fearful dead;
Repelled, their youthful blood revolts at death,
Nor owns the awful forms which gave them breath.

Pale, and more pale, they sicken in their fears,
And shed the tribute of their orphan tears;
Unconscious why mysterious feelings strove
With mingled attributes of fear and love,
Closely they grasp th' embrace of friendly care,
And their closed eyes the dreadful scene forbear.

While such the holy pomp and pride of woe,
O'er manly cheeks the silent sorrows flow;
They gaze upon the bier, with grief opprest,
And tears, not words, their duteous love confest.
Lingering they lengthen out the last delay,
Till forced at length they tear themselves away.
Thrice tolled the bell of death, the threefold doom,
Thrice was the requiem chaunted through the gloom,
And thrice the long processions wound around the tomb.

But now the hand of slow consuming time,
Foe to man's proudest works and proudest prime,

Yields to wide ruin all the mouldering pile,
No more the seat where sainted virtues smile.
No holy trains 'mid lamps that dimly shine
Now wait the solemn service of the shrine,
Or wake and watch the dwellings of the dead,
Where each is laid within "his narrow bed."

No more the peal resounds thro' midnight air,
Rousing the drowsy soul to pious prayer;
No more the hooded trains, in hallowed gloom,
With holy rites avert th' impending doom;
Nor more, while solemn chauntings deeply roll,
Shall sweet respondings steal the raptured soul.

These are no more but their still voice we hear,
Murm'ring remembrance to the anxious ear:
These are no more, usurping ruin cries,
And marks mortality to curious eyes.

And still the traveller on his weary way,
While the lone red-breast warbles on the spray,
The rank grass whistling to th' autumnal blast,
And the loose leaves in short swift showers cast,
May mark the spot, with rudest sculpture drest,
Where the babe slumbers, and the parents rest.

Here oft may Contemplation, pensive maid,
Seek the rude spot, where wedded love is laid;
And here Compassion heave the secret sigh,
And shed the tribute tear from pitying eye.

Here oft shall Fancy tint with busy hand,
While the dim cloisters rise at her command,
'Mid the grey mists of eve, the pictured show
In swift creation seems again to grow;
To Fancy's eye, the funeral tapers gleam,
While thro' the broken arch the moon-beams stream;
To Fancy's ear, the midnight measures swell,
As bursts the night breeze o'er the sainted vale:
O'er the rapt mind mysterious meaning rolls,
And requiems seem to wait departing souls.
But when no more by favoured fancy led,
Thoughtful we bend our steps where sleep the dead,
Where the unconscious herds of trespass stray,
And scatter fragments of the hallowed clay,
Cropping the flowers, by pious memory flung,
As round the tomb her sacred circlets hung;
Then unsustained by Fancy's fickle dream,
We feel the solemn substance of the theme.

And sometimes here the wand'rer loves to stray

Till the pale moon lights up the lonely way,
And as he wanders o'er the grass-grown stones,
His hollow steps resound in sullen moans:
He stops to hear; he listens to the wind,
And thinks he proves the courage of the mind.
When thro' the air slow sluggish pinions float,
And the dark pile repeats the funeral note,
When on the blast the loosened fragments rush,
Or the wild conies' scatter'd footsteps brush,
Sudden his courage fails –strange fancies rise,
He fears to look, nor dares to trust his eyes;
While all confest, the conscious nature thrills,
And from his brow the cold round drop distils.
Hold! let the spirits of the dead pass on,
They're here –and there –and here –and now they're gone.
Visions of past and present share the breast,
While vast eternity comes rushing on the rest.
And still thy native children, Cumbria, tell
How fell the noble, and how tolled the bell;
And still with pride of legendary lore
They love the tale, yet dread to tell it o'er;
While drowsy children start from fear–broke sleep,
And o'er the crackling faggots closer creep,
Age, not less fearful, bars the creaking door,
And loves the tale, but loves the terror more!

For sad the fate of him, ill-starred wight,
Wandering where Enn reflects the troubled light.
Far from the spot, with fear the peasant flies,
And starts, and looks behind with doubtful eyes;
E'en careful hinds, if chance their lambkins stray,
Neglect the wanderers on the fearful way,
Trembling to dare the woeful banks of Enn,
Where the waves murmur and the winds complain.
For still they tell, while whispered horrors spread,
How the ghost-tempest sweeps the haunted shade,
How the gust rushes on the moon-struck plain,
How shrinks the Lady from the drifting rain!
And how, again, in glancing armour drest,
The Chief appears, and takes her to his breast!
And how the gloom still deepens on the eye,
Till the gaunt Wolf upon the Lady fly,
And all in spectred vision seem to die!

Rest to the spirits of the LUCIE race!
Rest to the rude-wrought stones which mark the place.
Should there be one who doubts the simple tale,
Let the sad remnant o'er his doubts prevail;
There where the heaving sods disclose the doom,
The monster Limb still grasps the mould'ring tomb;
And while the soul hangs anxious on the fate,

The conscious scenes the well-known tale relate.

SPIRIT OF AIR. AN IRREGULAR ODE.

SPIRIT of AIR ! I woo thee still,
I love to list' thy chastened thrill,
Thy wild delight, thy wilder pain,
And the wild cadence of thy strain.
Spirit! thou shedd'st devotion on the mind,
Whether thou lull the breeze, or ride the wind.

The breeze is up; the deep-veiled nun,
By men called eve, now treads the glade,
And as she treads, the spell is won
That pillows peaceful nature's head.
Soft be the pillow, and the curtain light,
And gently strewed the poppies of the night.

O'er careless hearts the night-drugs fall serene,
To careless eyes the pall is spread unseen
Which wraps departed day Spirit! I hear,
I feel thy broken breathings on mine ear;
Thy pious 'plaints, which inly seem to mourn
The bright hours gone, which never must return.

The breeze is up; the aerial lyre
Awakes, yet wakes but to expire;
The solemn breath sweeps slowly past,
Cadenced by falling leaves upon the blast.
But now the ear swells with the swelling sounds,
Which burst all bondage, and disdain all bounds.

Spirit! 'tis thine to come on viewless wings,
To reach from heav'n, and sweep the sounding strings;
Wild as the winds, and as the winds sublime,
Beyond the reach of art, and rule of time.
Spirit! what voice may mingle voice with thine?
None born of earth, thy being is divine.

SECOND PART.

Spirit of Air! I woo thee still,
I love to list' thy chastened thrill,
Thy wild delight, thy wilder pain,
And the wild cadence of thy strain.
Spirit! thou shedd'st devotion on the mind,
Whether thou lull the breeze, or ride the wind.

And dearer thou, because thy birth
Lifts thee beyond what mortals dare;

None can arrest thy course on earth,
None quell thy threat'nings of despair.
Spirit of Air! then dwell with me,
And gift me with thy minstrelsy.

But most I woo thee, when that modest nun
Has won her triumphs from the garish sun,
While softly pillowed Nature leans her head,
While all serene the gradual curtain spread,
And when thy breath scarce stirs the leafy bed;
Then when thy voice I hear, to charm is thine,
Thine is the minstrelsy to list thee, mine.

Spirit of Air! whose breezy wing
Lingers unseen upon the string,
Whether thou woo the sleeping lyre,
Whether thou wake in flight of fire,
Thine is the secret heart's own chord to ring,
And thine the sphere's own music when they sing.
Thou harp untouch'd of hand, still dwell with me,
And that wild breeze, the soul that visits thee.

To contemplation then resigned,
Who loves to bless the studious mind,
Calm may I sit, and list thee while
Thy musing melodies beguile;
Then 'mid thy sounds, with soul imprest,
I hush the strugglings at my breast,
'Mid filial love and tenderest friendship blest.

For soft! the philosophic sway,
Which loves to meet the close of day,
The silent hour, the sacred gleam,
Hallowed by contemplation's dream,
While the calmed heart may rest serene,
And look upon the distant rage of men.
What tho' oppression strive with lawless power,
The hand that guides the morn and ev'ning hour
Can stay the midway storm, and save the drooping flower.

Spirit of Air! I woo thee still,
I'll woo thee 'til life's latest thrill;
And e'en 'mid life's departing pains,
I'll list some angel in thy strains;
And when thou grasp'st each panting string,
When pant the strings of struggling life,
And when thy thrilling pulses ring,
When rings the pulse of latest strife,
Then be thy highest holiest measures given,
And when I list thee, let me list on heaven.

FRAGMENT OF

Said to be found on raising some of the rude remains of the Cell
where the Saint was supposed to have been used to kneel.

ON the lone isle where Herbert dwelt,
On the rude rock where Herbert knelt,
My sighs are mingled with the winds that blow,
My tears are lost amid the waves that flow;
And my wrecked bark, impelled 'mid tempest times,
Subsides, and sinks a prey to foreign crimes.

A man without a home, without a name,
By honour taught to hide an injured fame;
A man of years, who urged the rapid wings
Of time's swift summers, and his swifter springs,
Springs, whose fire-blasts consumed the pregnant flower;
Summers, where nature mocked the genial hour,
When the bright sun, grown old amid his might,
Set in his course, and sunk the land in night.
What more I am it boots not ye to know;
Strangers to me, be strangers to my woe.
Could I become a stranger to my soul,
How calm might years of dull existence roll!
Yet still I scorn the cowardly relief,
Content to be myself in all my grief:
Yet not myself. Sudden thick fancies come;
Sudden they seize, and bear me to my home:
Then madness reigns, within, without, around,
Strains every sense, and swells in every sound.

Ha! art thou here? already in my heart
I feel thy burning sting, thy bleeding smart:
Yes; like th' avenging fiend of fate,
Thou whirl'st the soul 'mid rage and hate.

Hark!

'Tis th' exulting 'larum of death;
The dogs of murder pant for breath;
Their greedy nostrils snuff the ground;
They scent the carnage round and round.

Yes, yes; 'tis he, the victim king:
Suspended yet on angel's wing,
See, from the slow ascending cloud,
He looks in pardon to the guilty crowd;
But, ah! his words are sighs, his tears are blood.

Hark! the trumpet's murderous sound;
Hark! the drum's impetuous round;
Hark! the din is o'er, 'tis calm profound;

For now they drink the blood, and raven on the wound.

'Tis done, 'tis past; the conflict o'er,
The fevered transports now no more:
Again I wake, my blood runs chill,
My palsied pulses inward thrill:
'Tis the dread hour, the midnight air;
'Tis the sore ague of despair;
Tired nature sinks beneath the strife,
Resigned to Him who gives and takes the life.

And yet to me, to me the flatt'rer, Hope,
Sometimes presents the deleterious cup;
Sometimes on me the flatt'rer casts her smile,
Her smile still loved, still trusted to beguile.
But soon the hope is chased by cruel fears,
And the short smile quenched by a flood of tears.
Oh, Earth! Oh, Heaven! and thou unbounded space
Where Omnipresence reigns in every place,
Be ye my country! Lost in Nature's breast,
Without a home, without a name, I rest.
And what is name? Oh false, Oh empty world!
A bauble lost or won, a meteor whirl'd;
Be thou extinct. Yet, yet I am a man;
A man, whose soul 'tis Heaven's alone to scan.
Nature, physician to creation's pain,
Who lend'st to wretches leisure to complain!
Be thou the book whose sacred page
Shall calm my griefs, and quench my rage;
While, through the wide expanded whole
I trace immeasurable soul;
And, stretching high from earth to heaven,
Attain the Giver in the given.

Now, now, 'mid wonder plunge the mind,
And leave my griefs and leave my pains behind;
While, 'mid the floating cloud
Of thought, a restless flood,
My page is sometimes soiled with tears,
And sometimes red with blood.

CUMBRIA. MORNING.

HAIL, eldest birth of time! where wonder dwells
Amid thy monstrous rocks and mountain fells;
Towering on high, the tyrant of the scene,
Where fragment ruins seem to boast his reign,
And beauteous nature, prest within his arms,
Yields a wild progeny of fearful charms;
Where every feature of prodigious birth
Dizzies the brain, and dims the shadowed earth;

CUMBRIA. MORNING.

And from whose heights, intent to win his world,
Man seems an atom through creation whirled:
Hail, Cumbria! thou, whose privilege sublime
Lifts th' errant spirit to the brink of time,
And almost dar'st to pierce the heavenly clime.

From your high altars, sons of wonder pour
The hallowed incense of the morning hour;
Proclaim, with gladdened voice, th' immortal ray
Bursting in glory round the rising day:
Sing how th' empurpled canopies unfold
The bright-haired bridegroom's locks that stream with gold;
How tint by tint awakes the spreading scene;
How soft the shadows on the tender green;
While through the scattering mists new objects grow,
New summits dazzle, and new fountains flow;
Till, from aloft, is seen the burning car
On the broad wave reflected from afar.
Creation wakes, and nature lives to sound;
An universal matin breathes around:
Then let Heav'n's nobler priest in worship bow,
Let man adore, and pay his humble vow.
The panting steeds now turn the goal of day,
And seem to breathe upon their western way.

And now tis Eve; the saffron robe is spread,
And Hymen streaks the living gold with red.
What poets tongue may tell th' ensanguined hue
Streaming on high, and spreading on the view;
Such as, when holy hosts contend the skies,
In martial pomp emblazoned to the eyes;
Towers, pillars, pyramids, commingling rise;
Spears seem to flash, as, quickly dipt in blood,
They melt and mingle in the lurid flood.

'Tis Night; the dusky demons of the gloom
Usurp the earth, and seem to shake the tomb;
And now the angry spirit of the fell
Compels his ghost-rid team along the dell,
When the night *weird-words* mutter through the wood,
When starts the torrent temper of the flood,
And when the dogs of fate are roused to blood.
Now Nature sleeps; and while she sleeps opprest,
The night-hag and her imps invade the rest.

Rest still o'er Nature spreads her healthful veil,
And but the wild and wicked wake to wail.
I too, who weary seek the heathy bed,
Or on the sacred stone support my head,
May taste the peace denied to wakeful mind,
And sometimes slumber, on the cold sod reclined.

Again the fresh'ning breath of day
Sweeps th' uncurtained sleep away;
The sun renews his race again,
And measures o'er the goal of pain
Unmindful of the melancholy man.

Sweet is the morning hour,
And rich the vigorous noon;
Soft is the evening shower,
And calm the midnight moon.
Sweet is each season to the soul at ease,
When every season changes but to please.

But what can still the tempest of despair?
Heaven, 'tis thy spirit 'tis the voice of prayer.

Now let me strive to mount on eagle's wing,
And snatch new wonders where the eaglets cling;
Or climb, by daring inspiration led,
To prove the wonders of the giant bed,
Where the prodigious mass of germ is bred.

Imperial Nature! whose resistless sway
Compels the waning night and dawning day;
Mysterious mistress of the various whole,
Say who can tell how deep thy treasures roll?
Say who can tell how high thy wonders rise,
Stretching beyond the region of the skies?
Come, holy priestess of th' inspired song,
And lead my steps thy mysteries among;
Lead, where thou strik'st thy boldest, fiercest strain,
Waking the voice of wonder o'er the plain,
When thy proud hills in matchless concert join,
And prove the mighty melody divine.
And when thou sit'st aloft on Skiddaw's brow,
Weaving the misty web where tempests grow,
Or wafting wide the wand of circling dyes,
Spread'st the bright bow of promise in the skies;
Say, should my errant temper seek to soar,
And the vast regions of the heights explore,
While yet my steps attempt another sky;
Say how dark vapours thicken as they fly,
Mount o'er my head, before my footsteps roll,
And seem to close for ever on my soul.
The human eye—beam spreads in fruitless ray,
And fails to pierce th' impenetrable way;
While inward turned, the sense of vision crowds,
And owns a present heaven in the clouds.

Sudden conflicting elements combine,

Now mix, now melt, now burst with vivid shine;
And now space-rending thunders roll around,
Till heaven and earth and waters all resound:
Now rush the rains, the sweeping torrents roar,
Burst o'er the hills, and break upon the shore;
And the quelled thunders, rolling on their way,
Scatter the mists, and give returning day.

Conscious of self, I am but man,
A speck in universal plan,
"More sinned against than sinning," I adore;
But let the guilty fear, and "sin no more."

SPRING.

WHAT voice of love, in every tongue confest,
Can tell how tinged the many-coloured vest
Of the young year? Or how, with graceful arms,
She twines the giant shapes with blushing charms;
Crowns with her tender chaplets roughest brows,
And sweetly soothes the hoarse blast ere it blows?
How soft at eve, when sinks the garish sun,
And all the busy buzz of day is done;
How cool her mantle sheds a softened green,
How loose her tresses spread upon the scene,
When mild the turtle coos eternal love,
And mixed the myriad murmurs of the grove?
Mysterious nature, thine the plastic hand,
Thou livest thro' life, and provest the great command.

So the sweet grace of beauty's gentler charms
May win the tyrant from his rage of arms;
So Heaven, with mingled attributes of art,
Controls the fiercer with the fairer part;
So various nature, o'er the mystic scene,
Blends the rude russet with the tender green:
And when, with pointed ray, the crescent burns,
Thou guidest her changing course where'er she turns;
Thou sleep'st luxurious on the distant woods,
Or fling'st mysterious shadows on the floods;
Thou driv'st thy silver furrows o'er the lake,
Or hang'st thy snow-drop on the shivering brake.

So, when the car ascends the lunar noon,
Streaming effulgent from a sapphire zone;
When the wide arch a sacred dome appears,
Hung with ten thousand constellated spheres,
And the calm blue, dissolving on the sight,
Thrills with mysterious mellowings of light:
Then, like the pious priestess of the scene,
Thou spread'st the peaceful presence of thy reign.

SPRING.

And sometimes here, to highly favoured eye,
The watery pomp ascending meets the sky,
What time the silent influence is shed,
Pouring serene on the expanded bed;
While rolls aloft, in mild and mystic pride,
The cloudless orb which rules the swelling tide,
Shedding th' intelligence of lunar day,
And holding o'er the waves a potent sway:
'Tis then th' obedient spirits of the deep,
Roused by imperious spells, awake from sleep.

At thy command appears the floating pile,
Around the dome new lamps of lustre smile;
Phantastic columns swell upon the sight;
Shining they burst, and shiver into light;
While each to each succeeding shapes arise,
Each strives to emulate and reach the skies;
And borne aloft on every fleecy car,
Floats some quaint sp'rit of wave or sp'rit of air;
So deep the utterings of silver spheres,
So strong the voice unheard of vulgar ears,
Breaking compulsive on the sullen sleep,
And drawing forth the spirits of the deep.

Oh Moon! Oh Moon! thy madd'ning power I feel;
I feel the secret mystery of pain
Sweep o'er my sense; my pulses swell,
And strain my heart and fire my brain:
I close my eyes to shun thy fatal light;
Thy light shines inwards, and enflames my night.
Ah! whither turn to hide my head?
Deep in some cave, low on some earthy bed,
Where serpents hiss, and basilisks are bred.

How wide, how wild I ranged? how long I raved?
What hollow sheltered, or what mercy saved?
My food my griefs, my drink my tears,
No friendly voice to quell my fears;
Madness my own, with waste of pain,
Unmeasured all, till Heaven restored again.

MUSIC OF THE CHASE.

NATURE awakes, and now the mellow horn
Wakes the fleet wood-nymphs of the early morn;
Those who, with buskined leg and feathered tread,
Scarce brush the dews, in crystal clusters spread.
Now madd'ning echoes from thy hills rebound,
Start into life, and hurry into sound,
Bursting in multiformed birth around.
And now, from rifted cliffs, in wild affray,

MUSIC OF THE CHASE.

Poured headlong on the ear, in strange dismay,
The broken sweeps of agonizing strains;
Such as once spake the Bard of Snowden's pains,
When his deep cursings broke upon the wave,
And 'mid the tide he sought an angry grave.

But now, embosomed in the sheltering vale,
Where, 'mid enamelled verdure, sleeps the gale,
Soft are the love-sick lute-notes to the ear;
Sweet as the tones which charm the virgin's tear;
Sweeter than Faunus to the list'ning grove,
When first he sought to win the nymphs to love.

Again the struggling sounds, with mingled cry,
Burst o'er the wastes, and rush upon the sky;
Awake the brazen clangour of the war,
And seem to faint amid the dead afar.

But now, upon the lake's resplendent breast,
Reposed in Contemplation's dreams they rest;
Or floating slow, with full mellifluous song,
They seem with hymning choirs to roll along.

Say, native queen, how imitative art
Struggles imperious to usurp thy part;
Holds her phantastic mirror up to thine,
And lights her shortlived torches at thy shrine.
Hark how false thunders thro' the mountains roar,
Ruffle the lakes, and rattle round the shore;
Transpire in distant murmurings around.
And faint in feeblest sentiment of sound.
Then from thy rocky caves, and tinkling rills,
More sweet the voice of water-music thrills,
In liquid numbers whispering to the plain,
Where bend the sisters of the lily train.
But now, renewed, the clamours gather near,
And break in monstrous uproar on the ear;
Again, from hill to hill the echoes fly,
Till, faint again, amid the wastes they die.

Now, once again, the rushing murmurs please,
Persuade to peace, and lull to dreaming ease;
Soften the sorrows of the saddened soul,
And mingle magic with a sweet control.
Yet not the cliffs, the caves, the lakes among,
Are heard alone the mysteries of song,
E'en tenderest flowers distend their tubic shells,
And shed the dulcet drop from honied cells;
While the long grass, that whistles to the breeze,
And every leaf which clothes the tufted trees,
Adds to the mystic melody its part,

And strains some secret fibre of the heart.

Intoxicating powers of mingled sound,
Ye press my sense, and whirl my fancy round;
Wrap my strained heartstrings with resistless charms,
Till my soul melts, subdued, in Music's arms.

Music! Music! hast thou power
To rouse the troubled soul to pain?
Hence! be thy magic spell no more;
Thou hast no art to lull to gentle peace again.

Here long I lingered in my painful dream,
While maddened Music ruled the changeful theme:
'Twas madness still, though changed the busy measure,
Beating the chords, unstrung, of wild and painful pleasure.

I felt I wept, I know I raved,
To changing nature still enslaved;
I bore the mid-noon's scorching ray,
The blighting dew at close of day;
And here the sickly fever of my brain
Was sometimes hot with sun,
And sometimes cold with rain.

'Twas then kind Heaven vouchsafed its aid to send,
And lent to my relief an humble friend:
Calm was his countenance, his air serene,
And mild humanity o'erspread his mien;
Simple his garment as his simple soul,
While from his eye the sign of sorrow stole.
Startled I saw, and blushed, I know not why;
Startled I rose, and sought in vain to fly,
While the salt tear suffused my burning eye.
His gentle virtue seeks to reach my heart,
And softly tries to ease the wounded part;
Sometimes he guides my errant steps along,
Sometimes he soothes me with a simple song;
And sometimes tells the tales of other times,
How virtue lives renowned, and vengeance waits on crimes.
Friend to the nameless, houseless man of care,
Still may his heart be stranger to despair,
And peace on earth, and peace in heaven his share.

Again I wake to wait the ray of light,
Again I pierce the curtains of the night.
The night retires; her floating locks, unshorn,
Hang in soft shadow on the drowsy morn;
When, lo! behold! the vapour-vision Man
Sudden appears to meet the human scan,
Familiar to the view. No stranger he;
Like to myself the vision seemed to be:

Like me, a man of grief, a man of woe;
Shrunk was his forehead, and his footstep slow.
On me he seemed to fix his watery eyes;
Like mine, his bosom seemed to heave with sighs;
And when I waved my hand, in gracious sign
His hand he waved with equal grace to mine:
But when my aching eye-balls strayed away,
Sudden he fled amid a blaze of day.

Sometimes I lean, by wand'ring thoughts misled,
Where the lost traveller finds a watery bed
The treacherous Isle, which, rising on the scene,
Smiles through the softest veil of slightest green;
But, ere the fatal freshness can decay,
Sinks and retires, to shun the eye of day.
Then hapless he who trusts the faithless Isle,
Where softest ease with beauty seemed to smile
Smile to destroy; 'mid watery bubbles whirled,
He finds a bubble isle, a bubble world.

What is life? –a toilsome trouble.
What is death? –an o'erstrained bubble.

Long have I sat, and wept, and mourned the while,
And deemed my griefs 'mid stranger griefs to 'guile:
But, no; tho' outward floods of tears may roll,
More copious inward floods o'erflow my soul.
Then at my side my humble friend appears,
And kindly checks my griefs, and chides my tears;
Or, seated, holds the temples of my head,
Where, from the brain, the feverish fibres spread;
Or bears, reclined, my weight of living woe,
While from his lips mysterious legends flow.

LEGEND OF THE FLOATING ISLE.

As gains the legend on the curious ear,
As rustics whisper, and as strangers hear,
A sacred sister once, in beauty's charms,
Devote to peace, yet felt the heart's alarms,
Felt the strange tumults of rebellious will,
And strove, betimes with good, betimes with ill.
At length, an humble sacrifice to pain,
Her lone steps pressed the insulated plain;
The blood-stained print which marked her humble way,
Confessed her penance-sorrows to the day;
And on the turf, which pillowed her sad head,
Sat the chaste dew, a type of tears she shed.
Thus mourned the sister on the low-lone isle,
When, lo! a gracious presence seemed to smile:
The waters swell, the shuddering island sinks,

And e'en the sad sequestered bosom shrinks;
While the vexed waves, as from their centre part,
Return, and rush upon the bursting heart.

Deep-sounding sighs still float among the trees,
And plaintive murmurs seem to mock the breeze,
When as at times the fated isle appears,
To prove the ebb-tides of departing years.

Oft when forlorn, to restless thoughts a prey,
Unconscious of my wildered steps I stray,
Or climb the perverse cliffs impending way;
Then, as with headlong haste I've blindly ran,
He, sent by Heaven to check my wayward plan,
Saved, by his firmer step, the melancholy man.
When, more composed, I list his simple tale,
How, 'mid the lone recess and rugged cell,
The Hermit passed his consecrated days,
Concealed from life, and life's deceitful ways;
How ruled the rigours of his rigid years,
Till gained the purpose of his patient prayers;
How faithful friendship grew 'twixt mind and mind,
In faith united, and in death combin'd;
St Cuthbert's prayer, to holy ear address,
Won the bright union of eternal rest,
St Cuthbert blessing, and St Herbert blest.

There the meek hands, so often raised in prayer,
Strove 'mid the rock a rugged shrine to rear;
Drew a scant meal from forth the sedgy brake,
And snatched a hungry pittance from the lake;
Unsoothed by soothing voice, or soothing smile,
The Hermit fled from all that might beguile;
Sought the bleak seat where most the tempests beat,
And listened to the waves that bathed his feet.
Sometimes his silvered head, and faded form,
Felt the full fury of the wintery storm;
While o'er his pallid face the lightnings gleamed,
Faint on the blast his grey hairs thinly streamed:
Like one released from earth, and earthly tie,
His haggard form oft met the fearful eye;
When the scared fisher, in his shallop tost,
Beheld the Saint, and gave himself for lost.
Such was the holy life, by faith refined,
So strong, so fine, the friendship of the mind,
And so severe the penance self assigned:
So, though dim ages gather round their name,
CUTHBERT and HERBERT live in friendship's fame.

Friendship! ah sacred name! ah tender power!
Yet may thy presence calm my tortured hour;

Pour all thy balm upon the wounded part,
And tear the rankling venom from my heart!

Friendship! canst thou dwell below,
Where streams of living hatred flow?
Friendship! canst thou rest on earth,
Where mortal foes oppose thy birth?
No; thou hast fled beyond the spheres,
Reckless of human sighs and human tears.
Or art thou but this false world's faithless glass,
A tinkling cymbal, and a sounding brass?
Yet let my tongue be mute; to Heaven I bend;
Heaven, 'mid the stranger's land, vouchsafed a friend;
Found, when in sore despair, at life's sick wane,
A prey to nature's rage, and nature's pain,
A friendless, mindless, melancholy man.

END OF PART FIRST.

PART SECOND.

OH ! ever grandest, simplest, most sublime,
Owned by the human heart in every clime!
NATURE ! kind nurse of being, turn thine eye
From cloud-capt regions of a middle sky;
Guide back my steps, from worlds of wonder bend;
Tread the lone walk, the shepherd path descend;
Nor let man proudly deem those lost to fame,
Whose tender cares endeared the blessed name.
The heavenly Pastor led the way of life
The flock he loved, and shared the painful strife:
Kindly he called them with a friendly song,
Bore in his gracious breast the tender young,
And gently led the parent ewes along.

And so, in Judah's fair and favoured land,
Blest was the flock beneath the shepherd's hand;
And still, in type of mercy to the time,
Blest is the crosier of the Christian clime.
Kind is the voice which calls the scattered sheep,
And soft the careful hand which folds to peaceful sleep,
Simple, yet sacred, innocent the way,
Remote from paths where fellow men betray;
Far from the seat of sin's deceitful snare,
Th' insidious vice, the falsely golden glare.
Innocent sheep, and oft as guileless too
As innocent, are those who guide, as you.

Sacred the rank of unadulterate mind;
Simple, not servile; gentle, not refined:
Native the dignity of man imprest,

PART SECOND.

While modest nature rules the honest breast;
Erect his form, and perfect all the plan,
As his whose race the human race began;
Happy like him, while yet unknown to crime,
Whose fiendlike fury sharps the scythe of time
Crime, despot Crime! when proudly raised on high,
Dooms some to fall, and some like me to fly.

Here let me lay my aching head;
The feverish fit will soon be fled,
And the false phantoms fly my lowly bed.
They gather round where heaps of downy care
And gorgeous trappings hide the coward fear,
Sunk in his guilt, a wretched victim of despair.

Tho' poor the hand, yet rich the heart in good,
From Nature's genuine store fast flows the flood;
Tho' to the eye no golden gifts appear,
The glist'ning gift of charity is near.
The humblest hand may minister to pain,
Reckless of worldly praise or worldly gain;
The humblest roof protects the proudest head,
And rustic hands prepare a peaceful bed:
There gentle care, by gratitude confest,
May prove a true physician to the breast.

Lo! where he comes, a ready smile he wears;
Grateful, I try to smile, but melt in tears.
Onward he leads; I follow on his tread
To where the oaks a sober evening shed;
There, seated, hear the tales of legend lore,
And count the mystic wonders of his store;
Most welcome to my soul their wildest form,
Or when they ride the wave or drive the storm.
And sometimes, too, he tells the shepherd's tale,
How years flow calm thro' life's sequestered vale:
Tells the sweet changes of the wholesome day,
To labour now, and now to pleasant play;
How sweet they mingle in the changing scene,
Welcome as summer's eve to cool the green;
Welcome as summer's sun at early dawn,
When first the fleecy train o'erspread the lawn.
How day by day he leads the bleating care;
How led by him they find the juicy fare;
How day by day he climbs the fells among,
And how his well-known voice secures the throng:
Careful at night to call the bleating train,
Bleating they answer to the evening strain;
Till, folded, soon they lay them down to rest,
While rest as peaceful wraps the shepherd's breast;
Rest after labour, Nature's boon to man,

Sweeter from equal change in Nature's plan.

Happy, thrice happy ignorance of vice!
Happy the paths which lead, but not entice!
And still preserved, among the shepherd train,
Let unsophisticated Nature reign!
What pity 'twere to stain the simple thought
With villain vice, by strange experience taught!
Alas! the poisoned thought conceives the ill,
And 'wildered doubts resolve themselves in will.
Oh happy, then, that ignorance of art
Which knows not man but in the better part!
For calm the current of his peaceful life,
And late the labour of his parting strife:
No poisoned chalice, no intemperate fire,
Urged to forbidden joy or blind desire,
His decent age a gradual ruin spread,
And strewed fair honours on his aged head:
Filled was his cup of life, the dregs but few;
Simple the sweets, the bitters simple too;
And when the last long night suspends his breath,
His is the sleep of Nature, not the death.

And here that friendship, more than man's sincere,
Unquelled by famine, and unquenched by fear,
Instinctive glows, unrivalled in the heart,
Matchless in truth, and innocent of heart.
Grateful the shepherd owns his faithful cares,
And, by his dog companioned, every danger dares:
Faithful his eye-beams catch th' assenting smile,
His frolic feats the laboured hours beguile;
Sportive he flies to prove the practised skill,
Joyful returns, and waits upon the will;
With nobler instinct seems to study mind,
And fills the perfect character of kind.

When poverty controls with meagre want,
And the poor meals of struggling life are scant,
The patient follower at distance lies,
And waits what niggard need but ill supplies;
Grateful for little, still his faith he proves,
And loves the little from the hand he loves.
Tho' wearied, watchful on the master's way,
His anxious labours end not with the day;
Thro' the long night the lengthened watch he keeps,
And guards th' unconscious shepherd as he sleeps.

Oft when, from mountain's brow, the treacherous heath
Breaks from its hold, and hurls the swain beneath,
His dog, then true of instinct, shares his pain,
His faithful care forsakes the pleasant plain;

Intent he sits, and seems to watch the breath
Struggling uncertain 'twixt the life and death;
Looks to receive th' accustom'd kind command,
Then turns, and fondly licks th' unconscious hand;
Till found at length his humble efforts vain,
By instinct led he seeks the haunts of men.
Wisdom inscrutable directs his skill,
And man's proud reason waits upon his will.
Thither he leads, and wins them to the spot,
Then turns, and eager gains the master's cot;
Waits at the door-way with impatient cries,
Till at his master's feet content he lies:
And when the distant wand'rer yields his breath,
No friend to dress his limbs in decent death,
Patient his faithful dog, unhoused, unfed,
Alone defends the precincts of the dead;
Pious by instinct, guards the sacred clay,
And sullen howls the midnight hours away.
Unchanged, when fickle fortune's changing power
Sheds the cold frost on Friendship's summer flower,
His firmer faith defends th' unfriended life,
And bears himself the bitter brunt of strife.
So when, by wearing time and altering fate,
No trace remained to tell what once was great,
Thro' the disguise which baffled human scan,
Th' instinctive sense confessed the Royal Man.

The stubborn ox obeys the known command,
And bends submissive to the owner's hand;
And the poor ass, content in patient need,
Waits humbly to receive th' unsavoury feed.
Ev'n the least insect proves th' Eternal will,
Minute in agency, though perfect still;
While sweet the humming song of pleasant sound
Comes from the busy multitudes around:
Still on the wing, for ever on the way,
The prudent insects treasure up the day,
Win the soft fragrance of the tender hours,
And steal the richest dew from richest flowers;
Wear the long labours of the summer's sun,
Nor idly sink beneath the scorching noon.
Man, only rebel man, with wayward spleen,
Strikes at creation's peace, and mars the scene;
Strives 'gainst Omnipotence with impious will,
And murmurs 'gainst the load of human ill.

Oh holy light of Reason! how divine,
How various are the rays which point thy line!
How great the attributes of human mind,
And yet how near may instinct tread behind!
How may the proofs of human process fail,

To judge th' uncertain measures of the scale!
How to esteem that partial portion best,
By Nature bounded in each useful breast;
Or dare to deem devoid of reason's ray
The creeping reptile, as he shuns the day,

Again the morning dawns; I seek my friend,
Again his steps upon my steps attend;
Through his mild medium I survey mankind,
And soothe a while the madness of my mind.
Heav'n! I resign my soul beneath thy will,
Who work'st the future good from present ill.
What tho' my heart still heaves th' unbidden sigh?
What tho' th' unbidden tear still dims mine eye?
Thy holy mysteries alone support the heart,
And pour eternal balm through every wounded part.
Still when my startling mind, in strange alarms,
Stirs every pulse, and hurries all to arms,
The voice of simple charming all my madness charms.

He tells, when shepherd cares divide the day,
How swift the passing periods haste away;
The morn, the noon, the eve, new duties bring,
As the quick seasons follow on the spring;
And each new season wins a new delight,
Found in the thornless path of humble right.

Sometimes, with modest pride, a tale he tells,
Full of his home, where wedded friendship dwells;
How, like his forefathers, his humble door
Unfolds its little comforts to the poor;
And like the little mite, on high enrolled,
The native charity is more than gold:
And when the humble beggar bending stands,
And craves the boon from rustic labour's hands,
His careful partner lays her cares aside,
His infants bear the gifts with nature's pride;
While grateful smiles the beggar's face o'erspread,
The wondering infants mark the palsied head:
Still as he smiles their bolder freedom dares,
They touch his beard, and pull his whitened hairs;
Till, soon by food and rest restored, again
He turns his tottering steps to seek the plain;
Then, while his figure fades before their eyes,
His infant hosts still cheer him with their cries.

He tells, how, autumn past, the tempests roar,
The sun grows cold, the swelling torrents pour,
And the thick falling snows descend apace,
And spread a deadly shroud o'er Nature's face.
Deadly for oft unneath inclement skies

Entombed, the flock a heap of ruin lies.
Then sad the sorrows of the shepherd's share,
For still his sheep had found a parent's care;
Their simple looks expressed the speechless part,
And touched th' accustomed chord about the heart:
And if the social tie be owned by mind,
To break it leaves a painful void behind.

So strong the social love, by Nature given,
Reaching from man throughout the works of Heaven;
Conjoins the high with low, the good with ill,
And more consulting circumstance than will:
So strong the proof, in him whose 'prisoned soul
Felt the long years of life unfriended roll;
The world forgetting, by the world forgot,
He found a dusky partner of his lot,
The weaving insect, hung supine in air,
Fed from his hand, and found a friendly fare:
Pleased would he wait the period of her meal;
Pleased would his eye pursue where'er she'd steal:
Companioned from the vilest insect train,
Her poor society consoled his pain;
Till one short moment crushed her little life,
And burst the pris'ner's bonds, and ended all his strife.

What heart was his which snatched the latest prop!
What heart was his which poured th' o'ermeasured drop,
And, when the cup of life could hold no more,
Filled the surcharge, and flowed the sorrow o'er!
Ah! woe to him who loves the human kind,
And feels how man depraves the human mind!
Proud indignation in his bosom burns,
"When from his fellow's wrongs a fellow mourns."

Is it the passing bell comes slow upon the gale?
Is it the train of Death winds slowly thro' the vale?
Kindred to man is Death: the conscious thrill
Creeps thro' my heart, and every pulse stands still.
And is that all, of what so late was power,
Was boast of manhood's strength or beauty's flower;
Was virtue much deprest, vice much elate,
Was proudly little, or was idly great?
Youth stands incredulous upon the truth,
And ponders on the fate of age and youth.
But soon, by Heav'n ordained, th' elastic spring
Shakes the dull weight from off the vigorous wing.

When the rich harvest bends beneath the rains,
Combined in hasty floods to sweep the plains,
Soon as the storm subsides, it laughs anew,
And proudly bears the boast of health to view:

So man, presumptuous in his strength of heart,
Sees Death advance, but hopes to shun the dart:
If distant fallen, if shortly turned aside,
He floats alike the bubble of his tide.
Doomed thro the dark of human doubts to stray,
Man waits the dawning of eternal day,
While one vast promise stays the mighty whole,
And bears the grasp of universal soul.

Strange is the love of superstitious lore,
And strong the bonds by wildered fancy wore;
Hold boldest hearts, o'er purest bosoms steal,
And teach all mutual nature how to feel;
Assimilate high and low, and rich and poor,
Stalk the proud hall, or haunt the humble floor;
Wave the black banners o'er the noble head,
Or furl the fragments of the tattered bed.
Mixed with mysterious wanderings of mind
Is some eternal ray of truth combined;
Thro' the sick voice of superstitious tales
The sacred voice of Nature still prevails;
While, balanced wisely on the beam of fate,
Justice and Judgment still appear to wait.
So have I marked the tales of other times,
And owned the iron yoke imposed on crimes;
And when I lent my ear to legend tongue,
My absent spirit strayed the dead among;
Sometimes confessing all the just decree,
And sometimes lost in blank uncertainty.

Sometimes, companioned by the friendly man,
Silent I've watched the spectre of the plain;
For still by fits the gaunt-helm haunts the green, [8]
And still the monstrous head is dimly seen;
Thro' the fierce frown, by sudden shade concealed,
A deeper, darker menace seems revealed:
For then dire tempests break on every hand,
Blast the fresh mead, and blight the pleasant land;
Cleave the rude cliffs, and sweep the subject strand;
And when the sullen spirit seems to sleep,
Recoiled the bow, the 'vengeful aim more deep;
For soon again, renewed from fatal rest,
The whirlwind sweeps around the sable crest.

Old is the legend of the giant race,
Who warred with Heav'n, and strove 'gainst holy grace;
As when the haughty Hæmas felt the rod,
Constrained within a mighty mountain's load,
And 'tomed on earth who sought to be a god:
So thus the legend: One of impious pride,
Who sought to dare the heavens and rule the tide,

Was snatched to sudden fate; 'twas then a head
Convulsed in death, and horrible when dead,
Broke from the clouds, as hurled from on high,
Like the dread bolt which cleaves th' avenging sky;
And, where entombed the headless trunk remains,
The spectre helm still haunts the ruined plains.

Invisible the threads which form life's line,
And strange the web which wayward fates combine;
But 'midst the warf and woof is kindly given
A perfect pattern, from indulgent Heaven.
Tho' dark the colours in the mystic plan,
Man feels Immortal Mind is more than man;
Feels the dark web is but the shroud of soul,
Life but a part, eternity the whole.

Again alone on Herbert's gloomy Isle,
Where penance long forbad the land to smile,
Wildered I stand; again my rage returns,
And now my bosom swells, and now my spirit burns.

'Tis night a thick and fearful night;
The stars of Heaven refuse their light;
The storm grows wild, the bursts of angry rain
Harrow the lake, and sweep the narrow plain:
And oft, at intervals, the groaning wood
Gives horrid utterance to the voice of blood.
Ha! is it not a solemn knell
Which sounds throughout the ruined cell?
Oh, holy Heaven! to thee I bend my knee;
Submitted all, I yield my soul to thee.
Slumbers seem to gather round,
I sink succumbent to the ground:
'Tis death; no more my senses rave,
A mighty stillness spreads the stillness of the grave.
And now a deadly sleep constrains my soul,
While to my view strange visions seem to roll;
Stupendous terrors burst my aching eyes,
And seem to ride the whirlwinds of the skies:
Then he, the despot ruffian, strode the land,
And grasped the two-edged sword in either hand;
Close on his hurried steps the dogs of fate,
Ruin, Murder, and consuming Fury wait.
On me he casts his never-staying eye,
On me his many-headed monsters fly,
When sacred voices seemed to fill the cell,
And hushed the madness of the mingled yell.
Silent I lay, while, shrouded mild in air,
Cuthbert and Herbert seemed to kneel in prayer,
Then laid their holy hands upon my heart of care.
Soft was the healing touch; o'er every part

It shed new life, and warmed my dead-cold heart.
Their words were hope; but soon they passed away,
And my swollen eyelids opened on the day:
I rose, and bent my knees upon the stone
Where sainted knees had bent before the throne;
Sought the bleak rock where oft-times Herbert stood,
Dipt in the wave my bread, and blest the food,
And praised his name who tempers ill with good.

There, as I mused, what rapture reached mine ear!
What sounds, for ever sacred, ever dear!
Tidings triumphant, like the seraph's breath,
Which wakes the soul, and bursts the night of death.
Father! oh sacred name, 'mid phrenzy hid!
Son! oh soul-moving tie, too long forbid!
My son! my son! My sense again subsides,
Lost in the tumult of contending tides.
And is my life restored again to fame?
Are there yet hearts that love my injured name?
Haste! let me live to clasp my ravished rest,
To bless my children's arms, and country's breast.

STRANGER'S FAREWELL.

Farewell, thou holy shrine,
Thou noble flood, thou lone and humble cell,
Where Herbert's spirit mingled sighs with mine;
But more than all, my humble friend, farewell,
And still with thee thy sweet contentment dwell;
Still much beloved, tho' hid from public scan,
Who charitably saved the melancholy man.

Henceforth my voice be praise
To him who gives us good;
And thro' the remnant of my days,
No more my page be soiled with tears,
No more be stained with blood.

Note . The Author begs leave to observe, that she considered the introduction of some high-strained flights of disturbed mind, amid the grand and majestic scenes of Cumberland, as adding an appropriate figure to the description. That figure is no more than a fancy-picture on the occasion; but the agitated state of the noble, the exiled, and persecuted, in many instances have given melancholy and abundant matter for the sketches of imagination.
