

Fugitive Verses

Joanna Baillie

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Joanna Baillie

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TO SAMUEL ROGERS, ESQ.

THIS BOOK
IS GRATEFULLY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

I *BELIEVE* myself warranted in calling the contents of the following pages "Fugitive Verses," for by far the greatest portion has been in some way or other already before the public, though so scattered among various publications and collections, that it would be very difficult now for any one but myself to bring them together. Many of the Songs are to be found in Mr. George Thomson's Collection of Irish, Welch, and Scotch, Melodies, and other musical works, both selected and original; the Ballads, too, and many of the other occasional pieces, are dispersed in the same way. But it would be great vanity in me to suppose that any individual would take the trouble of drawing them from their different lurking-places for his own private reading.

This book then, does not hold out the allurements of novelty. As among an assembly of strangers, however, we sometimes look with more good will upon a few recognized faces that had been nearly lost or forgotten, though never much valued at any time, than upon those whom we have never before beheld; so I venture to hope, that upon the simple plea of old acquaintances, they may be received with some degree of favour. Be this as it may, I am unwilling to quit the world and leave them behind me in their unconnected state, or to leave the trouble of collecting and correcting them to another the Songs written in the Scotch dialect making it somewhat more difficult.

The occasional pieces for the first time offered to the public, have another disadvantage to contend with. Modern Poetry, within these last thirty years, has become so imaginative, impassioned, and sentimental, that more homely subjects, in simple diction, are held in comparatively small estimation. This, however, is a natural progress of the

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art, and the obstacles it may cast in the way of a less gifted, or less aspiring genius, must be submitted to with a good grace. Nay, they may even sometimes be read with more relish from their very want of the more elevated

flights of fancy, from our natural love of relaxation after having had our minds kept on the stretch, by following, or endeavouring to follow more sublime and obscure conceptions. He who has been coursing through the air in a balloon, or ploughing the boundless ocean in the bark of some dauntless discoverer, or careering over the field on a warhorse, may be very well pleased after all to seat himself on a bench by his neighbour's door, and look at the meadows around him, or country people passing along the common from their daily work. Let me then be encouraged to suppose that something of this nature may, with the courteous reader, operate in my behalf.

The early poems that stand first in the arrangement of this book, I now mention last. They are taken from a small volume, published by me anonymously many years ago, but not noticed by the public, or circulated in any considerable degree. Indeed, in the course of after years it became almost forgotten by myself, and the feelings of my mind in a good measure coincided with the neglect it had met with. A review, of those days, had spoken of it encouragingly, and the chief commendation bestowed was, that it contained true unsophisticated representations of nature. This

cheered me at the time, and then gradually faded from my thoughts. But not very long since, when I learnt from different quarters, that some of the pieces from this little neglected book had found their way into collections of extracts made by those whose approbation implied some portion of real merit, my little volume returned again to my own thoughts, and disposed me on a warmly expressed opinion in its favour by a poet, who, from his own refined genius, classical elegance, and high estimation with the public, is well qualified to judge no longer to resist a latent inclination to add some of its verses to the present publication. I was the more encouraged to yield to the influence of this friend, from having formerly received unwittingly from his critical pen, very great and useful service service that, at the beginning of my dramatical attempts, enabled me to make better head against criticism of a different character. This being decided, the difficulty was as to what pieces I ought to select; for I had a much clearer idea of those to be rejected than of those

that deserved to be chosen. I hope the reader will not think with much chagrin or impatience, that admittance has been too easily granted. Those which regard the moods and passions of the human mind, and shew any kindred to the works that with more success followed after, have, with a few exceptions, for this reason been preserved. When these poems were written, the author was young in years, and still younger in literary knowledge. Of all our eminent poets of modern times, not one was then known. Mr. Hayley and Miss Seaward, and a few other cultivated poetical writers, were the poets spoken of in literary circles. Burns, read and appreciated as he deserved by his own countrymen, was known to few readers south of the Tweed, where I then resided. A poet (if I dare so style myself) of a simpler and more homely character, was either, among such contemporaries, placed in a favourable or unfavourable position, as the taste and fashion of the day might direct; and I have, perhaps, no great reason to regret that my vanity was not stirred up at that time to more active exertions. Permit me to add, that in preparing them for this collection, they have undergone very little more than verbal corrections, with the expunging or alteration of a line here and there, and have never (but on one occasion noticed in a short note,) received the addition of new thoughts. Some Scotch expressions, as might naturally be expected, interfered with clearness of meaning and harmony of sound to an English reader, and some of those I have changed; but I have not been willing, unless when it appeared necessary, entirely to remove this national mark; and I believe those whom I am most ambitious to please, will not like my early verses the worse for this defect, though the difference of pronunciation in the two countries not unfrequently injures the rhyme.

Having said all that I dare to procure a lenient reception to the following pages, which contain nearly all the occasional lines, written under various circumstances and impressions, of a long life, I have nothing more to urge, as I will not, from feelings that may easily be imagined, make any remarks on the latter part of the volume, appropriated to devotional and sacred subjects. To avoid any imputation of forwardness or presumption, however, I think it right to mention that those Hymns marked "For the Kirk," were written at the request of an eminent

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member of the Scotch Church, at a time when it was in contemplation, to compile by authority a new collection of hymns and sacred poetry for the general use of parochial congregations. It would have gratified me extremely to have been of the smallest service to the venerable church of my native land, which the conscientious zeal of the great majority of an intelligent and virtuous nation had founded; which their unconquerable courage, endurance of persecution, and unwearied perseverance, had reared into a church as effective for private virtue and ecclesiastical government, as any protestant establishment in Europe. I was proud to be so occupied; my heart and my duty went along with it; but the General Assembly when afterwards applied to, refused their sanction to any new compilation, and what I had written, and many sacred verses from far better poets, proved abortive. That clergymen, who had been accustomed from their youth to hear the noble Psalms of David sung by the mingled voices of a large congregation swelling often to a sublime volume of sound, elevating the mind and quickening the feelings beyond all studied excitements of art, should regard any additions or changes as presumptuous, is a circumstance at which we ought not to be surprised.

I will no longer trouble the reader with preliminary matters. I hope the book itself will be read with a disposition to be pleased, and that even in the absence of superior merit, the variety of its subjects alone will afford some amusement.

POEMS.

A WINTER'S DAY.

THE cock warm roosting 'mid his feathered mates,
Now lifts his beak and snuffs the morning air,
Stretches his neck and claps his heavy wings,
Gives three hoarse crows, and glad his task is done,
Low chuckling turns himself upon the roost,
Then nestles down again into his place.
The labouring hind, who on his bed of straw
Beneath his home-made coverings, coarse but warm,
Locked in the kindly arms of her who spun them,
Dreams of the gain that next year's crop should bring;
Or at some fair, disposing of his wool,
Or by some lucky and unlooked-for bargain,
Fills his skin purse with store of tempting gold,
Now wakes from sleep at the unwelcome call,
And finds himself but just the same poor man
As when he went to rest.
He hears the blast against his window beat
And wishes to himself he were a laird,
That he might lie a-bed. It may not be:
He rubs his eyes and stretches out his arms;
Heigh ho! heigh ho! he drawls with gaping mouth,
Then, most unwillingly creeps from his lair,
And without looking-glass puts on his clothes.
With rueful face he blows the smothered fire,
And lights his candle at the reddening coal;
First sees that all be right among his cattle,
Then hies him to the barn with heavy tread,
Printing his footsteps on the new-fallen snow.
From out the heaped-up mow he draws his sheaves,

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Dislodging the poor red-breast from his shelter
Where all the live-long night he slept secure;
But now, affrighted, with uncertain flight,
Flutters round walls, and roof, to find some hole
Through which he may escape.
Then whirling o'er his head, the heavy flail
Descends with force upon the jumping sheaves,
While every rugged wall and neighbouring cot
The noise re-echoes of his sturdy strokes.

The family cares call next upon the wife
To quit her mean but comfortable bed.
And first she stirs the fire and fans the flame,
Then from her heap of sticks for winter stored
An armful brings; loud crackling as they burn,
Thick fly the red sparks upward to the roof,
While slowly mounts the smoke in wreathy clouds.
On goes the seething pot with morning cheer,
For which some little wistful folk await,
Who, peeping from the bed-clothes, spy well pleased,
The cheery light that blazes on the wall,
And bawl for leave to rise.
Their busy mother knows not where to turn,
Her morning's work comes now so thick upon her.
One she must help to tie his little coat,
Unpin another's cap, or seek his shoe
Or hosen lost, confusion soon o'er-mastered!
When all is o'er, out to the door they run
With new-combed sleeky hair and glistening faces,
Each with some little project in his head.
His new-soled shoes one on the ice must try;
To view his well-set trap another hies,
In hopes to find some poor unwary bird,
(No worthless prize) entangled in his snare;
While one, less active, with round rosy cheeks,
Spreads out his purple fingers to the fire,
And peeps most wishfully into the pot.

But let us leave the warm and cheerful house
To view the bleak and dreary scene without,
And mark the dawning of a Winter day.
The morning vapour rests upon the heights
Lurid and red, while growing gradual shades
Of pale and sickly light spread o'er the sky.
Then slowly from behind the southern hills
Enlarged and ruddy comes the rising sun,
Shooting askance the hoary waste his beams
That gild the brow of every ridgy bank,
And deepen every valley with a shade.
The crusted window of each scattered cot,
The icicles that fringe the thatched roof,

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The new-swept slide upon the frozen pool,
All keenly glance, new kindled with his rays;
And even the rugged face of scowling Winter
Looks somewhat gay. But only for a time
He shews his glory to the brightening earth,
Then hides his face behind a sullen cloud.

The birds now quit their holes and lurking sheds,
Most mute and melancholy, where through night,
All nestling close to keep each other warm,
In downy sleep they had forgot their hardships;
But not to chant and carol in the air,
Or lightly swing upon some waving bough,
And merrily return each other's notes;
No; silently they hop from bush to bush,
Can find no seeds to stop their craving want,
Then bend their flight to the low smoking cot,
Chirp on the roof, or at the window peck,
To tell their wants to those who lodge within.
The poor lank hare flies homeward to his den,
But little burthened with his nightly meal
Of withered colworts from the farmer's garden;
A wretched scanty portion, snatched in fear;
And fearful creatures, forced abroad by hunger,
Are now to every enemy a prey.

The husbandman lays by his heavy flail,
And to the house returns, where for him wait
His smoking breakfast and impatient children,
Who, spoon in hand, and ready to begin,
Toward the door cast many an eager look
To see their Dad come in.
Then round they sit, a cheerful company;
All quickly set to work, and with heaped spoons
From ear to ear besmear their rosy cheeks.
The faithful dog stands by his master's side
Wagging his tail and looking in his face;
While humble puss pays court to all around,
And paws and rubs them with her furry sides,
Nor goes this little flattery unrewarded.
But the laborious sit not long at table;
The grateful father lifts his eyes to heaven
To bless his God, whose ever bounteous hand
Him and his little ones doth daily feed,
Then rises satisfied to work again.

The varied rousing sounds of industry
Are heard through all the village.
The humming wheel, the thrifty housewife's tongue,
Who scolds to keep her maidens to their work,
The wool-card's grating most unmusical!

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Issue from every house.
But hark! the sportsman from the neighbouring hedge
His thunder sends! loud bark the village curs;
Up from her cards or wheel the maiden starts
And hastens to the door; the housewife chides,
Yet runs herself to look, in spite of thrift,
And all the little town is in a stir.

Strutting before, the cock leads forth his train,
And chuckling near the barn-door 'mid the straw,
Reminds the farmer of his morning's service.
His grateful master throws a liberal handful;
They flock about it, while the hungry sparrows,
Perched on the roof, look down with envious eye,
Then, aiming well, amidst the feeders light,
And seize upon the feast with greedy bill,
Till angry partlets peck them off the field.
But at a distance, on the leafless tree,
All woe-begone, the lonely blackbird sits;
The cold north wind ruffles his glossy feathers;
Full oft he looks, but dare not make approach,
Then turns his yellow beak to peck his side
And claps his wings close to' his sharpened breast.
The wandering fowler from behind the hedge,
Fastens his eye upon him, points his gun,
And firing wantonly, as at a mark,
Of life bereaves him in the cheerful spot
That oft hath echoed to his summer's song.

The mid-day hour is near, the pent-up kine
Are driven from their stalls to take the air.
How stupidly they stare! and feel how strange!
They open wide their smoking mouths to low,
But scarcely can their feeble sound be heard,
Then turn and lick themselves, and step by step,
Move, dull and heavy, to their stalls again.

In scattered groups the little idle boys
With purple fingers moulding in the snow
Their icy ammunition, pant for war;
And drawing up in opposite array,
Send forth a mighty shower of well-aimed balls,
Each tiny hero tries his growing strength,
And burns to beat the foe-men off the field.
Or on the well-worn ice in eager throngs,
After short race, shoot rapidly along,
Trip up each other's heels and on the surface
With studded shoes draw many a chalky line.
Untired and glowing with the healthful sport
They cease not till the sun hath run his course
And threatening clouds, slow rising from the north,

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Spread leaden darkness o'er the face of heaven;
Then by degrees they scatter to their homes,
Some with a broken head or bloody nose,
To claim their mother's pity, who most skilful!
Cures all their troubles with a bit of bread.

The night comes on apace
Chill blows the blast and drives the snow in wreaths;
Now every creature looks around for shelter,
And whether man or beast, all move alike
Towards their homes, and happy they who have
A house to screen them from the piercing cold!
Lo, o'er the frost a reverend form advances!
His hair white as the snow on which he treads,
His forehead marked with many a care-worn furrow,
Whose feeble body bending o'er a staff,
Shews still that once it was the seat of strength,
Though now it shakes like some old ruined tower.
Clothed indeed, but not disgraced with rags,
He still maintains that decent dignity
Which well becomes those who have served their country.
With tottering steps he gains the cottage door:
The wife within, who hears his hollow cough,
And pattering of his stick upon the threshold,
Sends out her little boy to see who's there.
The child looks up to mark the stranger's face,
And, seeing it enlightened with a smile,
Holds out his tiny hand to lead him in.
Round from her work, the mother turns her head,
And views them, not ill pleased.
The stranger whines not with a piteous tale,
But only asks a little to relieve
A poor old soldier's wants.
The gentle matron brings the ready chair
And bids him sit to rest his weary limbs,
And warm himself before her blazing fire.
The children full of curiosity,
Flock round, and with their fingers in their mouths
Stand staring at him, while the stranger, pleased,
Takes up the youngest urchin on his knee.
Proud of its seat, it wags its little feet,
And prates and laughs and plays with his white locks.
But soon a change comes o'er the soldier's face;
His thoughtful mind is turned on other days,
When his own boys were wont to play around him,
Who now lie distant from their native land
In honourable but untimely graves:
He feels how helpless and forlorn he is,
And big, round tears course down his withered cheeks.
His toilsome daily labour at an end,
In comes the wearied master of the house,

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And marks with satisfaction his old guest,
In the chief seat, with all the children round him.
His honest heart is filled with manly kindness,
He bids him stay and share their homely meal,
And take with them his quarters for the night.
The aged wanderer thankfully accepts,
And by the simple hospitable board,
Forgets the by-past hardships of the day.

When all are satisfied, about the fire
They draw their seats and form a cheerful ring.
The thrifty house-wife turns her spinning wheel;
The husband, useful even in his hour
Of ease and rest, a stocking knits, belike,
Or plaits stored rushes, which with after skill
Into a basket formed may do good service,
With eggs or butter filled at fair or market.

Some idle neighbours now come dropping in,
Draw round their chairs and widen out the circle;
And every one in his own native way,
Does what he can to cheer the social group.
Each tells some little story of himself,
That constant subject upon which mankind
Whether in court or country, love to dwell.
How, at a fair, he saved a simple clown
From being tricked in buying of a cow;
Or laid a bet on his own horse's head
Against his neighbour's bought at twice his price,
Which failed not to repay his better skill;
Or on a harvest day bound in an hour
More sheaves of corn than any of his fellows,
Though e'er so stark, could do in twice the time;
Or won the bridal race with savoury bruise
And first kiss of the bonny bride, though all
The fleetest youngsters of the parish strove
In rivalry against him.
But chiefly the good man, by his own fire,
Hath privilege of being listened to,
Nor dare a little prating tongue presume
Though but in play, to break upon his story.
The children sit and listen with the rest;
And should the youngest raise its lisping voice,
The careful mother, ever on the watch,
And ever pleased with what her husband says,
Gives it a gentle tap upon the fingers,
Or stops its ill-timed prattle with a kiss.
The soldier next, but not unasked, begins
His tale of war and blood. They gaze upon him,
And almost weep to see the man so poor
So bent and feeble, helpless and forlorn,

Fugitive Verses

Who has undaunted stood the battle's brunt
While roaring cannons shook the quaking earth,
And bullets hissed round his defenceless head.
Thus passes quickly on the evening hour,
Till sober folks must needs retire to rest,
Then all break up, and, by their several paths,
Hie homeward, with the evening pastime cheered
Far more, belike, than those who issue forth
From city theatre's gay scenic show,
Or crowded ball-room's splendid moving maze.
But where the song and story, joke and gibe
So lately circled, what a solemn change
In little time takes place!
The sound of psalms, by mingled voices raised
Of young and old, upon the night-air borne,
Haply to some benighted traveller,
Or the late parted neighbours on their way,
A pleasing notice gives that, those whose sires
In former days on the bare mountain's side,
In deserts, heaths, and caverns, praise and prayer,
At peril of their lives, in their own form
Of covenanted worship offered up,
In peace and safety in their own quiet home
Are (as in quaint and modest phrase is termed)
Are now engaged in *evening exercise* .

But long accustomed to observe the weather,
The farmer cannot lay him down in peace
Till he has looked to mark what bodes the night.
He lifts the latch, and moves the heavy door,
Sees wreaths of snow heaped up on every side,
And black and dismal all above his head.
Anon the norther blast begins to rise,
He hears its hollow growling from afar,
Which, gathering strength, rolls on with doubled might
And raves and bellows o'er his head. The trees
Like pithless saplings bend. He shuts his door
And, thankful for the roof that covers him,
Hies him to bed.

A SUMMER'S DAY.

THE dark-blue clouds of night, in dusky lines
Drawn wide and streaky o'er the purer sky,
Wear faintly morning purple on their skirts.
The stars that full and bright shone in the west,
But dimly twinkle to the stedfast eye,
And seen and vanishing and seen again,
Like dying tapers winking in the socket,
Are by degrees shut from the face of heaven;

A SUMMER'S DAY.

Fugitive Verses

The fitful lightning of the summer cloud,
And every lesser flame that shone by night;
The wandering fire that seems, across the marsh,
A beaming candle in a lonely cot,
Cheering the hopes of the benighted hind,
Till, swifter than the very change of thought,
It shifts from place to place, eludes his sight,
And makes him wondering rub his faithless eyes;
The humble glow-worm and the silver moth,
That cast a doubtful glimmering o'er the green,
All die away.

For now the sun, slow moving in his glory,
Above the eastern mountains lifts his head;
The webs of dew spread o'er the hoary lawn,
The smooth, clear bosom of the settled pool,
The polished ploughshare on the distant field,
Catch fire from him and dart their new got beams
Upon the gazing rustic's dazzled sight.

The wakened birds upon the branches hop,
Peck their soft down, and bristle out their feathers,
Then stretch their throats and trill their morning song,
While dusky crows, high swinging over head,
Upon the topmost boughs, in lordly pride,
Mix their hoarse croaking with the linnet's note,
Till in a gathered band of close array,
They take their flight to seek their daily food.
The villager wakes with the early light,
That through the window of his cot appears,
And quits his easy bed; then o'er the fields
With lengthened active strides betakes his way,
Bearing his spade or hoe across his shoulder,
Seen glancing as he moves, and with good will
His daily work begins.

The sturdy sun-burnt boy drives forth the cattle,
And, pleased with power, bawls to the lagging kine
With stern authority, who fain would stop
To crop the tempting bushes as they pass.
At every open door, in lawn or lane,
Half naked children, half awake are seen
Scratching their heads and blinking to the light,
Till, rousing by degrees, they run about,
Roll on the sward and in some sandy nook
Dig caves, and houses build, full oft defaced
And oft begun again, a daily pastime.
The housewife, up by times, her morning cares
Tends busily; from tubs of curdled milk
With skilful patience draws the clear green whey
From the pressed bosom of the snowy curd,
While her brown comely maid, with tucked-up sleeves
And swelling arm, assists her. Work proceeds,

A SUMMER'S DAY.

Fugitive Verses

Pots smoke, pails rattle, and the warm confusion
Still more confused becomes, till in the mould
With heavy hands the well-squeezed curd is placed.

So goes the morning till the powerful sun,
High in the heavens, sends down his strengthened beams,
And all the freshness of the morn is fled.
The idle horse upon the grassy field
Rolls on his back; the swain leaves off his toil,
And to his house with heavy steps returns,
Where on the board his ready breakfast placed
Looks most invitingly, and his good mate
Serves him with cheerful kindness.
Upon the grass no longer hangs the dew;
Forth hies the mower with his glittering scythe,
In snowy shirt bedight and all unbraced.
He moves athwart the mead with sideling bend,
And lays the grass in many a swathe line;
In every field in every lawn and meadow
The rousing voice of industry is heard;
The hay-cock rises and the frequent rake
Sweeps on the fragrant hay in heavy wreaths.
The old and young, the weak and strong are there,
And, as they can, help on the cheerful work.
The father jeers his awkward half-grown lad,
Who trails his tawdry armful o'er the field,
Nor does he fear the jeering to repay.
The village oracle and simple maid
Jest in their turns and raise the ready laugh;
All are companions in the general glee;
Authority, hard favoured, frowns not there.
Some, more advanced, raise up the lofty rick,
Whilst on its top doth stand the parish toast
In loose attire and swelling ruddy cheek.
With taunts and harmless mockery she receives
The tossed-up heaps from fork of simple youth,
Who, staring on her, takes his aim awry,
While half the load falls back upon himself.
Loud is her laugh, her voice is heard afar;
The mower busied on the distant lawn,
The carter trudging on his dusty way,
The shrill sound know, their bonnets toss in the air
And roar across the field to catch her notice:
She waves her arm to them, and shakes her head,
And then renews her work with double spirit.
Thus do they jest and laugh away their toil
Till the bright sun, now past his middle course,
Shoots down his fiercest beams which none may brave.
The stoutest arm feels listless, and the swart
And brawny-shouldered clown begins to fail.
But to the weary, lo there comes relief!

A SUMMER'S DAY.

Fugitive Verses

A troop of welcome children o'er the lawn
With slow and wary steps approach, some bear
In baskets oaten cakes or barley scones,
And gusty cheese and stoups of milk or whey.
Beneath the branches of a spreading tree,
Or by the shady side of the tall rick,
They spread their homely fare, and seated round,
Taste every pleasure that a feast can give.

A drowsy indolence now hangs on all;
Each creature seeks some place of rest, some shelter
From the oppressive heat; silence prevails;
Nor low nor bark nor chirping bird are heard.
In shady nooks the sheep and kine convene;
Within the narrow shadow of the cot
The sleepy dog lies stretched upon his side,
Nor heeds the footsteps of the passer by,
Or at the sound but raises half an eye-lid,
Then gives a feeble growl and sleeps again;
While puss composed and grave on threshold stone
Sits winking in the light.
No sound is heard but humming of the bee,
For she alone retires not from her labour,
Nor leaves a meadow flower unsought for gain.

Heavy and slow, so pass the sultry hours,
Till gently bending on the ridge's top
The drooping seedy grass begins to wave,
And the high branches of the aspin tree
Shiver the leaves and gentle rustling make.
Cool breathes the rising breeze, and with it wakes
The languid spirit from its state of stupor.
The lazy boy springs from his mossy lair
To chase the gaudy butterfly, who oft
Lights at his feet as if within his reach,
Spreading upon the ground its mealy wings,
Yet still eludes his grasp, and high in air
Takes many a circling flight, tempting his eye
And tiring his young limbs.
The drowzy dog, who feels the kindly air
That passing o'er him lifts his shaggy ear,
Begins to stretch him, on his legs half-raised,
Till fully waked with bristling cocked-up tail,
He makes the village echo to his bark.

But let us not forget the busy maid,
Who by the side of the clear pebbly stream
Spreads out her snowy linens to the sun,
And sheds with liberal hand the crystal shower
O'er many a favourite piece of fair attire,
Revolving in her mind her gay appearance,

A SUMMER'S DAY.

Fugitive Verses

So nicely tricked, at some approaching fair.
The dimpling half-checked smile and muttering lip
Her secret thoughts betray. With shiny feet,
There, little active bands of truant boys
Sport in the stream and dash the water round,
Or try with wily art to catch the trout,
Or with their fingers grasp the slippery eel.
The shepherd-lad sits singing on the bank
To while away the weary lonely hours,
Weaving with art his pointed crown of rushes,
A guiltless easy crown, which, having made,
He places on his head, and skips about,
A chaunted rhyme repeats, or calls full loud
To some companion lonely as himself,
Far on the distant bank; or else delighted
To hear the echoed sound of his own voice,
Returning answer from some neighbouring rock,
Or roofless barn, holds converse with himself.

Now weary labourers perceive well pleased
The shadows lengthen, and the oppressive day
With all its toil fast wearing to an end.
The sun, far in the west, with level beam
Gleams on the cocks of hay, on bush or ridge,
And fields are checkered with fantastic shapes,
Or tree or shrub or gate or human form,
All lengthened out in antic disproportion
Upon the darkened ground. Their task is finished,
Their rakes and scattered garments gathered up,
And all right gladly to their homes return.

The village, lone and silent through the day,
Receiving from the fields its merry bands,
Sends forth its evening sound, confused but cheerful;
Yelping of curs, and voices stern and shrill,
And true-love ballads in no plaintive strain,
By household maid at open window sung;
And lowing of the home-returning kine,
And herd's dull droning trump and tinkling bell,
Tied to the collar of the master-sheep,
Make no contemptible variety
To ears not over nice.
With careless lounging gait the favoured youth
Upon his sweetheart's open window leans,
Diverting her with joke and harmless taunt.
Close by the cottage door with placid mien,
The old man sits upon his seat of turf.
His staff with crooked head laid by his side,
Which oft some tricky youngling steals away,
And straddling o'er it, shews his horsemanship
By raising clouds of sand; he smiles thereat,

Fugitive Verses

But seems to chide him sharply:
His silver locks upon his shoulders fall,
And not ungraceful is his stoop of age.
No stranger passes him without regard,
And neighbours stop to wish him a good e'en,
And ask him his opinion of the weather.
They fret not at the length of his remarks
Upon the various seasons he remembers;
For well he knows the many divers signs
That do foretell high winds, or rain, or drought,
Or aught that may affect the rising crops.
The silken-clad who courtly breeding boast,
Their own discourse still sweetest to their ear,
May at the old man's lengthened story fret,
Impatiently, but here it is not so.

From every chimney mounts the curling smoke,
Muddy and grey, of the new evening fire;
On every window smokes the family supper,
Set out to cool by the attentive housewife,
While cheerful groups, at every door convened,
Bawl 'cross the narrow lane the parish news,
And oft the bursting laugh disturbs the air.
But see who comes to set them all agape;
The weary-footed pedlar with his pack;
Stiffly he bends beneath his bulky load,
Covered with dust, slip-shod and out at elbows;
His greasy hat set backwards on his head;
His thin straight hair, divided on his brow,
Hangs lank on either side his glistening cheeks,
And woe-begone yet vacant is his face.
His box he opens and displays his ware.
Full many a varied row of precious stones
Cast forth their dazzling lustre to the light,
And ruby rings and china buttons, stamped
With love devices, the desiring maid
And simple youth attract; while streaming garters,
Of many colours, fastened to a pole,
Aloft in air their gaudy stripes display,
And from afar the distant stragglers lure.
The children leave their play and round him flock;
Even sober, aged grand-dame quits her seat,
Where by the door she twines her lengthened threads,
Her spindle stops, and lays her distaff by,
Then joins with step sedate the curious throng.
She praises much the fashions of her youth,
And scorns each useless nonsense of the day;
Yet not ill-pleased the glossy riband views,
Unrolled and changing hues with every fold,
Just measured out to deck her grand-child's head.

Fugitive Verses

Now red but languid the last beams appear
Of the departed sun, across the lawn,
Gilding each sweepy ridge on many a field,
And from the openings of the distant hills
A level brightness pouring, sad though bright;
Like farewell smiles from some dear friend they seem,
And only serve to deepen the low vale,
And make the shadows of the night more gloomy.
The varied noises of the cheerful village
By slow degrees now faintly die away,
And more distinctly distant sounds are heard
That gently steal adown the river's bed,
Or through the wood come on the ruffling breeze.
The white mist rises from the meads, and from
The dappled skirting of the sober sky
Looks out with steady gleam the evening star.
The lover, skulking in some neighbouring copse,
(Whose half-seen form, shewn through the dusky air
Large and majestic, makes the traveller start,
And spreads the story of a haunted grove,)
Curses the owl, whose loud ill-omened hoot
With ceaseless spite takes from his listening ear
The well-known footsteps of his darling maid,
And fretful chases from his face the night-fly,
That, buzzing round his head, doth often skim
With fluttering wings across his glowing cheek;
For all but him in quiet balmy sleep
Forget the toils of the oppressive day;
Shut is the door of every scattered cot,
And silence dwells within.

NIGHT SCENES OF OTHER TIMES.

A Poem, in Three Parts.

PART I.

"**THE** night winds bellow o'er my head
Dim grows the fading light;
Where shall I find some friendly shed
To screen me from the night?"

"Ah! round me lies a desert vast,
No habitation near;
And dark and pathless is the waste
And fills my mind with fear.

Fugitive Verses

"Thou distant tree, whose lonely top
Has bent to many a storm,
No more canst thou deceive my hope
And take my lover's form;

"For o'er thy head the dark cloud rolls,
Dark as thy blasted pride;
How deep the angry tempest growls
Along the mountain's side.

"Safely within the shaggy brake
Are couched the mountain deer;
A sound unbroken sleep they take;
No haunts of men are near.

"Beneath the fern the moorcock sleeps,
And twisted adders lie;
Back to his rock the night-bird creeps,
Nor gives his wonted cry.

"For angry spirits of the night
Ride on the troubled air,
And to their dens, in strange affright,
The beasts of prey repair.

"But thou, my love! where dost thou rest?
What shelter covers thee?
O may this cold and wintry blast
But only beat on me!

"Some friendly dwelling mayst thou find,
Where sleep may banish care
And thou feel not the chilly wind
That scatters Margaret's hair.

"Ah no! for thou didst give thy word
To meet me on the way:
Nor friendly roof nor social board
Will tempt a lover's stay.

"O raise thy voice if thou art near!
Its weakest sound were bliss;
What other sound my heart can cheer
In such a gloom as this?

"But from the hills with deafening roar
The dashing torrents fall,
And heavy beats the drifted shower,
And mock a lover's call.

Fugitive Verses

"Ha! see, across the dreary waste,
A moving form appears,
It is my love, my cares are past;
How vain were all my fears!"

The form advanced, but sad and slow,
Not with a lover's tread;
And from his cheek the youthful glow
And greeting smile were fled.

Dim sadness sat upon his brow;
Fixed was his beamless eye;
His face was like a moon-light bow
Upon a wintry sky.

And fixed and ghastly to the sight
His strengthened features rose,
And bended was his graceful height,
And bloody were his clothes.

"My Margaret, calm thy troubled breast;
Thy sorrow now is vain;
Thy Edward from his peaceful rest
Shall ne'er return again.

"A treacherous friend has laid me low,
Has fixed my early doom,
And laid my corse with feigned woe
Beneath a vaunted tomb.

"To take thee to my home I swear,
And here we were to meet;
Wilt thou a narrow coffin share,
And part my winding sheet?"

"But late the lord of many lands,
And now a grave is all:
My blood is warm upon his hands
Who revels in my hall.

"Yet think, thy father's hoary hair
Is watered with his tears;
He has but thee to soothe his care,
And prop his load of years.

"Remember Edward when he's gone
He only lived for thee;
And when thou art pensive and alone
Dear Margaret, call on me!

Fugitive Verses

"Though deep beneath the mouldering clod
I rest my wounded head,
And terrible that call and loud
Which shall awake the dead!"

"No, Edward; I will follow thee,
And share thy hapless doom;
Companions shall our spirits be,
Though distant is thy tomb.

"O! never to my father's tower
Will I return again;
A bleeding heart has little power
To ease another's pain.

"Upon the wing my spirit flies,
I feel my course is run;
Nor shall these dim and weary eyes
Behold to-morrow's sun."

Like early dew, or hoary frost
Spent with the beaming day,
So shrunk the pale and watery ghost,
And dimly wore away.

No longer Margaret felt the storm,
She bowed her lovely head,
And, with her lover's fleeting form,
Her gentle spirit fled.

PART II.

"**LOUD** roars the wind that shakes the wall,
It is no common blast;
Deep hollow sounds pass through my hall:
O would the night were past!

"Methinks the demons of the air
Upon the turrets growl,
While down the empty winding stair
Their deepening murmurs roll.

"The glimmering fire cheers not the gloom,
Blue burns the quivering ray,
And, like a taper in a tomb,
But spreads the more dismay.

"Athwart its melancholy light
The lengthened shadow falls;

Fugitive Verses

My grandsires to my troubled sight
Lower on me from these walls.

"Methinks yon angry warrior's head
Doth in its panel frown,
And dart a look, as if it said,
'Where hast thou laid my son?'

"But will these fancies never cease?
O would the night were run!
My troubled soul can find no peace
But with the morning sun,

"Vain hope! the guilty never rest;
Dismay is always near;
There is a midnight in the breast
No morn shall ever cheer.

"Now soundly sleeps the weary hind,
Though lowly lies his head;
An easy lair the guiltless find
Upon the hardest bed.

"The beggar, in his wretched haunt,
May now a monarch be;
Forget his woe, forget his want,
For all can sleep but me.

"I've dared whate'er the boldest can,
Then why this childish dread?
I never feared a living man,
And shall I fear the dead?

"No; whistling blasts may shake my tower,
And passing spirits scream:
Their shadowy arms are void of power,
And but a gloomy dream.

"But, lo! a form advancing slow
Across the dusky hall,
Art thou a friend? art thou a foe?
O answer to my call!"

Still nearer to the glimmering light
The stately figure strode,
Till full, and horrid to the sight,
The murdered Edward stood.

A broken shaft his right hand swayed,
Like Time's dark, threatening dart,
And pointed to a rugged blade

Fugitive Verses

That quivered in his heart.

The blood still trickled from his head,
And clotted was his hair;
His severed vesture stained and red;
His mangled breast was bare.

His face was like a muddy sky
Before the coming snow;
And dark and dreadful was his eye,
And cloudy was his brow.

Pale Conrad shrunk, but drew his sword
Fear thrilled in every vein;
His quivering lips gave out no word;
He paused, and shrunk again.

Then utterance came "At this dread hour
Why dost thou haunt the night?
Has the deep gloomy vault no power
To keep thee from my sight?"

"Why dost thou glare and slowly wave
That fatal shaft of strife?
The deed is done, and from the grave
Who can recall to life?"

"Why roll thine eyes beneath thy brow
Dark as the midnight storm?
What dost thou want? O let me know,
But hide thy dreadful form.

"I'd give the life—blood from my heart
To wash my crime away:
If thou a spirit art, depart,
Nor haunt a wretch of clay!"

"Say, dost thou with the blessed dwell?
Return and blessed be!
Or comest thou from the lowest hell?
I am more cursed than thee."

The form advanced with solemn steps
As if it meant to speak,
And seemed to move its pallid lips,
But silence did not break.

Then sternly stalked with heavy pace
Which shook the floor and wall,
And turned away its fearful face,
And vanished from the hall.

PART II.

Fugitive Verses

Transfixed and powerless, Conrad stood;
Ears ring, and eyeballs swell;
Back to his heart runs the cold blood;
Into a trance he fell.

Night fled, and through the windows 'gan
The early light to play;
But on a more unhappy man
Ne'er shone the dawning day.

The gladsome sun all nature cheers,
But cannot charm his cares;
Still dwells his mind with gloomy fears,
And murdered Edward glares.

PART III.

"No rest nor comfort can I find:
I watch the midnight hour;
I sit and listen to the wind
That beats upon my tower.

"Methinks low voices from the ground
Break mournful on my ear,
And through these empty chambers sound
So dismal and so drear!

"The ghost of some departed friend
Doth in my sorrows share;
Or is it but the rushing wind
That mocketh my despair?

"Sad through the hall the pale lamp gleams
Upon my father's arms;
My soul is filled with gloomy dreams,
I fear unknown alarms.

"O, I have known this lonely place
With every blessing stored,
And many a friend with cheerful face
Sit smiling at my board!

"While round the hearth, in early bloom,
My harmless children played,
Who now within the narrow tomb
Are with their mother laid.

"Now sadly bends my wretched head,
And those I loved are gone:

Fugitive Verses

My friends, my family, all are fled,
And I am left alone.

"Oft as the cheerless fire declines,
In it I sadly trace,
As lone I sit, the half-formed lines
Of many a much-loved face.

"But chiefly, Margaret, to my mind,
Thy lovely features rise;
I strive to think thee less unkind,
And wipe my streaming eyes.

"For only thee I had to vaunt,
Thou wert thy mother's pride;
She left thee like a shooting plant,
To screen my widowed side.

"But thou forsakest me, weak, forlorn,
And chilled with age's frost,
To count my weary days and mourn
The comforts I have lost.

"Unkindly child! why didst thou go?
O, had I known the truth!
Though Edward's father was my foe,
I would have blessed the youth.

"Could I but see that face again,
Whose smile calmed every strife,
And hear that voice which soothed my pain,
And made me wish for life!

"Thy harp hangs silent by the wall:
My nights are sad and long,
And thou art in a distant hall,
Where strangers raise the song.

"Ha! some delusion of the mind
My senses doth confound!
It is the harp, and not the wind,
That did so sweetly sound."

Old Arno rose all wan as death,
And turned his eager ear,
And checked the while his quickened breath
The sound again to hear.

When like a full, but distant choir,
The swelling notes returned;
And with the softly trembling wire

Fugitive Verses

Surrounding echoes mourned;

Then softly whispered o'er the song
That Margaret loved to play,
Its well-known measure lingered long,
And faintly died away.

His dim-worn eyes to heaven he cast,
Where all his griefs were known,
And smote upon his troubled breast,
And heaved a heavy groan.

"I know it is my daughter's hand,
But 'tis no hand of clay;
And here a lonely wretch I stand,
All childless, bent, and grey.

"And art thou low, my lovely child,
And hast thou met thy doom,
And has thy flattering morning smiled,
To lead but to the tomb?

"O let me see thee ere we part,
For souls like thine are blest;
O let me fold thee to my heart,
If aught of form thou hast!

"This passing mist conceals thy shape,
But it is shrunk or flown;
Why dost thou from mine arms escape,
Art thou not still mine own?

"Thou'rt fled like the low evening breath,
That sighs upon the hill:
O stay! though in thy weeds of death,
Thou art my daughter still."

Loud waked the sound, then fainter grew,
And long and sadly mourned,
And softly sighed a long adieu,
And never more returned.

Old Arno stretched him on the ground;
Thick as the gloom of night,
Death's misty shadows gathered round,
And swam before his sight.

He heaved a deep and deadly groan,
That rent his labouring breast,
And long before the morning shone,
His spirit was at rest.

ADDRESS TO THE MUSES.

YE tuneful sisters of the lyre,
Who dreams and fantasies inspire,
Who over poesy preside,
And on a lofty hill abide
Above the ken of mortal sight,
Fain would I sing of you, could I address ye right.

Thus known, your power of old was sung,
And temples with your praises rung;
And when the song of battle rose,
Or kindling wine, or lovers' woes,
The Poet's spirit inly burned,
And still to you his upcast eyes were turned.

The youth, all wrapped in vision bright,
Beheld your robes of flowing white;
And knew your forms benignly grand,
An awful but a lovely band;
And felt your inspiration strong
And warmly poured his rapid lay along.

The aged bard all heavenward glowed,
And hailed you daughters of a God.
Though to his dimmer eyes were seen
Nor graceful form nor heavenly mien,
Full well he felt that ye were near,
And heard you in the breeze that raised his hoary hair.

Ye lightened up the valley's bloom,
And gave the forest deeper gloom;
The mountain peak sublimer stood,
And grander rose the mighty flood;
For then religion lent her aid,
And o'er the mind of man your sacred empire spread.

Though rolling ages now are past,
And altars low and temples waste;
Though rites and oracles are o'er,
And Gods and heroes rule no more,
Your fading honours still remain,
And still your votaries call, a long and motley train.

They seek you not on hill or plain,
Nor court you in the sacred fane;
Nor meet you in the mid-day dream,
Upon the bank of hallowed stream;
Yet still for inspiration sue,
And still each lifts his fervent prayer to you.

Fugitive Verses

He woos ye not in woodland gloom,
But in the close and shelved room,
And seeks ye in the dusty nook,
And meets ye in the lettered book:
Full well he knows ye by your names,
And still with poet's faith your presence claims.

Now youthful Poet, pen in hand,
All by the side of blotted stand,
In reverie deep which none may break,
Sits rubbing of his beardless cheek,
And well his inspiration knows,
E'en by the dewy drops that trickle o'er his nose.

The tuneful sage, of riper fame,
Perceives you not in heated frame;
But at conclusion of his verse,
Which still his muttering lips rehearse,
Oft waves his hand in grateful pride,
And owns the heavenly power that did his fancy guide.

O lovely Sisters! is it true
That they are all inspired by you,
And write by inward magic charmed,
And high enthusiasm warmed?
We dare not question heavenly lays,
And well, I wot, they give you all the praise.

O lovely Sisters! well it shews
How wide and far your bounty flows.
Then why from me withhold your beams?
Unvisited of visioned dreams,
Whene'er I aim at heights sublime,
Still downward am I called to seek some stubborn rhyme.

No hasty lightning breaks my gloom,
Nor flashing thoughts unsought for come,
Nor fancies wake in time of need:
I labour much with little speed,
And, when my studied task is done,
Too well alas! I mark it for my own.

Yet, should you never smile on me,
And rugged still my verses be,
Unpleasing to the tuneful train,
Who only prize a flowing strain,
And still the learned scorn my lays,
I'll lift my heart to you and sing your praise.

Your varied ministry of grace,
Your honoured names and godlike race,

ADDRESS TO THE MUSES.

Fugitive Verses

Your sacred caves where fountains flow
They will rehearse, who better know;
I praise ye not with Grecian lyre,
Nor hail ye daughters of a heathen sire.

Ye are the spirits who preside
In earth and air and ocean wide;
In rushing flood and crackling fire,
In horror dread and tumult dire;
In stilly calm and stormy wind,
And rule the answering changes in the human mind.

High on the tempest-beaten hill,
Your misty shapes ye shift at will;
The wild fantastic clouds ye form;
Your voice is in the midnight storm,
While in the dark and lonely hour
Oft starts the boldest heart, and owns your secret power.

When lightning ceases on the waste,
And when the battle's broil is past,
When scenes of strife and blood are o'er,
And groans of death are heard no more,
Ye then renew each sound and form,
Like after echoing of the overpassed storm.

The shining day and nightly shade,
The cheerful plain and sunny glade;
The homeward kine, the children's play,
The busy hamlet's closing day,
Give pleasure to the peasant's heart,
Who lacks the gift his feelings to impart.

Oft when the moon looks from on high,
And black around the shadows lie,
And bright the sparkling waters gleam,
And rushes rustle by the stream,
Voices and fairy forms are known
By simple folk who wander late alone.

Ye kindle up the inward glow,
Ye strengthen every outward show;
Ye overleap the strongest bar,
And join what nature sunders far,
And visit oft in fancies wild,
The breast of learned sage and simple child.

From him who wears a monarch's crown
To the unlettered simple clown,
All in some fitful, lonely hour
Have felt, unsought, your secret power,

ADDRESS TO THE MUSES.

And loved your inward visions well;
You add but to the bard the art to tell.

Ye mighty spirits of the song,
To whom the poet's prayers belong,
My lowly bosom to inspire
And kindle with your sacred fire,
Your wild and dizzy heights to brave,
Is boon alas! too great for me to crave.

But O, such sense of nature bring!
As they who feel and never sing
Wear on their hearts; it will avail
With simple words to tell my tale;
And still contented will I be,
Though greater inspiration never fall to me.

A MELANCHOLY LOVER'S FAREWELL TO HIS MISTRESS.

DEAR Phillis, all my hopes are o'er
And I shall see thy face no more.
Since every secret wish is vain,
I will not stay to give thee pain.
Then do not drop thy lowering brow,
But let me bless thee ere I go:
Oh! do not scorn my last adieu!
I've loved thee long, and loved thee true.

The prospects of my youth are crost,
My health is flown, my vigour lost;
My soothing friends augment my pain,
And cheerless is my native plain;
Dark o'er my spirits hangs the gloom,
And thy disdain has fixed my doom.
But light waves ripple o'er the sea
That soon shall bear me far from thee;
And, wheresoe'er our course is cast,
I know will bear me to my rest.
Full deep beneath the briny wave,
Where lie the venturous and brave,
A place may be for me decreed;
But, should the winds my passage speed,
Far hence upon a foreign land,
Whose sons perhaps with friendly hand
The stranger's lowly tomb may raise,
A broken heart will end my days.

But Heaven's blessing on thee rest!
And may no troubles vex thy breast!

Perhaps, when pensive and alone,
You'll think of me when I am gone,
And gentle tears of pity shed,
When I am in my narrow bed.
But softly will thy sorrows flow
And greater mayest thou never know!
Free from all worldly care and strife,
Long mayest thou live a happy life!
And every earthly blessing find,
Thou loveliest of woman kind:
Yea, blest thy secret wishes be,
Though cruel thou hast proved to me!

And dost thou then thine arm extend?
And may I take thy lovely hand?
And do thine eyes thus gently look,
As though some kindly wish they spoke?
My gentle Phillis, though severe,
I do not grudge the ills I bear;
But still my greatest grief will be
To think my love has troubled thee.
Oh do not scorn this swelling grief!
The laden bosom seeks relief;
Nor yet this infant weakness blame,
For thou hast made me what I am.
Hark now! the sailors call away,
No longer may I lingering stay.
May peace within thy mansion dwell!
O gentle Phillis, fare thee well!

A CHEERFUL-TEMPERED LOVER'S FAREWELL TO HIS MISTRESS.

THE light winds on the streamers play
That soon shall bear me far away;
My comrades give the parting cheer,
And I alone have lingered here.
Now dearest Phill, since it will be,
And I must bid farewell to thee
Since every cherished hope is flown,
Send me not from thee with a frown,
But kindly let me take thy hand,
And bid God bless me in a foreign land.
No more I'll loiter by thy side,
Well pleased thy gamesome taunts to bide;
Nor lover's gambols lightly try
To make me graceful in thine eye;
Nor sing a merry roundelay
To cheer thee at the close of day.
Yet ne'ertheless though we must part,

I'll have thee still within my heart;
Still to thy health my glass I'll fill,
And drink it with a right good-will.
Far hence upon a foreign shore,
There will I keep an open door,
And there my little fortune share
With all who ever breathed my native air.
And he who once thy face hath seen,
Or ever near thy dwelling been,
Shall freely push the flowing bowl
And be the master of the whole.
And every woman, for thy sake,
Shall of my slender store partake,
Shall in my home protection find,
Thou fairest of a fickle kind!
O dearly, dearly have I paid,
Thou little, haughty, cruel maid!
To give that inward peace to thee
Which thou hast ta'en away from me.
Soft hast thou slept with bosom light,
While I have watched the weary night;
And now I cross the surgy deep
That thou mayest still untroubled sleep.
But in thine eyes what do I see
That looks as though they pitied me?
I thank thee, Phillis; be not sad,
I leave no blame upon thy head.
To gain thy gentle heart I strove,
But ne'er was worthy of thy love.
And yet, perhaps, when I shall dwell
Far hence, thou'lt sometimes think how well
I dare not stay, since we must part,
To expose a fond and foolish heart;
Where'er it goes, it beats for you,
God bless ye, Phill, adieu! adieu!

**A PROUD LOVER'S FAREWELL
TO HIS MISTRESS.**

FAREWELL, thou haughty, cruel fair!
Upon thy brow no longer wear
That sombre look of cold disdain,
I ne'er shall see thy face again.
Now every foolish wish is o'er,
And fears and doubtings are no more.

All cruel as thou art to me,
Long has my heart been fixed on thee.
I've tracked thy footstep o'er the green,
And shared thy rambles oft unseen;

I've lingered near thee night and day
When thou hast thought me far away;
I've watched the changes of thy face,
And fondly marked thy moving grace;
I've wept with joy thy smiles to see;
I've been a fool for love of thee.
Yet do not think I stay the while
Thy feeble pity to beguile:
Let favour forced still fruitless prove!
The pity cursed that brings not love!

No woman e'er shall give me pain
Or ever break my rest again:
Nor aught that comes of womankind
Again have power to move my mind.
Far on a foreign shore I'll seek
Some lonely Island bare and bleak;
There find some wild and rugged cell,
And with the untamed creatures dwell.
To hear their cries is now my choice,
Rather than man's deceitful voice;
To hear the tempest's boisterous song
Than woman's softly witching tongue:
They wear no guise, nor promise good,
But roughsome seem as they are rude.

O Phillis! thou hast wrecked a heart
That proudly bears, but feels the smart.
Adieu, adieu! shouldst thou e'er prove
The pangs of ill requited love,
Thou'lt know what I have borne for thee,
And then thou wilt remember me.

A POETICAL OR SOUND-HEARTED LOVER'S FAREWELL TO HIS MISTRESS.

FAIR Nymph, who dost my fate controul
And reignest Mistress of my soul,
Where thou all bright in beauty's ray
Hast held a long tyrannic sway!
They who the hardest rule maintain,
In their commands do still refrain
From what impossible must prove,
Yet thou hast bade me cease to love.
Ah! when the magnet's power is o'er,
The needle then will point no more,
And when no verdure clothes the spring,
The tuneful birds forget to sing;
But thou, all sweet and heavenly fair,
Wouldst have thy swain from love forbear.

Fugitive Verses

In pity let thine own dear hand
A death's-wound to this bosom send:
This tender heart of purest faith
May then resign thee with its breath;
And in the sun-beam of thine eye
A proud and willing victim die.

But since thou wilt not have it so,
Far from thy presence will I go;
Far from my heart's dear bliss I'll stray,
Since I no longer can obey.
In foreign climes I'll henceforth roam
No more to hail my native home:
To foreign swains I'll pour my woe,
In foreign plains my tears shall flow;
By murmuring stream and shady grove
Shall other echoes tell my love;
And richer flowers of vivid hue
Upon my grave shall other maidens strew.

Adieu, dear Phillis! shouldst thou e'er
Some soft and plaintive story hear
Of hapless youth, who vainly strove
With wayward fate, and died for love,
O think of me! nor then deny
The gentle tribute of a sigh.

A REVERIE.

BESIDE a spreading elm, from whose high boughs
Like knotted tufts the crow's light dwelling shows,
Skreened from the northern blast and winter-proof,
Snug stands the parson's barn with thatched roof.
At chaff-strewed door where in the morning ray
The gilded mots in mazy circles play,
And sleepy Comrade in the sun is laid,
More grateful to the cur than neighb'ring shade:
In snowy shirt, unbraced, brown Robin stood,
And leant upon his flail in thoughtful mood.
His ruddy cheeks that wear their deepest hue,
His forehead brown that glist'ning drops bedew,
His neck-band loose and hosen rumpled low,
A careful lad, nor slack at labour, shew.
Nor scraping chickens chirping in the straw,
Nor croaking rook o'er-head, nor chattering daw,
Loud-breathing cow among the juicy weeds,
Nor grunting sow that in the furrow feeds,
Nor sudden breeze that stirs the quaking leaves
And makes disturbance 'mong the scattered sheaves,
Nor floating straw that skims athwart his nose

A REVERIE.

Fugitive Verses

The deeply musing youth may discompose.
For Nelly fair, and blythest village maid,
Whose tuneful voice beneath the hedge-row shade,
At early milking o'er the meadow borne,
E'er cheered the ploughman's toil at rising morn;
The neatest maid that e'er in linen gown
Bore cream and butter to the market town;
The tightest lass that e'er at wake or fair
Footed the ale-house floor with lightsome air,
Since Easter last had Robin's heart possest,
And many a time disturbed his nightly rest.
Full oft returning from the loosened plough,
He slacked his pace, and knit his careful brow;
And oft, ere half his thresher's task was o'er,
Would muse with arms across at cooling door.
His mind thus bent, with downcast eyes he stood,
And leant upon his flail in thoughtful mood.
His soul o'er many a soft remembrance ran
And muttering to himself the youth began.

"Ah! happy is the man whose early lot
Hath made him master of a furnished cot;
Who trains the vine that round his window grows,
And after setting sun his garden hoes;
Whose wattled pales his own enclosure shield,
Who toils not daily in another's field.
Where'er he goes, to church or market town,
With more respect he and his dog are known,
With brisker face at pedlar's booth he stands,
And takes each tempting gew-gaw in his hands,
And buys at will or ribands, gloves, or beads,
And willing partners to the green he leads:
And oh! secure from toils that cumber life,
He makes the maid he loves an easy wife.
Ah! Nelly! canst thou with contented mind
Become the help-mate of a labouring hind,
And share his lot, whate'er the chances be,
Who hath no dower but love to fix on thee?
Yes; gayest maid may meekest matron prove,
And things of little note betoken love.
When from the Church thou cam'st at eventide,
And I and red-haired Susan by thy side,
I pulled the blossoms from the bending tree,
And some to Susan gave and some to thee;
Thine were the fairest, and thy smiling eye
The difference marked, and guessed the reason why.
When on that holiday we rambling strayed,
And passed Old Hodge's cottage in the glade;
Neat was the garden dressed, sweet humm'd the bee,
I wished the Cot and Nelly made for me;
And well, methought, thy very eyes revealed,

A REVERIE.

Fugitive Verses

The self-same wish within thy breast concealed.
When, artful, once I sought my love to tell,
And spoke to thee of one who loved thee well,
You saw the cheat, and jeering homeward hied,
Yet secret pleasure in thy looks I spied.
Ay, gayest maid may meekest matron prove,
And smaller signs than these betoken love."

Now at a distance on the neighb'ring plain,
With creaking wheels slow comes the harvest wain,
High on its shaking load a maid appears,
And Nelly's voice sounds shrill in Robin's ears.
Quick from his hand he throws the cumbrous flail,
And leaps with lightsome limbs the enclosing pale.
O'er field and fence he scours, and furrow wide,
With wakened Comrade barking by his side;
While tracks of trodden grain and tangled hay,
And broken hedge-flowers sweet, mark his impetuous way.

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

ON village green whose smooth and well-worn sod,
Cross pathed, with many a gossip's foot is trod;
By cottage door where playful children run,
And cats and curs sit basking in the sun;
Where o'er an earthen seat the thorn is bent,
Cross-armed and back to wall poor William leant.
His bonnet all awry, his gathered brow,
His hanging lip and lengthened visage shew
A mind but ill at ease. With motions strange
His listless limbs their wayward postures change;
While many a crooked line and curious maze
With clouted shoon he on the sand pourtrays.
At length the half-chew'd straw fell from his mouth,
And to himself low spoke the moody youth.

"How simple is the lad, and reft of skill,
Who thinks with love to fix a woman's will!
Who every Sunday morn to please her sight,
Knots up his neck-cloth gay and hosen white;
Who for her pleasure keeps his pockets bare,
And half his wages spends on pedlar's ware;
When every niggard clown or dotard old,
Who hides in secret nooks his oft-told gold,
Whose field or orchard tempts, with all her pride,
At little cost may win her for his bride!
While all the meed her silly lover gains,
Is but the neighbours' jeering for his pains.
On Sunday last, when Susan's banns were read,
And I astonished sat with hanging head,

Fugitive Verses

Cold grew my shrinking frame, and loose my knee,
While every neighbour's eye was fixed on me.
Ah Sue! when last we worked at Hodge's hay,
And still at me you mocked in wanton play
When last at fair, well pleased by chapman's stand,
You took the new-bought fairing from my hand
When at old Hobb's you sung that song so gay,
'Sweet William,' still the burthen of the lay,
I little thought, alas! the lots were cast,
That thou shouldst be another's bride at last:
And had, when last we tripped it on the green,
And laughed at stiff-back'd Rob, small thoughts I ween,
Ere yet another scanty month was flown
To see thee wedded to the hateful clown;
Ay, lucky churl! more gold thy pockets line;
But did these shapely limbs resemble thine,
I'd stay at home and tend the household gear,
Nor on the green with other lads appear.
Ay, lucky churl! no store thy cottage lacks,
And round thy barn thick stand the sheltered stacks,
But did such features coarse my visage grace,
I'd never budge the bonnet from my face.
Yet let it be; it shall not break my ease!
He best deserves who doth the maiden please.
Such silly cause no more shall give me pain,
Nor ever maiden cross my rest again.
Such grizzled suitors with their taste agree,
And the black fiend may have them all for me!

Now through the village rise confused sounds,
Hoarse lads, and children shrill, and yelping hounds.
Straight every housewife at her door is seen,
And pausing hedgers on their mattocks lean.
At every narrow lane and alley's mouth,
Loud-laughing lasses stand and joking youth.
A bridal band tricked out in colours gay,
With minstrels blythe before to cheer the way,
From clouds of curling dust that onward fly,
In rural splendour breaks upon the eye.
As in their way they hold so gayly on,
Caps, beads, and buttons, glancing to the sun,
Each village wag with eye of roguish cast,
Some maiden jogs and vents the ready jest;
While village toast the passing belles deride,
And sober matrons marvel at their pride.
But William, head erect with settled brow,
In sullen silence viewed the passing show;
And oft he scratched his pate with careless grace,
And scorned to pull the bonnet o'er his face;
But did with steady look unaltered wait,
Till hindmost man had passed the Churchyard gate,

A DISAPPOINTMENT.

Then turned him to his cot with visage flat,
Where honest Lightfoot on the threshold sat.
Up leaped the kindly beast his hand to lick,
And for his pains received an angry kick.
Loud shuts the door with harsh and thundering din;
The echoes round their circling course begin.
From cot to cot, church tower, and rocky dell,
It grows amain with wide progressive swell,
And Lightfoot joins the coil with loud and piteous yell.

A LAMENTATION.

WHERE ancient broken wall encloses round,
From tread of lawless feet, the hallowed ground,
And sombre yews their dewy branches wave,
O'er many a graven stone and mounded grave;
Where Parish Church, confusedly to the sight,
With deeper darkness prints the shades of night,
In garb deranged and loose, with scattered hair,
His bosom open to the nightly air,
Lone, o'er a new-heaped grave poor Basil bent,
And to himself began his simple plaint.
"Alas, how cold thy home, how low thou art,
Who wert the pride and mistress of my heart!
The fallen leaves now rustling o'er thee pass,
And o'er thee waves the dank and dewy grass,
The new-laid sods and twisted osier tell,
How narrow is the space where thou must dwell.
Now rough and wintry winds may on thee beat,
Chill rain, and drifting snow, and summer's heat;
Each passing season's rub, for woe is me!
Or gloom or sunshine is the same to thee.
Ah Mary! lovely was thy slender form,
And bright thy cheerful brow that knew no storm.
Thy steps were graceful on the village green,
As though thou hadst some courtly lady been.
At Church or market still the gayest lass,
Each youngster slacked his speed to see thee pass.
At early milking tuneful was thy lay,
And sweet thy homeward song at close of day;
But sweeter far, and every youth's desire,
Thy cheerful converse by the evening fire.
Alas! no more thou'lt foot the village sward,
No song of thine shall ever more be heard,
And they full soon will trip it on the green,
As blythe and gay as thou hadst never been.
Around the evening fire with little care,
Will neighbours sit and scarcely miss thee there;
And when the sober parting hour comes round,
Will to their rest retire, and slumber sound.

But Basil cannot rest; his days are sad,
 And long his nights upon the weary bed.
 Yet still in broken dreams thy form appears,
 And still my bosom proves a lover's fears.
 I guide thy footsteps through the tangled wood;
 I catch thee sinking in the boisterous flood;
 I shield thy bosom from the threatened stroke;
 I clasp thee falling from the headlong rock;
 But ere we reach the dark and dreadful deep,
 High heaves my troubled breast, I wake and weep.
 At every wailing of the midnight wind,
 Thy lowly dwelling comes into my mind.
 When rain beats on my roof, wild storms abroad,
 I think upon thy bare and beaten sod;
 I hate the comfort of a sheltered home,
 And hie me forth, o'er pathless fields to roam.

"O Mary! loss of thee hath fixed my doom,
 This world around me is a weary gloom,
 Dull heavy musings lead my mind astray,
 I cannot sleep by night, nor work by day.
 Or wealth or pleasure duldest hinds inspire,
 But cheerless is their toil who nought desire;
 Let happier friends divide my farmer's stock,
 Cut down my grain, and shear my little flock;
 For now my only care on earth will be
 Here every Sunday morn to visit thee,
 And in the holy Church with heart sincere
 And humble mind our worthy Curate hear;
 He best can tell, when earthly woes are past,
 The surest way to meet with thee at last.
 I'll thus a while a weary life abide,
 Till wasting time hath laid me by thy side;
 For now on earth there is no place for me,
 Nor peace nor slumber till I rest with thee."

Loud from the lofty spire, with piercing knell,
 Solemn and awful, toll'd the parish bell,
 A later hour than rustics deem it meet
 That Churchyard ground be trod by mortal feet.
 The wailing lover started at the sound,
 And raised his head and cast his eyes around.
 The gloomy pile in strengthened horror lowered,
 Large and majestic every object towered;
 Dun through the gloom, they shewed like forms unknown,
 And tall and ghastly, rose each whitened stone;
 Aloft the dismal screech—owl 'gan to sing,
 And past him skimm'd the bat with flapping wing.
 The fears of nature woke within his breast,
 He left the hallowed spot of Mary's rest,
 And sped his way the Churchyard wall to gain,
 Then check'd his fear and stopp'd and would remain.

But shadows round a deeper horror wear;
A deeper silence falls upon his ear;
An awful stillness broods upon the scene,
His fluttering heart recoils, he turns again.
With hasty steps he measures back the ground,
And leaps with summoned force the Churchyard bound;
Then home, with shaking limbs and quickened breath,
His footsteps urges from the place of death.

A MOTHER TO HER WAKING INFANT.

NOW in thy dazzled half-op'd eye,
Thy curled nose and lip awry,
Up-hoisted arms and noddling head,
And little chin with crystal spread,
Poor helpless thing! what do I see,
That I should sing of thee?

From thy poor tongue no accents come,
Which can but rub thy toothless gum:
Small understanding boasts thy face,
Thy shapeless limbs nor step nor grace:
A few short words thy feats may tell,
And yet I love thee well.

When wakes the sudden bitter shriek,
And redder swells thy little cheek;
When rattled keys thy woes beguile,
And through thine eye-lids gleams the smile,
Still for thy weakly self is spent
Thy little silly plaint.

But when thy friends are in distress,
Thou'lt laugh and chuckle ne'ertheless,
Nor with kind sympathy be smitten,
Though all are sad but thee and kitten;
Yet, puny varlet that thou art,
Thou twitchest at the heart.

Thy smooth round cheek so soft and warm;
Thy pinky hand and dimpled arm;
Thy silken locks that scanty peep,
With gold-tipp'd ends, where circles deep,
Around thy neck in harmless grace,
So soft and sleekly hold their place,
Might harder hearts with kindness fill,
And gain our right goodwill.

Each passing clown bestows his blessing,
Thy mouth is worn with old wives' kissing;

E'en lighter looks the gloomy eye
Of surly sense when thou art by;
And yet, I think, whoe'er they be,
They love thee not like me.

Perhaps when time shall add a few
Short months to thee thou'lt love me too;
And after that, through life's long way,
Become my sure and cheering stay;
Will care for me and be my hold,
When I am weak and old.

Thou'lt listen to my lengthened tale,
And pity me when I am frail
But see, the sweepy spinning fly,
Upon the window takes thine eye.
Go to thy little senseless play;
Thou dost not heed my lay.

A CHILD TO HIS SICK GRANDFATHER.

GRAND-DAD, they say you're old and frail,
Your stiffened legs begin to fail:
Your staff, no more my pony now,
Supports your body bending low,
While back to wall you lean so sad,
I'm vex'd to see you, Dad.

You used to smile and stroke my head,
And tell me how good children did;
But now, I wot not how it be,
You take me seldom on your knee,
Yet ne'ertheless I am right glad,
To sit beside you, Dad.

How lank and thin your beard hangs down!
Scant are the white hairs on your crown:
How wan and hollow are your cheeks,
Your brow is crossed with many streaks;
But yet although his strength be fled,
I love my own old Dad.

The housewives round their potions brew,
And gossips come to ask for you;
And for your weal each neighbour cares;
And good men kneel and say their prayers,
And every body looks so sad,
When you are ailing, Dad.

You will not die and leave us then?

Fugitive Verses

Rouse up and be our Dad again.
When you are quiet and laid in bed,
We'll doff our shoes and softly tread;
And when you wake we'll still be near,
To fill old Dad his cheer.

When through the house you change your stand,
I'll lead you kindly by the hand:
When dinner's set I'll with you bide,
And aye be serving by your side;
And when the weary fire burns blue,
I'll sit and talk with you.

I have a tale both long and good,
About a partlet and her brood,
And greedy cunning fox that stole
By dead of midnight through a hole,
Which slyly to the hen-roost led,
You love a story, Dad?

And then I have a wondrous tale
Of men all clad in coats of mail,
With glittering swords, you nod, I think
Your heavy eyes begin to wink;
Down on your bosom sinks your head:
You do not hear me, Dad.

THUNDER.

SPIRIT of strength! to whom in wrath 'tis given,
To mar the earth and shake its vasty dome,
Behold the sombre robes whose gathering folds,
Thy secret majesty conceal. Their skirts
Spread on mid air move slow and silently,
O'er noon-day's beam thy sultry shroud is cast,
Advancing clouds from every point of heaven,
Like hosts of gathering foes in pitchy volumes,
Grandly dilated, clothe the fields of air,
And brood aloft o'er the empurpled earth.
Spirit of strength! it is thy awful hour;
The wind of every hill is laid to rest,
And far o'er sea and land deep silence reigns.

Wild creatures of the forest homeward hie,
And in their dens with fear unwonted cower;
Pride in the lordly palace is put down,
While in his humble cot the poor man sits
With all his family round him hushed and still,
In awful expectation. On his way
The traveller stands aghast and looks to heaven.

THUNDER.

Fugitive Verses

On the horizon's verge thy lightning gleams,
And the first utterance of thy deep voice
Is heard in reverence and holy fear.

From nearer clouds bright burst more vivid gleams,
As instantly in closing darkness lost;
Pale sheeted flashes cross the wide expanse
While over boggy moor or swampy plain,
A streaming cataract of flame appears,
To meet a nether fire from earth cast up,
Commingling terribly; appalling gloom
Succeeds, and lo! the rifted centre pours
A general blaze, and from the war of clouds,
Red, writhing falls the embodied bolt of heaven.
Then swells the roiling peal, full, deep'ning, grand,
And in its strength lifts the tremendous roar,
With mingled discord, rattling, hissing, growling;
Crashing like rocky fragments downward hurled,
Like the upbreking of a ruined world,
In awful majesty the explosion bursts
Wide and astounding o'er the trembling land.
Mountain, and cliff, repeat the dread turmoil,
And all to man's distinctive senses known,
Is lost in the immensity of sound.
Peal after peal, succeeds with waning strength,
And hushed and deep each solemn pause between.

Upon the lofty mountain's side
The kindled forest blazes wide;
Huge fragments of the rugged steep
Are tumbled to the lashing deep;
Firm rooted in his cloven rock,
Crashing falls the stubborn oak.
The lightning keen in wasteful ire
Darts fiercely on the pointed spire,
Rending in twain the iron-knit stone,
And stately towers to earth are thrown.
No human strength may brave the storm,
Nor shelter skreen the shrinking form,
Nor castle wall its fury stay,
Nor massy gate impede its way:
It visits those of low estate,
It shakes the dwellings of the great,
It looks athwart the vaulted tomb,
And glares upon the prison's gloom.
Then dungeons black in unknown light,
Flash hideous on the wretches' sight,
And strangely groans the downward cell,
Where silence deep is wont to dwell.

THUNDER.

Now eyes, to heaven up—cast, adore,
Knees bend that never bent before,
The stoutest hearts begin to fail,
And many a manly face is pale;
Benumbing fear awhile up—binds,
The palsied action of their minds,
Till waked to dreadful sense they lift their eyes,
And round the stricken corse shrill shrieks of horror rise.

Now rattling hailstones, bounding as they fall
To earth, spread motley winter o'er the plain,
Receding peals sound fainter on the ear,
And roll their distant grumbling far away:
The lightning doth in paler flashes gleam,
And through the rent cloud, silvered with his rays,
The sun on all this wild affray looks down,
As, high enthroned above all mortal ken,
A higher Power beholds the strife of men.

THE HORSE AND HIS RIDER.

BRACED in the sinewy vigour of thy breed,
In pride of generous strength, thou stately steed!
Thy broad chest to the battle's front is given,
Thy mane fair floating to the winds of heaven;
Thy stamping hoofs the flinty pebbles break;
Graceful the rising of thine arched neck;
Thy bridle—bits white flakes of foam enlock;
From thy moved nostrils bursts the curling smoke
Thy kindling eye—balls brave the glaring south,
And dreadful is the thunder of thy mouth:
Whilst low to earth thy curving haunches bend,
Thy sweepy tail involved in clouds of sand,
Erect in air thou rearest thy front of pride,
And ring'st the plated harness on thy side.

But lo! what creature, goodly to the sight,
Dares thus bestride thee, chafing in thy might;
Of portly stature, and determined mien,
Whose dark eye dwells beneath a brow serene,
And forward looks unmoved to scenes of death,
And smiling, gently strokes thee in thy wrath;
Whose right hand doth its flashing falchion wield?
A British soldier girded for the field.

FRAGMENT OF A POEM.

GLOOMY and still was the broad solemn deep,
Whose rolling tides for twice a hundred years,
Had lashed the rugged walls of Tora's Towers,

Fugitive Verses

The strong abode of Curdmore's haughty kings.
Its frowning battlements o'erhung the sea,
Where in the fair serene of summer days,
Each answering Tower a nether heaven did meet,
And cast its pictured shadow on the waves.
But now, no mild blue sky in gentle grandeur,
Did lend its azure covering to the main,
Softening the most majestic work of nature,
Nor even a sunbeam through the rifted cloud,
Glanced on the distant wave.

Dull heavy clouds hung in the lower air,
Misty and shapeless, like the humid chaos,
Ere God divided it and called it water.
The creatures of the deep forgot their prey,
Leaving the upper waves to seek the bottom;
The flocking sea-fowl homeward bent their flight,
In dusky bands to caverned rock or cliff.
A deadly calm reigned in the stately woods,
That hung aloft upon the hardy shore;
The mingled music of the forest ceased
Before the day had run its wonted term,
Yet birds of night forgot their twilight song,
And every creature, whether fierce or tame,
Skulked in its hole, seized with unwonted fear.

Nor was that creature styled the lord of earth
Without his fear: that secret worst of fears,
The mind unknowing what it has to dread.
Fenced in the seeming safety of his home,
Man's sometime-haughty spirit sank within him,
And dark uncertainty of ill unseen
Increased the sombre gloom of Tora's Halls.
The sullen watch did lean upon their arms,
With quickened breath half-check'd and listening ear,
In expectation of some unknown thing.
Each smothered in his breast his untold fears,
And wished within himself the hours might speed,
But that the night with tenfold horror came,
To close the frightful day.
No cheerful converse graced the evening board,
Slow went the goblet round, each face was grave;
And ere the first dark watch fulfilled its term,
All were retired to rest in Tora's Halls.

Sleep came, and closed full many a weary eye,
But not that gentle kindly visitor,
That oft-times bringeth to the poor man's cot,
More wealth than e'er enjoyed his haughty lord;
Or to the couch of the dejected lover
Brings true love-knots, and kind remembrances,

THE HORSE AND HIS RIDER.

Fugitive Verses

And cheering glances, making him by night
The favoured man he fain would be by day;
Nor yet that haggard tyrant of the night,
Who comes oft-times to shake the ill man's bed,
Tearing him from his heaps of silk and down,
To hang his quivering carcass o'er the gulf,
Or through the air by foul fiends goaded on,
Bears him with dizzy, furious speed along;
But she, stiff shrouded in her blackest weed,
And swathed with leaden bands, awful and still,
Who by the couch of the condemned wretch,
Harassed and spent, before the morning breaks,
Whose setting sun he never shall behold,
Oft takes her stand, and scarce is known from death.

But still the red lamp, pendent from the roof,
Did cast its trembling and unjoyous light
Athwart the lofty chamber of the king;
For he alone felt not her weighty power.
A load of cares lay heavy at his heart;
His thoughtful eyes were bent upon the ground;
And the unsuited gravity of age,
Had sadly sobered o'er his cheek of youth,
That newly blushed beneath a galling crown.

Long had his warlike father ruled the land,
Whose vengeful bloody sword no scabbard knew.
Wild was his fury in the field of battle,
And dreadful was his wrath to nations round,
But kind and glowing yearned his manly heart,
To the brave hardy sons of his blue hills.
He owned a friend and brother of the field,
In each broad-chested brawny warrior,
Who followed to the fight his daring steps.
One deed of fame, done by a son of Curdmore,
He prized more than the wealth of peaceful realms,
And dealt them death and ruin in his love.
Unshaped and rude the state, and knew no law,
Save that plain sense which nature gives to all,
Of right and wrong within the monarch's breast;
And when no storm of passion shook his soul,
It was a court of mildest equity.

One distant nation only in the field,
Could meet his boasted arms with equal strength.
Impetuous, rushing from their mountains rude,
Oft had they striven like two adverse winds,
That bursting from their pent and narrow glens,
On the wide desert meet, in wild contention
Tossing aloft in air dun clouds of sand,
Tearing the blasted herbage from its bed,

Fugitive Verses

And bloating the clear face of beauteous heaven
With the dissevered fragments of the earth,
Till spent their force, low growling they retire,
And for a time within their caverns keep,
Gathering new force with which they issue forth
To rage and roar again. So held they strife.
But even while Corvan gloried in his might,
Death came and laid him low.

His spear was hung high in the sombre hall,
Whose lofty walls with darkening armour clad,
Spoke to the valiant of departed heroes,
A fellow now to those which rest ungrasped,
Unburnished, and know no master's hand.
A hardy people, scattered o'er the hills,
And wild uncultivated plains of Curdmore,
Depending more upon to-morrow's chace,
Than on the scanty produce of their fields,
Where the proud warrior, as debased by toil,
Throws down unwillingly his boasted weapons,
To mar the mossy earth with his rude tillage,
Bedding his dwarfish grain in tracks less deep,
Than he would plough the bosom of a foe;
A people rude but generous now looked up,
With wistful and expecting eyes, to Allener,
The son of their beloved, their only hope.
The general burthen, though but new to care,
Was laid on him. His heart within him whispered
That he was left in rough and perilous times,
Like elder brother of a needy race,
To watch and care for all, and it was thoughtful;
Sombre and thoughtful as unjoyous age.
But never had he felt his mind so dark,
As in this heavy and mysterious hour.

With drooping head and arms crossed o'er his breast,
His spirit all collected in itself,
As it had ceased to animate the body,
He sat, when like pent air from a dank cave,
He felt a cold and shivering wind pass o'er him,
And from his sinking bosom raised his head.
A thick and mazy mist had filled the chamber,
Thro' which the feeble lamp its blue flame showed
With a pale moony cirlet compassed round,
As when the stars through dank unwholesome air
Show thro' the night their blunted heads, enlarged,
Foretelling plagues to some affrighted land.
When, lo! a strange light, breaking thro' the gloom,
Struck his astonished mind with awe and wonder.
It rose before him in a streamy column,
As, seen upon the dim benighted ocean,

Fugitive Verses

By partial moon—beams through some severed cloud,
The towering, wan, majestic waterspout
Delights and awes the wondering mariner.

Soul—awed within himself shrunk Curdmore's king;
Thick beat his fluttering heart against his breast,
As towards him the moving light approached,
While opening by degrees its beamy sides,
A mighty phantom showed his awful form,
Gigantic, far above the sons of men.
A robe of watery blue in wreathy folds,
Did lightly float o'er his majestic limbs:
Firm in their strength more than was ever pictured,
Of fabled heroes in their fields of war.
One hand was wide outstretchd in threatened act,
As if to draw down vengeance from the skies,
The other, spread upon his ample breast,
Seemed to betoken what restrained its fellow.
Thus far to mortal eye he stood revealed,
But misty vapour shrouded all above,
Save that a ruddy glow did oft break through
With hasty flash, according with the vehemence
And agitation of the form beneath,
Speaking the terrors of that countenance,
The friendly darkness veiled.
Commutations strange disturbed the heaving earth.
A hollow muffled rumbling from beneath,
Rolled deeply in its dark and secret course.
The castle trembled on its rocky base;
And loosened fragments from the nodding towers,
Fell on the flinty ground with hideous crash.

The bursting gates against the portal rung,
And windows clattered in their trembling walls;
And as the phantom trode, far echoing loud,
The smitten pavement gave a fearful sound.
He stopped, the trembling walls their motion ceased,
The earth was still; he raised his awful voice.

"Thou creature, set o'er creatures like thyself,
To bear the rule for an appointed season,
Bethink thee well, and commune with thy heart.
If one man's blood can mark the unblest front,
And visit with extreme of inward pangs
The dark breast of the secret murderer,
Canst thou have strength all singly in thyself,
To bear the blood of thousands on thy head,
And wrongs which cry to heaven and shall be heard?
Kings to the slaughter lead their people forth,
And home return again with thinned bands,
Bearing to every house its share of mourning,

THE HORSE AND HIS RIDER.

Fugitive Verses

Whilst high in air they hang their trophied spoils,
And call themselves the heroes of the earth.

"Thy race is stained with blood: such were thy fathers:
But they are passed away and have their place,
And thou still breathest in thy weeds of clay,
Therefore to thee their doom is veiled in night.
Yet mayst thou be assured, that mighty Power
Who gave to thee thy form of breathing flesh,
Of such like creatures as thyself endowed,
Although innumerable on this earth,
Doth knowledge take, and careth for the least,
And will prepare his vengeance for the man
Whose wasteful pride uproots what he hath sown.
And now he sets two paths before thy choice,
Which are permitted thee: even thou thyself
Mayst fix thy doom, a doom which cannot change.
Wilt thou draw out securely on thy throne
A life of such content and happiness
As thy wild country and rude people yield,
Laying thee late to rest in peaceful age,
Where thy forefathers sleep; thy name respected,
Thy children after thee to fill thy seat?
Or wilt thou, as thy secret thoughts incline,
Across the untried deep conduct thy bands,
Attack the foe on their unguarded coast,
O'ercome their strength at little cost of blood,
And raise thy trophies on a distant shore,
Where none of all thy race have footing gained,
Gaining for Curdmore wealth, and power, and fame,
But not that better gain, content and happiness?
Wealth, power, renown, thou mayest for Curdmore earn,
But mayest not live to see her rising state:
For far from hence, upon that hostile shore,
A sepulchre which owns no kindred bone,
Gapes to receive thee in the pride of youth.
This is the will of Heaven: then choose thy fate,
Weak son of earth, I leave thee to thy troubles;
A little while shall make us more alike,
A spirit shalt thou be when next we meet.

It vanished. Black mist thickened where it stood.
A hollow sounding wind rushed thro' the chamber,
And rent in twain the deep embodied darkness
Which, curling round in many a pitchy volume,
On either side, did slowly roll away,
Like two huge waves of death.

And now the waving banners of the castle,
In early breath of morn began to play,
And faintly through the lofty windows looked

Fugitive Verses

The doubtful grey–light on the silent chambers
Sleep's deadly heaviness fled with the night,
And lighter airy fancies of the dawn
Confusedly floated in the half–waked mind,
Till roused with fuller beams of powerful light,
Up sprung the dreamers from their easy beds,
And saw with a relieved and thankful heart,
The fair blue sky, the uncapped distant hills,
The woods, and streams, and valleys brightening gladly,
In the blest light of heaven.

But neither hill, nor vale, nor wood, nor stream,
Nor yet the sun high riding in his strength,
That beauty gave to all, cheered Allener,
Who wist not when it rose, nor when it set.
Silent but troubled in his lofty chamber
Two days he sat and shunned the searching eyes,
The sidelong looks of many a friendly chief.
Oft in his downcast eye the round tear hung,
Whilst by his side he clenched his trembling hand,
As if to rouse the ardour of his soul.
His seat beneath him shook, high heaved his breast,
And burst the bracings of its tightened vestment.
The changing passions of his troubled soul
Passed with dark speed across his varied face;
Each passing shadow followed by a brother,
Like clouds across the moon in a wild storm:
So warred his doubtful mind, till by degrees
The storm subsided, calmer thoughts prevailed;
Slow wore the gloom away like morning mist;
A gleam of joy spread o'er his lightened visage,
And from his eye–balls shot that vivid fire,
Which kindles in the bosoms of the brave,
When the loud trumpet calls them forth to battle.
"Gird on mine armour," said the rising youth,
"I am the son of Corvan!"

MISCELLANEOUS POETRY WRITTEN SINCE THE YEAR 1790.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF SIR WALTER SCOTT.

THOU pleasant noble Bard of fame far spread,
Now art thou gathered to the mighty dead,
And the dark coffin and the girdling mould
All that of thee is perishable, hold.

Fugitive Verses

Mourners and mutes and weeping friends are gone;
The pageant closed, and thou art left alone,
The covered treasure of a sacred spot,
That in the course of time shall never be forgot.

Soon those who loved, admired and honoured thee,
In death's still garner-house will gathered be;
And great their number is, who have with pride
Looked in thy manly face, sat by thy side,
And heard thy social converse, words of cheer,
And words of power to charm the listening ear!
At death's despotic summons will they come,
Each in his turn from many a different home:
From town and muirland, cot and mansion warm,
The regal palace, and the homely farm.
Soldier and lawyer, merchant, priest and peer,
The squire, the laird of forty pounds a-year,
The crowned monarch and the simple hind,
Did all in thee a meet companion find.

For thee the peasant's wife her elbow chair,
Smiling a welcome, kindly set, and there
With fair exchange of story, saw and jest,
Thou wert to her a free and pleasant guest;
While nature, undisguised, repaid thee well
For time so spent. She and her mate could tell
Unawed, to such a man, their inmost mind;
They claimed thee as their own, their kin their kind.
From nature's book thou couldst extract a store,
More precious than the scholar's classic lore.

And how felt he, whose early rhymes had been
To perilous inspection given, and seen
By one whose brows were graced from every land,
With chaplets twined by many a skilful hand?
How beat his heart, as with the morning ray,
To Abbotsford he took his anxious way,
Imagining what shortly he must see,
Him in whose presence he so soon will be?
And how felt he, thy study's threshold passed,
When on thy real face his eyes were cast?
Thine open brow with glow of fancy heated;
Thy purring cat upon the table seated;
Thy sleeping hound that hath his easy lair
Close on the precincts of his master's chair;
The honest welcome of that sudden smile,
And outstretched hand, misgiving thoughts beguile.
But when thy cheerful greeting met his ear,
"Fie on thee! foolish heart, a man like this to fear!"
Thou wert to him, when blushed the eastern sky,
A sage of awful mien and lofty eye;

Fugitive Verses

When noon-day heat called forth th' industrious bee,
Thou wert the monitor both kind and free;
But when the changeful day was at an end,
Thou wert his easy cheerful host, his friend.

When all whose eyes have e'er beheld thy face,
Departed are to their long resting-place,
Thou wilt exist in all thy magic then,
The cherished, speaking friend of living men.
In torrid climes, in regions cold and bleak,
In every land and language wilt thou speak.
Within the sick man's curtained couch thou'lt dwell;
Within the languid prisoner's cheerless cell;
Within the seaman's cabin, where the sound
Of many leagues of water murmurs round.
The buoyant school-boy will forego his play,
In secret nook alone with thee to stray;
The sober sage wise tomes will cast aside,
An hour with thee a pleasant hour to bide.

Men of all nations, of all creeds, all ranks,
Will owe to thee an endless meed of thanks,
Which more than in thy passing, checkered day
Of mortal life, they will delight to pay.
For who shall virtuous sympathies resign,
Or feed foul fancies from a page of thine?
No, none! thy writings as thy life are pure,
And their fair fame and influence will endure.

Not so with those where perverse skill pourtrays
Distorted, blighting passions; and displays,
Wild, maniac, selfish fiends to be admired,
As heroes with sublimest ardour fired.
Such are, to what thy faithful pen hath traced,
With all the shades of varied nature graded,
Like grim cartoons, for Flemish looms prepared,
To Titian's or Murillo's forms compared;
Stately or mean, theirs still are forms of truth,
Charming, unlearned, and learned age and youth:
Not extacies expressed in critic phrase,
But silent smiles of pleasure speak their praise.

When those, who now thy recent death deplore,
Lie in the dust, thought of and known no more,
As poet and romancer, thy great name
Will brightly shine with undiminished fame;
And future sons of fancy fondly strive
To their compatriots works like thine to give.
But of the many who on her wide sea
Shall boldly spread their sails to follow thee,
More as romancers on thy track will gain,

Fugitive Verses

Than those who emulate the poet's strain.
A tale like Waverley we yet may con,
But shall we read a lay like Marmion?
And fearlessly I say it, though I know
The voice of public favour says not so:
For story-telling is an art, I ween,
Which hath of old most fascinating been,
And will be ever, strong in ready power,
To combat languor and the present hour;
And o'er these common foes will oft prevail,
When Homer's theme and Milton's song would fail.
But strong in both, there is in sooth no need
Against thy left hand for thy right to plead:
Think as we list, one truth, alas! is plain,
We ne'er shall look upon thy like again.

Thy country, bounded by her subject sea,
Adds to her fame by giving birth to thee;
In distant lands yon fancied group behold,
Where busy traders meet in quest of gold;
Motley and keen, all gathered round a youth,
Who simply stands unconscious of the truth,
Look at him wistfully, and hark, they speak
The Turk and Jew, Armenian and Greek,
Their rapid lips the whispered words betraying
"He's from the land of Walter Scott," they're saying.
That Caledonian, too, with more good will
They greet as of thy closer kindred still:
But who is he, who, standing by their side,
Raises his head with quickly-kindled pride,
As if he meant to look the others down?
Ay; he is from thine own romantic town.

Thou art in time's long course a land-mark high,
A beacon blazing to the nether sky,
To which, as far and wide it shoots its rays,
Landsmen and mariners, with wistful gaze,
From ship, and shore, and mountain turn their sight,
And hail the glorious signal of the night.

Oh Dryburgh! often trode by pilgrim feet
Shall be thy hallowed sod; solemn and sweet,
Will be the gentle sorrow uttered there,
The whispered blessing and the quiet prayer.
Flower, herb, or leaf by children yet unborn
Will often from thy verdant turf be torn,
And kept in dear memorial of the place
Where thou art laid with a departed race;
Where every thing around, tower, turret, tree,
River, and glen, and mountain, wood and lea,
And ancient ruin, by the moonlight made

Fugitive Verses

More stately with alternate light and shade,
Thy once beloved Melrose, all speak of thee,
With mingled voices through the gale of morn,
Of evening, noon, and night, most sadly borne,
A dirge-like wailing, a mysterious moan,
That sadly seems to utter "He is gone!"

To God's forgiving mercy and his love
To fellowship with blessed souls above
Bright hosts redeemed by him whose voice of hope
Revealed th' immortal spirit's boundless scope
We leave thee, though within its narrow cell,
Thy honoured dust must for a season dwell
Our friend, our bard, our brother, fare thee well!

**Hampstead,
November, 1832.**

EPILOGUE TO
THE THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION AT STRAWBERRY HILL,
WRITTEN BY JOANNA BAILLIE AND SPOKEN BY THE
HON. ANNE S. DAMER, NOVEMBER, 1800.

WHILE fogs along the Thames' damp margin creep,
And cold winds through his leafless willows sweep;
And fairy elves, whose summer sport had been
To foot it lightly on the moonlight green,
Now, hooded close, in many a cowering form,
Troop with the surly spirits of the storm;
While by the blazing fire, with saddled nose,
The sage turns o'er his leaves of tedious prose,
And o'er their new-dealt cards, with eager eye,
Good dowagers exult or inly sigh,
And blooming maids from silken work-bags pour
(Like tangled sea-weed on the vexed shore)
Of patchwork, netting, fringe, a strange and motley store;

While all, attempting many a different mode,
Would from their shoulders hitch time's heavy load,
This is our choice, in comic sock bedight,
To wrestle with a long November night.
"In comic sock!" methinks indignant cries
Some grave fastidious friend with angry eyes
Scowling severe, "No more the phrase abuse;
So shod, indeed there had been some excuse;
But in these walls, a once well-known retreat,
Where taste and learning kept a favourite seat,
Where gothic arches with a solemn shade
Should o'er the thoughtful mind their influence spread;
Where pictures, vases, busts, and precious things
Still speak of sages, poets, heroes, kings,

Fugitive Verses

On which the stranger looks with pensive gaze,
And thinks upon the worth of other days:
Like foolish children, in their mimic play,
Confined at grandame's in a rainy day,
With paltry farce and all its bastard train,
Grotesque and broad, such precincts to profane!

It is a shame! But no, I will not speak,
I feel the blood rise mantling to my cheek."
Indeed wise sir!
But he who o'er our heads those arches bent,
And stored these relics dear to sentiment,
More mild than you with grave pedantic pride,
Would not have ranged him on your surly side.

But now to you, who on our frolic scene
Have looked well pleased, and gentle critics been;
Nor would our homely humour proudly spurn,
To you the good, the gay, the fair I turn,
And thank ye all. If here our feeble powers
Have lightly winged for you some wint'ry hours;
Should these remembered scenes in fancy live,
And to some future minutes pleasure give,
To right good end we've worn our mumming guise,
And we're repaid and happy ay, and wise.
Who says we are not, on his sombre birth
Gay fancy smiled not, nor heart-light'ning mirth:
Home let him hie to his unsocial rest,
And heavy sit the night-mare on his breast!

THE BANISHED MAN,

ON A DISTANT VIEW OF HIS COUNTRY, WHICH
HE IS QUITTING FOR EVER.

DEAR distant land, whose mountains blue
Still bound this wild and watery view,
Dear distant land, where fate has thrown
All that my heart delights to own!
Blest be yon gleam of partial light,
Which gives thee to my parting sight!

Those well-known cliffs, whose shadows throw
Soft coolness o'er the beech below,
Where I so oft, a happy child,
Picking or shell or weed, beguiled
Light reckless hours, that passed away,
Like night-sparks on the briny spray,
Dear pleasant shore, thy sandy bed,
These feet unblessed no more shall tread!

THE BANISHED MAN,

Fugitive Verses

Still thy rich vales with autumn's store,
And cheerful hamlets mottled o'er;
Thy up-land peaks whose stately forms
Are mantled oft in gathering storms;
Thy blue streams widening on their way,
Thy broad lakes gleaming to the day;
Thy smoking towns, whose towers of war
And dusky spires are seen afar,
Thy children's boastful pride will raise,
And fix the admiring stranger's gaze,
But now, for ever lost to me,
These eyes unblest no more shall see.

Thy wild pipe, touched with rustic hands,
Thy reapers' song from merry bands;
Thy boatman's call and dashing oar,
Thy falling torrent's deaf'ning roar;
Thy busy city's humming sound,
With all its sweet bells chiming round,
Far, on a strange and cheerless shore,
These ears unblest shall hear no more.

Happy is he, beyond all gain,
Who holds in thee his free domain,
And roves with careless feet at will
O'er his paternal mead and hill,
And stores the fruit his harvests yield
From his own orchard and his field!
Happy is he who leads at dawn
His harnessed steers across thy lawn!
Yea, happy he, bent down with toil,
Whose glistening brow bedews thy soil!

How gently heaves the evening sea,
As all things homeward tend to thee!
Borne lightly on the gentle gale,
Now homeward points each little sail!
Far, screaming from their airy height,
The sea-fowl homeward take their flight;
The floating plank and spreading weed,
Upon the setting current speed;
The light cloud passes on the wind,
While I alone am left behind.

Ah, woe is me! where shall I stray,
And whither bend my reckless way?
A waste of world before me lies,
But in the thought my spirit dies.
There is no home nor joy for me,
My native land, removed from thee.
For me the sun of heaven doth shine

Fugitive Verses

Upon no hills, no plains but thine;
For me the voice of kindness sounds
Only within thy cheerful bounds.

Rise, surgy deep, ye wild winds blow
And whelm my bark these waves below!
Then bear me to my native land:
A breathless corse upon her strand,
Some hand, in pity of the dead,
Will lay her greensward on my head,
And there for ever let me rest,
As sleeps the froward child, stilled on his mother's breast.

TO A CHILD.

WHOSE imp art thou, with dimpled cheek,
And curly pate, and merry eye,
And arm and shoulder round and sleek,
And soft and fair? thou urchin sly!

What boots it who with sweet caresses
First called thee his, or squire or hind?
Since thou in every wight that passes,
Dost now a friendly play-mate find.

Thy downcast glances, grave, but cunning,
As fringed eye-lids rise and fall;
Thy shyness, swiftly from me running,
Is infantine coquetry all.

But far a-field thou hast not flown;
With mocks and threats, half lisped, half spoken,
I feel thee pulling at my gown,
Of right good will thy simple token.

And thou must laugh and wrestle too,
A mimick warfare with me waging;
To make, as wily lovers do,
Thy after kindness more engaging.

The wilding rose, sweet as thyself,
And new-cropt daisies are thy treasure:
I'd gladly part with worldly pelf
To taste again thy youthful pleasure.

But yet, for all thy merry look,
Thy frisks and wiles, the time is coming
When thou shalt sit in cheerless nook,
The weary spell or horn-book thumbing.

Well; let it be! through weal and woe,
Thou knowest not now thy future range;
Life is a motley, shifting show,
And thou a thing of hope and change.

SONG.

(TO THE SCOTCH AIR OF "MY NANNY O.")

WI' lang-legged Tam the bruise I tried,
Though best o' foot, what wan he o?
The first kiss of the blouzing bride,
But I the heart of Nanny o.

Like swallow wheeling round her tower,
Like rock-bird round her cranny o,
Sinsyne I hover near her bower,
And list and look for Nanny o.

I'm nearly wild, I'm nearly daft,
Wad fain be douce, but canna' o;
There's ne'er a Laird of muir or craft,
Sa blithe as I wi' Nanny o.

She's sweet, she's young, she's fair, she's good,
The brightest maid of many o,
Though a' the world our love withstood,
I'd woo and win my Nanny o.

Her angry mither scalds sa loud,
And darkly glooms her granny o;
But think they he can e'er be cow'd,
Wha loves and lives for Nanny o?

The spae-wife on my loof that blink't
Is but a leeing ranny o,
For weel kens she my fate is link't
In spite of a' to Nanny o.

LONDON.

IT is a goodly sight through the clear air,
From Hampstead's heathy height, to see at once
England's vast capital in fair expanse,
Towers, belfries, lengthened streets and structures fair.
St. Paul's high dome amidst the vassal bands
Of neighb'ring spires, a regal chieftain stands,
And over fields of ridgy roofs appear,
With distance softly tinted, side by side,
In kindred grace, like twain of sisters dear,

SONG.

Fugitive Verses

The Towers of Westminster, her Abbey's pride;
While, far beyond, the hills of Surrey shine
Through thin soft haze, and shew their wavy line.
View'd thus, a goodly sight! but when survey'd
Through denser air when moisten'd winds prevail,
In her grand panoply of smoke arrayed,
While clouds aloft in heavy volumes sail,
She is sublime. She seems a curtained gloom
Connecting heaven and earth, a threat'ning sign of doom.
With more than natural height, reared in the sky
'Tis then St. Paul's arrests the wondering eye;
The lower parts in swathing mist concealed,
The higher through some half-spent shower revealed,
So far from earth removed, that well, I trow,
Did not its form man's artful structure shew,
It might some lofty alpine peak be deemed,
The eagle's haunt with cave and crevice seamed.
Stretched wide on either hand, a rugged skreen,
In lurid dimness, nearer streets are seen
Like shore-ward billows of a troubled main,
Arrested in their rage. Through drizzly rain,
Cataracts of tawny sheen pour from the skies,
Black furnace-smoke in curling columns rise,
And many-tinted vapours, slowly pass
O'er the wide draping of that pictured mass.

So shews by day this grand imperial town,
And, when o'er all the night's black stole is thrown,
The distant traveller doth with wonder mark
Her luminous canopy athwart the dark,
Cast up, from myriads of lamps that shine
Along her streets in many a starry line:
He wondering looks from his yet distant road,
And thinks the northern streamers are abroad.
"What hollow sound is that?" approaching near,
The roar of many wheels breaks on his ear.
It is the flood of human life in motion!
It is the voice of a tempestuous ocean!
With sad but pleasing awe his soul is filled,
Scarce heaves his breast, and all within is stilled,
As many thoughts and feelings cross his mind,
Thoughts, mingled, melancholy, undefined,
Of restless, reckless man, and years gone by,
And Time fast wending to Eternity.

LINES ON THE DEATH OF WILLIAM SOTHEBY, ESQ.

Fugitive Verses

LEARNING and fancy were combined
To stimulate his manly mind;
Open, generous and acute,
Steady of purpose, in pursuit
Ardent and hopeful; all the while
In child-like ignorance of guile.
There are who say that envy lurks concealed
Where genius strives, by slightest traits revealed,
A truth, if truth it be, by him forgot,
He turned his eyes away and saw it not.
Success in others, frank and free,
He hailed with words of friendly glee.
Praise given to them he could not feel
Did aught from his own portion steal;
And when offence, designed and rude,
Did on his peaceful path obtrude,
He soon forgave the paltry pain,
Nor could resentment in his breast retain.
His was the charity of right goodwill,
That loves, confides, believes and thinks no ill.
He, by his Saviour's noble precepts led,
Still followed what was right with heart and head.
Religion did with lofty honour dwell
Within his bosom's sacred cell.

But said I learning did in him agree
With fancy, union rare! how could it be?
His eighteenth year beheld him fondly cheering
His warlike steed and on its back careering.
A gay dragoon with spur on heel,
And brandished blade of flashing steel;
With wealth at will, the world before him,
To go where whim or fashion bore him.
No friendly tutor by his side,
His academic course to guide.

No classic honours to invite,
No emulation to excite.
But, in default of these, his soul
With native fire supplied the whole;
And neither Hall nor College claim
Honour from him whose honoured name
Shall henceforth with the highest stand,
The most efficient scholars of our land.
To him what meed of thanks the unlearned owe!
And even the learned, who best his merits know.
With Homer, Virgil, Wieland, all converse
Like true compatriots in his pliant verse.
Pliant but elevated, graceful, bold,
And worthy of the Bards of old.

Fugitive Verses

Nor will we thanklessly peruse
The beauties of his native muse,
Where lofty thoughts and feelings sweet,
And moral truths commingling meet.
Where fancy spreads her absent scene,
The flowery mead, the forest green;
The plains, the mountain peaks, the fanes sublime,
The ruins long revered of Italy's fair clime.
Yea thanks be his, heart-given and kind,
For all his pen has left behind!

Though bitters in his cup were mixed,
And in his heart sharp arrows fixed,
The current of his life ran clear;
With virtuous love and duteous children blest,
He journeyed onward to the Christian's rest,
And happy was his long career.

Social and joyous to the end,
Around him gathered many a friend,
Whose minds his dear remembrance hold,
Though seventy years and more
His head had silvered o'er,
As one who ne'er was old.
Rejoicing in his well-earned fame,
They oft repeat his honoured name,
And as their thoughts on all his virtues dwell
With sorrow, cheered and sweet, bid him a last farewell.

VERSES TO OUR OWN FLOWERY KIRTLED SPRING.

WELCOME, sweet time of buds and bloom, renewing
The earliest objects of delight, and wooing
The notice of the grateful heart! for then
Long-hidden, beauteous friends are seen again;
From the cleft soil, like babes from cradle peeping,
At the glad light, where soundly they've been sleeping;
Like chickens in their downy coats, just freeing
From the chipp'd shell, their new-found active being;
Like spotted butterfly, its wings up-rearing,
Half from the bursting chrysalis appearing.
Sweet season, so bedight, so gay, so kind,
Right welcome to the sight and to the mind!

Now many a "thing that pretty is" delays
The wanderer's steps beneath the sun's soft rays.
Gay daffodils, bent o'er the watery gleam,
Doubling their flickered image in the stream;
The woody nook where bells of brighter blue

Fugitive Verses

Have clothed the ground in heaven's ethereal hue;
The lane's high sloping bank, where pale primrose
With hundreds of its gentle kindred blows;
And speckled daisies that on uplands bare
Their round eyes opening, scatter gladness there.
Man looks on nature with a grateful smile,
And thinks of Nature's bounteous Lord the while.

Now urchins range the brake in joyous bands,
With new-called nosegays in their dimpled hands.
The cottage maid her household task-work cheats
In mead or glen to pick the choicest sweets,
With skilful care preserved for Sunday morn,
Her bosom's simple kerchief to adorn.
And even the beldame, as with sober tread,
She takes her sunning in the grassy mead,
Stoops down with eager look and finds, well pleased,
Such herbs, as in a chest or bible squeezed,
In former days were deemed, by folks of sense,
A fragrant wholesome virtue to dispense,
And oft on raftered roof, in bunches strung,
With other winter stores were duly hung.

But not alone in simple scenes like these,
Thy beauteous offspring our soothed senses please;
I' the city's busy streets, by rich men's doors,
On whose white steps the flower-girl sets her stores,
In wicker basket grouped to lure the sight,
They stop and tempt full many a wistful wight.
Flowers though they be by artful culture bred,
Upon the suburb-seedsman's crowded bed,
By fetid manure cherished, gorgeous, bright,
Like civic madams dressed for festive night,
Anemonies of crimson, purple, yellow,
And tulips streaked with colours rich and mellow,
Brown wallflowers and jonquils of golden glare,
In dapper posies tied like shop-man's ware,
Yet still they whisper something to the heart,
Which feelings kind and gentle thoughts impart.

Gay sight! that oft a touch of pleasure gives
Even to the saddest, rudest soul that lives
Gay sight! the passing carman grins thereat,
And sticks a purchased posie in his hat,
And cracks his whip and treads the rugged streets
With waggish air and jokes with all he meets.
The sickly child from nursery window spies
The tempting show, and for a nosegay cries,
Which placed in china mug, by linnet's cage,
Will for a time his listless mind engage.
The dame precise, moves at the flower-girl's cry,

Fugitive Verses

Laying her patch-work or her netting by,
And from the parlour window casts her eye,
Then sends across the way her tiny maid;
And presently on mantle-piece displayed,
Between fair ornaments of china ware,
Small busts and lackered parrots stationed there,
Tulips, anemonies and wallflowers shine,
And strangely with their new compeers combine
Each visitor with wonder to excite,
Who looks and smiles, and lauds the motley sight.
That even to the prison's wretched thrall,
Those simple gems of nature will recall
What soothes the sadness of his dreary state,
Yon narrow window, through whose iron grate
A squalid countenance is dimly traced,
Gazing on flowers in broken pitcher placed
Upon the sooty sill and withering there,
Sad emblems of himself, most piteously declare.

Of what in gentle lady's curtained room,
On storied stands and gilded tripods bloom,
The richest, rarest flowers of every clime,
Whose learned names suit not my simple rhyme,
I speak not! lovely as they are, we find
They visit more the senses than the mind.
Their nurture comes not from the clouds of heaven,
But from a painted watering-pot is given;
And, in return for daily care, with faint
And sickly sweetness hall and chamber taint.
I will not speak of those; we feel and see
They have no kindred, our own Spring! with thee.

Welcome, sweet season! though with rapid pace
Thy course is run, and we can scarcely grace
Thy joyous coming with a grateful cheer,
Ere loose-leaved flowers and leaflets shrunk and sere,
And flaccid bending stems, sad bodings! tell
We soon must bid our fleeting friend farewell.

LINES TO A PARROT.

IN these our days of sentiment
When youthful poets all lament
Some dear lost joy, some cruel maid;
Old friendship changed and faith betrayed;
The world's cold frown and every ill
That tender hearts with anguish fill;
Loathing this world and all its folly,
In lays most musical and melancholy,
Touching a low and homely string,

Fugitive Verses

May poet of a Parrot sing
With dignity uninjured? say!
No; but a simple rhymester may.
Well then, I see thee calm and sage,
Perched on the summit of thy cage,
With broad, hooked beak and plumage green,
Changing to azure in the light,
Gay pinions tipped with scarlet bright,
And, strong for mischief, use or play,
Thick talons, crisped with silver grey,
A gallant bird, I ween!

What courtly dame, for ball-room drest
What gartered lord in silken vest
On wedding morn what country bride
With groom bedizened by her side
What youngsters in their fair-day geer,
Did ever half so fine appear?
Alas! at ball, or, church, or fair,
Were ne'er assembled visions rare
Of moving creatures all so gay
As in thy native woods, where day
In blazing torrid brightness played
Through checkered boughs and gently made
A ceaseless morris-dance of sheen and shade!

In those blest woods, removed from man,
Thy early being first began,
'Mid gay compeers, who, blest as thou,
Hopped busily from bough to bough,
Robbing each loaded branch at pleasure
Of berries, buds and kerneled treasure;
Then rose aloft with outspread wing,
Then stooped on flexile twig to swing,
Then coursed and circled through the air,
Mate chasing mate, full many a pair.
It would have set one's heart a dancing
To 've seen their varied feathers glancing,
And thought how many happy things
Creative Goodness into being brings.

But now how changed! it is thy doom
Within a walled and windowed room
To hold thy home, and (all forgot
The traces of thy former lot),
Clutching the wires with progress slow,
Still round and round thy cage to go.

Or cross the carpet: altered case!
This now is all thy daily travel's space.

Fugitive Verses

Yet here thou art a cherished droll,
Known by the name of Pretty Poll;
Oft fed by lady's gentle hand
With sops and sugar at command,
And sometimes too a nut or cherry,
Which in thy claws to beak and eye
Thou seemest to raise right daintily,
Turning it oft, as if thou still
Wert scanning it with cautious skill,
Provoking urchins near to laughter loud and merry.

See, gathered round, a rosy band,
With eager upcast eyes they stand,
Marking thy motions and withal
Delighting on thy name to call;
And hear, like human speech, reply
Come from thy beak most curiously.
They shout, they mowe, they grin, they giggle,
Clap hands, hoist arms, and shoulders wriggle;
O here, well may we say or sing,
That learning is a charming thing!

For thou, beneath thy wire-wove dome,
A learned creature hast become;
And hast, by dint of oft repeating,
Got words by rote, the vulgar cheating
Which, once in ten times well applied,
Are to the skies with praises cried.
So lettered dunces oft impose
On simple fools their studied prose.
Aye; o'er thy round though unwigged head,
Full many a circling year has sped,
Since thou kept terms within thy college,
From many tutors, short and tall,
In braid or bonnet, cap or caul,
Imbibing wondrous stores of seeming knowledge.

And rarely Bachelor of Arts
Or Master (dare we say it?) imparts
To others such undoubted pleasure
From all his stores of classic treasure:
And ladies sage, whose learned saws
To cognoscenti friends give laws,
Rarely, I trow, can so excite
A listening circle with delight.
And rarely their acquirements shine
Through such a lengthened course as thine.

The grannums of this group so gay,
Who round thee now their homage pay,
Belike have in such youthful glee,
With admiration gazed on thee;
And yet no wrinkled line betrays
The long course of thy lengthened days,

Fugitive Verses

Thy bark of life has kept afloat
As on a shoreless sea, where not
Or change or progress may be traced;
Time hath with thee been leaden-paced.

But ah! proud beauty, on whose head
Some three-score years no blight hath shed,
Untoward days will come at length,
When thou, of spirit reft and strength,
Wilt mope and pine, year after year,
Which all one moulting-time appear,
And this bright plumage, dull and rusty,
Will seem neglected shrunk and dusty,
And scarce a feather's rugged stump
Be left to grace thy fretted rump.
Mewed in a corner of thy home,
Having but little heart to roam,
Thou'lt wink and peer a wayward elf,
And croon and clutter to thyself,
Screaming at visitors with spite,
And opening wide thy beak to bite.

Yet in old age still wilt thou find
Some constant friend thy wants to mind,
Whose voice thou'lt know, whose hand thou'lt seek,
Turning to it thy feathered cheek;
Grateful to her though cross and froward
To all beside, and it will go hard
But she will love thee, even when life's last goal
Thou'st reached, and call thee still her Pretty Poll.

Now from these lines, young friends, I know
A lesson might be drawn to shew
How, like our bird, on life's vain stage,
Pass human childhood, prime and age:
But coned comparisons, I doubt,
Might put your patience to the rout,
And all my pains small thanks receive,
So this to wiser folks leave.

LINES TO A TEAPOT.

ON thy carved sides, where many a vivid dye
In easy progress leads the wandering eye,
A distant nation's manners we behold,
To the quick fancy whimsically told.

The small-eyed beauty with her Mandarin,
Who o'er the rail of garden arbour lean,
In listless ease; and rocks of arid brown,

LINES TO A TEAPOT.

Fugitive Verses

On whose sharp crags, in gay profusion blown,
The ample loose-leaved rose appears to grace
The skilful culture of the wonderous place;
The little verdant plat, where with his mate
The golden pheasant holds his gorgeous state,
With gaily crested pate and twisted neck,
Turned jantily his glossy wings to peck;
The smooth-streaked water of a paly gray,
O'er which the checkered bridge lends ready way,
While, by its margin moored, the little boat
Doth with its oars and netted awning float:
A scene in short all soft delights to take in,
A paradise for grave Grandee of Pekin.
With straight small spout, that from thy body fair,
Diverges with a smart vivacious air,
And round, arched handle with gold tracery bound,
And dome-shaped lid with bud or button crowned,
Thou standest complete, fair subject of my rhymes,
A goodly vessel of the olden times.

But far less pleasure yields this fair display
Than that enjoyed upon thy natal day,
When round the potter's wheel, their chins raising,
An urchin group in silent wonder gazing,
Stood and beheld, as, touched with magic skill,
The whirling clay swift fashioned to his will,
Saw mazy motion stopped, and then the toy
Complete before their eyes, and grinned for joy;
Clapping their naked sides with blythe halloo,
And curtailed words of praise, like *ting, tung, too!*
The brown-skinned artist, with his unclothed waist
And girded loins, who, slow and patient, traced,
Beneath his humble shed, this fair array
Of pictured forms upon thy surface gay,
I will not stop in fancy's sight to place,
But speed me on my way with quickened pace.
Packed in a chest with others of thy kind,
The sport of waves and every shifting wind,
The Ocean thou hast crossed, and thou mayest claim
The passing of the Line to swell thy fame,
With as good observation of the thing
As some of those who in a hammock swing.

And now thou 'rt seen in Britain's polished land,
Held up to public view in waving hand
Of boastful auctioneer, whilst dames of pride
In morning farthingals, scarce two yards wide,
With collared lap-dogs snarling in their arms,
Contend in rival keenness for thy charms.
And certes well they might, for there they found thee
With all thy train of vassal cups around thee,

LINES TO A TEAPOT.

Fugitive Verses

A prize which thoughts by day, and dreams by night,
Could dwell on for a week with fresh delight.

Our pleased imagination now pourtrays
The glory of thy high official days,
When thou on board of rich japan wert set,
Round whose supporting table gaily met
At close of eve, the young, the learned, the fair,
And even philosophy and wit were there.
Midst basons, cream-pots, cups and saucers small,
Thou stood'st the ruling chieftain of them all;
And even the kettle of Potosi's ore,
Whose ample cell supplied thy liquid store,
Beneath whose base the sapphire flame was burning,
Above whose lid the wreathy smoke was turning,
Though richly chased and burnished it might be,
Was yet, confessed, subordinate to thee.
But O! when beauty's hand thy weight sustained,
The climax of thy glory was attained!
Back from her elevated elbow fell
Its three-tired ruffle, and displayed the swell
And gentle rounding of her lily arm,
The eyes of wistful sage or beau to charm
A sight at other times but dimly seen
Through veiling folds of point or colberteen.
With pleasing toil, red glowed her dimpled cheek,
Bright glanced her eyes beneath her forehead sleek,
And as she poured the beverage, through the room
Was spread its fleeting, delicate perfume.
Then did bright wit and cheerful fancy play
With all the passing topics of the day.
So delicate, so varied and so free
Was the heart's pastime, then inspired by thee,
That goblet, bowl or flask could boast no power
Of high excitement, in their reigning hour,
Compared to thine; red wildfire of the fen,
To summer moonshine of some fairy glen.

But now the honours of thy course are past,
For what of earthly happiness may last!
Although in modern drawing-room, a board
May fragrant tea from menial hands afford,
Which, poured in dull obscurity hath been,
From pot of vulgar ware, in nook unseen,
And pass in hasty rounds our eyes before,
Thou in thy graceful state art seen no more.
And what the changeful fleeting crowd, who sip
The unhonoured beverage with contemptuous lip,
Enjoy amidst the tangled, giddy maze,
Their languid eye their listless air betrays.
What though at times we see a youthful fair

Fugitive Verses

By white clothed board her watery drug prepare,
At further corner of a noisy room,
Where only casual stragglers deign to come,
Like tavern's busy bar-maid; still I say,
The honours of thy course are passed away.

Again hath auctioneer thy value praised,
Again have rival bidders on thee gazed,
But not the gay, the young, the fair, I trow!
No; sober connoisseurs, with wrinkled brow
And spectacles on nose, thy parts inspect,
And by grave rules approve thee or reject.
For all the bliss which china charms afford,
My lady now has ceded to her lord.
And wisely too does she forego the prize,
Since modern pin-money will scarce suffice
For all the trimmings, flounces, beads and lace,
The thousand needful things that needs must grace
Her daily changed attire. And now on shelf
Of china closet placed, a cheerless elf,
Like moody statesman in his rural den,
From power dismissed like prosperous citizen,
From shop or change set free untoward bliss!
Thou rest'st in most ignoble uselessness.

THE MOODY SEER,

A BALLAD.

"**THE** sun shines in a cloudless sky,
The lake is blue and still;
Up, Flora! on thine errand hie,
And climb the eyrie hill;

"And tell my ancient kinsman there
To leave his lonely tower,
And at our yearly feast to share
The merry social hour."

"Oh mother! do not bid me go;
I scarce can draw my breath,
When I see his eyes move to and fro,
His lowering brows beneath;

"His moving lips, that give no sound
My very spirits quell,
When he stares upon the harmless ground
As 'twere the mouth of hell."

"Fy, foolish child! on such a day

THE MOODY SEER,

Fugitive Verses

Aught ill thou need'st not fear,
And thy cousin Malcom will the way
With tale or ballad cheer."

The maiden blushed and turned her head,
And saw young Malcom near,
And she thought no more of scathe or dread,
Or the looks of the moody Seer.

And now, bound for the mountain hold,
The youthful pair are seen,
He like a stripling frank and bold,
She like a fairy queen.

With merry songs and merry talk
The long way cheated he,
And plucked her blue-bells from the stalk,
And blossoms from the tree.

Time (how they wist not) swiftly ran,
Till scarcely half a rood
From the opening gate of the gifted man
With beating hearts they stood.

Then issued from that creaking gate
A figure bent and spare,
In checkered garb of ancient state,
With grizzled, shaggy hair.

By motion, look and mien, he seemed
Of gentle pedigree,
Well struck with years, you might have deemed,
But more with misery.

He raised his face to the youthful pair,
Grammercie! can it be?
There passeth a glance of pleasure there
And a smile of courtesy.

"My cousin's daughter near my hold!
Some message kind, I trow.
But no, fair maid, I am too old
To mix in revels now.

"And who is this so gay and young?
No no! thou need'st not tell;
His mother is from Garelace sprung,
His sire from bold Glenfell.

"His mother's smile is on his face,
His father's form I see,

THE MOODY SEER,

Fugitive Verses

Those well-knit limbs of active grace,
Those feet it cannot be!

Out out! mine eyes see falsely! tossed
And drifted by the wind,
Some beldame's kerchief hath been lost,
And round his brogues hath twined."

Thus muttering low, with voice unsweet,
He turned his face aside,
And hastily snatched at Malcom's feet,
But the close-clutched palm was void.

"Why gropest thou with thy trembling hand?
Think'st thou my feet are bound?
Let loose thy house-guard, famous Brand,
And I'll out-run the hound."

"Ah! swiftest race is soonest o'er,
Like stream of the mountain brook:
Go home, and con some sober lore,
Betake thee to bead and book."

"Yes, I will pray to Mary mild,
And my first request shall be,
That from all fancies grim and wild,
Thou mayst delivered be."

Then anger tinged the maid's round cheek
"Come, Malcom, come away!
When Hallow-e'en blows chill and bleak,
Macvorely will join our play."

"When Hallow-e'en blows bleak and chill
An old man's seat prepare,
For if life and strength be in him still,
Macvorely will be there."

The old man sighed, as down the hill
They took their homeward way,
And he heard afar so loud and shrill
Young Malcom's joyous lay.

'Tis Hallow-e'en in Flora's home,
Bright shines the fir-wood flame;
From distant halls and holds are come
Maid, youngster, laird and dame.

Their friets are tried true-love to prove
Friets taught by warlock lore,
And mingled lovers gladly move

THE MOODY SEER,

Fugitive Verses

Upon the crowded floor.

And flaming nuts are keenly watched
By many a youthful eye,
And colworts, from the dark mould snatched,
Are borne triumphantly.

Then gay strathspeys are featly danced
To the pibroch's gallant sound,
While the sighted man, like one entranced,
In the honoured chair is found.

But who comes now so buoyantly,
In flaunting kirtle dressed,
Who snaps her fingers, capers high,
And foots it with the best?

She leaps and crosses, wheels and turns,
Like mawkin on the lea,
Till every kindred bosom burns
Such joyous sight to see.

Her dark eyes gleamed, and her ribands streamed,
And bells and bracelets rung,
And the charmed rout raised a joyous shout
As her arms aloft she flung.

Out spoke a bachelor, Glenore,
Of threescore years and ten,
And well respected heretofore
By prudent, wary men:

"O were I now as I have been
(Vain wish! alas how vain!)
I would plight my faith to that winsome queen,
And with my freedom twain."

But naught cared she for laugh or shout
And cheers from every tongue;
She circled in, and she circled out,
Through all the yielding throng,

Until before the honoured chair
With sliding step she came,
And dropped a sober curtesy there
To the Seer of eldrich fame.

But ah! how different is his face
From those so blithe and boon!
Tears down his cheeks the big tears chase,
Like thunder-drops in June.

THE MOODY SEER,

Fugitive Verses

"Nay, weep not, kind though hapless Seer;
Forgive my foolish glee,
That, flaunting thus in woman's gear,
Thought to deceive even thee.

"I've danced before thee, vain and proud,
In crimson kirtle drest."
"Thou'st danced before me in a shroud,
Raised midway to thy breast."

Dull grew the sound of the crowded hall,
Yet Malcom danced again,
And did for rousing pibrochs call,
But pipers piped in vain.

Before the early cock had crowed,
Withdrawn was every guest;
Ere on high Ben a sun-beam glowed,
All were retired to rest.

A goodly ship at anchor rides,
With freight of British store,
And a little boat from her shadow glides,
Swift nearing to the shore.

And, on that shore, kind hearts and true,
Small groups of kinsfolk stand,
To bid a much-loved youth adieu,
Who quits his native land.

There Flora and her mother dear
Heave many a heavy sigh,
And by them is the moody Seer,
With red and lowering eye.

"Weep not, dear aunt!" says the parting wight,
"Weep not, my play-mate sweet!
Hope beckons me to fortune bright,
And we again shall meet.

"And, good Macvorely, send me hence
With thy blessing; on me pour
Some muttered spell of sure defence,
When wild waves round me roar.

"This band that round my neck is tied,
Is the gift of a maiden dear,
Fenced with thy potent spell beside,
What danger need I fear?"

Fugitive Verses

"I see no band around thy neck,
But the white shroud gathered high:
Yon breakers rage, and a stranded wreck
Doth on the dark rocks lie.

"A solemn requiem for the dead
Is the gift I will give to thee;
O that, to save thee, in thy stead,
The same were sung for me!"

Yet still the youth, with parting cheer,
Extends to all his hand;
Embraces those who are most dear,
And hastens from the land.

His form reflected on the wave,
As the lessening boat withdrew,
Of that joyous youth, so boon and brave,
Was their last heart-moving view.

In Flora's home the midnight blast
Rose with a wailing moan,
And all had to their chambers past,
And the maiden sat alone.

She thought of the seaman's perilous case
As the loud gust went and came,
And she gazed on the fire with a woeful face
And watched the flickering flame.

The flickering flame burnt dull and blue,
And the icy chill of fear
Passed o'er her head; then well she knew
Some ghastly thing was near.

She turned her head the room to scan,
To wot if aught was there;
And she saw a figure wet and wan
Three paces from her chair.

Fixed were the eyes of its pallid face,
Like those who walk in sleep,
And she started up and prayed for grace
With a voice suppressed and deep.

Then gazing on that face, at length,
She knew the features dear;
She spoke, affection lent her strength,
"Malcom, how cam'st thou here?"

Fugitive Verses

"How spirits travel, dear, dear maid!
No living wight may know,
But far from hence my corse is laid,
The deep green waves below."

"O Malcom say, in this world of care
Is there aught I can do for thee?"
"When thou bendest thy knees in humble prayer,
My Flora, pray for me;

"And let my kinsfolk know the fate
Of one so young and vain.
And now farewell, till time's last date,
When we shall meet again."

The figure faded from her sight,
And the angry tempest fell,
And she heard through the stilly air of night
A distant passing bell.

THE MERRY BACHELOR,

(FOUNDED ON THE OLD SCOTCH SONG OF "WILLIE WAS A WANTON WAG.")

WILLIE was a wanton wag,
The blithest lad that e'er I saw;
Of field and floor he was the brag,
And carried a' the gree awa'.

And was na' Willie stark and keen,
When he gaed to the weapon-shaw;
He won the prizes on the green,
And cheered the feasters in the ha'.

His head was wise, his heart was liel,
His truth was fair without a flaw;
And aye by every honest chiel
His word was holden as a law.

And was na' Willie still our pride
When, in his gallant gear arrayed,
He wan the bruise and kist the bride,
While pipes the wedding welcome played.

And aye he led the foremost dance,
Wi' winsom maidens buskit braw,
And gave to each a merry glance
That stole, a while, her heart awa'.

The bride forgot her simple groom,

THE MERRY BACHELOR,

Fugitive Verses

And every lass her trysted Joe;
Yet nae man's brow on Will could gloom,
They liked his rousing blitheness so.

Our good Mess John laughed wi' the laive;
The dominie for a' his lair
Could scarcely like himsell behave,
While a' was glee and revel there.

A joyous sight was Willie's face,
Baith far and near in ilka spot;
In ha' received wi' kindly grace,
And welcomed to the lowly cot.

The carlin left her housewife's wark,
The bairnies shouted Willie's name;
The colley too would fidge and bark
And wag his tail when Willie came.

But Willie now has crossed the main,
And he has been sae lang awa'!
Oh! would he were returned again
To drive the dourness frae us a'!

TWO SONGS.

I.

COME rouse thee, lady fair,
The sun is shining brightly,
High through the cloudless air
The sea-bird roving lightly.

Come, from thy lattice look;
With many an oar in motion,
Boats have the creek forsook,
And course the azure ocean.

See on the dim waves borne,
White distant sails are gliding;
Good, on so fair a morn,
Is every heart abiding.

II. (FOR FISHERMEN.)

Fugitive Verses

The waves are rippling on the sand
The winds are still, the air is clear;
Then gather round, my merry band,
We'll hold on shore an hour of cheer.

The lord keeps vigil in his hall,
The dame in bower or turret high;
But meet the merriest mates of all
Beneath the summer's starlight sky.

SONG

WRITTEN FOR THE STRAWBERRY HILL FOUNDLING PLAY, AND
SUNG BY MRS. JOURDAIN.

WITH the rough blast heaves the billow,
In the light air waves the willow,
Every thing of moving kind
Varies with the veering wind;
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

After fretted, pouting sorrow,
Sweet will be thy smile to-morrow;
Changing still, each passing thing
Fairest is upon the wing:
What have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

Song of love, and satire witty,
Sprightly glee and doleful ditty;
Every mood and every lay,
Welcome all, but do not stay;
For what have I to do with thee,
Dull, unjoyous Constancy?

TO SOPHIA J. BAILLIE, AN INFANT.

SWEET bud of promise, fresh and fair,
Just moving in the morning air,
The morn of life but just begun,
The sands of time just set to run!
Sweet babe with cheek of pinky hue,
With eyes of soft ethereal blue,
With raven hair like finest down
Of unfledged bird and scanty shewn
Beneath the cap of cumbrous lace,
That circles round thy placid face!
Ah, baby! little dost thou know

SONG

Fugitive Verses

How many yearning bosoms glow,
How many lips in blessings move,
How many eyes beam looks of love
At sight of thee!

Some future day,
And grant it Heaven! thou wilt repay
The early love of loving friends
With oft-renewed and dear amends.
Affection true, as with a spell,
Hath many ways her tale to tell:
And thou, with lightsome laughing eye,
Thy artless love wilt testify
By proffered kisses oft repeated,
And words at will, when thou art seated
On the paternal knee, in glory,
Rehearsing there thy mimic story
By little errands, run so fleetly
For dear mamma; and when so featly
Thou dost for her the Dunsbourn heather,
The primrose and the daisy gather,
The daisy fresh with unbruised stem,
Like thee a "bright and bonny gem"
All this, and more than I can say
Will shew thy love some future day.
Sweet bud of hope, beloved, carest,
Upon thy head Heaven's blessing rest!

VERSES ADDED TO THE FOREGOING BY THE BABY'S PATERNAL GRANDMOTHER.

UNCONSCIOUS babe! not even lines like these
Have power thy little slumbering sense to please,
Nor all the charms pourtrayed with so much grace,
Can force one smile from that soft "placid face."

But oh, how sweetly on the parents' ear
Fall tender tones of love from one so dear!
How seems the little form that pen has traced,
With future charms and virtues to be graced,
While brighter seem the hopes such love bestows,
And the fair prospect with fresh beauty glows.

Dear, dear Joanna, well employed art thou
In weaving chaplets for this baby's brow!
For this dear babe, who had so welcome been
To those who now on earth no more are seen!

For me, for me, in these declining days,
Nothing remains but humble prayer and praise:
Praise for the precious boon already given,
Prayers for its endless happiness in Heaven!

THE KITTEN.

WANTON droll, whose harmless play
Beguiles the rustic's closing day,
When, drawn the evening fire about,
Sit aged crone and thoughtless lout,
And child upon his three-foot stool,
Waiting till his supper cool,
And maid, whose cheek outblooms the rose,
As bright the blazing faggot glows,
Who, bending to the friendly light,
Plies her task with busy slight;
Come, shew thy tricks and sportive graces,
Thus circled round with merry faces.

Backward coiled and crouching low,
With glaring eyeballs watch thy foe,
The housewife's spindle whirling round,
Or thread or straw that on the ground
Its shadow throws, by urchin sly
Held out to lure thy roving eye;
Then stealing onward, fiercely spring
Upon the tempting faithless thing.
Now, wheeling round with bootless skill,
Thy bo-peep tail provokes thee still,
As still beyond thy curving side
Its jetty tip is seen to glide;
Till from thy centre starting far,
Thou sidelong veer'st with rump in air
Erected stiff, and gait awry,
Like madam in her tantrums high;
Though ne'er a madam of them all,
Whose silken kirtle sweeps the hall,
More varied trick and whim displays
To catch the admiring stranger's gaze.

Doth power in measured verses dwell,
All thy vagaries wild to tell?
Ah no! the start, the jet, the bound,
The giddy scamper round and round,
With leap and toss and high curvet,
And many a whirling somerset,
(Permitted by the modern muse
Expression technical to use)
These mock the deftest rhymester's skill,
But poor in art though rich in will.

The featest tumbler, stage bedight,
To thee is but a clumsy wight,
Who every limb and sinew strains

Fugitive Verses

To do what costs thee little pains;
For which, I trow, the gaping crowd
Requite him oft with plaudits loud.

But, stopped the while thy wanton play,
Applauses too thy pains repay:
For then, beneath some urchin's hand
With modest pride thou takest thy stand,
While many a stroke of kindness glides
Along thy back and tabby sides.
Dilated swells thy glossy fur,
And loudly croons thy busy pur,
As, timing well the equal sound,
Thy clutching feet bepat the ground,
And all their harmless claws disclose
Like prickles of an early rose,
While softly from thy whiskered cheek
Thy half-closed eyes peer, mild and meek.

But not alone by cottage fire
Do rustics rude thy feats admire.
The learned sage, whose thoughts explore
The widest range of human lore,
Or with unfettered fancy fly
Through airy heights of poesy,
Pausing smiles with altered air
To see thee climb his elbow-chair,
Or, struggling on the mat below,
Hold warfare with his slippered toe.
The widowed dame or lonely maid,
Who, in the still but cheerless shade
Of home unsocial, spends her age
And rarely turns a lettered page,
Upon her hearth for thee lets fall
The rounded cork or paper ball,
Nor chides thee on thy wicked watch,
The ends of ravelled skein to catch,
But lets thee have thy wayward will,
Perplexing oft her better skill.

Even he, whose mind of gloomy bent,
In lonely tower or prison pent,
Reviews the coil of former days,
And loathes the world and all its ways,
What time the lamp's unsteady gleam
Hath roused him from his moody dream,
Feels, as thou gambol'st round his seat,
His heart of pride less fiercely beat,
And smiles, a link in thee to find,
That joins it still to living kind.

Whence hast thou then, thou witless puss!
The magic power to charm us thus?
Is it that in thy glaring eye
And rapid movements, we descry
Whilst we at ease, secure from ill,
The chimney corner snugly fill
A lion darting on his prey,
A tiger at his ruthless play?
Or is it that in thee we trace
With all thy varied wanton grace,
An emblem, viewed with kindred eye,
Of tricky, restless infancy?
Ah! many a lightly sportive child,
Who hath like thee our wits beguiled,
To dull and sober manhood grown,
With strange recoil our hearts disown.

And so, poor kit! must thou endure,
When thou becomest a cat demure,
Full many a cuff and angry word,
Chased roughly from the tempting board.
But yet, for that thou hast, I ween,
So oft our favoured play-mate been,
Soft be the change which thou shalt prove!
When time hath spoiled thee of our love,
Still be thou deemed by housewife fat
A comely, careful, mousing cat,
Whose dish is, for the public good,
Replenished oft with savoury food.
Nor, when thy span of life is past,
Be thou to pond or dung-hill cast,
But, gently borne on goodman's spade,
Beneath the decent sod be laid;
And children shew with glistening eyes
The place where poor old pussy lies.

SCHOOL RHYMES FOR NEGRO CHILDREN.

HOW happy are we in that hour we love,
When shadows grow longer and branches move;
 Blithe urchins then we be!
From the school's low porch with a joyous shout,
We rush and we run and we gambol about,
 So careless, light and free!

And the good child merrily plays his part,
For all is well in his guileless heart,
 The glance of his eye is bright.
We hop and we leap and we toss the ball;
Some dance to their shadows upon the wall,

Fugitive Verses

And spread out their hands with delight.

The parrot that sits on her bough a–swinging,
The bird and the butterfly, light air winging,
Are scarcely more happy, I trow.
Then hey for the meadow, the glade and the grove,
For evening is coming and branches move,
We'll have merry pastime now.

RHYMES.

BUSY work brings after ease;
Ease brings sport and sport brings rest;
For young and old of all degrees,
The mingled lot is best.

And pain brings pity; then I hear
My mother's sweet and gentle voice,
She strokes my cheek, the touch is dear,
And makes my heart rejoice.

Then welcome work and pain and play
When all is o'er, like bird in nest
We soundly sleep; well says our lay,
The mingled lot is best.

RHYMES FOR CHANTING.

BUTTERFLY , butterfly, speed through the air,
The ring–bird follows thee fast,
And the monkey looks up with a greedy stare;
Speed on till the peril be past!

O, wert thou but safe in my garden bower,
And wouldst thou no further stray,
Thou shouldst feed on the rose and the gilliflower,
And be my play–mate gay.

DEVOTIONAL SONG FOR A NEGRO CHILD.

WHEN at rising morn we lave
Our dark limbs in the shiny wave,
When beneath the palm–tree shade,
We rest awhile in freshness laid,
And, when our early task is done,
Whom should we love to think upon?

When we noonday slumber take,
In grassy glade or bowery brake,
Where humming birds come glancing by,

RHYMES.

And stingless snakes untwisted lie,
And quietly sounds the beetle's drone,
Whom should we love to think upon?

When, all awake, we shout and sing,
And dance and gambol in a ring,
Or, healthful hunger to relieve,
Our stated wholesome meals receive,
When this is past and day is done,
Whom should we love to think upon?

On God the giver of all good,
Who gives us life, and rest, and food,
And cheerful pastime, late and early,
And parents kind who love us dearly;
God hath our hearts with goodness won,
Him will we love to think upon.

SECOND DEVOTIONAL SONG.

OUR heavenly Father sent his Son
From hateful sin to save us,
And precious blessings many a one,
Health, friends and freedom gave us.

And all we see, each beauteous sight,
The woods, the fields, the ocean,
The sun by day, the moon by night,
Should fill us with devotion.

Then let our praises be expressed
In light and lively measure,
He loves the grateful homage best
That is bestowed with pleasure.

THIRD DEVOTIONAL SONG.

OUR Father and Almighty Lord,
By angels and by saints adored,
With starry brightness circled round,
Gleam beyond gleam, which hath no bound,
Though He be high and we are low,
Accepts the grateful thanks that flow
From infant lips, and to the skies,
Like morning's early vapour rise;
The simplest child who lisps a prayer,
His mercy and his love will share.

A NURSERY LESSON (DEVOTIONAL).

SAY , little child, who gives to thee
Thy life and limbs, so light and free?
Thy moving eyes to look around,
Thy ears to catch the softest sound?
Thy food and clothing, friends and home?
'Tis God from whom those blessings come;
And what shouldst thou do? canst thou guess?
To prove to Him thy thankfulness
For life and friends, for clothes and food?
"Be good."

And tell me, little-one, I pray,
Who gives thee pleasure in thy play?
Who makes the happy girl and boy
To run, and leap, and shout for joy,
When looking on the clear blue sky;
The clouds, that float, the birds that fly;
Trees, flowers, and every pretty thing?
'Tis God from whom those blessings spring;
And in return what shouldst thou do?
"Be good, and love Him too."

SECOND NURSERY LESSON (ADMONITORY).

FAT Tommy on the carpet lay,
And held with sprightly kit his play.
To her the twisted cord he flung,
At which with teeth and claws she sprung;
His worsted ball then past her roll'd,
Which soon within her clutching hold
She whirled, and checked, and tugged, and tore,
Then sent it rolling as before.
Tommy his blue eyes glancing bright,
View'd all these antics with delight;
Then fondly stroked her tabby fur,
And smiled to see her wink and purr;
And then her ears began to touch,
Which she endured, but liked not much;
Then did her hinder parts assail,
And pinch'd and pull'd her by the tail.
On this her sudden anger rose,
She turn'd and growl'd, and scratched his nose.
Then Tommy roared like any bull
And said his eyes with tears brim full
"Mamma, beat kit." "And why?" quoth she.
"Beat naughty kit for scratching me,
And teach her not to scratch again."
"No child, such teaching were in vain.

Fugitive Verses

She can feel pain, but lacks the wit
To learn a lesson; but we'll hit
Upon a plan more plain and easy.
Tommy has sense to learn, so, please ye,
Let him be taught this simple lore,
To pull his play-mate's tail no more."

HYMN.

FATHER and Lord! Almighty and all-wise!
How ardently devout affections rise,
When rushing thoughts, unsought for, swift and free,
Crowd on th' expanding heart, and speak of thee!
All mingling, soaring, brightening, how they shine
In truth's strong light, and say that we are thine!

This world a temple is, where man descries
Signs visible, where'er he turns his eyes,
That thou art good as wise and mighty; love
The active power that doth through all things move.

A vasty temple, paved with sea and land,
Adorned with forests, hills and mountains grand,
And coped aloft with beauty, ever changing
As white clouds o'er cerulean blue are ranging,
As rosy splendour glows, line after line,
At day's glad waking, or at day's decline;
As full or crescent moons shine softly bright
Through the air-floated awnings of the night;
As stars from deepen'd darkness, fiercely burning
Keep round their northern guide, for ever turning!

Such thoughts do visit us like friends indeed,
Who help and comfort in the hour of need;
And sacred lore repeat, even that bless'd line,
"Living and dying we are thine."

The dying soldier stretched on battle ground,
While swells amain the deep and ghastly wound,
Amidst his fallen comrades laid,
The maim'd, the dying, and the dead;
Thinks of his home, the distant and the dear,
Then in his heart repeats these words of cheer.

She, too, whose little flock of love are led
To stand once more around her dying bed,
Blesses them one by one, and when the last
Hath from her fondly lingering vision past,
Raises her eyes, to worship and adore,
And feels the bitterness of death is o'er;

HYMN.

Casting behind her mortal love and fear,
She feels that she is Thine, and thou art near.

The man who in this mingled world of woe,
Dire warfare holds with many a galling foe;
With poverty, disgrace, disease, and pain,
And bravely fronting all, can still maintain,
Like gallant liegeman, his appointed post,
Hath succour still at hand when wanted most.
"Let all these foes to work my woe combine,
Living and dying, Father, I am thine."

But oh! to trace what forms of mortal ill
This thought hath conquer'd, baffles human skill
Yes, we are thine, Almighty Lord and Sire,
With souls endowed to reason and aspire.
Reason, thy gifted spark of heavenly flame,
The noblest inmate of the human frame;
By which, in all thy works, thyself we see,
And love, obey, adore, and worship Thee.

TWO BROTHERS.

WHO presses on my knee this kindly pat,
And with a merry archness in my face
Looks up? a youngling of my own liel race:
Comest thou to woo my notice, little Matt?
I think thou dost, and thou shalt have it too,
For, whatsoe'er thou dost or dost not do,
Thou hast upon my heart a potent claim,
 Matthew Baillie is thy name;
 And worn by thee, O never may
 The light transmitted fade away!
The virtues of thy grandsire's manly breast,
May they within thy bosom ever rest!
Far be from thee, dear child, even in thy play,
A crooked cunning trick or selfish way,
All greedy grasping, or of cake or toy!
Thou must be generous, kind and true, my boy.

And if, in after days, thou needs must fight
With angry school-mates, wrestle for the right.
Whate'er the poor or wealthy do, thou must
Frank and straight-forward be, faithful and just.
No seeking favour with fair glozing words!
No dangling after little patron lords!
In thee, or man or boy, still let us see
Traces of him whose name now honours thee.
He passed, through life with conscience for his guide,
Nor hesitated, winked, or turned aside.

Fugitive Verses

He lived in courts, all courtly failings near,
And knew not feigning, flattery, or fear.
Be thou a Matthew then from right unswerving,
And of thy name deserving.

Ah, little man! thy roguish eye
When those thou lovest are standing by,
Thy scowling brow and stormy voice,
When thwarted of thy will or choice,
Shew thou wilt have no easy play
Old aunty's precepts to obey.

Aye! and wee Willie too is near,
His gladsome, cooing voice, I hear;
And there he comes in all his charms,
Set perching in his nurse's arms.
In his sweet face beam smiles of love
That o'er cheeks, chin, and forehead move;
Fat dimpled arms, and shoulders bare,
The same emotion seem to share;
Yea, could we see thee all, we should discover
Thou art *one* living smile all over.
Thy small foot too, tinged like the rose,
With all its spread and stirring toes,
Its tiny heel and ankle stout,
From muslin coaties peeping out
What part of thee can we behold
That is not worth a mine of gold?
Thy open mouth that offers kisses
So winningly, and seldom misses
A kind return, full twenty-fold,
From stern or gentle, young or old;
Come sweet temptation! near more near,
And let me feel its pressure dear!

Thou little, loving harmless baby,
Ah! what progressive changes may be;
When, with thy youth and manhood, future years
Have dealt, and on thy countenance appears
The marked expression of thy inward worth,
By joy, and grief, and love, and generous ire drawn forth!
Could we even now thy future fortunes know,
Thy character and thy endowments! No;
Why look through onward time to see
What thou, dear baby, then mayest be?
I will not from the present part,
Loving so dearly what thou art.

Matthew and William, brothers twain,
God's blessing on your heads remain!
Soft pretty signs and tokens tell

That now ye love each other well,
And nature's self and parents kind
Will round your hearts this blessing bind.
In sacred words to each dear brother,
A grand-aunt's say concludes, "love one another."

LINES TO AGNES BAILLIE ON HER BIRTHDAY.

DEAR Agnes, gleamed with joy and dashed with tears,
O'er us have glided almost sixty years
Since we on Bothwell's bonny braes were seen,
By those whose eyes long closed in death have been,
Two tiny imps, who scarcely stooped to gather
The slender hair-bell on the purple heather;
No taller than the foxglove's spiky stem,
That dew of morning studs with silvery gem.
Then every butterfly that crossed our view
With joyful shout was greeted as it flew,
And moth and lady-bird and beetle bright
In sheeny gold were each a wondrous sight.

Then as we paddled barefoot, side by side,
Among the sunny shallows of the Clyde
Minnows or spotted paur with twinkling fin,
Swimming in mazy rings the pool within,
A thrill of gladness through our bosoms sent,
Seen in the power of early wonderment.

A long perspective to my mind appears,
Looking behind me to that line of years,
And yet through every stage I still can trace
Thy visioned form, from childhood's morning grace
To woman's early bloom, changing how soon!
To the expressive glow of woman's noon;
And now to what thou art, in comely age,
Active and ardent. Let what will engage
Thy present moment, whether hopeful seeds
In garden-plat thou sow, or noxious weeds
From the fair flower remove, or ancient lore
In chronicle or legend rare explore,

Or on the parlour hearth with kitten play,
Stroking its tabby sides, or take thy way
To gain with hasty steps some cottage door,
On helpful errand to the neighbouring poor,
Active and ardent, to my fancy's eye,
Thou still art young in spite of time gone by.
Though oft of patience brief and temper keen,
Well may it please me, in life's latter scene,
To think what now thou art and long to me hast been.

Fugitive Verses

'Twas thou who woo'dst me first to look
Upon the page of printed book,
That thing by me abhorred, and with address
Didst win me from my thoughtless idleness,
When all too old become with bootless haste
In fitful sports the precious time to waste.
Thy love of tale and story was the stroke
At which my dormant fancy first awoke,
And ghosts and witches in my busy brain
Arose in sombre show, a motley train.
This new-found path attempting, proud was I,
Lurking approval on thy face to spy,
Or hear thee say, as grew thy roused attention,
"What! is this story all thine own invention?"

Then, as advancing through this mortal span,
Our intercourse with the mixed world began,
Thy fairer face and sprightlier courtesy,
(A truth that from my youthful vanity
Lay not concealed) did for the sisters twain,
Where'er we went, the greater favour gain;
While, but for thee, vexed with its tossing tide,
I from the busy world had shrunk aside.
And now in later years, with better grace
Thou helpest me still to hold a welcome place
With those whom nearer neighbourhood have made
The friendly cheerers of our evening shade.

With thee my humours, whether grave or gay,
Or gracious or untoward, have their way.
Silent if dull O precious privilege!
I sit by thee; or if, culled from the page
Of some huge, ponderous tome which, but thyself,
None e'er had taken from its dusty shelf,
Thou read me curious passages to speed
The winter night, I take but little heed
And thankless say "I cannot listen now,"
'Tis no offence; albeit, much do I owe
To these, thy nightly offerings of affection,
Drawn from thy ready talent for selection;
For still it seemed in thee a natural gift
The lettered grain from lettered chaff to sift.

By daily use and circumstance endeared,
Things are of value now that once appeared
Of no account, and without notice past,
Which o'er dull life a simple cheering cast;
To hear thy morning steps the stair descending,
Thy voice with other sounds domestic blending;
After each stated nightly absence, met
To see thee by the morning table set,

Fugitive Verses

Pouring from smoky spout the amber stream
Which sends from saucered cup its fragrant steam;
To see thee cheerly on the threshold stand,
On summer morn, with trowel in thy hand
For garden-work prepared; in winter's gloom
From thy cold noonday walk to see thee come,
In furry garment lapt, with spattered feet
And by the fire resume thy wonted seat;
Aye even o'er things like these, soothed age has thrown
A sober charm they did not always own.
As winter-hoar frost makes minutest spray
Of bush or hedge-weed sparkle to the day,
In magnitude and beauty, which bereaved
Of such investment, eye had ne'er perceived.

The change of good and evil to abide,
As partners linked, long have we side by side
Our earthly journey held, and who can say
How near the end of our united way?
By nature's course not distant; sad and 'reft
Will she remain, the lonely pilgrim left.
If thou art taken first, who can to me
Like sister, friend and home-companion be?
Or who, of wonted daily kindness shorn,
Shall feel such loss, or mourn as I shall mourn?
And if I should be fated first to leave
This earthly house, though gentle friends may grieve,
And he above them all, so truly proved
A friend and brother, long and justly loved,
There is no living wight, of woman born,
Who then shall mourn for me as thou wilt mourn.

Thou ardent, liberal spirit! quickly feeling
The touch of sympathy and kindly dealing
With sorrow or distress, for ever sharing
The unhoarded mite, nor for to morrow caring,
Accept, dear Agnes, on thy natal day,
An unadorned but not a careless lay.
Nor think this tribute to thy virtues paid
From tardy love proceeds, though long delayed.
Words of affection, howsoe'er expressed,
The latest spoken still are deemed the best:
Few are the measured rhymes I now may write;
These are, perhaps, the last I shall endite.

VERSES SENT TO MRS. BAILLIE ON HER BIRTHDAY, 1813.

A **JUDGEMENT** clear, a pensive mind
With feelings tender and refined;

Fugitive Verses

A generous heart in kindness glowing,
An open hand on all bestowing;
A temper sweet, and calm, and even
Through petty provocations given;
A soul benign, whose cheerful leisure
Considers still of others' pleasure,
Or, in its lonely, graver mood,
Considers still of others' good;
And joined to these the visioned eye,
And tuneful ear of poesy;
Blest wight, in whom those gifts combine,
Our dear Sophia, sister mine!

How comes it that, from year to year,
This day hath passed without its cheer,
No token passing time to trace,
No rhymester's lay to do it grace?

Love was not wanting, but the muse,
Reserved, unpliant, and recluse,
Sat in her unreal kingdom, dreaming
Through baseless scenes of airy seeming,
And could not turn her 'wilder'd eye
On plain, unfancied verity.

Yet be it so! once in my life
I'll hold with her a generous strife;
With or without her aid, my lay
Shall hail with grateful lines this happy day.
The day when first thy infant heart
Did from inactive being start,
And in thy baby bosom beat,
Its doubtful, dangerous, fragile seat,
A heavenly spark that downward came
To mount again a brighter flame.

Meantime, a warm and fostering blessing,
More precious felt in long possessing,
'Tis lent to those who daily prove
Its gentle offices of love.
Ah! for their sake, long be the date
Of this its more ignoble state!
I who, so near its influence set,
Owe it a long and pleasing debt,
In course of nature launched before
From mortal nature's foggy shore,
Would fain behind me leave some token
Of friendly kindred love unbroken,
Which in some hour, retired and lone,
Thine eyes may sometimes look upon,
While in thy saddened tender breast

Fugitive Verses

Ah, no! I may not think the rest,
Lest, both bereft of words and strain
My silent thoughts alone remain:
This token then do thou receive.
I will not tell thee to believe
How in my heart its spirit glows,
How soothly from my pen it flows.

Through years unmarked by woe or pain,
Oft may this day return again,
Blessed by him whose rough career
Of toil and care thy love doth cheer.
Whose manly worth by Heaven was fated
To be through life thus fitly mated;
Blessed by those thy youthful twain,
Who by thy side their place maintain,
Still nestling closer to thy bosom
As the fair flowers of reason blossom;
By all who thy dear kindred claim,
And love to see thy face, and love to hear thy name.

And so I end my simple writing,
The muse in fault, but love ending
That which, but for this love alone,
I thought not ever to have done,
A birth-day lay. Then sister mine,
Keep thou in kindness this propine,
And through life's yet untrodden scene
Still be to me what thou hast been.

VERSES WRITTEN IN FEBRUARY, 1827.

LIKE gleam of sunshine on the mountain's side,
Fair, bright and beautiful, while all beside,
Slope, cliff and pinnacle in shadow lie
Beneath the awning of a wintry sky,
Through loop-hole in its cloudy texture beaming
A cataract of light, so softly streaming,
Shines one blest deed of ruth when war's grim form
O'er a scourged nation guides his passing storm.

Like verdant islet-spots, that softly peer
Through the dull mist, as morning breezes clear
The brooding vapour from the wide-stretched vale,
So in a land where Mammon's cares prevail,
Do frequent deeds of gentle charity
Refresh the moral gazer's mental eye.

Britain, thou art in arms and commerce graced
With many generous acts, that, fairly traced

On thy long annals, give a lustre far
Exceeding those of wealth or trophied war;
And may we not say truthfully of thee,
Thou art a land of mercy? May it be!

What forms are those with lean galled sides? In vain
Their lax'd and ropy sinews sorely strain
Heaped loads to draw with lash and goad urged on.
They were in other days, but lately gone,
The useful servants, dearly prized, of those
Who to their failing age give no repose,
Of thankless, heartless owners. Then full oft
Their arched graceful necks so sleek and soft
Beneath a master's stroking hand would rear
Right proudly, as they neigh'd his well-known voice to hear.
But now how changed! And what marred things are these,
Starved, hooted, scarred, denied or food or ease;
Whose humbled looks their bitter thralldom shew,
Familiar with the kick, the pinch, the blow?
Alas! in this sad fellowship are found
The playful kitten and the faithful hound,
The gallant cock that hailed the morning light,
All now hard-fated mates in woeful plight.

Ah no! a land of mercy is a name
Which thou in all thy glory mayest not claim!

But yet there dwell in thee the good, the bold,
Who in thy streets, courts, senates bravely hold
Contention with thy wayward cruelty,
And shall subdue it ere this age glide by.
Meantime as they their manly power exert,
"God speed ye well!" bursts from each kindly heart.
And they *will* speed; for this foul blot of shame
Must be washed out from Britain's honoured name,
And she among enlightened nations stand,
A brave, a merciful and generous land.

THE TRAVELLER BY NIGHT IN NOVEMBER.

HE who with journey well begun
Beneath the morning's cheerful sun
Stretches his view o'er hill and dale,
And distant city, (through its veil
Of smoke, dark spires and chimneys seen,)
O'er harvest-lands and meadows green,
What time the roused and busy, meeting
On king's high-way exchange their greeting,
Feels his cheered heart with pleasure beat,
As on his way he holds. And great

Delight hath he who travels late
When the fair moon doth hold her state
In the clear sky, while down and dale
Repose in light so pure and pale!

While lake and pool and stream are seen
Weaving their maze of silvery sheen,
And cot and mansion, rock and glade,
And tower and street in light and shade
Strongly contrasted are. I trow,
Better than noonday seems his show,
Soothing the pensive mind.
And yet,
When moon is dark and sun is set,
Not reft of pleasure is the wight,
Who, in snug chaise, at close of night,
Begins his journey in the dark,
With crack of whip and ban-dogs' bark,
And jarring wheels and children bawling,
And voice of surly ostler, calling
To post-boy, through the mingled din,
Some message to a neighbouring inn.
All sounds confusedly in his ear;
The lonely way's commencing cheer.

With dull November's starless sky
O'er head, his fancy soars not high.
The carriage lamps a white light throw
Along the road, and strangely shew
Familiar things that cheat the eyes,
Like friends in motley masker's guise.
"What's that? or dame, or mantled maid,
Or herd-boy gathered in his plaid,
Who leans against yon wall his back?"
"No 'tis in sooth a tiny stack
On peat or turf or cloven wood
Of cottage fire the winter's food."
"Ha! yonder shady nook discovers
A gentle pair of rustic lovers."
"Out on't! a pair of harmless calves,
Through ragged bushes seen by halves."
"What thing of strange, unshapely height,
Approaches slowly on the light,
That like a hunch-backed giant seems,
And now is whitening in its beams?"
"'Tis but a hind, whose burly back
Is bearing home a well-filled sack."
"What's that like spots of fleckered snow
On the road's margin clustered so?"

" 'Tis linen left to bleach by night."
"Gramercy on us! see I right?
Some witch is casting cantraps there,
The linen hovers in the air!"
"Pooh! soon or late all wonders cease,
We have but scared a flock of geese."

Thus oft through life we do misdeem
Of things that are not what they seem.
Ah! could we there with as slight skathe
Divest us of our cheated faith!

And then, belike, when chiming bells
The near approach of waggon tells,
He wistful looks to see it come,
Its bulk emerging from the gloom,
With dun tarpawling o'er it thrown,
Like a huge Mammoth moving on.

But still more pleased, through murky air,
He spies the distant bonfire's glare;
And, nearer to the spot advancing,
Black imps and goblins round it dancing;
And nearer still, distinctly traces
The featured disks of happy faces,
Grinning and roaring in their glory,
Like Bacchants wild of ancient story,
And making murgeons to the flame,
As it were play-mate in the game.
Full well, I trow, could modern stage
Such acting for the nonce engage,
A crowded audience, every night,
Would press to see the jovial sight;
And this, from cost and squeezing free,
November's nightly travellers see.

Through village, lane or hamlet going,
The light from cottage window, shewing
Its inmates at their evening fare,
By rousing fire, where earthenware
With pewter trenchers, on the shelf,
Give some display of worldly pelf,
Is transient vision to the eye
Of him our hasty passer by;
Yet much of pleasing import tells,
And cherished in his fancy dwells,
Where simple innocence and mirth
Encircle still the cottage hearth.
Across the road a fiery glare
Doth now the blacksmith's forge declare,
Where furnace-blast, and measured din

Fugitive Verses

Of heavy hammers, and within
The brawny mates their labour plying,
From heated bar the red sparks flying,
Some idle neighbours standing by
With open mouth and dazzled eye;
The rough and sooty walls with store
Of chains and horse-shoes studded o'er,
And rusty blades and bars between,
All momentarily are heard and seen.

Nor does he often fail to meet,
In market town's dark, narrow street,
(Even when the night with onward wings
The sober hour of bed-time brings,)
Amusement. From the alehouse door,
Having full bravely paid his score,
Issues the tipsy artizan,
With some sworn brother of the can,
While each to keep his footing tries,
And utters words solemn and wise.

The dame demure, from visit late,
Her lantern borne before in state
By sloven footboy, paces slow
With pattered feet and hooded brow.

Where the seamed window-board betrays
Interior light, right closely lays
The eves-dropper his curious ear,
Some neighbours fire-side talk to hear;
While, from an upper casement bending,
A household maid, perhaps, is sending
From jug or pot, a sloppy shower
That makes him homeward fleetly scour.

From lower rooms few gleams are sent
Through shortened shutter-hole or rent;
But from the loftier chambers peer
(Where damsels doff their gentle gear
For rest preparing) tapers bright,
That give a momentary sight
Of some fair form with visage glowing,
With loosened braids and tresses flowing,
Who busied by the mirror stands
With bending head and upraised hands
Whose moving shadow strangely falls
With size enlarged on roof and walls.
Ah! lovely are the things, I ween,
By speed's light, passing glam'rie seen!
Fancy so touched will oft restore
Things once beheld and seen no more.

But now he spies the flaring door
Of bridled Swan or gilded Boar,
At which the bowing waiter stands
To know the alighting guest's commands.
A place of bustle, dirt and din,
Swearing without, scolding within;
Of narrow means and ample boast,
The traveller's stated halting post,
Where trunks are missing or deranged,
And parcels lost and horses changed.

Yet this short scene of noisy coil
But serves our traveller as a foil,
Enhancing what succeeds, and lending
A charm to pensive quiet, sending
To home and friends, left far behind,
The kindest musings of his mind;
Or, should they stray to thoughts of pain,
A dimness o'er the haggard train
A mood and hour like this will throw,
As vexed and burthened spirits know.
Night, loneliness and motion are
Agents of power to distance care;
To distance, not discard; for then,
Withdrawn from busy haunts of men,
Necessity to act suspended,
The present, past and future blended,
Like figures of a mazy dance,
Weave round the soul a dreamy trance,
Till jolting stone or turnpike gate
Arouse him from the soothing state.

And when the midnight hour is past,
If through the night his journey last,
When still and lonely is the road,
Nor living creature moves abroad,
Then most of all, like fabled wizard,
Night slily dons her cloak and vizard,
His eyes at every corner meeting
With some new slight of dexterous cheating,
And cunningly his sight betrays
Even with his own lamp's partial rays.

The road that in fair, honest day
Through pasture-land or corn-fields lay,
A broken hedge-row's ragged skreen
Skirting its margin rank and green,
With boughs projecting, interlaced
With thorn and briar, distinctly traced
On the deep shadows at their back
That deeper sink to pitchy black,

Appearing soothly to the eye
Like woven boughs of tapestry,
Seems now to wind through tangled wood
On forest wild, where Robin Hood
With all his out-laws stout and bold
In olden days his reign might hold.
Yea, roofless barn and ruined walls,
As passing light upon them falls,
When favoured by surrounding gloom,
The castle's stately form assume.

The steaming vapour that proceeds
From moistened hide of weary steeds,
And high on either side will rise,
Like clouds storm-drifted, past him flies;
While mire cast up by their hooved feet
Adds curious magic to deceit,
Glancing presumptuously before him,
Like yellow diamonds of Cairngorum.

How many are the subtle ways
By which sly night the eye betrays,
When in her wild fantastic mood,
By lone and wakeful traveller woo'd!
Shall I proceed? O no! for now
Upon the black horizon's brow
Appears a line of tawny light;
Thy reign is ended, witching night!
And soon thy place a wizard elf,
(But only second to thyself
In glam'rie's art) will quietly take
And spread o'er meadow, vale and brake
Her misty shroud of pearly white;
A modest though deceitful wight,
Who in a softer, gentler way
Will with the wakeful fancy play,
When woody knolls, their bases losing,
Are Islands on a lake reposing,
And streeeted town of high pretence,
As rolls away the vapour dense
With all its wavy, curling billows,
Is but a row of pollard willows.
O no! our traveller, still and lone,
A far, fatiguing way hath gone;
His eyes are dim, he stoops his crest,
And folds his arms and goes to rest.

LINES FOR A FRIEND'S ALBUM.

LINES , in addition to the treasure

LINES FOR A FRIEND'S ALBUM.

Fugitive Verses

Of poesy, culled for the pleasure
Of beau and belle and gentle dame,
When seated round the evening flame,
What time the social hour is waning,
And tardy coachman guests detaining,
A courteous friend hath bid me write
Upon her Album's pages white.

But age the easy grace hath lost
That would become such pages most,
While of a quondam rhymester's skill,
Scarce aught is extant but the will;
And sober, stinted age must use
The school-girl's worn and stale excuse,
When, long her correspondent's debtor,
The apology becomes the letter.

Apologies for those who need 'em!
An Album is a thing of freedom,
Receiving all with right good will
That fortune sends from many a quill,
And then displays like scaly store
Which fisher's net brings to the shore:
The herring sheathed in silvery green,
The whiting in its pearly sheen,
The lithe and wavy eel that glides
Athwart the mackerel's tabbied sides;
John Dory with his dolphin head,
Where amber fins like horns are spread,
And flounder, sole, and thornback, all
In turn on some observer call
To mark each varied form and tint;
And from this simile a hint
Of some encouragement I take,
And humbly this my offering make,
Which if received with favour, truly
Will shew that I have reckoned duly
On what might homelier things commend,
On the good nature of a friend.

ADDRESS TO A STEAM VESSEL.

FREIGHTED with passengers of every sort,
A motley throng, thou leavest the busy port:
Thy long and ample deck, where scattered lie,
Baskets and cloaks and shawls of crimson dye;
Where dogs and children through the crowd are straying,
And on his bench apart the fiddler playing,
While matron dames to tressed seats repair,
Seems, on the glassy waves, a floating fair.

ADDRESS TO A STEAM VESSEL.

Fugitive Verses

Its dark form on the sky's pale azure cast,
Towers from this clustering group thy pillared mast;
The dense smoke, issuing from its narrow vent,
Is to the air in curly volumes sent,
Which coiling and uncoiling on the wind,
Trails, like a writhing serpent, far behind.
Beneath, as each merged wheel its motion plies,
On either side the white-churned waters rise,
And newly parted from the noisy fray,
Track with light ridgy foam thy recent way,
Then far diverged, in many a lustrous line
On the still-moving distant surface shine.

Thou holdest thy course in independent pride;
No leave askest thou of either wind or tide.
To whate'er point the breeze inconstant veer,
Still doth thy careless helmsman onward steer;
As if the stroke of some magician's wand
Had lent thee power the ocean to command.
What is this power which thus within thee lurks,
And all unseen, like a masked giant works?
Even that which gentle dames at morning tea,
From silver urn ascending, daily see
With tressy wreathings borne upon the air
Like loosened ringlets of a lady's hair;
Or rising from th' enamelled cup beneath,
With the soft fragrance of an infant's breath:
That which within the peasant's humble cot
Comes from the uncovered mouth of savoury pot,
As his kind mate prepares his noonday fare,
Which cur and cat and rosy urchins share;
That which, all silvered by the moon's pale beam
Precedes the mighty Geyser's up-cast stream,
What time, with bellowing din, exploded forth,
It decks the midnight of the frozen north,
While travellers from their skin-spread couches rise
To gaze upon the sight with wondering eyes.

Thou hast to those "in populous city pent"
Glimpses of wild and beauteous nature lent,
A bright remembrance ne'er to be destroyed,
That proves to them a treasure long enjoyed,
And for this scope to beings erst confined,
I fain would hail thee with a grateful mind.
They who had nought of verdant freshness seen,
But suburb orchards choked with colworts green,
Now, seated at their ease, may glide along,
Loch Lomond's fair and fairy Isles among;
Where bushy promontories fondly peep
At their own beauty in the nether deep,
O'er drooping birch and rowen red that lave

Fugitive Verses

Their fragrant branches in the glassy wave:
They who on higher objects scarce have counted
Than church—spire with its gilded vane surmounted,
May view within their near, distinctive ken
The rocky summits of the lofty Ben;
Or see his purple shoulders darkly lower
Through the dim drapery of a summer shower.
Where, spread in broad and fair expanse, the Clyde
Mingles his waters with the briny tide,
Along the lesser Cumra's rocky shore,
With moss and crusted lichens fleckered o'er,
He who but warfare held with thievish cat,
Or from his cupboard chased a hungry rat,
The city cobbler, scares the wild sea—mew
In its mid—flight with loud and shrill halloo;
Or valiantly with fearful threatening shakes
His lank and greasy head at Kittywakes.
The eyes that have no fairer outline seen,
Than chimneyed walls with slated roofs between,
Which hard and harshly edge the smoky sky,
May Aron's softly—visioned peaks descry,
Coping with graceful state her steepy sides
O'er which the cloud's broad shadow swiftly glides,
And interlacing slopes that gently merge
Into the pearly mist of ocean's verge.
Eyes which admired that work of sordid skill,
The storied structure of a cotton mill,
May wondering now behold the unnumbered host
Of marshalled pillars on fair Ireland's coast,
Phalanx on phalanx ranged with sidelong bend
Or broken ranks that to the main descend,
Like Pharaoh's army on the Red Sea shore,
Who deep and deeper sunk, to rise no more.

Yet ne'ertheless, whate'er we owe to thee,
Rover at will on river, lake, and sea,
As profit's bait or pleasure's lure engage,
Offspring of Watt, that philosophic sage,
Who in the heraldry of science ranks
With those to whom men owe high meed of thanks
For genius usefully employed, whose fame
Shall still be linked with Davy's splendid name!
Dearer to fancy, to the eye more fair
Are the light skiffs, that to the breezy air
Unfurl their swelling sails of snowy hue
Upon the moving lap of ocean blue:
As the proud swan on summer lake displays,
With plumage brightening in the morning rays,
Her fair pavilion of erected wings,
They change and veer and turn like living things.

Fugitive Verses

With ample store of shrouding, sails and mast
To brave with manly skill the winter blast
Of every clime, in vessels rigged like these
Did great Columbus cross the western seas,
And to the stinted thoughts of man revealed
What yet the course of ages had concealed:
In such as these, on high adventure bent
Round the vast world Magellan's comrades went.
To such as these are hardy seamen found
As with the ties of kindred feeling bound,
Boasting, while cans of cheering grog they sip,
The varied fortunes of "our gallant ship:"
The offspring these of bold sagacious man,
Ere yet the reign of lettered lore began.

In very truth, compared to these, thou art
A daily labourer, a mechanic swart,
In working weeds arrayed of homely grey,
Opposed to gentle nymph or lady gay,
To whose free robes the graceful right is given
To play and dally with the winds of heaven.
Beholding thee, the great of other days
And modern men with all their altered ways,
Across my mind with hasty transit gleam,
Like fleeting shadows of a feverish dream:
Fitful I gaze, with adverse humours teased,
Half sad, half proud, half angry, and half pleased.

THE ELDEN TREE.

A BALLAD.

A **FEAST** was spread in the Baron's hall,
And loud was the merry sound,
As minstrels played at lady's call,
And the cup went sparkling round.

For gentle dames sat there, I trow,
By men of mickle might,
And many a chief with dark-red brow,
And many a burly knight.

Each had fought in war's grim ranks,
And some on the surgy sea,
And some on Jordan's sacred banks
For the cause of Christentie.

But who thinks now of blood or strife,
Or Moor, or Paynim foe?
Their eyes beam bright with social life,

THE ELDEN TREE.

Fugitive Verses

And their hearts with kindness glow.

"Gramercie, chieftain, on thy tale!
It smacks of thy merry mood."

"Aye, monks are sly and women frail
Since rock and mountain stood."

"Fye, fye! sir knight, thy tongue is keen,
'Tis sharper than thy steel."

"So, gentle lady, are thine een,
As we poor lovers feel."

"Come pledge me well, my lady gay,
Come pledge me, noble frere;
Each cheerful mate on such a day,
Is friend or mistress dear."

And louder still came jeer and boast,
As the flagons faster pour,
Till song and tale and laugh are lost
In a wildly mingled roar.

Aye, certes, 'tis an hour of glee,
For the Baron himself doth smile,
And nods his head right cheerily,
And quaffs his cup the while.

What recks he now of midnight fear,
Or the night-wind's dismal moan,
As it tosses the boughs of that Elden Tree,
Which he thinketh so oft upon?

Long years have passed since a deed was done,
By its doer only seen,
And there lives not a man beneath the sun,
Who wotteth that deed hath been.

So gay was he, so gay were all,
They marked not the growing gloom;
Nor wist they how the darkening hall
Lowered like the close of doom.

Dull grew the goblet's sheen, and grim
The features of every guest,
And colourless banners aloft hung dim,
Like the clouds of the drizzly West.

Hath time passed then so swift of pace?
Is this the twilight grey?
A flash of light passed through the place
Like the glaring noon of day.

THE ELDEN TREE.

Fierce glanced the momentary blaze
O'er all the gallant train,
And each visage pale with dazzled gaze
Was seen and lost again.

And the thunder's rolling peal, from far,
Then on and onward drew,
And varied its sound like the broil of war,
And loud and louder grew.

Still glares the lightning blue and pale,
And roars the astounding din;
And rattle the windows with bickering hail,
And the rafters ring within.

And cowering hounds the board beneath
Are howling with piteous moan,
While lords and dames sit still as death,
And words are uttered none.

At length, in the waning tempest's fall,
As light from the welkin broke,
A frightened man rushed through the hall,
And words to the baron spoke.

"The thunder hath stricken your tree so fair;
Its roots on green-sward lie."
"What tree?" "The Elden planted there,
Some thirty years gone by."

"And wherefore starest thou on me so,
With a face so ghastly wild?"
"White bones are found in the mould below
Like the bones of a stripling child."

Pale he became as the shrouded dead,
And his eye-balls fixed as stone;
And down on his bosom dropped his head,
And he uttered a stifled groan.

Then from the board each guest, amazed,
Sprung up, and curiously
Upon his sudden misery gazed,
And wondered what might be.

Out spoke the ancient seneschal,
"I pray ye stand apart,
Both gentle dames and nobles all,
His grief is at his heart.

Fugitive Verses

"Go call Saint Cuthbert's monk with speed,
And let him be quickly shriven,
And fetch ye a leech for his body's need
To dight him for earth or heaven."

"No fetch me a priest," the Baron said,
In a voice that seemed uttered with pain;
And he shuddered and shrunk as he faintly bade
His noble guests remain.

"Heaven's eye each secret deed doth scan;
Heaven's justice all should fear;
What I confess to the holy man,
Both heaven and you shall hear."

And soon Saint Cuthbert's monk stood by
With visage sad, but sweet,
And cast on the Baron a piteous eye,
And the Baron knelt low at his feet.

"O father! I have done a deed
Which God alone did know:
A brother's blood these hands have shed
With many a fiend-like blow.

"For fiends lent strength, like a powerful charm,
And my youthful breast impelled,
And I laughed to see, beneath my arm
The sickly stripling quelled.

"A mattock from its pit I took,
Dug deep for the Elden Tree,
And I tempted the youth therein to look
Some curious sight to see.

"The woodmen to their meal were gone,
And ere they returned again,
I had planted that tree with my strength alone
O'er the body of the slain.

"Ah! gladly smiled my father then,
And seldom he smiled on me,
When he heard that my skill, like skill of men,
Had planted the Elden Tree.

"But where was his eldest son, so dear,
Who nearest his heart had been?
They sought him far, they sought him near,
But the boy no more was seen.

Fugitive Verses

"And thus his life and lands he lost,
And his father's love beside;
The thought that ever rankled most
If this heart of secret pride.

"Ah! could the partial parent wot
The cruel pang he gives
To the child, neglected and forgot,
Who under his cold eye lives!

"His elder rights did envy move,
These lands and their princely hall;
But it was our father's partial love
I envied him most of all.

"Now thirty years have o'er me past,
And, to the eye of man,
My lot was with the happy cast,
My heart it could not scan.

"Oh! I have heard in the dead of night
My murdered brother's groan,
And shuddered as the pale moon-light
On the mangled body shone!

"My very miners, pent in gloom,
Whose toil my coffers stored,
And cursed, belike, their cheerless doom,
Were happier than their Lord.

"O holy man! my tale is told
With pain, with tears, with shame;
May penance hard, may alms of gold
Some ghostly favour claim?

"The knotted scourge shall drink my blood,
The earth my bed shall be,
And bitter tears my daily food,
To earn Heaven's grace for me."

Now, where that rueful deed was done,
Endowed with rights and lands,
Its sharp spires brightening in the sun,
A stately abbey stands.

And the meekest monk whose life is there
Still spent on bended knee,
Is he who built that abbey fair,
And planted the Elden Tree.

NOTE.

The story of this ballad was told to me by the late Sir George Beaumont, as one he had heard from his mother, who said it was a tradition belonging to some castle in the North of England, where it was believed to have happened. It was recommended by him as a good subject for a ballad; and with such a recommendation I was easily tempted to endeavour, at least, to preserve its simple and striking circumstances, in that popular form. I have altered no part of the story, nor have I added any thing but the founding of the Abbey, and the Baron's becoming a Monk, in imitation of that exquisite ballad, "The Eve of St. John," where so much is implied in so few words, by the two last stanzas, which I have always particularly admired.

There is a nun in Dryburgh bower,
Ne'er looks upon the sun;
There is a Monk in Melrose Tower,
He speaketh word to none.

That nun who ne'er beholds the day,
That Monk who speaks to none,
That nun is Smaylho'mes Lady gay,
That Monk the bold Baron.

**SONG,
WOO'D AND MARRIED AND A',**

(VERSION TAKEN FROM AN OLD SONG OF THAT NAME.)

THE bride she is winsome and bonny,
Her hair it is snooded sae sleek,
And faithfu' and kind is her Johnny,
Yet fast fa' the tears on her cheek.
New pearlins are cause of her sorrow,
New pearlins and plenishing too,
The bride that has a' to borrow,
Has e'en right mickle ado.
Woo'd and married and a'!
Woo'd and married and a'!
Is na' she very weel aff
To be woo'd and married at a'?
Her mither then hastily spak,
"The lassie is glakit wi' pride;
In my pouch I had never a plack
On the day when I was a bride.
E'en tak' to your wheel, and be clever,
And draw out your thread in the sun;
The gear that is gifted, it never
Will last like the gear that is won.
Woo'd and married and a'!
Wi' havins and tocher sae sma'!
I think ye are very weel aff,
To be woo'd and married at a'!"

Fugitive Verses

"Toot, toot!" quo' her grey-headed faither,
"She's less o' a bride than a bairn,
She's ta'en like a cout frae the heather,
Wi' sense and discretion to learn.
Half husband, I trow, and half daddy,
As humour inconstantly leans,
The chiel maun be patient and steady,
That yokes wi' a mate in her teens.
A kerchief sae douce and sae neat,
O'er her locks that the winds used to blaw!
I'm baith like to laugh and to greet,
When I think o' her married at a'!"

Then out spak' the wily bridegroom,
Weel waled were his wordies, I ween,
"I'm rich, though my coffer be toom,
Wi' the blinks o' your bonny blue een.
I'm prouder o' thee by my side,
Though thy ruffles or ribbons be few,
Than Kate o' the Croft were my bride,
Wi' purples and pearlins enow.
Dear, and dearest of ony!
Ye're woo'd and buikit and a'
And do ye think scorn o' your Johnny,
And grieve to be married at a'?"

She turned, and she blushed, and she smiled,
And she looket sae bashfully down;
The pride o' her heart was beguiled,
And she played wi' the sleeves o' her gown;
She twirled the tag o' her lace,
And she nipplet her boddice sae blue,
Sine blinket sae sweet in his face,
And aff like a maukin she flew.
Woo'd and married and a'
Wi' Johnny to roose her and a'
She thinks hersel very weel aff,
To be woo'd and married at a'.

A SONG,

(WRITTEN FOR MR. STRUTHER'S COLLECTION OF SONGS.)

IT was on a morn, when we were thrang,
The kirn it crooned, the cheese was making,
And bannocks on the girdle baking,
When ane at the door chapp't loud and lang.

Yet the auld gudewife and her mays sae tight,
Of a' this bald din took sma' notice I ween;

A SONG,

Fugitive Verses

For a chap at the door in braid day–light,
Is no like a chap that's heard at e'en.

But the docksy auld laird of the Warlock glen,
Wha waited without, half blate, half cheery,
And lang'd for a sight o' his winsome deary,
Raised up the latch, and cam' crouselly ben.

His coat it was new, and his o'erlay was white,
His mittens and hose were cozy and bean;
But a wooer that comes in braid day–light,
Is no like a wooer that comes at e'en.

He greeted the carline and lasses sae braw,
And his bare liart pow, sae smoothly he straiokit,
And he looket about, like a body half glaikit,
On bonny sweet Nanny the youngest of a'.

"Ha laird!" quo' the carline, "and look ye that way?
Fy, let na' sic fancies bewilder ye clean:
An elderlin man, in the noon o' the day,
Should be wiser than youngsters that come at e'en."

"Na, na," quo' the pawky auld wife, "I trow,
You'll no' fash your head wi' a youthfu' gilly,
As wild and as skeigh as a muirland filly;
Black Madge is far better and fitter for you."

He hem'd and he haw'd, and he drew in his mouth,
And he squeezed the blue bannet his twa hands between,
For a wooer that comes when the sun's i' the south,
Is mair landward than wooers that come at e'en.

"Black Madge is sae carefu'" "What's that to me?"
"She's sober and ident, has sense in her noddle;
She's douce and respeckit" "I care na' a bodle,
Love winna be guided, and fancy's free."

Madge tossed back her head wi' a saucy slight,
And Nanny, loud laughing, ran out to the green;
For a wooer that comes when the sun shines bright,
Is no like an wooer that comes at e'en.

Then awa flung the Laird, and loud muttered he,
"A' the daughters of Eve, between Orkney and Tweed o!
Black or fair, young or auld, dame or damsel or widow,
May gang in their pride to the de'il for me!

But the auld gudewife and her mays sae tight
Cared little for a' his stour banning, I ween;
For a wooer that comes in braid day light,

A SONG,

Is no' like a wooer that comes at e'en.

FY, LET US A' TO THE WEDDING.

(AN AULD SANG NEW BUSKIT.)

FY , let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be liling there;
For Jock's to be married to Maggy,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

And there will be jibing and jeering,
And glancing of bonny dark een,
Loud laughing and smooth-gabbit speering
O' questions baith pawky and keen.

And there will be Bessy the beauty,
Wha raises her cockup sae hie,
And giggles at preahings and duty,
Guid grant that she gang na' ajee!

And there will be auld Geordie Taunner,
Wha coft a young wife wi' his gowd;
She'll flaunt wi' a silk gown upon her,
But wow! he looks dowie and cow'd.

And brown Tibby Foulter the Heiress
Will perk at the tap o' the ha',
Encircled wi' suitors, wha's care is
To catch up her gloves when they fa',

Repeat a' her jokes as they're cleckit,
And haver and glower in her face,
When tocherless mays are negleckit,
A crying and scandalous case.

And Maysie, wha's clavering aunty
Wad match her wi' Laurie the Laird,
And learns the young fule to be vaunty,
But neither to spin nor to caird.

And Andrew, wha's Granny is yearning
To see him a clerical blade,
Was sent to the college for learning,
And cam' back a coof as he gaed.

And there will be auld Widow Martin,
That ca's hersel thrity and twa;
And thraw-gabbit Madge wha for certain
Was jilted by Hab o' the Shaw.

FY, LET US A' TO THE WEDDING.

Fugitive Verses

And Elspy the sewster sae genty,
A pattern of havens and sense,
Will straik on her mittens sae dainty,
And crack wi' Mess John i' the spence.

And Angus, the seer o' fairlies,
That sits on the stane at his door,
And tells about bogles, and mair lies
Than tongue ever uttered before.

And there will be Bauldy the boaster,
Sae ready wi' hands and wi' tongue;
Proud Paty and silly Sam Foster,
Wha quarrel wi' auld and wi' young:

And Hugh the town-writer, I'm thinking,
That trades in his lawerly skill,
Will egg on the fighting and drinking
To bring after-grist to his mill:

And Maggy na, na! we'll be civil,
And let the wee bridie a-be;
A vilipend tongue is the devil,
And ne'er was encouraged by me.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be liltin' there,
Frae mony a far-distant ha'din',
The fun and the feasting to share.

For they will get sheep's head, and haggis,
And browst o' the barley-mow;
E'en he that comes latest, and lag is,
May feast upon dainties enow:

Veal florentines in the oon baken,
Weel plenished wi' raisins and fat,
Beef, mutton, and chuckies, a' taken
Het reeking frae spit and frae pat:

And glasses (I trow 'tis na' said ill),
To drink the young couple good luck,
Weel filled wi' a braw beechen ladle
Frae punch-bowl as big as Dumbuck.

And then will come dancing and daffing,
And reelin and crossin o' hans,
Till even auld Lucky is laughing,
As back by the aumry she stans.

Sic bobbing and flinging and whirling,
While fiddlers are making their din;
And pipers are droning and skirling,
As loud as the roar o' the lin.

Then fy, let us a' to the wedding,
For they will be lilting there,
For Jock's to be married to Maggy,
The lass wi' the gowden hair.

HOOLY AND FAIRLY.

(FOUNDED ON AIN OLD SCOTCH SONG.)

OH, neighbours! what had I a—do for to marry!
My wife she drinks possets and wine o' Canary,
And ca's me a niggardly, thraw—gabbit cairly,
O, gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly,
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad drink hooly and fairly!

She sups wi' her kimmers on dainties enow,
Aye bowing and sminning and wiping her mou',
While I sit aside, and am helpit but sparely,
O, gin my wife wad feast hooly and fairly
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad feast hooly and fairly

To fairs and to bridals and preachings and a',
She gangs sae light headed and buskit sae braw,
In ribbons and mantuas that gar me gae barely:
O, gin my wife wad spend hooly and fairly!
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad spend hooly and fairly!

I' the kirk sic commotion last Sabbath she made,
Wi' babs o' red roses and breast—knots o'erlaid!
The Dominie stickit the psalm very nearly:
O, gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly!
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad dress hooly and fairly!

She's warring and flyting frae morning till e'en,
And if ye gainsay her, her een glowr sae keen,
Then tongue, kneeve, and cudgel she'll lay on ye sairly:
O, gin my wife wad strike hooly and fairly!
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad strike hooly and fairly!

When tired wi' her cantrips, she lies in her bed,

Fugitive Verses

The wark a' negleckit the chaumer unred,
While a' our guid neighbours are stirring sae early:
O, gin my wife wad wurk timely and fairly!
Timely and fairly, timely and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad wurk timely and fairly!

A word o' guid counsel or grace she'll hear none;
She bandies the Ellers, and mocks at Mess John,
While back in his teeth his own text she flings rarely:
O, gin my wife wad speak hooly and fairly!
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
O, gin my wife wad speak hooly and fairly!

I wish I were single, I wish I were freed;
I wish I were doited, I wish I were dead,
Or she in the moul, to dement me nae mair, lay!
What does it 'vail to cry hooly and fairly!
Hooly and fairly, hooly and fairly,
Wasting my breath to cry hooly and fairly!

LORD JOHN OF THE EAST, A Ballad.

THE fires blazed bright till deep midnight,
And the guests sat in the hall,
And the Lord of the feast, Lord John of the East,
Was the merriest of them all.

His dark–grey eye, that wont, so sly,
Beneath his helm to scowl,
Flashed keenly bright, like a new–waked sprite,
As passed the circling bowl.

In laughter light, or jocund lay,
That voice was heard, whose sound,
Stern, loud and deep in battle–fray,
Did foe–men fierce astound;

And stretched so balm, like lady's palm,
To every jester near,
That hand which through a prostrate foe
Oft thrust a ruthless spear.

The gallants sang and the goblets rang,
And they revelled in careless state,
Till a thundering sound that shook the ground
Was heard at the castle gate.

"Who knocks without, so loud and stout?
Some wandering knight, I ween,

Fugitive Verses

Who from afar, like a guiding star,
Our blazing hall hath seen.

"If a stranger it be of high degree,
(No churl durst make such din,)
Step forth amain, my pages twain,
And soothly ask him in.

"Tell him our cheer is the forest deer,
Our bowl is mantling high,
And the Lord of the feast is John of the East,
Who welcomes him courteously."

The pages twain returned again,
And a wild scared look had they.
"Why look ye so? Is it friend or foe?"
Did the angry Baron say.

"A stately knight without doth wait,
But further he will not come,
Till the Baron himself shall stand at the gate
And ask him to his home."

"By my mother's shroud, he is full proud!
What earthly man is he?"
"I know not in truth," quoth the trembling youth,
"If earthly man it be:

"In reveller's plight he is bedight,
With a vest of the crim'sy meet;
But his mantle behind, that streams on the wind,
Is a corse's bloody sheet."

"Out! paltry child! thy wits are wild,
Thy comrade will tell me true:
Say plainly then what thou hast seen,
Or dearly shalt thou rue."

Then spoke the second page with fear,
And bent him on his knee,
"Were I on your father's sword to swear,
The same it appeared to me."

"And is there ne'er of my vassals here,
Of low or high degree,
That will unto this stranger go,
Will go for the love of me?"

Then spoke and said fierce Donald the Red,
(A fearless man was he,)
"Yes; I will straight to the castle gate,

Fugitive Verses

Lord John, for the love of thee."

With heart full stout he hied him out,
While silent all remain:
Nor moved a tongue those gallants among,
Till Donald returned again.

"Speak," said his Lord, "by thy hopes of grace!
What stranger must we hail?"
But the haggard looks of Donald's face
Made his faltering words to fail.

"It is a knight in some foreign guise,
His like did I never behold,
For the stony look of his beamless eyes
Made my very life—blood cold.

"I did him greet in fashion meet,
And bade him your feast to partake;
But the voice that spoke when he silence broke
Made the earth beneath me quake.

"O, such a tone did tongue ne'er own,
That moved in mortal head;
It is like a sound from the hollow ground,
Like the voice of the confined dead!

"I bade him to your social board,
But in he will not hie,
Until at the gate this castle's Lord
Shall entreat him courteously.

"And a ghastly smile o'er his visage past,
As he sternly bade me say,
'It was no vassal who lured your guest
To that feast of the woody Bay.'"

Pale grew the Baron, and faintly said,
As he heaved his breath with pain,
"From such a feast, as there was spread,
Do any return again?"

"I bade my guest to a bloody feast,
Where the death's—wound was his fare,
And the Isle's bright Maid who my love betrayed,
She tore her raven hair.

"The sea—fowl screams and the watch—tower gleams,
And the deafening billows roar,
Where he, unblest, was put to rest
On a wild and distant shore.

Fugitive Verses

"Do the hollow grave and the whelming wave
Give up their dead again?
Doth the surgy waste waft o'er its breast
The spirits of the slain?"

But the Baron's limbs shook fast, and poured
The big drops from his brow,
As louder still the third time roared
The thundering gate below.

"O rouse thee, Baron, for manhood's worth!
Let good or ill befall,
Thou must to the stranger knight go forth,
And ask him to your hall."

"Rouse thy bold breast," said each eager guest,
"What boots it shrinking so?
Be it fiend or sprite, or murdered knight,
In God's name thou must go.

"Why should'st thou fear? dost thou not wear
A gift from the great Glendower,
Sandals blest by a holy Priest,
O'er which nought ill hath power?"

All ghastly pale Lord John did quail,
As he turned him to the door,
And his sandals blest by a holy Priest
Sound feebly on the floor.

Then back to the hall and his merry mates all
A parting look he sent;
"God send thee, amain, safe back again!"
His head he sadly bent.

Then listened they on the lengthened way
To his faint and lessening tread,
And, when that was past, to the wailing blast,
That wailed as for the dead.

But wilder it grew, and stronger it blew,
And it rose with an elrich sound,
Till the lofty Keep on its rocky steep
Fell hurling to the ground.

Each fearful eye then glanced on high
To the lofty windowed wall,
When a fiery trace of the Baron's face
Through the casements shone on all.

Fugitive Verses

But the visioned glare passed through the air,
And the raging tempest ceased,
And never more, on sea or shore,
Was seen Lord John of the East.

The sandals blest by a holy Priest
Lay unscathed on the swarded green;
But never again, on land or main,
Lord John of the East was seen.

MALCOLM'S HEIR.

A TALE OF WONDER.

O, go not by Dunorloch's walls
When the moon is in the wane,
And cross not o'er Dunorloch's bridge,
The farther bank to gain!

For there the Lady of the Stream
In dripping robes you'll spy,
A-singing to her pale wan babe
An eldrich lullaby.

And stop not at the house of Merne,
On the eve of good Saint John;
For then the swathed knight walks his rounds
With many a heavy moan.

All swathed is he in coffin-weeds,
And a wound is in his breast,
And he points still to the gloomy vault,
Where they say his corse doth rest.

But pass not near Glencroman's Tower,
Though the sun shine e'er so bright;
More dreaded is that in the noon of day
Than these in the noon of night.

The night-shade rank grows in the court,
And snakes coil in the wall,
And bats lodge in the rifted spire,
And owls in the murky hall.

On it there shsine no cheerful light,
But the deep-red setting sun
Gleams bloody red on its battlements,
When day's fair course is run.

And fearfully in night's pale beams,

Fugitive Verses

When the moon peers o'er the wood,
Its shadow grim stretched on the ground
Lies blackening many a rood.

No sweet bird's chirping there is heard,
No herd-boy's horn doth blow;
But the owlet hoots and the pent blast sobs,
And loud croaks the carrion-crow.

No marvel! for within its walls
Was done the deed unblest,
And in its noisome vaults the bones
Of a father's murderer rest.

He laid his father in the tomb,
With deep and solemn woe,
As rumour tells, but righteous Heaven
Would not be mocked so.

There rest his bones in the mouldering earth,
By lord and by carl forgot;
But the foul, fell spirit, that in them dwelt,
Rest hath it none, I wot!

"Another night," quoth Malcolm's heir,
As he turned him fiercely round,
And closely clenched his ireful hand,
And stamped upon the ground;

"Another night within your walls
I will not lay my head,
Though the clouds of Heaven my roof shall be,
And the cold dank earth my bed.

"Your younger son has now your love,
And my stepdame false your ear;
And his are your hawks, and his are your hounds,
And his are your dark-brown deer.

"To him you have given your noble steed,
As fleet as the passing wind;
But me have you shamed before my friends,
Like the son of a base-born hind."

Soft answer made the white-haired chief,
Dim was his tearful eye,
"Proud son, thy anger is all too keen,
Thy spirit is all too high:

"Yet rest this night beneath my roof,
The wind blows cold and shrill,

Fugitive Verses

With to-morrow's dawn, if it so must be,
Even follow thy wayward will."

Yet nothing moved was Malcolm's heir,
And never a word did he say;
But cursed his father in his heart,
And sternly strode away.

And his coal-black steed he mounted straight,
As twilight gathered round,
And at his feet, with eager speed,
Ran Swain, his faithful hound.

Loud rose the blast, yet nevertheless,
With furious speed rode he,
Till night, like the gloom of a caverned mine,
Had closed o'er tower and tree.

Loud rose the blast, thick fell the rain,
Keen flashed the lightning red,
And loud the awful thunder roared
O'er his unsheltered head.

At length full close before him shot
A flash of sheeted light,
And the high arched gate of Glencroman's Tower
Glared on his dazzled sight.

His steed stood still, nor step would move,
Up looked his faithful Swain,
And wagged his tail, and feebly whined;
He lighted down amain.

Through porch and court he passed, and still
His listening ear he bowed,
Till, beneath the hoofs of his trampling steed,
The paved hall echoed loud.

And other echoes answer gave
From arches wide and grand;
Close to his horse and his faithful dog,
He took his fearful stand.

The night-birds shrieked from the creviced roof,
And the fitful wind sung shrill,
Yet, ere the mid-watch of the night,
Were all things hushed and still.

But in the mid-watch of the night,
When hushed was every sound,
Faint doleful music reached his ear,

MALCOLM'S HEIR.

Fugitive Verses

As if rising from the ground.

And loud and louder still it waxed,
And upward still it wore,
Till it seemed at the end of the farthest aisle
To enter the eastern door.

O! never did music of mortal make
Such dismal sounds contain;
A horrid eldrich dirge it seemed,
A wild unearthly strain.

The yell of pain and the wail of woe,
And the short, shrill shriek of fear,
Through the winnowing sound of a furnace flame
Confusedly struck his ear;

And the serpent's hiss, and the tiger's growl,
And the famished vulture's cry,
Were mixed at times, as with measured skill,
In this horrid harmony.

Up bristled the locks of Malcolm's heir,
And his heart it quickly beat,
And his trembling steed shook under his hand,
And Swain cowered close to his feet.

When lo! a faint light, through the porch,
Still strong and stronger grew,
And shed on the walls and the lofty roof
Its wan and dismal hue.

And slowly entering then appeared,
Approaching with soundless tread,
A funeral band in dark array,
As in honour of the dead.

The first that walked were torch-men ten
To lighten their gloomy road,
And each wore the face of an angry fiend,
And on cloven goat's feet trod;

And the next that walked as mourners meet,
Were murderers twain and twain,
With bloody hands and surtout red,
Befouled with many a stain;

Each with a cut cord round his neck,
And red-strained starting een,
Shewed that, upon the gibbet tree
His earthly end had been;

MALCOLM'S HEIR.

Fugitive Verses

And after these in solemn state
There came an open bier,
Borne on black, shapeless, rampant forms,
That did but half appear.

And on that bier a corse was laid,
As corse could never lie,
That did, by decent hands composed,
In nature's struggles die.

Nor stretched, nor wound, but every limb
In strong distortion lay,
As in the throes of a violent death,
Is fixed the lifeless clay;

And in its breast was a broken knife,
With the black-blood oozing slow;
And its face was the face of an aged man,
With locks of the winter snow:

Its features were fixed in horrid strength,
And the glaze of its half-closed eye
A last dread parting look expressed,
Of woe and agony.

But oh I that horrid form to trace,
Which followed it close behind,
In fashion of the chief mourner,
What words shall minstrel find?

In his lifted hand, with straining grasp,
A broken knife he prest,
The other half of the cursed blade
Was that in the corse's breast.

And in his blasted, horrid face
Full strongly marked, I ween,
The features of the aged corse,
In life's full prime were seen.

Ay; gnash thy teeth and tear thy hair,
And roll thine eyeballs wild,
Thou horrible, accursed son,
With a father's blood defiled!

Back from the corse, with strong recoil,
Still onward as they go,
Doth he in vain his harrowed head
And writhing body throw;

Fugitive Verses

For closing round, a band of fiends
Full fiercely with him deal,
And force him o'er the bier to bend,
With their fangs of red-hot steel.

Still on they moved, and stopped at length
In the midst of the trembling hall,
When the dismal dirge from its loudest pitch,
Sunk to a dying fall.

But what of horror next ensued,
No mortal tongue can tell,
For the thrilled life paused in Malcolm's heir,
In a death-like trance he fell.

The morning rose with cheerful light
On the country far and near,
But neither in country, town, nor tower,
Could they find Sir Malcolm's heir.

They sought him east, they sought him west,
O'er hill and dale they ran,
And met him at last on the blasted heath,
A crazed and wretched man.

He will to no one utter his tale,
But the Priest of Saint Cuthbert's Cell,
And aye, when the midnight warning sounds,
He hastens his beads to tell.

NOTE.

The yell of pain, and the wail of woe,
And the short, shrill shriek of fear,
Through the winnowing sound of a furnace flame, &c.

In Miss Holford's (now Mrs. Hodson) Margaret of Anjou, there is an assemblage of sounds, preceding a scene of terrific incantation, which is finely imagined, and produces a powerful effect; and this passage in the above ballad may, perhaps, lead the reader to suppose that I had that description in my mind when I wrote it. Had this been the case, I should have owned it readily. But the Ballad of Malcolm's Heir was written several years before the publication of that Poem; and in the hands of the immediate friends of my own family; though as no copy of it was ever given away, it was impossible it could ever reach further. I, therefore, claim it, though acknowledging great inferiority, as a coincidence of thought with that distinguished Author.

"Their senses reeled, for every sound
Which the ear loves not, filled the air;
Each din that reason might confound
Echoed in ceaseless tumult there;
Swift whirling wheels, the shriek intense

Fugitive Verses

Of one who dies by violence;
Yell, hoarse and deep, from blood-hound's throat;
The night-crow's evil-boding note;
Such wild and chattering sounds as throng
Upon the moon-struck idiot's tongue:
The roar of bursting flames, the dash
Of waters wildly swelling round,
Which unrestrained by dyke or mound,
Leap down at once with hideous crash."
MARGARET OF ANJOU, Cant. VII.

SONG,

CALLED
THE COUNTRY LADY'S REVEILLIE.

FROM early fire wending
The smoke is ascending,
And with the clouds blending,
 Awake, awake!
From green covert creeping
Wild creatures are peeping,
Fy! sloth of dull sleeping
 Forsake, forsake!

The cocks are a-crowing,
The kine are a-lowing,
The milk-pail is flowing
 Awake, awake
The dew-drops are gleaming,
And bright eyes are beaming,
The mist of pale dreaming
 Forsake, forsake!

Now maidens are bracing,
And bodices lacing,
The slender form gracing,
 Awake, awake!
On slippered toe stealing,
Thy fair face revealing,
The curtain's dark sheeling
 Forsake, forsake

VOLUNTEER'S SONG,

WRITTEN IN 1803.

YE who Britain's soldiers be,
Freemen, children of the free,
Who quickly come at danger's call,

SONG,

Fugitive Verses

From shop and palace, cot and hall,
And brace ye bravely up in warlike gear,
For all that ye hold dear;

Blest in your hands be sword and spear!
There is no banded Briton here
On whom some fond mate hath not smiled,
Or hung in love some lisping child,
Or aged parent, grasping his last stay,
With locks of honoured grey.

Such men behold with steady pride,
The threatened tempest gathering wide,
And list with onward form inclined,
To sound of foe—men on the wind,
And bravely act amid the battle's roar,
In scenes untried before.

Let veterans boast, as well they may,
Nerves steeled in many a bloody day;
The generous heart, who takes his stand
Upon his free and native land,
Doth, with the first sound of the hostile drum,
A fearless man become.

Then come, ye hosts, that madly pour
From wave—tossed floats upon our shore!
If fell or gentle, false or true,
Let those inquire, who wish to sue:
Nor fiend nor hero from a foreign strand,
Shall lord it in our land.

Come, then, ye hosts that madly pour
From wave—tossed floats upon our shore!
An adverse wind or breezeless main
Locked in their ports our *tars* detain,
To waste their eager spirits, vainly keen,
Else here ye had not been.

Yet ne'ertheless, in strong array,
Prepare ye for a well—fought day.
Let banners wave and trumpets sound,
And closing cohorts darken round,
And the fierce onset raise its mingled roar,
New sound on England's shore!

Freemen, children of the free,
Are brave alike on land or sea;
And every rood of British ground
On which a hostile spear is found,
Proves under their firm tread and vigorous stroke,

SONG,

A deck of royal oak.

SONG,

WRITTEN FOR AN IRISH AIR.

THE morning air plays on my face,
And through the grey mist peering
The softened sun I sweetly trace,
Wood, muir and mountain cheering.
Larks aloft are singing,
Hares from covert springing,
And o'er the fen the wild-duck brood
Their early way are winging.

Bright every dewy hawthorn shines,
Sweet every herb is growing,
To him whose willing heart inclines
The way that he is going.
Clearly do I see now
What will shortly be now;
I'm patting at her door poor Tray,
Who fawns and welcomes me now.

How slowly moves the rising latch!
How quick my heart is beating!
That worldly dame is on the watch
To frown upon our meeting.
Fy! why should I mind her,
See who stands behind her,
Whose eye upon her traveller looks
The sweeter and the kinder.

O every bounding step I take,
Each hour the clock is telling,
Bears me o'er mountain, bourn and brake
Still nearer to her dwelling.
Day is shining brighter,
Limbs are moving lighter,
While every thought to Nora's love,
But binds my love the tighter.

SONG,

FOR AN IRISH AIR.

COME , form we round a cheerful ring
And broach the foaming ale,
And let the merry maiden sing,
The beldame tell her tale.

SONG,

Fugitive Verses

And let the sightless harper sit
The blazing faggot near;
And let the jester vent his wit,
The nurse her bantling cheer.

Who shakes the door with angry din,
And would admitted be?
No, Gossip Winter! snug within,
We have no room for thee.

Go scud it o'er Killarney's lake,
And shake the willows bare,
Where water-elves their pastime take,
Thou'lt find thy comrades there.

Will-o'-the-wisp skips in the dell,
The owl hoots on the tree,
They hold their nightly vigil well,
And so the while will we.

Then strike we up the rousing glee,
And pass the beaker round,
Till every head, right merrily
Is moving to the sound.

A SCOTCH SONG.

THE gowan glitters on the sward,
The lavrock's in the sky,
And collie on my plaid keeps ward,
And time is passing by.
Oh no! sad and slow
And, lengthened on the ground,
The shadows of our trysting bush,
It wears so slowly round!

My sheep-bell tinkles frae the west,
My lambs are bleating near,
But still the sound that I lo'e best,
Alac! I canna' hear.
Oh no! sad and slow,
The shadow lingers still,
And like a lanely ghaist I stand
And croon upon the hill.

I hear below the water roar,
The mill wi' clacking din,
And Lucky scolding frae her door,
To ca' the bairnies in.
Oh no! sad and slow,

A SCOTCH SONG.

Fugitive Verses

These are na' sounds for me,
The shadow of our trysting bush,
It creeps sae drearily!

I coft yestreen, frae Chapman Tam,
A snood of bonny blue,
And promised when our trysting cam',
To tie it round her brow.
Oh no! sad and slow!
The mark it winna' pass;
The shadow of that weary thorn,
Is tethered on the grass.

O now I see her on the way,
She's past the witch's knowe,
She's climbing up the Brownny's brae,
My heart is in a lowe!
Oh no tis na' so,
'Tis glamrie I have seen;
The shadow of that hawthorn bush,
Will move na' mair till e'en.

My book o' grace I'll try to read,
Though conn'd wi' little skill,
When collie barks I'll raise my head,
And find her on the hill;
Oh no! sad and slow,
The time will ne'er be gane,
The shadow of the trysting bush,
Is fixed like ony stane.

SONG,

POVERTY PARTS GOOD COMPANY, (FOR AN OLD SCOTCH AIR.)

WHEN my o'erlay was white as the foam o' the lin,
And siller was chinkin my pouches within,
When my lambkins were bleatin on meadow an brae,
As I went to my love in new cleeding sae gay,
Kind was she, and my friends were free,
But poverty parts good company.

How swift passed the minutes and hours of delight,
When piper played cheerly, and crusie burned bright,
And linked in my hand was the maiden sae dear,
As she footed the floor in her holy-day gear!
Woe is me; and can it then be,
That poverty parts sic company?

We met at the fair, and we met at the kirk,

SONG,

Fugitive Verses

We met i' the sunshine, we met i' the mirk;
And the sound o'her voice, and the blinks o'her een,
The cheerin and life of my bosom hae been.
 Leaves frae the tree, at Mertimass flee,
 And poverty parts sweet company.

At bridal and infare, I braced me wi' pride,
The bruise I hae won, and a kiss o' the bride;
And loud was the laughter good fellows among,
As I uttered my banter or chorused my song;
 Dowie and dree are jestin and glee,
 When poverty spoils good company.

Wherever I gaed kindly lasses looked sweet,
And mithers and aunties were unco discreet;
While kebbuck and beeker were set on the board;
But now they pass by me, and never a word!
 Sae let it be, for the worldly and slee
 Wi' poverty keep nae company.

But the hope of my love is a cure for its smart,
And the spae-wife has tauld me to keep up my heart,
For, wi' my last saxpence, her loof I hae crost,
And the bliss that is fated can never be lost.
 Though cruelly we may ilka day see
 How poverty parts dear company.

SONG,

(FOR A SCOTCH AIR.)

O **SWIFTLY** glides the bonny boat
 Just parted from the shore,
And, to the fisher's chorus note,
 Soft moves the dipping oar!
His toils are borne with lightsome cheer,
 And ever may they speed,
Who feeble age and helpmates dear,
 And tender bairnies feed.

CHORUS.

We cast our lines in Largo Bay,
 Our nets are floating wide,
Our bonny boat with yielding sway
 Rocks lightly on the tide;
And happy prove our daily lot,
 Upon the summer sea!
And blest on land our kindly cot,

SONG,

Fugitive Verses

Where all our treasures be!

The Mermaid on her rock may sing,
The Witch may weave her charm,
Nor Water-Sprite, nor eldrich thing
The bonny boat can harm.
It safely bears its scaly store
Through many a stormy gale,
While joyful shouts rise from the shore,
Its homeward prow to hail.

CHORUS.

We cast our lines, &c.

A SAILOR'S SONG

WHILE clouds on high are riding,
The wintry moonshine hiding,
The raging blast abiding,
O'er mountain waves we go,
We go, we go, we go,
Bravely we go, we go.

With hind, the dry land reaping,
With townsman, shelter keeping,
With lord, on soft down sleeping,
Change we our lot? O no!
O no! O no! O no!
Change we our lot? O no!

On stormy main careering,
Each sea-mate, sea-mate cheering,
With dauntless helms-man steering,
Our forthward course we hold,
We hold, we hold, we hold,
Our forthward course we hold, we hold.

Their sails with sunbeams whitened,
Themselves with glory brightened,
From care their bosoms lightened,
Who shall return? the bold;
The bold, the bold, the bold;
Only the bold! the bold!

SONG,

A NEW VERSION OF AN OLD SCOTCH SONG.

CHORUS.

Fugitive Verses

"SAW ye Johnny comin?" quo' she,
"Saw ye Johnny comin?
Wi' his blue bonnet on his head,
And his doggie runnin.
Yestreen about the gloamin time
I chanced to see him comin,
Whistling merrily the tune
That I am a' day hummin," quo' she,
"I am a' day hummin."

"Fee him, faither, fee him," quo' she,
"Fee him, faither, fee him;
A' the wark about the house
Gaes wi' me whan I see him:
A' the wark about the house,
I gang sae lightly through it;
And though ye pay some merks o' geer,
Hoot! ye winna rue it," quo' she,
"No; ye winna rue it."

"What wad I do wi' him, hizzy?
What wad I do wi' him?
He's ne'er a sark upon his back,
And I hae nane to gie him."
"I hae twa sarks into my kist,
And ane o' them I'll gie him;
And for a merk o' mair fee,
O, dinna stand wi' him," quo' she,
"Dinna stand wi' him."

"Weel do I lo'e him," quo' she,
"Weel do I lo'e him,
The brawest lads about the place
Are a' but haverels to him.
O fee him, faither; lang I trow
We've dull and dowie been;
He'll haud the plough, thrash i' the barn,
And crack wi' me at e'en," quo' she,
"Crack wi' me at e'en."

SIR MAURICE. A Ballad.

SIR MAURICE was a wealthy lord,
He lived in the north countrie;
Well could he cope with foeman's sword,
Or the glance of a lady's eye.

Now all his armed vassals wait,
A staunch and burly band,

SIR MAURICE. A Ballad.

Fugitive Verses

Before his stately Castle's gate,
Bound for the Holy Land.

Above the spearmen's lengthened file,
Are pictured ensigns flying;
Stroked by their keeper's hand the while,
Are harnessed chargers neighing.

And looks of woe, and looks of cheer,
And looks the two between,
On many a warlike face appear,
Where tears have lately been.

For all they love is left behind,
Hope beckons them before;
Their parting sails swell with the wind,
Blown from their native shore.

Then through the crowded portal passed
Six goodly knights and tall,
Sir Maurice himself, who came the last,
Was goodliest of them all.

And proudly roved his hasty eye
O'er all the warlike train;
"Save ye! brave comrades! prosperously,
Heaven send us cross the main!

"But see I right? an armed band
From Moorham's lordless hall;
And he, who bears the high command,
Its ancient Seneschal!

"Return, your stately keep defend;
Defend your lady's bower,
Lest rude and lawless hands should rend,
That lone and lovely flower."

"God will defend our lady dear,
And we will cross the sea,
From slavery's chain, his lot severe,
Our noble lord to free."

"Nay, nay! some wandering minstrel's tongue,
Hath framed a story vain;
Thy lord, his liege-men brave among,
Near Acre's wall was slain."

"Nay, good my lord! for had his life
Been lost on battle-ground,
When ceased that fell and fatal strife,

Fugitive Verses

His body had been found."

"No faith to such delusion give;
His mortal term is past"
"Not so, not so! he is alive,
And will be found at last!"

These latter words, right eagerly,
From a slender stripling broke,
Who stood the ancient warrior by,
And trembled as he spoke.

Sir Maurice started at the sound,
And all, from top to toe,
The stripling scanned, who to the ground,
His blushing face bent low.

"Is this thy kinsman, Seneschal?
Thy own or thy sister's son?
A gentler page, in tent or hall,
Mine eyes ne'er looked upon.

"To thine own home return, fair youth!
To thine own home return;
Give ear to likely, sober truth,
Nor prudent counsel spurn.

"War suits thee not if boy thou art;
And if a sweeter name
Befit thee, do not lightly part
With maiden's honoured fame."

He turned him from his liege—men all,
Who round their chieftain pressed;
His very shadow on the wall,
His troubled mind expressed.

As sometimes slow and sometimes fast
He paced to and fro,
His plummy crest now upwards cast
In air, now drooping low.

Sometimes, like one in frantic mood,
Short words of sound he uttered,
And sometimes, stopping short, he stood
As to himself he muttered:

"A daughter's love, a maiden's pride!
And may they not agree?
Could man desire a lovelier bride,
A truer friend than she?"

SIR MAURICE. A Ballad.

Fugitive Verses

"Down, cursed thought! a boy's garb,
Betrays not wanton will;
Yet sharper than an arrow's barb,
That fear might wound me still."

He muttered long, then to the gate
Returned and looked around,
But the Seneschal and his stripling mate
Were nowhere to be found.

With outward cheer and inward smart,
In warlike, fair array,
Did Maurice with his bands depart,
And shoreward bent his way.

Their stately ship rode near to port,
The warriors to receive,
And there, with blessings kind but short,
Did friends of friends take leave.

And soon they saw the crowded strand
Wear dimly from their view,
And soon they saw the distant land,
A line of hazy blue.

The white-sailed ship with favouring breeze,
In all her gallant pride,
Moved like the mistress of the seas,
That rippled far and wide.

Sometimes with steady course she went,
O'er wave and surge careering,
Sometimes with sidelong mast she bent,
Her wings the sea-foam sheering.

Sometimes with poles and rigging bare
She scudded before the blast,
But safely by the Syrian shore
Her anchor dropped at last.

What martial honours Maurice won,
Joined with the brave and great,
From the fierce, faithless Saracen,
I may not here relate.

With boldest band on bridge or moat,
With champion on the plain,
I' the narrow bloody breach he fought,
Choked up with grizzly slain.

Fugitive Verses

Most valiant by the valiant deemed,
Their praise his deeds proclaimed,
And the eyes of his liege—men brightly beamed,
When they heard their leader named.

But fate will quell the hero's strength,
And dim the loftiest brow,
And this our noble chief at length
Was in the dust laid low.

He lay the heaps of dead beneath,
As sunk life's flickering flame,
And thought it was the trance of death,
That o'er his senses came.

And when again day's blessed light
Did on his vision fall,
There stood by his side a wondrous sight
The ancient Seneschal.

He strove, but could not utter word;
His misty senses fled;
Again he woke, and Moorham's lord
Was bending o'er his bed.

A third time sank he as if dead,
And then his eye—lids raising,
He saw a chief with turbaned head,
Intently on him gazing.

"The Prophet's zealous servant I;
His battles I've fought and won;
Christians I scorn, their creeds deny,
But honour Mary's Son.

"And I have wedded an English Dame,
And set her parent free;
And none who bear an English name,
Shall e'er be thrall'd by me.

"For her dear sake I can endure
All wrong, all hatred smother;
Whate'er I feel, thou art secure,
As though thou wert my brother."

"And thou hast wedded an English Dame!"
Sir Maurice said no more,
For o'er his heart soft weakness came,
He sighed and wept full sore.

Fugitive Verses

And many a dreary day and night,
With the Moslem Chief stayed he,
But ne'er could catch, to bless his sight,
One glimpse of the fair lady.

Oft gazed he on her lattice high,
As he paced the court below,
And turned his listening ear to try,
If word or accent low

Might haply reach him there; and oft
Traversed the garden green,
And thought some footstep, small and soft,
Might on the turf be seen.

And oft to Moorham's lord he gave
His eager ear, who told
How he became a wretched slave,
Within that Syrian hold;

What time from liege-men parted far,
Upon the battle-field,
By stern and adverse fate of war,
He was compelled to yield:

And how his daughter did by stealth,
So boldly cross the sea,
With secret store of gathered wealth,
To set her father free:

And how into the foemen's hands
She and her people fell;
And how (herself in captive bands,)
She sought him in his cell;

And but a captive boy appeared,
Till grief her sex betrayed;
And the fierce Saracen, so feared,
Spoke kindly to the maid:

How for her plighted hand sued he,
And solemn promise gave,
Her noble father should be free,
With every Christian slave;

(For many there, in bondage kept,
Felt the base rule of vice.)
How long she pondered, sorely wept,
Then paid the fearful price.

Fugitive Verses

A tale that made his bosom thrill,
His faded eyes to weep;
He waking thought upon it still,
And saw it in his sleep.

But harness rings, and the trumpet's bray,
Again to battle calls,
And Christian Powers in grand array,
Are near those Moslem walls.

Sir Maurice heard; untoward fate!
Sad to be thought upon!
But the Castle's lord unlocked its gate,
And bade his guest be gone.

"Fight thou for faith by thee adored,
By thee so well maintained;
But never may this trusty sword,
With blood of thine be stained!"

Sir Maurice took him by the hand,
"God bless thee too!" he cried;
Then to the nearest Christian band,
With mingled feelings hied.

The battle joined, with dauntless pride,
'Gainst foemen, foemen stood,
And soon the fatal field was dyed
With many a brave man's blood.

At length gave way the Moslem force;
Their valiant Chief was slain;
Maurice protected his corse,
And bore it from the plain.

There's mourning in the Moslem halls,
A dull and dismal sound;
The lady left its 'leaguered walls,
And safe protection found.

When months were past, the widowed Dame
Looked calm and cheerfully;
Then Maurice to her presence came,
And bent him on his knee.

What words of penitence or suit
He uttered, pass we by;
The lady wept, a while was mute,
Then gave this firm reply:

Fugitive Verses

"That thou didst doubt my maiden pride,
 (A thought that rose and vanished.
So fleetingly) I will not chide;
 'Tis from remembrance banished.

"But thy fair fame, earned by that sword,
 Still spotless shall it be:
I was the bride of a Moslem lord,
 And will never be bride to thee."

So firm though gentle was her look,
 Hope in the instant fled;
A solemn, dear farewell he took,
 And from her presence sped.

And she a plighted nun became,
 God serving day and night;
And he of blest Jerusalem,
 A brave and zealous knight.

But that their lot was one of woe,
 Wot ye, because of this
Their separate single state? if so,
 In sooth ye judge amiss.

She tends the helpless stranger's bed,
 For alms her wealth is stored;
On her meek worth God's grace is shed,
 Man's grateful blessings poured.

He still in warlike mail doth stalk,
 In arms his prowess prove;
And oft of siege or battle talk,
 And sometimes of his love.

His noble countenance the while,
 Would youthful listeners please,
When with altered voice, and a sweet sad smile
 He uttered such words as these:

"She was the fairest of the fair,
 The gentlest of the kind;
Search ye the wide world every where,
 Her like ye shall not find.

"She *was* the fairest, *is* the best,
 Too good for a monarch's bride;
I would not give her, in nun's coif drest,
 For all her sex beside."

TO MRS. SIDDONS.

GIFTED of Heaven! who hast, in days gone by,
Moved every heart delighted every eye;
While age and youth, of high and low degree,
In sympathy were joined, beholding thee,
As in the Drama's ever changing scene,
Thou held'st thy splendid state, our tragic queen!
No barriers there thy fair domains confined,
Thy sovereign sway was o'er the human mind;
And, in the triumph of that witching hour,
Thy lofty bearing well became thy power.

The impassioned changes of thy beauteous face,
Thy stately form, and high imperial grace;
Thine arms impetuous tossed, thy robe's wide flow,
And the dark tempest gathered on thy brow;
What time thy flashing eye and lip of scorn,
Down to the dust thy mimic foes have borne;
Remorseful musings, sunk to deep dejection,
The fixed and yearning looks of strong affection;
The active turmoil of a bosom rending,
When pity, love, and honour, are contending:
They who beheld all this, right well, I ween,
A lovely, grand, and wondrous sight have seen.

Thy varied accents, rapid, fitful, slow,
Loud rage, and fear's snatched whisper, quick and low;
The burst of stifled love, the wail of grief,
And tones of high command, full, solemn, brief;
The change of voice, and emphasis that threw
Light on obscurity, and brought to view
Distinctions nice, when grave or comic mood,
Or mingled humours, terse and new, elude
Common perception, as earth's smallest things
To size and form, the vesting hoar-frost brings,
That seemed as if some secret voice, to clear
The ravelled meaning, whispered in thine ear,
And thou hadst even with him communion kept,
Who hath so long in Stratford's chancel slept;
Whose lines, where nature's brightest traces shine,
Alone were worthy deemed of powers like thine:
They who have heard all this, have proved full well
Of soul-exciting sound, the mightiest spell.

But though time's lengthened shadows o'er thee glide,
And pomp of regal state is cast aside,
Think not the glory of thy course is spent,
There's moonlight radiance to thy evening lent,
That, to the mental world can never fade,

Fugitive Verses

Till all who have seen thee, in the grave are laid.
Thy graceful form still moves in nightly dreams,
And what thou wert, to the lulled sleeper seems:
While feverish fancy oft doth fondly trace
Within her curtained couch thy wondrous face.
Yea; and to many a wight, bereft and lone,
In musing hours, though all to thee unknown,
Soothing his earthly course of good and ill,
With all thy potent charm, thou actest still.

And now in crowded room or rich saloon,
Thy stately presence recognized, how soon
On thee the glance of many an eye is cast,
In grateful memory of pleasures past!
Pleased to behold thee, with becoming grace,
Take, as befits thee well, an honoured place
(Where blest by many a heart, long mayest thou stand)
Among the virtuous matrons of our land.

A SONG, WRITTEN FOR AN IRISH MELODY.

HIS boat comes on the sunny tide,
And briskly moves the flashing oar,
The boatmen carol by his side,
And blythely near the welcome shore.

How softly Shannon's currents flow,
His shadow in the stream I see;
The very waters seem to know,
Dear is the freight they bear to me.

His eager bound, his hasty tread,
His well-known voice I'll shortly hear;
And oh, those arms so kindly spread!
That greeting smile! that manly tear!

In other lands, when far away,
My love with hope did never twain;
I saw him thus, both night and day,
To Shannon's banks returned again.

SONG, FOR AN IRISH MELODY.

THE harper who sat on his green mossy seat,
And harped to the youngsters so loud and so sweet,
The far distant hum of the children at play,
And the maiden's soft carol at close of the day,

Fugitive Verses

Ah! this was the music delighted my ear,
And to think of it now is so sad and so dear!
Ah! to listen again, by mine own cottage door,
To the sound of mine own native village once more!

I knew every dame in her holy-day airs;
I knew every maiden that danced at our fairs;
I knew every farmer to market who came,
And the dog that ran after him called by its name.

And who know I now in this far distant land,
But the stiff collared sergeant, and red-coated band?
No kinsman to comfort his own flesh and blood;
No merry eyed damsel to do my heart good!

To mine eye or mine ear no gay cheering e'er comes,
But the flare of our colours, the tuck of our drums;
The fierce flashing steel of our long mustered file,
And the sharp shrilly fifers a-playing the while.

At night, as I keep on the wearisome watch,
The sound of the west wind I greedily catch,
Then the shores of dear Ireland will rise to my sight,
And mine own native valley, that spot of delight!

Divided so far by a wide stormy main
Shall I ever return to our valley again?
Ah! to listen at ease by mine own cottage door,
To the sound of mine own native village once more!

SONG.

BIRD soaring high, cloud in the sky,
Where go ye? O where go ye?
Where the smoke from the gipsy's fire is veering,
And our gay little boat, o'er the blue frith steering,
Will soon bear me.

My thoughts before, on yonder shore,
Are free as wind, are free as wind,
While this body of mine on its palfrey riding,
Right lazy of pace, or on smooth wave gliding,
Is far behind.

But see I not, yon distant spot?
O now I see, O now I see!
Where the mist up the distant hill is creeping,
And woods through the morning cloud are peeping,
There dwelleth she.

SONG.

Fugitive Verses

Doth gentle deep her senses steep
Or does she wake? or does she wake?
Even now perhaps, her dark hair raising,
At her casement she stands, o'er the waters she's gazing,
All for my sake.

Her face is gay as the joyous day,
And O how sweet! and O how sweet!
Her voice as she utters her modest greeting,
While my heart at the sound is so quickly beating,
Whene'er we meet!

When time runs on, and weeks are gone,
Then on that shore, then on that shore,
I'll meet her with all my gay bridesmen bounding,
In light-hearted glee to the minstrel's sounding,
And part no more.

SONG,

WRITTEN AT MR. THOMSON'S REQUEST, AS A KIND OF INTRODUCTION
TO HIS IRISH MELODIES.

SWEET power of song! that canst impart
To lowland swain or mountaineer
A gladness thrilling through the heart,
A joy so tender and so dear!

Sweet power! that on a foreign strand
Canst the rough soldier's bosom move
With feelings of his native land,
As gentle as an infant's love!

Sweet power! that makest youthful heads,
With thistle, leek or shamrock crowned,
Nod proudly as the carol sheds
Its spirit through the social round!

Sweet power! that cheerest the daily toil
Of cottage maid or beldame poor,
The ploughman on the furrowed soil,
Or herd-boy on the lonely moor:

Or he by bards the Shepherd hight,
Who mourns his maiden's broken tie,
Till the sweet plaint, in woe's despite,
Hath made a bliss of agony:

Sweet power of song! thanks flow to thee
From every kind and gentle breast!

SONG,

Let Erin's Cambria's minstrels be
With Burns's tuneful spirit blest!

THE BLACK COCK,

WRITTEN FOR A WELCH AIR, CALLED "THE NOTE OF THE BLACK COCK."

GOOD morrow to thy sable beak,
And glossy plumage, dark and sleek,
Thy crimson moon and azure eye,
Cock of the heath, so wildly shy!
I see thee, slyly cowering, through
That wiry web of silver dew,
That twinkles in the morning air,
Like easement of my lady fair.

A maid there is in yonder tower,
Who, peeping from her early bower,
Half shews, like thee, with simple wile,
Her braided hair and morning smile.
The rarest things with wayward will,
Beneath the covert hide them still:
The rarest things to light of day
Look shortly forth, and shrink away.

One fleeting moment of delight,
I sunned me in her cheering sight;
And short, I ween, the term will be,
That I shall parley hold with thee.
Through Snowdon's mist red beams the day;
The climbing herdboy chaunts his lay;
The gnat-flies dance their sunny ring;
Thou art already on the wing.

SONG,

WRITTEN FOR A WELCH AIR, CALLED "THE PURSUIT OF LOVE."

O, welcome, bat and owlet gray,
Thus winging low your airy way!
And welcome, moth and drowsy fly,
That to mine ear come humming by!
And welcome, shadows dim and deep,
And stars that through the pale sky peep!
O welcome all! to me ye say,
My woodland love is on her way.

Upon the soft wind floats her hair,
Her breath is in the dewy air;
Her steps are in the whispered sound

Fugitive Verses

That steals along the stilly ground.
O dawn of day, in rosy bower,
What art thou to this witching hour?
O noon of day, in sunshine bright,
What art thou to the fall of night?

SONG,

WRITTEN FOR A WELCH AIR, CALLED "THE NEW YEAR'S GIFT."

ALL white hang the bushes o'er Elaw's sweet stream,
And pale from the rock the long icicles gleam;
The first peep of morning just peers from the sky,
And here, at thy door, gentle Mary, am I.

With the dawn of the year, and the dawn of the light,
The one who best loves thee stands first in thy sight,
Then welcome, dear maid! with my gift let me be
A ribbon, a kiss, and a blessing for thee!

Last year, of earth's treasures I gave thee my part,
The new year before it, I gave thee my heart;
And now, gentle Mary, I greet thee again,
When only this band and a blessing remain.

Though Time should run on with his sack full of care,
And wrinkle thy cheek, dear, and whiten thy hair,
Yet still on this morn shall my offering be,
A ribbon, a kiss, and a blessing for thee.

SONG,

WRITTEN FOR A WELCH MELODY.

I'VE no sheep on the mountain, nor boat on the lake,
Nor coin in my coffer to keep me awake,
Nor corn in my garner, nor fruit on my tree,
Yet the Maid of Llanwellyn smiles sweetly on me.

Softly tapping at eve o her window I came,
And loud bayed the watch-dog, loud scolded the dame;
For shame, silly Lightfoot! what is it to thee,
Though the Maid of Llanwellyn smiles sweetly on me?

The farmer rides proudly to market or fair,
The clerk at the alehouse still claims the great chair,
But, of all our proud fellows, the proudest I'll be,
While the Maid of Llanwellyn smiles sweetly on me.

SONG,

Fugitive Verses

For blythe as the urchin at holyday play,
And meek as a matron in mantle of gray,
And trim as a lady of gentle degree,
Is the Maid of Llanwellyn, who smiles upon me.

SONG.

WHAT voice is this, thou evening gale!
That mingles with thy rising wail;
And, as it passes, sadly seems
The faint return of youthful dreams?

Though now its strain is wild and drear,
Blythe was it once as sky-lark's cheer
Sweet as the night-bird's sweetest song
Dear as the lisp of Infant's tongue.

It was the voice, at whose sweet flow
The heart did beat, and cheek did glow,
And lip did smile, and eye did weep,
And motioned love the measure keep.

Oft be thy sound, soft gale of even,
Thus to my wistful fancy given;
And, as I list the swelling strain,
The dead shall seem to live again.

VERSES ON SACRED SUBJECTS.

HYMN.

MY God! would that, from earthly trammels free,
My thoughts could win their upward way to thee,
And there a while in lofty regions prove,
The purifying glow of holy love!

The solemn dome of night is o'er my head,
Where countless stars in grand array are spread
Thy mighty host, that to our wondering eyes
One maze of glory is; while sombre lies
Beneath its vasty span the darkened face
Of many a land, where many a motley race,
With all their worldly care, in sleep are lapt.
O, might my soul, in adoration rapt,
Her high centered thoughts still raise to thee,
With steady power! Alas, this may not be!

My thoughts are twilight birds, in seasons rare,

SONG.

Fugitive Verses

That skim and rise, and flit in nether air;
That wheel, and turn, and cross, and soar, and swoop,
With seeming bootless speed, then feebly droop
Their weary wings, which may no more sustain
Such flight, and hie to murky haunts again.

My God, who knowest the creature thou hast made,
Pity my weakness, nor as sin be laid
Upon my head, this feebleness of mind;
And if sublimer thoughts I may not bind,
As the abiding treasure of my heart
Inmates, who rarely from their cell depart,
Vouchsafe such grace, that many a transient notion
May oft within me kindle true devotion;
And, moving as a meteor of the night,
Be for a passing, glorious moment bright,
A moment, uttering in words of fire,
"Thou art our Mighty Lord, our good and bounteous Sire."

HYMN.

THE frith is crossed, the previous war-fare past,
Through swampy plains, dark woods and deserts vast,
O'er heaths, and flowery slopes and valleys fair,
And gloomy mountain passes steep and bare,
All disembarked the pilgrims stand
On the unknown and beauteous Land,
While Hope, who needs support no more,
Hath dropped her anchor by the shore,
A strangely-mingled band!

And lo, with many a lofty dome,
Before them stands that ample home,
Of many mansions, halls of rest,
And heavenly converse for the blest,
Where charity and love abide;
While through its precincts fair and wide,
Research, and knowledge, and devotion,
Together wend with onward motion,
A home to which, the entrance free,
Come from all tribes of each degree,
And from all lands, the lord and slave,
The firm, the timid and the brave;
The nursling from its mother's arms,
The maid in all her early charms,
The stately dame, the weary drudge,
The priest, the penitent, the pannel and the judge,
The learned philosopher, historian sage,
And he who could not scan a lettered page,
Who look with wonderment, yet look with love,

Fugitive Verses

On their Companions, and most sweetly prove
The new-born fellowship of blessed souls above.
Yea, there do enemies and rivals meet,
And with a strange good-will each other greet,
Like urchins who in feigned array
Of war, on school-tide holyday,
Have sparred and jostled on the green,
And for a moment angry been,
Yea, feel such presence hath within them given,
A quickened zest even to the joys of Heaven.
For o'er them charity like unseen air,
Diffusing balmy sweetness every where,
Shall softly brood; and minds of every hue,
From rosy paleness to empurpled blue,
Like the fair rainbow's mingled harmony,
Give softened splendour to the mental eye.
For wisdom as the generous Saviour said,
When peevish censure reckless charges made
Wisdom, unshackled, works on every side,
And is of all her children justified.

The pilgrim crowds advance. But O, that sight
Before them opening, beautiful and bright,
As lessening distance gives to view
Their Father's house, while they pursue
Their onward path, No! nor by word or thought,
To man's imagination can be brought,
That awful glory, cease, vain muser! cease!
Bless God in humble hope, and be at peace.

HYMN.

ALMIGHTY God, from whom our being came,
To whom it tends, blest be thy holy name!
Blest when through pillared aisles we roam,
Or kneel beneath the lofty dome,
As full o'er-head, and all around,
Swell harmonies of long-drawn sound,
While storied windows with deep tintured beam,
On chiselled forms and graven pavements gleam!

Blest in the low-browed house of prayer,
Where homely pews and rafters bare
Encompass those, who meekly look
Upon the cherished, holy book!
Blest in the cot where, on the ground,
The patriarch peasant kneels with all his family round!

But oh! most blest where thy adorer stands,
Within a temple not upreared by hands!

Fugitive Verses

O'er-canopied by pure ethereal blue,
On which fair clouds, of white and silvery hue,
In wide array with slow progression range,
And varied forms assume in endless change;
The granite peak, by storms of ages beat,
The pavement is, on which he sets his feet,
And there a goodly scope surveys,
Enlightened by the morning rays.
Below, distinctly marked, are seen,
Fields, hamlets, towns, and woodlands green;
And then beyond, but less defined,
A sweep of hills and vales combined,
Where brooding vapours scarce betray,
Some river winding on its way;
And far beyond, by distance made,
A fainter line of light and shade,
While further still, in distance lost,
Lie sea, and shore, and clifted coast,
A vasty circle, dim and pale,
Of mortal ken the closing veil.

In this thy Temple, fair and grand,
Doth thine adoring creature stand,
His eyes in extacy of wonder raising,
His glowing, throbbing heart thy goodness praising,
Till tears run coursing down his cheeks,
And every thrilling member speaks
The one absorbing thought his soul containeth,
Of love and awe composed, "the Lord omnipotent reigneth."

HYMN.

WHAT thoughts come to the Christian's aid,
Upon a bed of sickness laid,
While nightly watchers silence keep,
Or close their weary eyes to sleep,
When lamp and faggots waste away,
As dimly dawns approaching day?

"Though here this frame of dust may end,
My spirit shall to God ascend,
And, for his sake who died to save
Poor sinners from a hopeless grave,
With all her sins and faults forgiven,
A peaceful shelter find in heaven;
A Father's house, a home of love,
Praised be his name, all praise above!

Who, even in ruin, loved us still,
And would not soul and body kill!

Fugitive Verses

And blessed be His generous Son,
Who has for us such mercy won!
His gospel sheds a cheering light
Upon our darkling way, through dreary night.
A gleam falls from a severed cloud,
Upon the coffin, and the shroud;
While, high in air, with buoyant swell,
Sounds like a friendly call, the passing bell."

HYMN.

MY soul! and dost thou faintly shrink,
Thus trembling on an awful brink?
Or rough or smooth, but one step more,
And thy long pilgrimage is o'er.
Thy pilgrim's cloak that clipped thee round,
Like a seared leaf, dropped on the ground,
A base and mouldering thing shall lie,
Its form and uses all gone by.
Behind thee, closing darkness all
Shall cover, like a midnight pall,
Before thee No! I may not dare
To think, or fancy, what lies there.

Doth the unbodied spirit take its flight,
Unto its destined, distant, sphere of light,
Upon the buoyant wings of morn,
All conscious of its glory borne?
Or with an instant transit, make
The awful change, and then awake,
As from a slumber, sound and deep,
Awakes an Infant from its sleep,
With limbs refreshed and vigour new,
A gradual progress to pursue?
Allied to Infancy, with earthly charms,
Once fondled in an elder brother's arms,
Who said to men, by worldly passions driven,
"Lo! such as these possess the realms of heaven."

Or shall it powerful, and at once
Start up as from a gloomy trance,
With sudden, glorious light astounded,
By the blest brotherhood of saints surrounded,
Where those, who have been loved and lost, appear
With kindred looks of greeting and of cheer?

Away, ye pictured thoughts that pass
Like figures on a magic glass,
Or fitful light with arrowy rays
That on the northern welkin plays!

Fugitive Verses

A steady gleam that will not flit,
Comes from the words of Holy Writ.

"Eye hath not seen, and ear hath never heard,
Nor heart conceived the things by God prepared,
For those who love him." O such love impart,
Repentant, fervent and adoring,
From every taint of sin restoring,
My Father and my God! to this poor heart!

HYMN FOR THE SCOTCH KIRK.

O **GOD** ! who madest earth, sea and air,
And living creatures, free and fair,
Thy hallowed praise is every where,
Halleluja!

All blended in the swelling song,
Are wise and simple, weak and strong,
Sweet woman's voice and Infant's tongue,
Halleluja!

Yea, woods, and winds, and waves convey
To the rapt ear a hymn, and say
"He who hath made us we obey,
Halleluja!"

A SECOND HYMN FOR THE KIRK.

BE Heaven's almighty King adored,
Of all good things the Giver!
Sing Halleluja to the Lord
For ever, and for ever!

Let closed lips, moved at the word,
With glowing accents sever!
O Halleluja to the Lord
For ever, and for ever!

Can other strains such sounds afford,
Of extacy? O never!
Sing Halleluja to the Lord
For ever, and for ever!

A THIRD HYMN FOR THE KIRK.

UP , sluggard soul! awake and raise,
To thy blest Lord a song of praise,
Who lifts thee from the gloomy grave,
When low on earth thou liest,

HYMN FOR THE SCOTCH KIRK.

To Him who lived and died to save,
Hosanna in the highest!

To Him, thy friend of friends, whose love
Invites thee to a home above,
When thou, the world's poor outcast slave
In grief and anguish criest,
To Him who lived and died to save,
Hosanna in the highest!

His love a living stream hath found
For pilgrims faint, on barren ground,
Their parched and languid souls to lave,
When earthly streams are driest,
To him who lived and died to save,
Hosanna in the highest!

ST. MATTHEW V. 9.

"**BLESSED** are the peace-makers, for they
God's children shall be called!" so spake
The Prince of Peace, in mortal clay,
Who veiled his glory, for our sake.

The stormy passions of the mind,
The boastful tongue and brow of pride,
Their soothing counsels, wise and kind
Make to a gentle calm subside.

That eye upon the ground is cast,
Which glanced with restless angry glare,
That breast to hostile breast is prest,
Which thought to place a scorpion there.

Contentious tribes upon the ground
Cast bow and spear at their charmed voice,
And, linked in many a friendly round,
Will o'er the pledge of peace rejoice.

Then flourish fields and gardens gay,
Where leaders charged with martial train;
And Infants 'mid the herbage play,
Where lately lay the ghastly slain.

Blest are the peace-makers! for they
To God's blest family belong;
Honoured in this our earthly lay,
And in a sweeter, loftier song.

ST. LUKE XVIII. 16.

"**LET** little children come to me,"
Our Lord and Saviour said,
As on a humble, harmless head
His gentle hand was laid.

The teachable and simple heart,
Fears not to be beguiled;
Who enters Heaven must love and trust,
Even as a little child.

The mightiest king, the wisest sage,
Who knows his God aright,
Himself a helpless Infant feels
In the Almighty's sight.

A nursling at his lesson set,
Who hopes at last to know,
Is the most learned of Adam's race,
In this our home below.

An urchin with his borrowed rod,
Who smites with guided hand,
Earth's greatest conquerors have been
Her lords of many a land.

"Let little children come to me!"
A cheering welcome given
To all with guileless, humble hearts,
Who seek the way to Heaven.

ST. JOHN XXI. 1.

TOIL-WORN upon their wavy sea,
With empty nets and wasted store,
The fishermen of Galilee
Are steering cheerless to the shore.
But lo! upon the shelving strand,
A form like one of Abraham's race,
Beckons with friendly outstretched hand,
Yet moves with more than mortal grace.

And words came wafted on the wind,
" Friends have ye meat?" they answered "None."
"Cast to the right and ye shall find,"
And to the right their nets were thrown:

When all the treasures of the deep
Into their meshy cells were poured.

Fugitive Verses

Who may it be? within them leap
Their yearning hearts "it is the Lord."

So he, traversing life's broad main,
Who long hath toiled and nothing won,
Will feel how profitless and vain
A worldling's task when it is done!
His hands hang listless by his side,
With languid eye and gathered brow,
He wanders, hope no more his guide,
For what hath she to offer now?

But hark, a voice! he turns his head;
A treasure rich before him lies;
And rays of light from heaven are shed,
To gleam the fair unfolded prize.
Who doth this better gift impart,
Than earth or ocean can afford?
O feel, and rouse thee, grateful heart!
And gladly own it is the Lord.

ST. LUKE VII. 12.

IN silent sorrow from the gates of Nain,
Bearing their dead, the widow's only son,
A band of friends went forth; and with that train
Even she, the most bereft, moved sadly on.

But when the Lord beheld the piteous sight,
He had compassion on her; from him broke
Soft tenderness of soul, with saving might,
And "Weep not" were the gracious words he spoke.

In deep affliction 'tis that voice we hear,
When pitying, helpless friends keep silence round:
Weep not! there's saving power, there's comfort near,
That will even in the darkest hour be found.

It is an hour of darkest, deepest woe,
When those we love are severed from our side,
Yet weep not, for we soon and surely go
Upon their steps, led by the same blest Guide.

It is a darkened hour, when evil fame
And evil fortune mingle in our lot;
Yet weep not, He, who scorn, rebuke and shame,
Bore for our worthless sakes, deserts us not.

It is an hour of darkness, when the soul,
She knows not why, dreads an impending doom,

Fugitive Verses

While heaven and earth, seem one black, formless scroll,
But weep not, light will yet break through the gloom.

Poor soul! He who beheld the widow's grief,
And touched the bier, and from death's bands set free
Her only son, hath for all woes relief,
And "Weep not" are the words He speaks to thee.

JOB XIII. 15.

O **GOD** , who by thy boundless might,
This earth, heaven's dome and stars of light,
Hast formed in wisdom and in love!
Let every human bosom move
With grateful thoughts, and gladly raise
In swelling notes a psalm of praise!
Let high and low, and bond and free,
Bless thy great name, and trust in thee!

This is our strong and stedfast stay,
When health and wealth have flown away;
When every joy of life is past,
Our greatest comfort and our last.
When laid upon the bed of death,
These thoughts will join our latest breath,
"I will, O Lord, though crushed and spent I be,
Yea, though thou slay me, trust in thee."

A generous virtue, nobly sprung,
Faith towers our inward powers among,
Like armed chief, like warrior true,
Whose courage nothing can subdue,
But bravely combats to the last,
Then says with looks high—heavenward cast,
"I will, O Lord, in this extremity,
Even though thou slay me, trust in thee."

HYMN.

THOSE , Lord, who raise their souls to thee,
Not alway sink on bended knee.
On earth's vast space of sea and land
Thy sky coped temple wide and grand,
Swift passing thoughts of praise and prayer
To thee are wafted every where,
From grateful hearts, who feel and love
To feel, that 'tis in thee they live and move.

In hours of triumph or of woe;
On fortune's sunny heights, or low

Fugitive Verses

In gloomy deeps of mortal doom,
The quickening thought will swiftly come,
As from veiled heaven the lightning keen
Doth pass the severed clouds between,
And penetrates with equal power
The humble cottage or the lordly tower.

The marching soldier, stern and stark,
The seaman in his wave-tossed ark,
The king on guarded throne sustained,
The prisoner fettered and arraigned,
Will feel, like links of living fire,
Their kindred to a Heavenly Sire,
And in their bosoms' secret core,
With speechless praise, his mighty name adore.

The guileless youth, in halls of pleasure,
Whose light feet time the tuneful measure,
May, with thrilled heart and flashing eye,
Blend holy thanks with revelry;
The very child, at gambols seen
With play-mates on the sunny green,
Who feels it bliss to be alive,
Will to life's Lord a transient worship give.

These nature's inward Hallelujas are,
Warm, tho' with words unclothed; here let them wear
Thy robe of woven sounds, sweet harmony,
And wend in floating beauty to the sky.

A HYMN FOR THE KIRK.

O **LORD** of earth and Heaven,
Whose love and power have given
The solid ground and floating air
And circling ocean, regions fair,
To be the home of moving life,
The busy seats of joy and strife,
To thee with fear and love we raise
A song of praise.

How many links there be
To bind man's heart to thee!
Affections of the human breast
For children, kindred, friend and guest;
Yea, those in generous minds that flow
From virtues of a noble foe!
All form a woven mystic cord,
Thy bands, O Lord.

Fugitive Verses

Thy streaming rays of love,
That glow in Heaven above,
And draw the ransomed soul to thee,
And set it from low thralldom free.
As the snared bird, when loosened, flies
On out-spread pinions to the skies,
With love that conquers fear, we raise
Our song of praise.

A HYMN.

O **LORD** supreme, whose works so fair,
Sublime and varied, every where
The gazing eye delight!
Thy wisdom, power, and love, the day
Doth in its splendid course display,
As doth the glorious night,

We look upon the ocean wide,
Where ships upon the billows ride,
And sea-birds wing the air,
And feel, as o'er the blue expanse
Soft shadows pass and sunbeams glance,
Thy power and love are there.

And also on the checkered land,
Where mountain peaks, and forests grand,
With peopled plains between,
And rising slow from man's abode
The grey smoke on its heavenward road,
In fair array are seen.

Thus day and night, and land, and sea,
Each in its turn, O Lord! of thee
Speaks to the mental ear:
And still the thoughts that they impart
Are, to the Christian Pilgrim's heart,
Most cherished and most dear.

SELECT VERSES FROM THE 147TH PSALM.

PRAISE ye the Lord with cheerful voice,
In swelling strains his praises sing,
It makes the grateful heart rejoice,
It is a blest and pleasant thing.

He who the broken heart doth brace,
And bindeth up the wounded frame,
Numbers the host through heaven's vast space,
And gives to every star its name.

A HYMN.

Fugitive Verses

With fleecy clouds he clothes the sky,
He stores the moistened earth with good,
From him the ravens when they cry,
And savage beasts receive their food.

He sends afar his high behests,
Which sea and land with blessings fill;
Swift flies his word, no power arrests
The course of his almighty will.

THOUGHTS TAKEN FROM THE 93RD PSALM.

CLOTHED in majesty sublime,
And girt with strength th' Almighty reigns;
And, through the wreckful course of time,
His hand the stedfast world sustains.

Wide doth the mighty thunder fill
The darkened earth with dread dismay,
But mightier far is he whose will
The lightning and the storm obey.

Deep, heaving under land and sea,
The earthquake uttereth his sound,
Awful though low; more awful he
Who holds its rage in prison bound.

The powerful billows, huge and grand,
Rise swelling from the troubled main,
More powerful is the powerful hand
That doth their threatening rage restrain.

O Lord, adored! from race to race,
Men shall thy righteous laws proclaim;
And holiness become the place
Called by thy great and glorious name.