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THEODRIC;

AND

OTHER POEMS.

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THEODRIC;

677

A DOMESTIC TALE;

AND

Other Poems.

BY THOMAS CAMPBELL.

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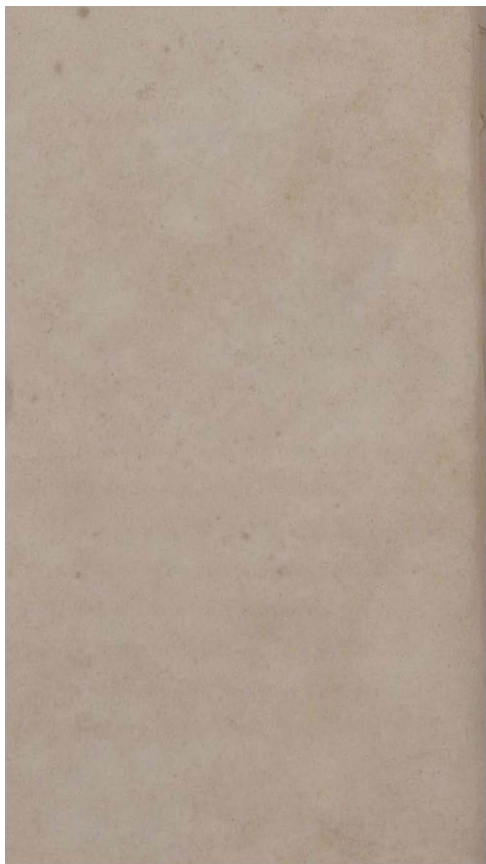
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THEODRIC;

A DOMESTIC TALE.





THEODRIC;

A DOMESTIC TALE.

'T WAS sunset, and the Ranz des Vaches was sung,
And lights were o'er th' Helvetian mountains flung,
That gave the glacier tops their richest glow,
And tinged the lakes like molten gold below.
Warmth flush'd the wonted regions of the storm,
Where, Phoenix-like, you saw the eagle's form,
That high in Heav'n's vermilion wheel'd and soar'd.
Woods nearer frown'd, and cataracts dash'd and roar'd,

From heights brouzed by the bounding bouquetin ;
Herds tinkling roam'd the long-drawn vales between,
And hamlets glitter'd white, and gardens flourish'd
green.

'Twas transport to inhale the bright sweet air !
The mountain-bee was revelling in its glare,
And roving with his minstrelsy across
The scented wild weeds, and enamell'd moss.
Earth's features so harmoniously were link'd,
She seem'd one great glad form, with life instinct,
That felt Heav'n's ardent breath, and smiled below
Its flush of love, with consentaneous glow.

A Gothic church was near ; the spot around
Was beautiful, ev'n though sepulchral ground ;

For there nor yew nor cypress spread their gloom,
But roses blossom'd by each rustic tomb.
Amidst them one of spotless marble shone—
A maiden's grave—and 'twas inscribed thereon,
That young and loved she died whose dust was there:

“Yes,” said my comrade, “young she died, and fair!
Grace form'd her, and the soul of gladness play'd
Once in the blue eyes of that mountain-maid:
Her fingers witch'd the chords they pass'd along,
And her lips seem'd to kiss the soul in song:
Yet woo'd, and worship'd as she was, till few
Aspired to hope, 'twas sadly, strangely true,
That heart, the martyr of its fondness, burn'd
And died of love that could not be return'd.

Her father dwelt where yonder Castle shines
O'er clust'ring trees and terrace-mantling vines.
As gay as ever, the laburnum's pride
Waves o'er each walk where she was wont to glide,—
And still the garden whence she graced her brow,
As lovely blooms, though trode by strangers now.
How oft from yonder window o'er the lake,
Her song of wild Helvetian swell and shake,
Has made the rudest fisher bend his ear,
And rest enchanted on his oar to hear !
Thus bright, accomplish'd, spirited, and bland,
Well-born, and wealthy for that simple land,
Why had no gallant native youth the art
To win so warm—so exquisite a heart ?
She, midst these rocks inspired with feelings strong
By mountain-freedom—music—fancy—song,

Herself descended from the brave in arms,
And conscious of romance-inspiring charms,
Dreamt of Heroic beings; hoped to find
Some extant spirit of chivalric kind;
And scorning wealth, look'd cold ev'n on the claim
Of manly worth, that lack'd the wreath of fame.

Her younger brother, sixteen summers old,
And much her likeness both in mind and mould,
Had gone, poor boy! in soldiership to shine,
And bore an Austrian banner on the Rhine.
'Twas when, alas! our Empire's evil star
Shed all the plagues, without the pride, of war;
When patriots bled, and bitterer anguish cross'd
Our brave, to die in battles foully lost.



The youth wrote home the route of many a day ;
Yet still he said, and still with truth could say,
One corps had ever made a valiant stand,—
The corps in which he served,—THEODRIC's band.
His fame, forgotten chief, is now gone by,
Eclipsed by brighter orbs in glory's sky ;
Yet once it shone, and veterans, when they show
Our fields of battle twenty years ago,
Will tell you feats his small brigade perform'd,
In charges nobly faced and trenches storm'd.
Time was, when songs were chanted to his fame,
And soldiers loved the march that bore his name ;
The zeal of martial hearts was at his call,
And that Helvetian, UDOLPH's, most of all.
'Twas touching, when the storm of war blew wild,
To see a blooming boy,—almost a child,—

Spur fearless at his leader's words and signs,
Brave death in reconnoitring hostile lines,
And speed each task, and tell each message clear,
In scenes where war-train'd men were stunn'd with
fear.

THEODRIC praised him, and they wept for joy
In yonder house,—when letters from the boy
Thank'd Heav'n for life, and more, to use his phrase,
Than twenty lives—his own Commander's praise.
Then follow'd glowing pages, blazoning forth
The fancied image of his Leader's worth,
With such hyperboles of youthful style
As made his parents dry their tears and smile:
But differently far his words impress'd
A wond'ring sister's well-believing breast;—

She caught th' illusion, blest THEODRIC's name,
And wildly magnified his worth and fame ;
Rejoicing life's reality contain'd
One, heretofore, her fancy had but feign'd,
Whose love could make her proud ; and time and
 chance
To passion raised that day-dream of Romance.

Once, when with hasty charge of horse and man
Our arrière-guard had checked the Gallic van,
THEODRIC, visiting the outposts, found
His UDOLPH wounded, weltering on the ground :—
Sore crush'd,—half-swooning, half-upraised, he lay,
And bent his brow, fair boy ! and grasp'd the clay.
His fate moved ev'n the common soldier's ruth—
THEODRIC succour'd him ; nor left the youth

To vulgar hands, but brought him to his tent
And lent what aid a brother would have lent.

Meanwhile, to save his kindred half the smart
The war-gazette's dread blood-roll might impart,
He wrote th' event to them ; and soon could tell
Of pains assuaged and symptoms auguring well ;
And last of all, prognosticating cure,
Enclosed the leach's vouching signature.

Their answers, on whose pages you might note
That tears had fall'n, whilst trembling fingers wrote,
Gave boundless thanks for benefits conferr'd,
Of which the boy, in secret, sent them word,
Whose memory Time, they said, would never blot ;
But which the giver had himself forgot.

In time, the stripling, vigorous and heal'd,
Resumed his barb and banner in the field,
And bore himself right soldier-like, till now
The third campaign had manlier bronzed his brow;
When peace, though but a scanty pause for breath,—
A curtain-drop between the acts of death,—
A check in frantic war's unfinish'd game,
Yet dearly bought, and direly welcome, came.
The camp broke up, and UDOLPH left his chief
As with a son's or younger brother's grief:
But journeying home, how rapt his spirits rose!
How light his footsteps crush'd St. Gothard's snows!
How dear seem'd ev'n the waste and wild Shreckhorn,
Though wrapt in clouds, and frowning as in scorn
Upon a downward world of pastoral charms;
Where, by the very smell of dairy-farms,

And fragrance from the mountain-herbage blown,
Blindfold his native hills he could have known !

His coming down yon lake,—his boat in view
Of windows where love's fluttering kerchief flew,—
The arms spread out for him—the tears that burst,—
('Twas JULIA's, 'twas his sister's met him first :)
Their pride to see war's medal at his breast,
And all their rapture's greeting, may be guess'd.

Ere long, his bosom triumph'd to unfold
A gift he meant their gayest room to hold,—
The picture of a friend in warlike dress ;
And who it was he first bade JULIA guess.
“ Yes,” she replied, “ 'twas he methought in sleep,
When you were wounded, told me not to weep.”

The painting long in that sweet mansion drew
Regards its living semblance little knew.

Meanwhile THEODRIC, who had years before
Learnt England's tongue, and loved her classic lore,
A glad enthusiast now explored the land,
Where Nature, Freedom, Art, smile hand in hand :
Her women fair ; her men robust for toil ;
Her vigorous souls, high-cultured as her soil ;
Her towns, where civic independence flings
The gauntlet down to senates, courts, and kings ;
Her works of art, resembling magic's powers ;
Her mighty fleets, and learning's beauteous bowers,—
These he had visited, with wonder's smile,
And scarce endur'd to quit so fair an isle.



But how our fates from unmomentous things
May rise, like rivers out of little springs !
A trivial chance postpon'd his parting day,
And public tidings caus'd, in that delay,
An English jubilee. 'Twas a glorious sight ;
At eve stupendous London, clad in light,
Pour'd out triumphant multitudes to gaze ;
Youth, age, wealth, penury, smiling in the blaze ;
Th' illumin'd atmosphere was warm and bland,
And Beauty's groupes, the fairest of the land,
Conspicuous, as in some wide festive room,
In open chariots pass'd with pearl and plume.
Amidst them he remark'd a lovelier mien
Than e'er his thoughts had shaped, or eyes had seen :
The throng detain'd her till he rein'd his steed,
And, ere the beauty pass'd, had time to read

The motto and the arms her carriage bore.
Led by that clue, he left not England's shore
Till he had known her : and to know her well
Prolong'd, exalted, bound, enchantment's spell ;
For with affections warm, intense, refined,
She mix'd such calm and holy strength of mind,
That, like Heav'n's image in the smiling brook,
Celestial peace was pictured in her look.
Hers was the brow, in trials unperplex'd,
That cheer'd the sad and tranquillized the vex'd :
She studied not the meanest to eclipse,
And yet the wisest listen'd to her lips ;
She sang not, knew not Music's magic skill,
But yet her voice had tones that sway'd the will.
He sought—he won her—and resolv'd to make
His future home in England for her sake.

Yet, ere they wedded, matters of concern
To CÆSAR'S Court commanded his return,
A season's space,—and on his Alpine way,
He reach'd those bowers, that rang with joy that day:
The boy was half beside himself,—the sire,
All frankness, honour, and Helvetian fire,
Of speedy parting would not hear him speak;
And tears bedew'd and brighten'd JULIA'S cheek.

Thus, loth to wound their hospitable pride,
A month he promised with them to abide;
As, blithe he trode the mountain-sward as they,
And felt his joy make ev'n the young more gay.
How jocund was their breakfast parlour fann'd
By yon blue water's breath,—their walks how bland!

Fair JULIA seem'd her brother's soften'd sprite—
A gem reflecting Nature's purest light,—
And with her graceful wit there was inwrought
A wildly sweet unworldliness of thought,
That almost child-like to his kindness drew,
And twin with UDOLPH in his friendship grew.
But did his thoughts to love one moment range?—
No! he who had loved CONSTANCE could not change!
Besides, till grief betray'd her undesign'd,
Th' unlikely thought could scarcely reach his mind,
That eyes so young on years like his should beam
Unwoo'd devotion back for pure esteem.

True she sang to his very soul, and brought
Those trains before him of luxuriant thought,

Which only Music's Heav'n-born art can bring,
To sweep across the mind with angel wing.
Once, as he smiled amidst that waking trance,
She paused o'ercome: he thought it might be chance,
And, when his first suspicions dimly stole,
Rebuked them back like phantoms from his soul.
But when he saw his caution gave her pain,
And kindness brought suspense's rack again,
Faith, honour, friendship bound him to unmask
Truths which her timid fondness fear'd to ask.

And yet with gracefully ingenuous power
Her spirit met th' explanatory hour;—
Ev'n conscious beauty brighten'd in her eyes,
That told she knew their love no vulgar prize;

And pride, like that of one more woman-grown,
Enlarged her mien, enrich'd her voice's tone.
'Twas then she struck the keys, and music made
That mock'd all skill her hand had e'er display'd :
Inspir'd and warbling, rapt from things around,
She look'd the very Muse of magic sound,
Painting in sound the forms of joy and woe,
Until the mind's eye saw them melt and glow.
Her closing strain composed and calm she play'd,
And sang no words to give its pathos aid ;
But grief seem'd ling'ring in its lengthen'd swell,
And like so many tears the trickling touches fell.
Of CONSTANCE then she heard THEODRIC speak,
And steadfast smoothness still possess'd her cheek ;
But when he told her how he oft had plann'd
Of old a journey to their mountain-land,

That might have brought him hither years before,
“Ah! then,” she cried, “you knew not England’s shore;
And, had you come,—and wherefore did you not?”

“Yes,” he replied, “it would have changed our lot!”

Then burst her tears through pride’s restraining
bands,

And with her handkerchief, and both her hands,

She hid her face and wept.—Contrition stung

THEODRIC for the tears his words had wrung.

“But no,” she cried, “unsay not what you’ve said,

Nor grudge one prop on which my pride is stay’d;

To think I could have merited your faith,

Shall be my solace even unto death!”—

“JULIA,” THEODRIC said, with purposed look

Of firmness, “my reply deserved rebuke;

But by your pure and sacred peace of mind,
And by the dignity of womankind,
Swear that when I am gone you'll do your best
To chase this dream of fondness from your breast."

Th' abrupt appeal electrified her thought ;—
She look'd to Heav'n, as if its aid she sought,
Dried hastily the tear-drops from her cheek,
And signified the vow she could not speak.

Ere long he communed with her mother mild :
" Alas !" she said, " I warn'd—conjured my child,
" And grieved for this affection from the first,
" But like fatality it has been nursed ;
" For when her fill'd eyes on your picture fix'd,
" And when your name in all she spoke was mix'd,

“ ’Twas hard to chide an over-grateful mind !
“ Then each attempt a likelier choice to find
“ Made only fresh-rejected suitors grieve,
“ And UDOLPH’S pride—perhaps her own—believe
“ That could she meet, she might enchant ev’n you.
“ You came.—I augur’d the event, ’tis true,
“ But how was UDOLPH’S mother to exclude
“ The guest that claim’d our boundless gratitude ?
“ And that unconscious you had cast a spell
“ On JULIA’S peace, my pride refused to tell
“ Yet in my child’s illusion I have seen,
“ Believe me well, how blameless you have been :
“ Nor can it cancel, howsoe’er it end,
“ Our debt of friendship to our boy’s best friend.”
At night he parted with the aged pair ;
At early morn rose JULIA to prepare

The last repast her hands for him should make ;
And UDOLPH to convoy him o'er the lake.
The parting was to her such bitter grief,
That of her own accord she made it brief ;
But, ling'ring at her window, long survey'd
His boat's last glimpses melting into shade.

THEODRIC sped to Austria, and achieved
His journey's object. Much was he relieved
When UDOLPH's letters told that JULIA's mind
Had borne his loss firm, tranquil, and resign'd.
He took the Rhenish route to England, high
Elate with hopes,—fulfill'd their ecstasy,
And interchanged with CONSTANCE's own breath
The sweet eternal vows that bound their faith.

To paint that being to a grovelling mind
Were like pourtraying pictures to the blind.
'Twas needful ev'n infectionally to feel
Her temper's fond and firm and gladsome zeal,
To share existence with her, and to gain
Sparks from her love's electrifying chain,
Of that pure pride, which less'ning to her breast
Life's ills, gave all its joys a treble zest,
Before the mind completely understood
That mighty truth—how happy are the good!—

Ev'n when her light forsook him it bequeath'd
Ennobling sorrow; and her memory breath'd
A sweetness that surviv'd her living days
As od'rous scents outlast the censer's blaze.



Or if a trouble dimm'd their golden joy,
'Twas outward dross, and not infused alloy :
Their home knew but affection's looks and speech—
A little Heav'n, above dissension's reach.
But midst her kindred there was strife and gall ;
Save one congenial sister, they were all
Such foils to her bright intellect and grace,
As if she had engross'd the virtue of her race.
Her nature strove th' unnatural feuds to heal,
Her wisdom made the weak to her appeal ;
And though the wounds she cured were soon unclosed,
Unwearied still her kindness interposed.

Oft on those errands though she went, in vain,
And home, a blank without her, gave him pain

He bore her absence for its pious end.—

But public grief his spirit came to bend ;

For war laid waste his native land once more,

And German honour bled at ev'ry pore.

Oh ! were he there, he thought, to rally back

One broken band, or perish in the wrack !

Nor think that *CONSTANCE* sought to move or melt

His purpose : like herself she spoke and felt :—

“ Your fame is mine, and I will bear all woe

“ Except its loss !—but with you let me go

“ To arm you for, to embrace you from the fight ;

“ Harm will not reach me—hazards will delight !”

He knew those hazards better ; one campaign

In England he conjured her to remain,

And she expressed assent, although her heart

In secret had resolved *they* should not part.

How oft the wisest on misfortune's shelves
Are wreck'd by errors most unlike themselves !
That little fault, *that* fraud of love's romance,
That plan's concealment, wrought their whole mischance.
He knew it not preparing to embark,
But felt extinct his comfort's latest spark,
When, 'midst those number'd days, she made repair
Again to kindred worthless of her care.
'Tis true she said the tidings she should write
Would make her absence on his heart sit light ;
But, haplessly, reveal'd not yet her plan,
And left him in his home a lonely man.

Thus damp'd in thoughts, he mused upon the past :
'Twas long since he had heard from UDOLPH last,

And deep misgivings on his spirit fell,
That all with UDOLPH'S household was not well.
'Twas that too true prophetic mood of fear
That augurs griefs inevitably near,
Yet makes them not less startling to the mind,
When come. Least look'd-for then of human kind,
His UDOLPH ('twas, he thought at first, his sprite)
With mournful joy that morn surprised his sight.
How changed was UDOLPH! Scarce THEODRIC durst
Inquire his tidings,—he reveal'd the worst.
“At first,” he said, “as JULIA bade me tell,
“She bore her fate high-mindedly and well,
“Resolved from common eyes her grief to hide,
“And from the world's compassion saved our pride;
“But still her health gave way to secret woe,
“And long she pined—for broken hearts die slow!

- “ Her reason went, but came returning, like
“ The warning of her death-hour—soon to strike ;
“ And all for which she now, poor sufferer ! sighs,
“ Is once to see THEODRIC ere she dies.
“ Why should I come to tell you this caprice ?
“ Forgive me ! for my mind has lost its peace.
“ I blame myself, and ne’er shall cease to blame,
“ That my insane ambition for the name
“ Of brother to THEODRIC, founded all
“ Those high-built hopes that crush’d her by their fall.
“ I made her slight a mother’s counsel sage,
“ But now my parents droop with grief and age ;
“ And though my sister’s eyes mean no rebuke,
“ They overwhelm me with their dying look.
“ The journey’s long, but you are full of ruth ;
“ And she who shares your heart, and knows its truth,

“ Has faith in your affection, far above

“ The fear of a poor dying object’s love.”—

“ She has, my UDOLPH,” he replied, “ ’tis true ;

“ And oft we talk of JULIA—oft of you.”

Their converse came abruptly to a close ;

For scarce could each his troubled looks compose,

When visitants, to CONSTANCE near akin,

(In all but traits of soul) were usher’d in.

They brought not her, nor midst their kindred band

The sister who alone, like her, was bland ;

But said—and smiled to see it gave him pain—

That CONSTANCE would a fortnight yet remain.

Vex’d by their tidings, and the haughty view

They cast on UDOLPH as the youth withdrew,

THEODRIC blamed his CONSTANCE’s intent.—

The demons went, and left him as they went,

To read, when they were gone beyond recall,
A note from her lov'd hand, explaining all.
She said, that with their house she only staid
That parting peace might with them all be made ;
But pray'd for love to share his foreign life,
And shun all future chance of kindred strife.
He wrote with speed, his soul's consent to say :
The letter miss'd her on her homeward way.
In six hours CONSTANCE was within his arms :
Moved, flush'd, unlike her wonted calm of charms,
And breathless—with uplifted hands outspread—
Burst into tears upon his neck, and said,—
“ I knew that those who brought your message laugh'd,
“ With poison of their own to point the shaft ;
“ And this my one kind sister thought, yet loth
“ Confess'd she fear'd 'twas true you had been wroth.

“ But here you are, and smile on me : my pain

“ Is gone, and CONSTANCE is herself again.”

His ecstasy, it may be guess'd, was much,

Yet pain's extreme and pleasure's seem'd to touch.

What pride ! embracing beauty's perfect mould ;

What terror ! lest his few rash words, mistold,

Had agonized her pulse to fever's heat :

But calm'd again so soon it healthful beat,

And such sweet tones were in her voice's sound,

Composed herself, she breathed composure round.

Fair being ! with what sympathetic grace

She heard, bewail'd, and pleaded JULIA's case ;

Implored he would her dying wish attend,

“ And go,” she said, “ to-morrow with your friend ;

I'll wait for your return on England's shore,
And then we'll cross the deep and part no more."

To-morrow both his soul's compassion drew
To JULIA's call, and CONSTANCE urged anew
That not to heed her now would be to bind
A load of pain for life upon his mind.

He went with UDOLPH—from his CONSTANCE went—
Stifling, alas! a dark presentiment
Some ailment lurk'd, ev'n whilst she smiled, to mock
His fears of harm from yester-morning's shock.
Meanwhile a faithful page he singled out,
To watch at home, and follow straight his route,
If aught of threaten'd change her health should show
—With UDOLPH then he reach'd the house of woe.

That winter's eve how darkly Nature's brow
Scowl'd on the scenes it lights so lovely now !
The tempest, raging o'er the realms of ice,
Shook fragments from the rifted precipice ;
And whilst their falling echoed to the wind,
The wolf's long howl in dismal discord join'd,
While white yon water's foam was raised in clouds
That whirl'd like spirits wailing in their shrouds :
Without was Nature's elemental din—
And beauty died, and friendship wept, within !

Sweet JULIA, though her fate was finish'd half,
Still knew him—smiled on him with feeble laugh—
And blest him, till she drew her latest sigh !
But lo ! while UDOLPH's bursts of agony,

And age's tremulous wailings, round him rose,
What accents pierced him deeper yet than those !
'Twas tidings—by his English messenger
Of CONSTANCE—brief and terrible they were.
She still was living when the page set out
From home, but whether now was left in doubt.
Poor JULIA ! saw he then thy death's relief—
Stunn'd into stupor more than wrung with grief ?
It was not strange ; for in the human breast
Two master-passions cannot co-exist,
And that alarm which now usurp'd his brain
Shut out not only peace, but other pain.
'Twas fancying CONSTANCE underneath the shroud
That cover'd JULIA made him first weep loud,
And tear himself away from them that wept.
Fast hurrying homeward, night nor day he slept,

Till, launch'd at sea, he dreamt that his soul's saint
Clung to him on a bridge of ice, pale, faint,
O'er cataracts of blood. Awake, he bless'd
The shore ; nor hope left utterly his breast,
Till reaching home, terrific omen ! there
The straw-laid street preluded his despair—
The servant's look—the table that reveal'd
His letter sent to CONSTANCE last, still seal'd,
Though speech and hearing left him, told too clear
That he had now to suffer—not to fear.
He felt as if he ne'er should cease to feel—
A wretch live-broken on misfortune's wheel :
Her death's cause—he might make his peace with
Heaven,
Absolved from guilt, but never self-forgiven.

The ocean has its ebbings—so has grief.

'Twas vent to anguish, if 'twas not relief,

To lay his brow ev'n on her death-cold cheek.

Then first he heard her one kind sister speak :

She bade him, in the name of Heaven, forbear

With self-reproach to deepen his despair :

“ 'Twas blame,” she said, “ I shudder to relate,

But none of yours, that caused our darling's fate ;

Her mother (must I call her such ?) foresaw,

Should CONSTANCE leave the land, she would with-
draw

Our House's charm against the world's neglect—

The only gem that drew it some respect.

Hence, when you went, she came and vainly spoke

To change her purpose—grew incensed, and broke

With execrations from her kneeling child.
Start not! your angel from her knee rose mild,
Fear'd that she should not long the scene outlive,
Yet bade ev'n you th' unnatural one forgive.
Till then her ailment had been slight, or none;
But fast she droop'd, and fatal pains came on:
Foreseeing their event, she dictated
And sign'd these words for you." The letter said—

"THEODRIC, this is destiny above
Our power to baffle; bear it then, my love!
Rave not to learn the usage I have borne,
For one true sister left me not forlorn;
And though you're absent in another land,
Sent from me by my own well-meant command,

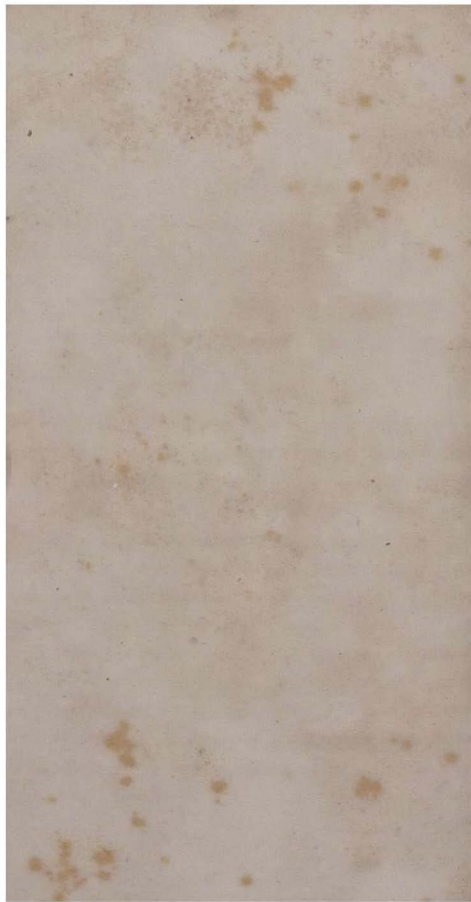
Your soul, I know, as firm is knit to mine
As these clasp'd hands in blessing you now join :
Shape not imagined horrors in my fate—
Ev'n now my sufferings are not very great ;
And when your grief's first transports shall subside,
I call upon your strength of soul and pride
To pay my memory, if 'tis worth the debt,
Love's glorying tribute—not forlorn regret :
I charge my name with power to conjure up
Reflection's balmy, not its bitter cup.
My pard'ning angel, at the gates of Heaven,
Shall look not more regard than you have given
To me ; and our life's union has been clad
In smiles of bliss as sweet as life e'er had.
Shall gloom be from such bright remembrance cast ?
Shall bitterness outflow from sweetness past ?

No ! imaged in the sanctuary of your breast,
There let me smile, amidst high thoughts at rest ;
And let contentment on your spirit shine,
As if its peace were still a part of mine :
For if you war not proudly with your pain,
For you I shall have worse than lived in vain.
But I conjure your manliness to bear
My loss with noble spirit—not despair :
I ask you by our love to promise this,
And kiss these words, where I have left a kiss,—
The latest from my living lips for yours.”—

Words that will solace him while life endures :
For though his spirit from affliction's surge
Could ne'er to life, as life had been, emerge,

Yet still that mind whose harmony elate
Rang sweetness, ev'n beneath the crush of fate,—
That mind in whose regard all things were placed
In views that soften'd them, or lights that graced,—
That soul's example could not but dispense
A portion of its own bless'd influence ;
Invoking him to peace, and that self-sway
Which Fortune cannot give, nor take away :
And though he mourn'd her long, 'twas with such woe,
As if her spirit watch'd him still below.

NOTES
TO
THEODRIC.



NOTES TO THEODRIC.

LINE 3.

" That gave the glacier tops their richest glow."

THE sight of the glaciers of Switzerland, I am told, has often disappointed travellers who had perused the accounts of their splendour and sublimity given by Bourrit and other describers of Swiss scenery. Possibly Bourrit, who has spent his life in an enamoured familiarity with the beauties of Nature in Switzerland, may have leaned to the romantic side of description. One can pardon a man for a sort of idolatry of those imposing objects of Nature which heighten our ideas of the bounty of Nature or Providence, when we reflect that the glaciers—those seas of ice—are not only sublime but useful: they are the inexhaustible reservoirs which supply the principal rivers of Europe; and their annual melting is in proportion to the summer heat which dries up those rivers and makes them need that supply.

That the picturesque grandeur of the glaciers should sometimes disappoint the traveller, will not seem surprising to any one who has been much in a mountainous country, and recollects that the beauty of Nature in such countries is not only variable, but capriciously dependent on the weather and sunshine. There are about four hundred different glaciers*, according to the computation of M. Bourrit, between Mont Blanc and the frontiers of the Tyrol. The full effect of the most lofty and picturesque of them can, of course, only be produced by the richest and warmest light of the atmosphere; and the very heat which illuminates them must have a changing influence on many of their appearances. I imagine it is owing to this circumstance, namely, the casualty and changeableness of the appearance of some of the glaciers, that the impressions made by them on the minds of other and more transient travellers have been less enchanting than those described by M. Bourrit. On one occasion M. Bourrit seems even to speak of a past phenomenon, and certainly one which no other spectator attests in the same terms, when he says, that there once existed between the Kandel Steig and Lauterbrun, "a passage amidst singular glaciers, some-

* Occupying, if taken together, a surface of 130 square leagues.

times resembling magical towns of ice, with pilasters, pyramids, columns, and obelisks, reflecting to the sun the most brilliant hues of the finest gems."—M. Bourrit's description of the Glacier of the Rhone is quite enchanting:—"To form an idea," he says, "of this superb spectacle, figure in your mind a scaffolding of transparent ice, filling a space of two miles, rising to the clouds, and darting flashes of light like the sun. Nor were the several parts less magnificent and surprising. One might see, as it were, the streets and buildings of a city, erected in the form of an amphitheatre, and embellished with pieces of water, cascades, and torrents. The effects were as prodigious as the immensity and the height;—the most beautiful azure—the most splendid white—the regular appearance of a thousand pyramids of ice, are more easy to be imagined than described."—*Bourrit*, iii. 163.

LINE 9.

"From heights brouzed by the bounding bouquetin."

Laborde, in his "*Tableau de la Suisse*," gives a curious account of this animal, the wild sharp cry and elastic movements of which must heighten the picturesque appearance of its haunts.—"Nature," says Laborde, "has destined it to mountains covered with snow: if it is not ex-

posed to keen cold it becomes blind. Its agility in leaping much surpasses that of the chamois, and would appear incredible to those who have not seen it. There is not a mountain so high or steep to which it will not trust itself, provided it has room to place its feet; it can scramble along the highest wall, if its surface be rugged."

LINE 15.

"Enamell'd moss."

The moss of Switzerland, as well as that of the Tyrol, is remarkable for a bright smoothness approaching to the appearance of enamel.

LINE 136.

"How dear seem'd ev'n the waste and wild Shreckhorn."

The Schreck-horn means in German, the Peak of Terror.

LINE 141.

"Blindfold his native hills he could have known."

I have here availed myself of a striking expression of the Emperor Napoleon respecting his recollections of Corsica, which is recorded in Las Cases's History of the Emperor's Abode at St. Helena.

FUGITIVE POEMS.



TO THE RAINBOW.

TRIUMPHAL arch, that fill'st the sky

When storms prepare to part,

I ask not proud philosophy

To teach me what thou art—

Still seem as to my childhood's sight,

A midway station given

For happy spirits to alight

Betwixt the earth and heaven.

Can all that optics teach, unfold

Thy form to please me so,

As when I dreamt of gems and gold

Hid in thy radiant bow?

When Science from Creation's face

Enchantment's veil withdraws,

What lovely visions yield their place

To cold material laws!

And yet, fair bow, no fabling dreams,

But words of the Most High,

Have told why first thy robe of beams

Was woven in the sky.

When o'er the green undeluged earth
Heaven's covenant thou didst shine,
How came the world's grey fathers forth
To watch thy sacred sign.

And when its yellow lustre smiled
O'er mountains yet untrod,
Each mother held aloft her child
To bless the bow of God.

Methinks, thy jubilee to keep,
The first-made anthem rang
On earth deliver'd from the deep,
And the first poet sang.

Nor ever shall the Muse's eye

Unraptured greet thy beam:

Theme of primeval prophecy,

Be still the poet's theme!

The earth to thee her incense yields,

The lark thy welcome sings,

When glittering in the freshen'd fields

The snowy mushroom springs.

How glorious is thy girdle cast

O'er mountain, tower, and town,

Or mirror'd in the ocean vast,

A thousand fathoms down!

As fresh in yon horizon dark,
As young thy beauties seem,
As when the eagle from the ark
First sported in thy beam.

For, faithful to its sacred page,
Heaven still rebuilds thy span,
Nor lets the type grow pale with age
That first spoke peace to man.

THE BRAVE ROLAND.*

THE brave Roland!—the brave Roland!—

False tidings reach'd the Rhenish strand

That he had fall'n in fight;

And thy faithful bosom swoon'd with pain,

O loveliest maiden of Allémayne!

For the loss of thine own true knight.

* The tradition which forms the substance of these stanzas is still preserved in Germany. An ancient tower on a height, called the Rolandseck, a few miles above Bonn on the Rhine, is shewn as the habitation which Roland built in sight of a nunnery, into which his mistress had retired, on having heard an unfounded account of his death. Whatever may be thought of the credibility of the legend, its scenery must be recollected

But why so rash has she ta'en the veil,
In yon Nonnenwerder's cloisters pale?

For her vow had scarce been sworn,
And the fatal mantle o'er her flung,
When the Drachenfells to a trumpet rung—
'Twas her own dear warrior's horn!

Woe! woe! each heart shall bleed—shall break!
She would have hung upon his neck,
Had he come but yester-even;
And he had clasp'd those peerless charms
That shall never, never fill his arms,
Or meet him but in heaven.

with pleasure by every one who has ever visited the romantic landscape of the Drachenfells, the Rolandseck, and the beautiful adjacent islet of the Rhine, where a nunnery still stands.

Yet Roland the brave—Roland the true—

He could not bid that spot adieu ;

It was dear still 'midst his woes ;

For he loved to breathe the neighb'ring air,

And to think she blest him in her prayer,

When the Halleluiah rose.

There 's yet one window of that pile,

Which he built above the Nun's green isle ;

Thence sad and oft look'd he

(When the chant and organ sounded slow)

On the mansion of his love below,

For herself he might not see.

She died !—He sought the battle-plain ;

Her image fill'd his dying brain,

When he fell and wish'd to fall :
And her name was in his latest sigh,
When Roland, the flower of chivalry,
Expired at Roncevall.



THE SPECTRE BOAT.

A BALLAD.

LIGHT rued false Ferdinand, to leave a lovely maid
forlorn,

Who broke her heart and died to hide her blushing
cheek from scorn.

One night he dreamt he woo'd her in their wonted
bower of love,

Where the flowers sprang thick around them, and the
birds sang sweet above.

But the scene was swiftly changed into a church-
yard's dismal view,

And her lips grew black beneath his kiss, from love's
delicious hue.

What more he dreamt, he told to none ; but, shud-
dering, pale, and dumb,

Look'd out upon the waves, like one that knew his
hour was come.

'Twas now the dead watch of the night—the helm
was lash'd a-lee,

And the ship rode where Mount Ætna lights the deep
Levantine sea ;

When beneath its glare a boat came, row'd by a
woman in her shroud,

Who, with eyes that made our blood run cold, stood
up and spoke aloud :—

“Come, Traitor, down, for whom my ghost still wanders unforgiven !

Come down, false Ferdinand, for whom I broke my peace with heaven !”—

It was vain to hold the victim, for he plunged to meet her call,

Like the bird that shrieks and flutters in the gazing serpent's thrall.

You may guess the boldest mariner shrunk daunted from the sight,

For the spectre and her winding-sheet shone blue with hideous light ;

Like a fiery wheel the boat spun with the waving of her hand,

And round they went, and down they went, as the cock crew from the land.

VALEDICTORY STANZAS

TO J. P. KEMBLE, Esq.

COMPOSED FOR A PUBLIC MEETING, HELD JUNE 1817.

PRIDE of the British stage,
A long and last adieu !
Whose image brought th' heroic age
Revived to Fancy's view.
Like fields refresh'd with dewy light
When the sun smiles his last,
Thy parting presence makes more bright
Our memory of the past ;

And memory conjures feelings up
That wine or music need not swell,
As high we lift the festal cup
To Kemble—fare thee well !

His was the spell o'er hearts
Which only acting lends,—
The youngest of the sister Arts,
Where all their beauty blends :
For ill can Poetry express
Full many a tone of thought sublime,
And Painting, mute and motionless,
Steals but a glance of time.
But by the mighty actor brought,
Illusion's perfect triumphs come,—
Verse ceases to be airy thought,
And Sculpture to be dumb.

Time may again revive,

But ne'er eclipse the charm,

When Cato spoke in him alive,

Or Hotspur kindled warm.

What soul was not resign'd entire

To the deep sorrows of the Moor,—

What English heart was not on fire

With him at Agincourt ?

And yet a majesty possess'd

His transport's most impetuous tone,

And to each passion of his breast

The Graces gave their zone.

High were the task—too high,

Ye conscious bosoms here !

In words to paint your memory

Of Kemble and of Lear ;

But who forgets that white discrowned head,
Those bursts of Reason's half-extinguish'd glare—
Those tears upon Cordelia's bosom shed,
In doubt more touching than despair,
If 'twas reality he felt?
Had Shakspeare's self amidst you been,
Friends, he had seen you melt,
And triumph'd to have seen!

And there was many an hour
Of blended kindred fame,
When Siddons's auxiliar power
And sister magick came.
Together at the Muse's side
The tragick paragons had grown—
They were the children of her pride,
The columns of her throne,

And undivided favour ran
From heart to heart in their applause,
Save for the gallantry of man,
In lovelier woman's cause.

Fair as some classic dome,
Robust and richly graced,
Your KEMBLE'S spirit was the home
Of genius and of taste :—

Taste like the silent dial's power,
That when supernal light is given,
Can measure inspiration's hour,
And tell its height in heaven.

At once ennobled and correct,
His mind survey'd the tragick page,
And what the actor could effect,
The scholar could presage.

These were his traits of worth:—

And must we lose them now !

And shall the scene no more shew forth

His sternly pleasing brow !

Alas, the moral brings a tear !—

'Tis all a transient hour below ;

And we that would detain thee here,

Ourselves as fleetly go !

Yet shall our latest age

This parting scene review :—

Pride of the British stage,

A long and last adieu !

LINES

SPOKEN BY MR. * * * *, AT DRURY LANE THEATRE,

On the first opening of the House after the

DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE, 1817.

BRITONS! although our task is but to shew
The scenes and passions of fictitious woe,
Think not we come this night without a part
In that deep sorrow of the public heart,
Which like a shade hath darken'd ev'ry place,
And moisten'd with a tear the manliest face!
The bell is scarcely hush'd in Windsor's piles,
That toll'd a requiem from the solemn aisles,

For her, the royal flower, low laid in dust,
That was your fairest hope, your fondest trust.
Unconscious of the doom, we dreamt, alas!
That ev'n these walls, ere many months should pass,
Which but return sad accents for her now,
Perhaps had witness'd her benignant brow,
Cheer'd by the voice you would have raised on high,
In bursts of British love and loyalty.
But, Britain! now thy chief, thy people mourn,
And Claremont's home of love is left forlorn:—
There, where the happiest of the happy dwelt,
The 'scutcheon glooms, and royalty hath felt
A wound that ev'ry bosom feels its own,—
The blessing of a father's heart o'erthrown—
The most beloved and most devoted bride
Torn from an agonized husband's side,

Who "long as memory holds her seat" shall view
That speechless, more than spoken last adieu,
When the fix'd eye long look'd connubial faith,
And beam'd affection in the trance of death.
Sad was the pomp that yesternight beheld,
As with the mourner's heart the anthem swell'd;
While torch succeeding torch illumed each high
And banner'd arch of England's chivalry.
The rich plumed canopy, the gorgeous pall,
The sacred march, and sable-vested wall,—
These were not rites of inexpressive shew,
But hallow'd as the types of real woe!
Daughter of England! for a nation's sighs,
A nation's heart went with thine obsequies!—
And oft shall time revert a look of grief
On thine existence, beautiful and brief.

Fair spirit ! send thy blessing from above
On realms where thou art canonized by love !
Give to a father's, husband's bleeding mind,
The peace that angels lend to human kind ;
To us who in thy loved remembrance feel
A sorrowing, but a soul-ennobling zeal--
A loyalty that touches all the best
And loftiest principles of England's breast !
Still may thy name speak concord from the tomb--
Still in the Muse's breath thy memory bloom !
They shall describe thy life--thy form pourtray ;
But all the love that mourns thee swept away,
'Tis not in language or expressive arts
To paint--ye feel it, Britons, in your hearts !

LINES

ON RECEIVING A SEAL WITH THE CAMPBELL CREST,
FROM K. M—, BEFORE HER MARRIAGE.

THIS wax returns not back more fair,
Th' impression of the gift you send,
Than stamp'd upon my thoughts I bear
The image of your worth, my friend!—

We are not friends of yesterday ;—
But poet's fancies are a little
Disposed to heat and cool, (they say,)—
By turns impressible and brittle.

Well! should its frailty e'er condemn
My heart to prize or please you less,
Your type is still the sealing gem,
And *mine* the waxen brittleness.

What transcripts of my weal and woe
This little signet yet may lock,—
What utt'rances to friend or foe,
In reason's calm or passion's shock!

What scenes of life's yet curtain'd page
May own its confidential die,
Whose stamp awaits th' unwritten page,
And feelings of futurity!—

Yet wheresoe'er my pen I lift
To date th' epistolary sheet,

The blest occasion of the gift

Shall make its recollection sweet ;

Sent when the star that rules your fates

Hath reach'd its influence most benign—

When every heart congratulates,

And none more cordially than mine.

So speed my song—mark'd with the crest

That erst th' advent'rous Norman* wore,

Who won the Lady of the West,

The daughter of Macaillain Mor.

* A Norman leader, in the service of the king of Scotland, married the heiress of Lochow in the twelfth century, and from him the Campbells are sprung.

Crest of my sires ! whose blood it seal'd
With glory in the strife of swords,
Ne'er may the scroll that bears it yield
Degenerate thoughts or faithless words !

Yet little might I prize the stone,
If it but typ'd the feudal tree
From whence, a scatter'd leaf, I 'm blown
In Fortune's mutability.

No !—but it tells me of a heart,
Allied by friendship's living tie ;
A prize beyond the herald's art—
Our soul-sprung consanguinity !

KATH'RINE ! to many an hour of mine

Light wings and sunshine you have lent ;

And so adieu, and still be thine

The all-in-all of life—Content !

STANZAS

TO THE MEMORY OF THE SPANISH PATRIOTS LATEST
KILLED IN RESISTING THE RÉGENT AND
THE DUKE OF ANGOULÊME.

BRAVE men who at the Trocadero fell—
Beside your cannons conquer'd not, though slain,
There is a victory in dying well
For Freedom,—and ye have not died in vain ;
For come what may, there shall be hearts in Spain
To honour, ay embrace your martyr'd lot,
Cursing the Bigot's and the Bourbon's chain,
And looking on your graves, though trophied not,
As holier, hallow'd ground than priests could make
the spot !

What though your cause be baffled—freemen cast
In dungeons—dragg'd to death, or forced to flee ;
Hope is not wither'd in affliction's blast—
The patriot's blood 's the seed of Freedom's tree ;
And short your orgies of revenge shall be,
Cowl'd Demons of the Inquisitorial cell !
Earth shudders at your victory,—for ye
Are worse than common fiends from Heaven that fell,
The baser, ranker sprung, *Autochthones* of hell !

Go to your bloody rites again—bring back
The hall of horrors and the assessor's pen,
Recording answers shriek'd upon the rack ;
Smile o'er the gaspings of spine-broken men ;—
Preach, perpetrate damnation in your den ;—

Then let your altars, ye blasphemers ! peal
With thanks to Heaven, that let you loose again,
To practise deeds with torturing fire and steel
No eye may search — no tongue may challenge or
 reveal !

Yet laugh not in your carnival of crime
Too proudly, ye oppressors !—Spain was free,
Her soil has felt the foot-prints, and her clime
Been winnow'd by the wings of Liberty ;
And these even parting scatter as they flee
Thoughts—influences, to live in hearts unborn,
Opinions that shall wrench the prison-key
From Persecution—shew her mask off-torn,
And tramp her bloated head beneath the foot of Scorn.

Glory to them that die in this great cause !
Kings, Bigots, can inflict no brand of shame,
Or shape of death, to shroud them from applause :—
No !—manglers of the martyr's earthly frame !
Your hangmen-fingers cannot touch his fame.
Still in your prostrate land there shall be some
Proud hearts, the shrines of Freedom's vestal flame.
Long trains of ill may pass unheeded, dumb,
But vengeance is behind, and justice is to come.

LINES

INSCRIBED ON THE MONUMENT LATELY FINISHED

BY MR. CHANTREY,

WHICH HAS BEEN ERECTED BY THE WIDOW OF

ADMIRAL SIR G. CAMPBELL, K. C. B. TO

THE MEMORY OF HER HUSBAND.

To him, whose loyal, brave, and gentle heart
Fulfill'd the hero's and the patriot's part,—
Whose charity, like that which Paul enjoin'd,
Was warm, beneficent, and unconfined,—
This stone is rear'd: to public duty true,
The seaman's friend, the father of his crew—
Mild in reproof, sagacious in command,
He spread fraternal zeal throughout his band,
And led each arm to act, each heart to feel,
What British valour owes to Britain's weal.

These were his public virtues :—but to trace
 His private life's fair purity and grace,
 To paint the traits that drew affection strong
 From friends, an ample and an ardent throng,
 And, more, to speak his memory's grateful claim
 On her who mourns him most, and bears his name—
 O'ercomes the trembling hand of widow'd grief,
 O'ercomes the heart, unconscious of relief,
 Save in religion's high and holy trust,
 Whilst placing their memorial o'er his dust.



SONG OF THE GREEKS.

AGAIN to the battle, Achaïans !

Our hearts bid the tyrants defiance ;

Our land, the first garden of Liberty's tree—

It has been, and shall yet be the land of the free :

For the cross of our faith is replanted,

The pale dying crescent is daunted,

And we march that the foot-prints of Mahomet's slaves

May be wash'd out in blood from our forefathers' graves

Their spirits are hovering o'er us,

And the sword shall to glory restore us.

Ah ! what though no succour advances,

Nor Christendom's chivalrous lances

Are stretch'd in our aid—be the combat our own !
And we'll perish or conquer more proudly alone :
For we've sworn, by our Country's assaulters,
By the virgins they've dragg'd from our altars,
By our massacred patriots, our children in chains,
By our heroes of old and their blood in our veins,
That living, we shall be victorious,
Or that dying, our deaths shall be glorious.

A breath of submission we breathe not ;
The sword that we've drawn we will sheathe not !
Its scabbard is left where our martyrs are laid,
And the vengeance of ages has whetted its blade.
Earth may hide—waves engulph—fire consume us,
But they shall not to slavery doom us :

If they rule, it shall be o'er our ashes and graves ;
But we 've smote them already with fire on the
waves,

And new triumphs on land are before us.
To the charge !—Heaven's banner is o'er us.

This day shall ye blush for its story,
Or brighten your lives with its glory.
Our women, Oh, say, shall they shriek in despair,
Or embrace us from conquest with wreaths in their
hair ?

Accursed may his memory blacken,
If a coward there be that would slacken
Till we 've trampled the turban and shown ourselves
worth

Being sprung from and named for the godlike of earth.

Strike home, and the world shall revere us
As heroes descended from heroes.

Old Greece lightens up with emotion
Her inlands, her isles of the Ocean ;
Fanes rebuilt and fair towns shall with jubilee ring,
And the Nine shall new-hallow their Helicon's spring:
Our hearths shall be kindled in gladness,
That were cold and extinguish'd in sadness ;
Whilst our maidens shall dance with their white-
 waving arms,
Singing joy to the brave that deliver'd their charms,
When the blood of yon Musulman cravens
Shall have purpled the beaks of our ravens.

THE LOVER TO HIS MISTRESS

ON HER BIRTH-DAY.

If any white-wing'd Power above
My joys and griefs survey,
The day when thou wert born, my love—
He surely bless'd that day.

I laugh'd (till taught by thee) when told
Of Beauty's magic powers,
That ripen'd life's dull ore to gold,
And changed its weeds to flowers.

My mind had lovely shapes pourtray'd ;
But thought I earth had one
Could make ev'n Fancy's visions fade
Like stars before the sun?

I gaz'd, and felt upon my lips
Th' unfinish'd accents hang :
One moment's bliss, one burning kiss,
To rapture chang'd each pang.

And though as swift as lightning's flash
Those tranced moments flew,
Not all the waves of time shall wash
Their memory from my view.

But duly shall my raptured song,
And gladly shall my eyes,
Still bless this day's return, as long
As thou shalt see it rise.

S O N G.

TO THE EVENING STAR.

STAR that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary labourer free !
If any star shed peace, 'tis thou,
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as her's we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,
Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard,
And songs, when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirr'd
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse ;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

SONG—"MEN OF ENGLAND."

MEN of England ! who inherit

Rights that cost your sires their blood !

Men whose undegenerate spirit

Has been proved on land and flood :—

By the foes ye 've fought uncounted,

By the glorious deeds ye 've done,

Trophies captured—breaches mounted,

Navies conquer'd—kingdoms won !

Yet, remember, England gathers
Hence but fruitless wreaths of fame,
If the patriotism of your fathers
Glow not in your hearts the same.

What are monuments of bravery,
Where no public virtues bloom?
What avail in lands of slavery,
Trophied temples, arch and tomb?

Pageants!—Let the world revere us
For our people's rights and laws,
And the breasts of civic heroes
Bared in Freedom's holy cause.

Yours are Hampden's, Russell's glory,
Sydney's matchless shade is yours,—
Martyrs in heroic story,
Worth a hundred Agincourts !

We 're the sons of sires that baffled
Crown'd and mitred tyranny:—
They defied the field and scaffold
For their birthrights—so will we !

ADELGITHA.

THE ordeal's fatal trumpet sounded,
And sad pale ADELGITHA came,
When forth a valiant champion bounded,
And slew the slanderer of her fame.

She wept, deliver'd from her danger ;
But when he knelt to claim her glove—
“ Seek not,” she cried, “ oh ! gallant stranger,
For hapless ADELGITHA's love.

“ For he is in a foreign far land
Whose arm should now have set me free ;
And I must wear the willow garland
For him that ’s dead, or false to me.”

“ Nay ! say not that his faith is tainted !”—
He raised his vizor—At the sight
She fell into his arms and fainted ;
It was indeed her own true knight !

S O N G.

DRINK ye to her that each loves best,

And if you nurse a flame

That 's told but to her mutual breast,

We will not ask her name.

Enough, while memory tranced and glad

Paints silently the fair,

That each should dream of joys he's had,

Or yet may hope to share.

Yet far, far hence be jest or boast

From hallow'd thoughts so dear ;

But drink to them that we love most,

As they would love to hear.

S O N G.

WHEN NAPOLEON was flying
From the field of Waterloo,
A British soldier dying,
To his brother bade adieu !

“ And take,” he said, “ this token
To the maid that owns my faith,
With the words that I have spoken
In affection’s latest breath.”

Sore mourn’d the brother’s heart,
When the youth beside him fell;
But the trumpet warn’d to part,
And they took a sad farewell.

There was many a friend to lose him,
For that gallant soldier sigh'd ;
But the maiden of his bosom
Wept when all their tears were dried.

SONG.

OH how hard it is to find
The one just suited to our mind ;
And if that one should be
False, unkind, or found too late,
What can we do but sigh at fate,
And sing Woe 's me—Woe 's me !

Love 's a boundless burning waste,
Where Bliss's stream we seldom taste,
And still more seldom flee
Suspense's thorns, Suspicion's stings ;
Yet somehow Love a something brings
That 's sweet—ev'n when we sigh Woe 's me !

SONG.

EARL MARCH look'd on his dying child,
And smit with grief to view her—
The youth, he cried, whom I exiled,
Shall be restored to woo her.

She's at the window many an hour
His coming to discover ;
And her love look'd up to Ellen's bower,
And she look'd on her lover—

But ah ! so pale, he knew her not,
Though her smile on him was dwelling.
And am I then forgot—forgot ?—
It broke the heart of Ellen.

In vain he weeps, in vain he sighs,
Her cheek is cold as ashes ;
Nor love's own kiss shall wake those eyes
To lift their silken lashes.



A B S E N C E.

'Tis not the loss of love's assurance,
It is not doubting what thou art,
But 'tis the too, too long endurance
Of absence, that afflicts my heart.

The fondest thoughts two hearts can cherish,
When each is lonely doom'd to weep,
Are fruits on desert isles that perish,
Or riches buried in the deep.

What though, untouch'd by jealous madness,
Our bosom's peace may fall to wreck;
Th' undoubting heart, that breaks with sadness,
Is but more slowly doom'd to break.

Absence! is not the soul torn by it
From more than light, or life, or breath?
'Tis Lethe's gloom, but not its quiet,—
The pain without the peace of death!

S O N G.

WITHDRAW not yet those lips and fingers,
Whose touch to mine is rapture's spell ;
Life's joy for us a moment lingers,
And death seems in the word—farewell.
The hour that bids us part and go,
It sounds not yet, oh ! no, no, no.

Time, whilst I gaze upon thy sweetness,
Flies like a courser nigh the goal ;
To-morrow where shall be his fleetness,
When thou art parted from my soul ?
Our hearts shall beat, our tears shall flow,
But not together—no, no, no !

THE LAST MAN.

ALL worldly shapes shall melt in gloom,

The Sun himself must die,

Before this mortal shall assume

Its Immortality !

I saw a vision in my sleep,

That gave my spirit strength to sweep

Adown the gulph of Time !

I saw the last of human mould,

That shall Creation's death behold,

As Adam saw her prime !

The Sun's eye had a sickly glare,

The Earth with age was wan,

The skeletons of nations were

Around that lonely man !

Some had expired in fight,—the brands

Still rusted in their bony hands ;

In plague and famine some !

Earth's cities had no sound nor tread ;

And ships were drifting with the dead

To shores where all was dumb !

Yet, prophet-like, that lone one stood,

With dauntless words and high,

That shook the sere leaves from the wood

As if a storm pass'd by,

Saying, We are twins in death, proud Sun,
Thy face is cold, thy race is run,

'Tis Mercy bids thee go.

For thou ten thousand thousand years

Hast seen the tide of human tears,

That shall no longer flow.

What though beneath thee man put forth

His pomp, his pride, his skill ;

And arts that made fire, flood, and earth,

The vassals of his will ;—

Yet mourn I not thy parted sway,

Thou dim discrowned king of day:

For all those trophied arts

And triumphs that beneath thee sprang,

Heal'd not a passion or a pang

Entail'd on human hearts.

Go, let oblivion's curtain fall

Upon the stage of men,

Nor with thy rising beams recall

Life's tragedy again.

Its piteous pageants bring not back,

Nor waken flesh, upon the rack

Of pain anew to writhe ;

Stretch'd in disease's shapes abhorr'd,

Or mown in battle by the sword,

Like grass beneath the scythe.

Ev'n I am weary in yon skies

To watch thy fading fire ;

Test of all sumless agonies,

Behold not me expire.

My lips that speak thy dirge of death—

Their rounded gasp and girgling breath

To see thou shalt not boast.

The eclipse of Nature spreads my pall,—

The majesty of Darkness shall

Receive my parting ghost !

This spirit shall return to Him

That gave its heavenly spark ;

Yet think not, Sun, it shall be dim

When thou thyself art dark !

No ! it shall live again, and shine

In bliss unknown to beams of thine,

By Him recall'd to breath,

Who captive led captivity,

Who robb'd the grave of Victory,—

And took the sting from Death !

Go, Sun, while Mercy holds me up
On Nature's awful waste
To drink this last and bitter cup
Of grief that man shall taste—
Go, tell the night that hides thy face,
Thou saw'st the last of Adam's race,
On Earth's sepulchral clod,
The dark'ning universe defy
To quench his Immortality,
Or shake his trust in God!

THE RITTER BANN.

THE Ritter Bann from Hungary

Came back, renown'd in arms,
But scorning jousts of chivalry
And love and ladies' charms.

While other knights held revels, he

Was wrapt in thoughts of gloom,
And in Vienna's hostelrie
Slow paced his lonely room.

There enter'd one whose face he knew,—
Whose voice, he was aware,
He oft at mass had listen'd to,
In the holy house of prayer.

'Twas the Abbot of St. James's monks,
A fresh and fair old man :
His reverend air arrested even
The gloomy Ritter Bann.

But seeing with him an ancient dame
Come clad in Scotch attire,
The Ritter's colour went and came,
And loud he spoke in ire.

“ Ha ! nurse of her that was my bane,
Name not her name to me ;
I wish it blotted from my brain :
Art poor ?—take alms, and flee.”

“ Sir Knight,” the abbot interposed,
“ This case your ear demands ;”
And the crone cried, with a cross enclosed
In both her trembling hands :

“ Remember, each his sentence waits ;
And he that shall rebut
Sweet Mercy’s suit, on him the gates
Of Mercy shall be shut.

You wedded undispensed by Church,
Your cousin Jane in Spring ;—
In Autumn, when you went to search
For churchmen's pardoning,

Her house denounced your marriage-band,
Betrothed her to De Grey,
And the ring you put upon her hand
Was wrench'd by force away.

Then wept your Jane upon my neck,
Crying, ' Help me, nurse, to flee
To my Howel Bann's Glamorgan hills ;'
But word arrived—ah me !—

You were not there ; and 'twas their threat,
By foul means or by fair,
To-morrow morning was to set
The seal on her despair.

I had a son, a sea-boy, in
A ship at Hartland bay ;
By his aid from her cruel kin
I bore my bird away.

To Scotland from the Devon's
Green myrtle shores we fled ;
And the Hand that sent the ravens
To Elijah, gave us bread.

She wrote you by my son, but he
From England sent us word
You had gone into some far countrie,
In grief and gloom he heard.

For they that wrong'd you, to elude
Your wrath, defamed my child ;
And you—ay, blush, Sir, as you should—
Believed, and were beguiled.

To die but at your feet, she vow'd
To roam the world ; and we
Would both have sped and begg'd our bread,
But so it might not be.

For when the snow-storm beat our roof,
She bore a boy, Sir Bann,
Who grew as fair your likeness proof
As child e'er grew like man.

'Twas smiling on that babe one morn
While heath bloom'd on the moor,
Her beauty struck young Lord Kinghorn
As he hunted past our door.

She shunn'd him, but he raved of Jane,
And roused his mother's pride ;
Who came to us in high disdain,—
' And where's the face,' she cried,

‘Has witch’d my boy to wish for one
So wretched for his wife?—
Dost love thy husband? Know, my son
Has sworn to seek his life.’

Her anger sore dismay’d us,
For our mite was wearing scant,
And, unless that dame would aid us,
There was none to aid our want.

So I told her, weeping bitterly,
What all our woes had been ;
And, though she was a stern ladie,
The tears stood in her een.

And she housed us both, when, cheerfully,
My child to her had sworn,
That even if made a widow, she
Would never wed Kinghorn."——

Here paused the nurse, and then began
The abbot, standing by:
“ Three months ago a wounded man
To our abbey came to die.

He heard me long, with ghastly eyes
And hand obdurate clench'd,
Speak of the worm that never dies,
And the fire that is not quench'd.

At last by what this scroll attests
He left atonement brief,
For years of anguish to the breasts
His guilt had wrung with grief.

‘ There lived,’ he said, ‘ a fair young dame
Beneath my mother’s roof ;
I loved her, but against my flame
Her purity was proof.

I feign’d repentance, friendship pure ;
That mood she did not check,
But let her husband’s miniature
Be copied from her neck.

As means to search him, my deceit
Took care to him was borne
Nought but his picture's counterfeit,
And Jane's reported scorn.

The treachery took: she waited wild;
My slave came back and lied
Whate'er I wish'd; she clasp'd her child,
And swoon'd, and all but died.

I felt her tears for years and years
Quench not my flame, but stir;
The very hate I bore her mate
Increased my love for her.

Fame told us of his glory, while
Joy flush'd the face of Jane ;
And whilst she bless'd his name, her smile
Struck fire into my brain,

No fears could damp ; I reach'd the camp,
Sought out its champion ;
And if my broad-sword fail'd at last,
'Twas long and well laid on.

This wound 's my meed, my name 's Kinghorn,
My foe 's the Ritter Bann.'——
The wafer to his lips was borne,
And we shrived the dying man.

He died not till you went to fight
The Turk's at Warradein ;
But I see my tale has changed you pale."
The abbot went for wine ;

And brought a little page who pour'd
It out, and knelt and smiled :—
The stunn'd knight saw himself restored
To childhood in his child ;

And stoop'd and caught him to his breast,
Laugh'd loud and wept anon,
And with a shower of kisses press'd
The darling little one.

“And where went Jane?”—“To a nunnery, Sir—

Look not again so pale—

Kinghorn’s old dame grew harsh to her.”—

“And has she ta’en the veil?”—

“Sit down, Sir,” said the priest, “I bar

Rash words.”—They sat all three,

And the boy play’d with the knight’s broad star,

As he kept him on his knee.

“Think ere you ask her dwelling-place,”

The abbot further said ;

“Time draws a veil o’er beauty’s face

More deep than cloister’s shade.

Grief may have made her what you can
Scarce love perhaps for life."

"Hush, abbot," cried the Ritter Bann,
"Or tell me where 's my wife."

The priest undid two doors that hid
The inn's adjacent room,
And there a lovely woman stood,
Tears bathed her beauty's bloom.

One moment may with bliss repay
Unnumber'd hours of pain ;
Such was the throb and mutual sob
Of the Knight embracing Jane.

A DREAM.

WELL may sleep present us fictions,

Since our waking moments teem

With such fanciful convictions

As make life itself a dream.—

Half our daylight faith 's a fable ;

Sleep disports with shadows too,

Seeming in their turn as stable

As the world we wake to view.

Ne'er by day did Reason's mint

Give my thoughts a clearer print

Of assured reality,
Than was left by Phantasy
Stamp'd and colour'd on my sprite
In a dream of yesternight.

In a bark, methought, lone steering,
I was cast on Ocean's strife ;
This, 'twas whisper'd in my hearing,
Meant the sea of life.

Sad regrets from past existence
Came, like gales of chilling breath ;
Shadow'd in the forward distance
Lay the land of death.

Now seeming more, now less remote,
On that dim-seen shore, methought,

I beheld two hands a space
Slow unshroud a spectre's face ;
And my flesh's hair upstood,—
'Twas mine own similitude.

But my soul revived at seeing
Ocean, like an emerald spark,
Kindle, while an air-dropt being
Smiling steer'd my bark.
Heaven-like—yet he look'd as human
As supernal beauty can,
More compassionate than woman,
Lordly more than man.
And as some sweet clarion's breath
Stirs the soldier's scorn of death—

So his accents bade me brook
The spectre's eyes of icy look,
Till it shut them—turn'd its head,
Like a beaten foe, and fled.

“Types not this,” I said, “fair spirit!

That my death-hour is not come?

Say, what days shall I inherit?—

Tell my soul their sum.”

“No,” he said, “yon phantom's aspect,

Trust me, would appal thee worse,

Held in clearly measured prospect:—

Ask not for a curse!

Make not, for I overhear

Thine unspoken thoughts as clear

As thy mortal ear could catch
The close-brought tickings of a watch—
Make not the untold request
That's now revolving in thy breast.

“'Tis to live again, remeasuring
Youth's years, like a scene rehearsed,
In thy second life-time treasuring
Knowledge from the first.
Hast thou felt, poor self-deceiver !
Life's career so void of pain,
As to wish its fitful fever
New begun again ?
Could experience, ten times thine,
Pain from Being disentwine—

Threads by Fate together spun?
Could thy flight heaven's lightning shun?
No, nor could thy foresight's glance
'Scape the myriad shafts of chance.

“ Would'st thou bear again Love's trouble—
Friendship's death-dissever'd ties;
Toil to grasp or miss the bubble
Of ambition's prize?
Say thy life's new-guided action
Flow'd from Virtue's fairest springs—
Still would Envy and Detraction
Double not their stings?
Worth itself is but a charter
To be mankind's distinguish'd martyr.”

—I caught the moral, and cried, “Hail,
Spirit! let us onward sail
Envyng, fearing, hating none,
Guardian Spirit, steer me on!”

REULLURA.*

STAR of the morn and eve,
Reullura shone like thee,
And well for her might Aodh grieve,
The dark-attired Culdee.†

* Reullura, in Gaelic, signifies "beautiful star."

† The Culdees were the primitive clergy of Scotland, and apparently her only clergy from the sixth to the eleventh century. They were of Irish origin, and their monastery on the island of Iona or Icolmkill was the seminary of Christianity in North Britain. Presbyterian writers have wished to prove them to have been a sort of Presbyters, strangers to the Roman Church and Episcopacy. It seems to be established that

Peace to their shades ! the pure Culdees
Were Albyn's earliest priests of God,
Ere yet an island of her seas
By foot of Saxon monk was trode,
Long ere her churchmen by bigotry
Were barr'd from holy wedlock's tie.
'Twas then that Aodh, famed afar,
In Iona preach'd the word with power,
And Reullura, beauty's star,
Was the partner of his bower.

they were not enemies to Episcopacy ;—but that they were not slavishly subjected to Rome like the clergy of later periods, appears by their resisting the Papal ordonnances respecting the celibacy of religious men, on which account they were ultimately displaced by the Scottish sovereigns to make way for more Popish canons.

But, Aodh, the roof lies low,
And the thistle-down waves bleaching,
And the bat flits to and fro
Where the Gael once heard thy preaching;
And fall'n is each column'd isle
Where the chiefs and the people knelt.
'Twas near that temple's goodly pile
That honour'd of men they dwelt.
For Aodh was wise in the sacred law,
And bright Reullura's eyes oft saw
The veil of fate uplifted.
Alas, with what visions of awe
Her soul in that hour was gifted—
When pale in the temple and faint,
With Aodh she stood alone

By the statue of an aged Saint!

Fair sculptured was the stone,
It bore a crucifix;

Fame said it once had graced
A Christian temple, which the Picts
In the Britons' land laid waste:

The Pictish men, by St. Columb taught,
Had hither the holy relic brought.

Reullura eyed the statue's face,

And cried, " It is, he shall come,
" Even he in this very place,
" To avenge my martyrdom.

" For, woe to the Gael people !

" Ulvfagre is on the main,

-
- “ And Iona shall look from tower and steeple
“ On the coming ships of the Dane;
“ And, dames and daughters, shall all your locks
“ With the spoiler’s grasp entwine?
“ No! some shall have shelter in caves and rocks,
“ And the deep sea shall be mine.
“ Baffled by me shall the Dane return,
“ And here shall his torch in the temple burn,
“ Until that holy man shall plough
“ The waves from Innisfail.
“ His sail is on the deep e’en now,
“ And swells to the southern gale.”
“ Ah! knowest thou not, my bride,”
The holy Aodh said,

“ That the Saint whose form we stand beside
Has for ages slept with the dead?”

“ He liveth, he liveth,” she said again,

“ For the span of his life tenfold extends

“ Beyond the wonted years of men.

“ He sits by the graves of well-loved friends

“ That died ere thy grandsire’s grandsire’s birth;

“ The oak is decay’d with old age on earth,

“ Whose acorn-seed had been planted by him;

“ And his parents remember the day of dread

“ When the sun on the cross look’d dim,

“ And the graves gave up their dead.

“ Yet preaching from clime to clime,

“ He hath roam’d the earth for ages,

“ And hither he shall come in time

“ When the wrath of the heathen rages,

“ In time a remnant from the sword—

“ Ah! but a remnant to deliver;

“ Yet, blest be the name of the Lord!

“ His martyrs shall go into bliss for ever.

“ Lochlin*, appall’d, shall put up her steele, .

“ And thou shalt embark on the bounding keel; .

“ Safe shalt thou pass through her hundred ships,

“ With the Saint and a remnant of the Gael,

“ And the Lord will instruct thy lips

“ To preach in Innisfail.”†

The sun, now about to set,

Was burning o’er Tirree,

And no gathering cry rose yet

O’er the isles of Albyn’s sea,

* Denmark.

† Ireland.

Whilst Reullura saw far rowers dip
Their oars beneath the sun,
And the phantom of many a Danish ship,
Where ship there yet was none.
And the shield of alarm* was dumb,
Nor did their warning till midnight come,
When watch-fires burst from across the main
From Rona and Uist and Skey,
To tell that the ships of the Dane
And the red-hair'd slayers were nigh.

Our islesmen arose from slumbers,
And buckled on their arms;
But few, alas! were their numbers
To Lochlin's mailed swarms.

* Striking the shield was an ancient mode of convocation to war among the Gael.

And the blade of the bloody Norse
Has fill'd the shores of the Gael
With many a floating corse,
And with many a woman's wail.
They have lighted the islands with ruin's torch,
And the holy men of Iona's church
In the temple of God lay slain;
All but Aodh, the last Culdee,
But bound with many an iron chain,
Bound in that church was he.

And where is Aodh's bride?
Rocks of the ocean flood!
Plunged she not from your heights in pride,
And mock'd the men of blood?

Then Ulvfagre and his bands

In the temple lighted their banquet up,
And the print of their blood-red hands
Was left on the altar cup.

'Twas then that the Norseman to Aodh said,
"Tell where thy church's treasure's laid,
Or I'll hew thee limb from limb."

As he spoke the bell struck three,
And every torch grew dim
That lighted their revelry.

But the torches again burnt bright,
And brighter than before,
When an aged man of majestic height
Enter'd the temple door.

Hush'd was the reveller's sound,
They were struck as mute as the dead,
And their hearts were appall'd by the very sound
Of his footstep's measured tread.
Nor word was spoken by one beholder,
While he flung his white robe back on his shoulder,
And stretching his arms—as eath
Unriveted Aodh's bands,
As if the gyves had been a wreath
Of willows in his hands.

All saw the stranger's similitude
To the ancient statue's form ;
The Saint before his own image stood,
And grasp'd Ulvfagre's arm.

Then uprose the Danes at last to deliver

 Their chief, and shouting with one accord,

They drew the shaft from its rattling quiver,

 They lifted the spear and sword,

And levell'd their spears in rows.

But down went axes and spears and bows,

When the Saint with his crosier sign'd,

 The archer's hand on the string was stopt,

And down, like reeds laid flat by the wind,

 Their lifted weapons dropt.

The Saint then gave a signal mute,

 And though Ulvfagre will'd it not,

He came and stood at the statue's foot,

 Spell-riveted to the spot,

Till hands invisible shook the wall,

And the tottering image was dash'd
Down from its lofty pedestal.

On Ulvfagre's helm it crash'd—
Helmet, and skull, and flesh, and brain,
It crush'd as millstone crushes the grain.
Then spoke the Saint, whilst all and each
Of the Heathen trembled round,
And the pauses amidst his speech
Were as awful as the sound:

“Go back, ye wolves, to your dens,” (he cried,)

“And tell the nations abroad,

“How the fiercest of your herd has died

“That slaughter'd the flock of God.

“ Gather him bone by bone,
“ And take with you o’er the flood
“ The fragments of that avenging stone
“ That drank his heathen blood.
“ These are the spoils from Iona’s sack,
“ The only spoils ye shall carry back ;
“ For the hand that uplifteth spear or sword
“ Shall be wither’d by palsy’s shock,
“ And I come in the name of the Lord
“ To deliver a remnant of his flock.”

A remnant was call’d together,

A doleful remnant of the Gael,

And the Saint in the ship that had brought him
hither

Took the mourners to Innisfail.

Unscathed they left Iona's strand,
When the opal morn first flush'd the sky,
For the Norse dropt spear, and bow, and brand,
And look'd on them silently;
Safe from their hiding-places came
Orphans and mothers, child and dame:
But, alas! when the search for Reullura spread,
No answering voice was given,
For the sea had gone o'er her lovely head,
And her spirit was in Heaven.

THE END.

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ERRATUM.

Page 8, line 1, *for route read rout.*