

The Bushrangers: A play in five acts

And other poems

Harpur, Charles (1813-1868)

A digital text sponsored by
Australian Literature Electronic Gateway

University of Sydney Library

Sydney

2002



<http://setis.library.usyd.edu.au/oztexts>

© University of Sydney Library.

The texts and Images are not to be used for commercial purposes without permission

Source Text:

Prepared from the print edition published by W. R. Piddington Sydney
1853

All quotation marks are retained as data.

First Published: 1853

setis australian etexts drama poetry verse 1840-1869

The Bushrangers: A play in five acts

And other poems

Sydney

W. R. Piddington

1853

Dedication

TO N. D. STENHOUSE, ESQ.
THESE POEMS
ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY ONE,
WHO,
THOUGH PERSONALLY UNACQUAINTED WITH HIM,
HAS LEARNED
TO APPRECIATE HIS CHARACTER
AND TALENTS.

The Bushrangers

Introduction

“Evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; when, at last,
Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change,
Self-fed, and self-consumed; if this fail,
The pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble.”
COMUS

“Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time.”
MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Trust and Treachery, Wisdom, Folly,
Madness, Mirth, and Melancholy;
Love and Hatred, Thrift and Pillage,
All are housed in one small village.
MS

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

1. MEN

ROGER TUNBELLY, WEALTHIMAN WOOLSACK: Magistrates of Windsor
ABEL HARTLEY, a young Townsman of Richmond
WALTHAM, his friend and fellow-traveller
DREADNOUGHT, a Chief Constable
BOMBARD, a boasting Constable
CANT, a simple Constable
STALWART, the Chief of a Gang of Bushrangers
MACBLOOD, RACKROAD, DESPERATE, FILCH: Bushrangers
FENCE, an obscure Settler in league with the Bushrangers
A TAILOR, A SHOEMAKER, An Old SHEPHERD: Townsman of Windsor
A FARMER, apprehended by Stalwart
A DOORKEEPER of Windsor Police-Office

2. WOMEN

MRS. LESLIE, a Widow of Richmond
ADA, her daughter, betrothed to Abel Hartley
LUCY GREY, friend to Ada
MRS. FENCE

MARY, her daughter

3. A number of Constables, Bushrangers, Townsmen of Windsor, &c.

Scene—In Windsor, Richmond, and various parts of the interior Forest.

Costume of the Bushrangers—Kangaroo-skin caps and moccasins, with serge shirts worn blouse-wise, and belted.

Act I.

SCENE 1.—A Room in the Windsor Police Office.

Enter TUNBELLY and WOOLSACK.

Tunbely. There is no question but you met their objections most ably. But what particular matter was it you had to inform me of?

Woolsack. Oh! I received a letter last night from the Parramatta Bench by a special messenger. I have surely left it behind me—but no matter; I can tell you the purport of it. It begins with deploring—in very choice English, I assure you—the appalling prevalence of highway robbery and burglarious violence, and the consequent insecurity of life and property: and it states then, that with the view of capturing or destroying the audacious Banditti—headed by that predatory devil, Stalwart, and which is daily augmenting—a strong party of Police, commanded by Chief Constable Dreadnought, is now on its way to Richmond—a justly suspected District: and it concludes with requesting us, of the Windsor Bench, to strengthen the same by some six or eight of our most approved Constables.

Tunbely. Ha! All this now ought to have been done before. But as matters are, it is, as I may say, atrociously necessary! Nothing but highway and byeway robberies, robberies, robberies!

Woolsack. Matters in those respects have indeed come to a terrible pass. But which of our Constables shall we send to Dreadnought?

Tunbely. I have chosen two already in my mind. Bomebard the deputy—fierce fellow! he's one. He's relentless as a Calmuck, and thinks and talks, when on duty, of nothing but blood and thunder, to the salutary terror of every drunken cobbler and pot-walloping 'prentice in the town. His very terms of respect—for Ned is not wanting in proper respect—are discharged as 'twere from a blunderbuss; and even his whiskers seem made to gore with, like a bull's horns. Then the fellow's nose, look

you, is a true Wellington; and his brows—why they are done, sir, as 'twere in granite, with an habitual frown that might turn the edge of an axe. Ned's one; and the other is old Cant, the Methodist, who is too pious to run away, while he has (as he would himself phrase it) both the law and the testimony on his side of the controversy. As for the other four, let Bomebard himself select them. He'll pitch upon fellows somewhat of his own kidney, I'll warrant you.

Woolsack. You devise the matter well, sir.

Tunbelly. Why, in these sort of things, do you see, I have a kind of a—knack, as it were. In detecting the outward signs of inward resolution, I am particularly at home, sir; particularly. --- Without there! Tell Bomebard and Cant to come hither immediately.

Enter the DOORKEEPER, with BOMEbard and CANT. We have sent for you, Bomebard, because we are requested by the Parramatta Bench to strengthen Dreadnought, who is now in quest of Stalwart and his desperadoes, by six of our best constables, who are to join him in the vicinity of Richmond; and knowing, do you see, that you are a brave and zealous officer, we have chosen you to conduct the detachment. What say you?

Bomebard. I says this here, your Worships—I'm thankful in'ardly for being pitched on, and for your noble 'pinion o' me likewise; which is, in a manner o' speaking, right down coin o' the relam to me. Brave, did your Worship say? --- But I'll not brag!

Tunbelly. No, don't Ned: it were needless.

Bomebard. Only this here I must say—and I don't care in regard o' who knows it: my wery chest, your Worships, is too counteracted to hold my roused-up heart with ease—with proper ease, your Worships.

Tunbelly. We are quite confident in your courage, Ned, and have every thing else to expect from your zeal.

Bomebard. Zeal? --- But I'll not brag.

Tunbelly. And we have also chosen you, Cant, for one of the six; holding you,
next to Ned here, our most trusty constable.

Cant. I'm proud o' your Worship's depinion o' thy servant to command. I feel gracious towards your Worships both. Moreover, I hope your Worships think me a godly and faithful seeker o' the Lord—saving your presence—and a fast holder of the Faith; all which I am, God be thanked—and saving your presence. Furthermore, if your Worships might wish to cross-contaminate me with hard questions touching my experience—

Tunbelly. No, no; not now, my good fellow. We are confident in you as an officer—and that is enough. Away home now, and get you ready. And, Bomebard, we leave to your selection the four others who are to accompany you.

Bomebard. Your Worships kiver me with honorableness; but I'll deserve it—there!
If so be as I comes across that 'ere Mister Stalwart, I'll l'arn him what right down fighting is—there! What more can I say?

Tunbelly. That's enough—that's enough! Now, away with you!

Bomebard. Cant! right shoulders for'ard! March!
(Exeunt BOMEbard and CANT.)

Woolsack. Truly, then, he is an extraordinary fierce fellow, that same Ned!

Tunbelly. Isn't he? An' he do come athwart the Bushrangers, they'll have small
relish of his company, I'm thinking. What a desperado
the fellow would make! Why, Stalwart himself were a mere pet lamb
to him! But, luckily, Ned has a very great respect for every thing legal.
--- Is the Court thrown open, fellow?

Doorkeeper. This good hour, your Worship.

Tunbelly. Gadsblood, you cub, see how you answer! What is it to you whether

the hour is good or bad, sir? Eh, sir?

Doorkeeper. O Lord, sir!

Tunbelly. O Lord, sir! Can you never answer as you should do? What is the
Lord to you, sir? Eh, sir?

Doorkeeper. O Lord, sir!

Tunbelly. Zounds! (striking him with his cane). Take that, you calf! You ought
to have your ragged head broken every day of your life, you
unteachable ironbark junk, you! --- Let's in, sir. --- I'll teach you ---
(*Exit with WOOLSACK.*)

Doorkeeper—(clenching his fist). O! if it was a thing as how I only might,
I think I know whose
corporation 'ud ake a bit! Well, all's one, as the saying is.
(*Exit.*)

SCENE II.—A Room in FENCE'S House.

MACBLOOD, RACKROAD, DESPERATE, FILCH, and a number of other BUSHRANGERS are discovered drinking, &c.

GLEE.

In the Forest we are free yet,
In the Forest we are free!
And though through strife we hold this life,
'Tis a life of liberty!
And while traveller goes with aught to lose,
Right merry will we be.

We nor bend to seed the soil, men,
Nor gather up its birth;
Yet its fruits for us shall smile, men,
And its harvests yield us mirth,
In the Forest ranging free:
And though through strife we hold this life,
'Tis a life of liberty!

Enter STALWART from an inner Apartment.

Stalwart. Come men, break off! Our need is at the worst.
A like necessity to that which pricks
The wild-dog from his forest lair, to prey
Around the guarded sheep-fold, bids us hence
Into society's more beaten paths,
For spoil, to glut our need. In then, at once,
And get you ready.

Macblood. Yes; the Captain's right.
This same Necessity, like a she-centurion,
Says, Go! and go we must.

Filch. Seeing it isn't
So merry a deed to disobey the jade,
As 'tis to trick dame Justice.

Desperate. Well! I care not;
Come what, come will, 'tis all as one at last.

Rackroad. Hey, for the roads again! Let's in, my tigers!
(Exeunt all but STALWART into an inner Apartment.)

Stalwart. So we depart once more: and here comes Mary.
To take another leave. Poor girl, she loves me;
And as I deeply feel the charm of being
Beloved by one, else innocent, despite
My desperate fortunes, I must grieve as deeply,
To know what sorrow and shame I and her parents—
Her all-abandoned parents!—are entailing
Upon the creature that thus loves me! Yes;
Although a wild, ungovernable heart,
Hath driven me neck-deep in crime;—though misery,
And burning wrongs, have stung me to commit
Deeds, terrible but to name! yet I, at times,
Am quick to pity.

Enter MARY. Why so sad, my girl?

Mary. What, Stalwart! Can you ask me such a question?
Do you not now depart—going, as it were,
In quest of an untimely grave, or bonds,

Or worse than these, of crime? I would not vex you!
They say you are a wild and fearful man,
But I will not believe them;—be not angry!
I ask not what you are: to me you seem
Only unhappy, like myself; and very—
Yes, very gentle—at least to me; and this
Aye makes me weep to think on when you are gone.

Stalwart. This kindness kills me!
(moving away from her, and speaking aside).

Did she only

know

In full the blackness of my life, she'd fly me,
Maddened with horror! Yet I here am honest;
For, by the hell I merit, I would fill—
Here, at this very point of time, would fill
A dastard's grave as freely as a throne,
Could I undo the evil, by my death,
Which, living, I have done her. Still 'twere nought,
Unless she could be so secured, besides,
From all that she must suffer in the future,
Of degradation and corrupting shame,
At her vile parents' hands. And this the fiend
Within suggests as comfort. --- Mary, go
Compose yourself within.

Mary. Stay: I would ask you,
Is there no way by which you might forsake
These desperate courses? Listen to my thoughts:
Many might call them foolish—but you will not,
Even though they be. Stalwart, there's many a vale—
Many a nameless vale, browed in by those
Blue shadowy mountains we behold afar,
Here to the west—which you might shelter in
Unknown, unsought for;—there, to till the soil,
Attend the herd, or hunt the forest beast,
You should not go alone.

Stalwart. Alas! poor girl.
Mary, your thoughts are sweeter to my heart
Than are the wood-notes of a bird, to one
Who hears them, lying bed-rid—but they are vain!

Where is the solitude, under yon bright heaven,
Which might afford a refuge now to Stalwart,
Even for a week; attended, as he must be,
By the tell-tale personal echoes that resent
The world's wide outcry, and the death-doom, pealed
By Vengeance through the trumpet of the Laws?—
Laws born of ages that were drunk with blood,
And mad with loss: hence are they merciless
In their effects, and never, never spare
The wretch whose wretchedness they help to make
The outcast thing it is. No, no: I may not,
Now still the legal hubbub that thus dogs
My hunted steps—not even by flight. And since
I may not, it must be my aim to make,
By deeds yet wilder and escapes more strange,
Its very prevalence become a fence
Of fearful mystery round my wandering life.
Yes! and besides, I am sworn unto my band,
In life, and to the death; and having now
No honest trust to pride in, be it mine,
Living and dying, to hold inviolate
The gloomy honor of a Robber Chief!

Mary. Then you would not reform, even though you might?
Nay, would you not?

Stalwart. Not now. There was a time,
Not long since, Mary, when I much was wont
To fashion in my mind some scheme by which
I might retrieve the lost: 'twas when sweet thoughts
Of thee—and of my sister, one like thee—
Had breathed within me, like unfolding flowers,
Or stirred my listening heart, recurringly,
Like love-remembered music. --- But, enough
Of this vain talk! Nay, why so sad?

Mary. To think
What, in an honest path, you might have trod to;
And, for you will not break an evil oath
To mend your soul. There's many an inland vale
Whose shades strife never enters ---

Stalwart. Say no more!
(moving from her, and continuing to speak aside).
O misery! This holding to my hopes
Glimpses of good, however far and faint,
Makes but my reason shudder all the more,
To apprehend the impassable gulf which crime
Hath thrown 'twixt me and aught but evil!—Crime,
The consciousness of which must ever make
The quiet interval, that overlasts
A week at most, less prizable to me
Than strife or riot; which, or arm remorse
Against itself, or blunt the thorns of guilt
Even in the sprouting. (Turning towards her).

Mary, hear me! rather
Than be the shuddering Thing that safety now,
And an unriotous life, could not but make me—
Rather, I say, than be so pale a worm,
I'd turn relenting Fortune's brightest smiles
To hostile flames, and be myself, before them,
A sun-parched stubble! --- Ho! within there, men.
Re-enter the rest of the BUSHRANGERS, with OLD FENCE and his WIFE.
Well, are you ready?

Macblood. Yes; and willing also.

Stalwart. 'Tis well. (Apart to Mary). Forgive this haste. Follow!
(*Exeunt BUSHRANGERS.*)

Mrs. Fence. Well, I'm main glad they're gone; for they were sucked dry,
and my
welcome weighs with their purses: a fresh purse—a fresh welcome.
Eh, master?

Old Fence, (admiringly). You can do it, old 'oman; you're the one that can
do it, and no
mistake.
(*Exit.*)

Mrs. Fence. Come, girl, let's in to our work: every thing is at sixes and
sevens.

(Exit.

Mary. May God forgive her all the misery
She has dowered her daughter with. My heart is broken!

(Exit.

SCENE III.—The Forest near Richmond.

Enter BOMBARD, CANT, and four others.

Bombard. It's him! Yes, my dymons, yonder's Dreadnought, and his constab'lary waryers, awaiting for us. Shoulder your bright-barrelled impelments o' war! Lift your legs, and push on afore me; and when you jines 'em, say this here—Ned Bombard's a-coming like lightning in the fernament! Presto!

Cant. Verily, we will denounce thy coming to strengthen them against the Philistines.

(Exeunt CANT and the four others.

Bombard. Said jist like yourself, old book o' sarmonsens. That bible Parson Teartext 'stowed on him has cracked his old pie-matter, as sartainly as I'm called the Waliant Trap—that is, by the scurvey Townsmen; but, by my bold com-rades, the Waliant Dog: though dog's a tarm most low and vulgar-like, unless the sense bees right taken, as sinnicating—infarnal brave, which it does. Now the only book I studies is one about the days o' cavelry, when every man wore steel at his side and fout his fill. And now the optu-nitty's come for magnamalous deeds, and I'll kiver myself with glory, and be well shot! (starts) I meant to say—well rewarded! (reflects). My wife says, Glory's the foolishistus thing in all the wide world round, and that my fondness for it 'ill get me a death soonerer or laterer, and leave her a weeping widder without a dump! But she 'ticulates blasphybious words, and ought to lose her mortal tongue in consekence. And besides, amn't I the Waliant Dog? Yes I am—there!

(Exit.

SCENE IV.—Another part of the Forest.

Enter STALWART and the other BUSHRANGERS.

Stalwart. We can but look to be hunted.

The choicest vintage,—be the next poltroon
That, dog-like, swings by the neck! But, ho! what say you?
Shall we now seek them? By the Lord, I have talked
My spirit into such a blaze, that I
Would now do nought but fight!

Filch. No, let us first
Outwit them, for we like the trick on't rarely.

Stalwart. Well, to the trial.

Macblood. Ha! beware! Yon scrub!

Rackroad. Faith, we're beset!

Stalwart. Fall back, but steadily. (*shots within*). So! Into cover.
(*The BUSHRANGERS fall back, firing out: then DREADNOUGHT, CANT, and a number of others charge across the stage after them: lastly BOMBARD enters in great apparent fury*).

Bombard. Fight on, my hayroes! I'll purtect your rear with the rage and wengence of a dragon. That's a wip'rous-looking scrub yonder. I'll jist try if any o' the willians is planted there. (fires at random.) No, there ain't, or—(firing and shouting within)—I don't feel well somehow;—sick at stomach like, and narvous. But I won't run away: no, I'll only lie down among these here bushes, in resarve like. (He hides among some bushes.)
Re-enter several of the Bushrangers, firing out: they pass over as CANT and other constables re-enter on the attack.

Cant. Hang not back neighbours! Faithful death is the gate o' life! quit yourselves like men! Put your trust i' the God o' battles, saith the 'vangelist! Come on!
(*They pass over.*)

Bomebard. (*poking out his head*) Well said, old boy! Fight on my ginnys o' goold! I'll guard your re ---
(*snatching in his head, as STALWART re-enters, speaking.*)

Stalwart. Look to your heart there! (*Fires out.*)

Re-enter DREADNOUGHT.

Dreadnought. And now look to yours! (*He fires at STALWART, who falls.*)

A true

ball. It has turned him into a giblet pie for the worms; which ancient gentlemen would have had a glorious meal prepared for them by this, had not Bomebard's figitty rashness betrayed our ambushade a thought too soon. But lie you there, my friend, while I seek you a bedfellow or so.

(Exit.

Stalwart. Thank you, Sir Trap! but then I am not fond
Of soulless bedfellows. (*Rises.*) I played the dead man
Most famously: ha, ha, (*bitterly.*) But the damned ball
Grates in my hip! Yet I can make a halt on't:

And now, Fortune, shake hands.

(Exit halting.

Bomebard. (*starting from his hiding place as though he would arrest STALWART, but stopping short at the side.*) Well, go and be damned since you're hipped! You beastly,

blacklivered, infernal, stinking, wile scorpiant o' the wilderness!

Re-enter DREADNOUGHT and the rest of the Police.

Dreadnought. (*speaking as he enters.*) Well, my lads, we must be even content with dispersing, since we could not capture them. Faith, while the rascals have sound legs, we might as well hope to run down so many kangaroos. The master spirit, however, is let off the chain. Its kennel should lie somewhere here (*looking about him.*) Why, this was the place. Gone. How's this? Damnation!—But he cannot be gone far yet, and must have gone in this direction. Spread out for a search.

Cant. Verily this Pharaoh hath escaped us, and returned again to Egypt. I speak by types and shadows and s'militudes.

Dreadnought. What, Bomebard; Why, I haven't seen you before since the tussle began. Where have you been, man?

Bomebard. Where have I been? That's rich, that is! Why a chasing o' two o'

the
enemy, who fouts like two fiends o' the woods, till one o' them says to
the other, says he—I'm blowed if it ain't Ned Bomebard! and with that
they fled, like lightening in the fernament.

Dreadnought. And in good time no doubt. (Aside.) I begin to suspect this
fellow of
being a mere braggadocia.—But come! we are wasting moments that
are like so many drops of gold. Spread out well: we must not let this
wounded fox escape us.

The Scene closes as the Police spread about the Stage.

* * * * *

Act II

SCENE 1.—Before the Red Lion in Windsor.

Enter a TAILOR and a SHOEMAKER.

Shoemaker. So they took none o' them?

Tailor. Not an individual. But Dreadnought or Bomebard—'t isn't settled which—shot Stalwart down and left him for dead; but on coming to the place again, look you, he had vanished like a spirit o' the elements.

Shoemaker. Look you, neighbour, he's a 'chanted man. But 'twas Bomebard did
it, I'll be affidavited. What's said of him?

Tailor. That he fout awful like. But 'thas finished his spoiling. He was always
a horrid Tartar; but now,—why it's dangerous even to look at him as
he passes.

Shoemaker. He mislests every one.

Tailor. Yes! 'cept the swells: and the Magistrates 'ill hear no story but his, because, I s'pose, he's so downdacious resolute like. Old Tunbelly calls him his Bengal Tiger. Only think of Christian men—and what's more, Magistrates o' the Peace—making use of such heathenish lingo as that! What 'ill the world come to?—Now, I myself, am a man of very weak nerves—terrible, exceeding weak nerves, sir,—terrible!

Shoemaker. So be I: I was always timersome like, man and boy. But let's in
and
have our morning.

Tailor. Ha! have a care, friend. We have been talking o' the devil, and here
he
comes, I do declare, like mad! If he mislests us, neighbour, let us be prudent with him. The Magistrates,—'specially Tunbelly, 'ill hear no story but his.

Enter BOMBARD, drunk.

Bomebard. Give me glory and friddum, say I!—Who are yous? Are you men o' mettle or filthy cowards? Answer me that.

Tailor. We be quiet men; and thanks to our breeding, men that are as honest as men well can be. You know us very well, neighbour.

Bomebard. Neighbour? Foh? Answer me this here: What is Ned Bomebard by natur' and compacity?

Tailor. A terrible exceeding brave fellow!

Bomebard. And the right-hand man o' the Magistrates?

Shoemaker. That you be!

Bomebard. And forby that, the ragin' lion o' the Windsor Constab'lary—'stead o' the Waliant Dog?

Tailor. And no mistake.

Bomebard. Well then, to show yous that I ain't too proud o' my dig-nitty, I don't care if I takes a dram with the pair o' yous—purwidning one o' yous stands flat. I've been on the spree all night myself, my dymons o' goold, though I am a hofficer. But what then? A hofficer is a mortal man, and must git drunk now and then, like a man o' mortality—mustn't he?

Shoemaker. In course he must.

Bomebard. You speaks natur's truth, my pigeon: whereby, by reason o' which, so forth an' cetra, let's in and have this here dram. Another nip 'ill jist send me home to bed comfortable—and you'll stand flat, like a hemp'ror, won't you?

Shoemaker. That I will.

Tailor. And so will I.
(Exeunt into the Red Lion.)

SCENE II.—A Meadow near Richmond.

Enter ABEL and ADA.

Abel. The sun is just uprising. See, sweet Ada,
What a vast wreath of golden cloud envelopes
Yon swell in the dark forest. Seems it not
A splendid turban wrapt in rising folds
About the shaggy and recumbent head
Of some old fabled giant?

Ada. Yes: and yet
I cannot choose but smile,—your similies
Are so extravagant always. Yesterday,
You could compare the river as it wound
Shining between its banks o'erclumpt with shades
Then heaping in the wind, to nought besides
A fabled monster—a leviathan
Cleaving his strenuous passage through the waves
Of ocean, tempest-tossed.

Abel. Well, for the future
They shall not deal in monsters. To begin—
Know you what most the sun resembles, there
Just risen now, and glowing through the dark
And drooping tresses of the forest?

Ada. Oh!
What may be likened to a Thing so glorious!

Abel. Even two things.

Ada. Name them.

Abel. Thy love-speaking eyes
As now, half lifted from the ground, they glow

Through their dark silken fringes.

Ada. Nay, now, Abel,
You flatter me by wholesale. Let me go.

Abel. By heaven, I do not flatter. Hear me, Ada!
The light of thy blue eyes is dearer far
To me, than is the sun's; for I could live
Contented in its influence, though shut
From the broad day—but Ada, I should die,
Even 'neath a sun more golden, if denied
Thy precious looks of love.

Ada. Then spare me, Abel.
But said you not that you had need to haste,
To keep appointment with some friends?

Abel. Aye, true.
But whether so early also?

Ada. To the woods, here,
Not far, to gather some particular flowers
I saw there yesterday, before the dews
Shall cease to freshen, and the steadier gaze
Of the proud sun oppress them.

Abel. But bethink you,
'Tis somewhat perilous to go alone
Just now into the woods.

Ada. Because of robbers?
Nay, 'tis not likely any now should keep
So near the scene of their late danger.

Abel. Hardly.
But mind you meet me at the gate to-night.

Ada. Perhaps—if you will promise faithfully
To leave your flattery all behind you.

Abel. Flattery?

Ada. Yes. Leave it behind you; and perhaps I may
Be at the gate tonight.

(Exit.)

Abel. There I, at least,
Will surely be.—Behold her how she goes
Forth in her fresh bright beauty, like a Joy
Born of the breathing gladness of the morn!

(He sings.)

Oh, how gentle, frank, and kind—
How pure of heart, how clear of mind—
How simple—and yet how refin'd
Is my enchanting Ada?

She looks so happy when we meet,
And smiles so innocently sweet,
That, even if prone to all deceit,
I could not wrong my Ada.

I wooed her trembling—but to see
A mutual love rise glowingly,
And win her virgin vow to be
My own—my only Ada.

(Exit.)

SCENE III.—The Skirt of the Forest. Richmond in the distance.

Enter STALWART, supporting himself with an untrimmed bough.

Stalwart. My wound is maddening me! What shall I do?
To seek relief in yonder Town's to seek
A dungeon also—and my heart bitterly envies
The veriest wretch that now may cower beside
Its scantiest hearth. 'Tis horrible! I had best
Surrender: Yes, 'twere surely better far
Than moping here, even like a soul in hell,
That vainly hopes, by ever wandering on,
To find some region less instinct with woe—
Some spot less saturate with torturing wrath,
Than that he treads!—Ha! who comes here? A woman!
'Tis even so—a young and lovely woman!

Benevolence, simplicity, and truth
Sit in bright union on her happy face!
How shall I act? I'll ask assistance. Yes.
But then the cause:—my wound—the place—the need
Of secrecy, will indicate at once
My real condition. Well then, I will trust
All to her pity; that quick pity, which
At sight of pain, hath a prevailing part
In every purple drop that throbbeth through
The eloquent heart of Woman.

Enter ADA with a basket of Flowers.

Gentle Maiden

Take pity on a forlorn and wounded man!

Ada. (much alarmed.) Good heaven! how came you thus?

Stalwart. Ah! may I tell?
Have you heard aught of a wild fray that chanced
Hard by here, in the Forest?

Ada. Yes, indeed,
Every circumstance—and I do hope
Even for the sake of pity, that you are not
The terrible robber, Stalwart!

Stalwart. Gentle maiden,
I am that wretched—that repented outlaw.

Ada. Then must I fly you, terrible man!—
(After a pause, she communes with herself.) Alas!
Said he not—wretched and repented both?
And truly he looks most wretched: and methinks
I do not fear him now. No; and 'twere wrong
Surely to leave him thus, (so pleads my heart,)
On the sharp edge of pitiless pain.—Indeed,
My heart is sobbing with compassion for you;
But though my charity relieve you, yet
My honesty must divulge the fact; for you
Do bear a very—very evil name.

Stalwart. Look on me, maiden! Do I seem the fierce
And merciless fiend, that blind and vulgar fear

Stalwart. Your scruples,
Fair Charity, attest your virtue. But
Now hear what I propose: and, by yourself—
(An oath to bind the worst) I swear to keep
The promise I shall make, as faithfully
As grace serves heaven. When that I am whole,
Through your so generous aid, I'll straightway seek
Amongst yon mountains their most difficult cave,
Where never yet the sound of human speech,
Save of the dusky savage, or a cry
Less dreary than the wild-dog's, hath disturbed
The ancient reign of Solitude;—and there,
Scantily sustained by what the hollow trees,
And scrubs, and rivulets afford, I'll wear
The unperverted future out in pure
Repentance for the past.

Ada. I am satisfied:
And now for your immediate relief.
Hard by, there stands a ruined house, obscured
By a rank growth of wattles—you may see
Its crumbling gable yonder, jutting through
Their circling foliage. It contains, I think,
One weather-proof apartment; and the place
Is seldom sought, having an evil name
For deeds of death, which, ere my memory,
'Tis said, were there committed. House you there;
While I speed home for bandages, and what
Your state may else require.
(*Exit.*)

Stalwart. I have succeeded
Beyond all hope. How graciously compassion
Shone through her innocence! Now, if it were
But possible for me to urge, in future,
Some better course, 'twere surely at the bidding
Of so much beauty and goodness. But I can
At least be grateful—yes! to fail in that,
Were to be ten times damned. Yonder's the ruin;
And this the nearest and most secret way.
(*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.—Before Fence's House.

Enter MACBLOOD, RACKROAD, DESPERATE, FILCH, and others, with OLD FENCE, MRS. FENCE, and their daughter, MARY.

Mrs. Fence. - Well; 'twas his fate, as the saying is, and has been the fate o' many a good man afore him. Ods! gal—(to Mary) you do nothing but mope, an' hang your head, an' stare when you're spoke to! What the dickens! was he the only man i' the world? Have a good hearty cry, and ha' done with it.

Old Fence. That's what I tell her.

Mary. I cannot—my heart is dry.

Rackroad. So is mine, for that matter. Our life is the devil without a leader that all rely on: and he had no fellow in the profession.

Filch. Not in open scrimmage and road-work: it was only in finger business and house-prigging that he wasn't so gifted like as some others be.

Desperate. Well, I care not an' I were with him, wherever he is: above or below.

1st Bushranger. We begin sorely to miss him already.

Macblood. Well, lads, we must even do the best we may. He died as a gentleman of the bush should wish to die—and there's an end of the matter. Let's all join in the Ranger's Dirge to his memory, and then in to business.

Old Fence. In course.

Mrs. Fence. That's proper.

DIRGE.

He lived as a Ranger should live,
Fearing nothing above or below!
Ever ready a friend in his need to relieve—
And yet he nor borrowed nor bought to give,

But compelled from his betters the rhino—and so
He lived as a Ranger should live.

He died as a Ranger should die,
Like a lion defying his foe!
In the green forest shade where he gloried to lie
And list the wild breezes go piping by;
With his gun smoking hot in his death-grip—and so
He died as a Ranger should die.

The Scene closes as the Dirge ends.

* * * * *

Act III

SCENE I.—Near the ruined House.

Enter ABEL and ADA.

Ada. Our patient mends apace; and when restored,
If he shall keep his promise of reform,
Strictly and truly, as I trust he will,
How often may we draw, in years to come,
A silent satisfaction from the view
Of these our singular charities, which snatched
A fellow-being from the jaws of death,
And paths that lead to hell?

Abel. Perhaps. But, Ada,
If, on the other hand, he again become
Aught like what he has been—nay, should he but
Make one transgression against justice, thus
Diverted from its course, I fear me, then,
These charities would darken into crimes.
And tell me, while these promises are made
Tow'rds a repentant future, even then,
Do you not mark that his impatient eye
Seems fretting inwardly, and struggling hard
To smother down its scornful fire?

Ada. At times,
His looks, indeed, seem fearfully conflicting.
And this ----

Abel. Contrasting with those promises,
Is even too like some wild-dog lurking near
A flock of lambs, and waiting so, the time
Convenient for destruction.

Ada. Yet, bethink you;
This wildness may but be the mixed expression
Of sorrow and shame, induced by every glance
His memory pours o'er an unlovely past;

Or the unrest of a yet doubtful struggle
'Twi'xt hope and fear, for mastery contending
Over the unknown future.

Abel. Oh, this guilt!
How terrible a thing it needs must be!
The criminal, who from his height of place
May laugh at human law, or from his mere
Obscurity evade it—goeth he
Unpunished therefore? No: he is his own
Sure punishment, and in his being bears
About with him the worst of penalties,
A wounded conscience.—Still, my Ada, be
The case of our strange patient as it may,
You have a generous wisdom (shall I call it?)
And a confiding goodness, which would charm
My heart to love you, though their precious meanings
Distilled, like dew from the blue heavens, from eyes
Less glowing in their gentleness than thine;
Spake from a mouth less richly set with pearls,
Less stored with musical balm; or throbb'd aloud
In the dear billows of a less soft bosom,
Than that which I with hearted love as pure
As gold entreaured in some Indian lake,
And warm as light, and fond as infancy,
Now clasp to mine. (embracing her.)

Ada. Abel, you make me blush!

Abel. Pardon me, dearest!—nay, but pardon me!—
Now let us wander by the shining river,
And I will sing you there, aided by Echo,
A loving ditty of the olden time,
Before the whiteness of our simplest terms
Was soiled by evil use;—of such 'tis framed:
And yet so thick is it with love, so rich
In dainty poesy, that 'twould pall the sense
But for its innocent simplicity,
And earnest strength of purpose. Then, my fairest,
We'll mark the spangled fishes throng about
In happy revel, and compare them well

To swarms of brilliant love-lights flashing through
The silver vision of some glorious Bard,
When, flowing forth in everlasting verse,
It greens the course of Time. Give me your hand.
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE II.—A High Road through the Forest.

Enter BOMBARD armed, and singing.

Bombard

O I'm a Soldier bold,
Brimful of fun and rattle;
An angel with the ladies—but
A devil in the Battle!
There's nothing that I fear
Upon the earth or under,
And my name is Whiskerandos Cannon—
Bullets, blazes, blood and thunder!

We've beat the roads every day this fortni't now, without a partingal
o' success. Some people says as how the Bush is the place as we
ought to look for 'em, but I says the roads is the place.

(He sings again.)

Achilles, whose great deeds
First set Dan Homer writing;
Brave Hector, and huge Ajax too,
Had just my style of fighting!
This horrid arm of mine
Can smite a foe asunder:
And my name is Whiskerandos Cannon—
Bullets, blazes, blood and thunder!

That's a song I l'arned from one o' the old Wit'rans: a rale army song,
about Capt'in Cannon.—How them there fellows o' mine does l'iter
sure-ly! I heer'd 'em a-talking about my wallor in the late haction, and
so walked a-head o' purpose—that they mout do it with the more
delekissy.—Ha! I smell a prize. (looking out.) By the crown o' the
rel-am, it's him! and without any implements o' war either.

Enter CANT and two others. I say, Tim Baton and Jack Catchpole, trot off both of
yous to the

Court: the Justices are busy, and may want you to sarve summonses.
Presto! lift your legs!

(Exeunt the two Constables. Can you think, my old dymon o' the Injun mines, why I

packed them
two coves off?

Cant (shaking his head solemnly). I can't, then.

Bomebard. Doesn't the shares of a re-ward weigh some'at heavier 'twixt two than they does 'twixt four? I rayther think they does, consid'rin' the p'int. (*smiling grimly*).

Cant. Yes, neighbour; by two-fourths, 'cording to my 'rithmetic.

Bomebard. Your 'rithmetic says right. Ha! my old waryer, there's sense as well as fury in this here consarn (tapping his forehead). But what o' that? says you: why, this here, says I:—Turn your eagle eye yonder. Are you blind, or do you see some'at of importance?

Cant. Right away here, towards old Spaulding's?

Bomebard. Yes, that's the p'int o' the compass. Are you blind yet?

Cant. God has blessed me with good eyesight, neighbour; and if that's the way you mean, I do even seem to see a poor man limping this way very badly: as if he was hipped, like.

Bomebard. And what strikes your eager compacity in consekence—Eh, my old dollar o' Spain?

Cant. Why nothing, neighbour: only that I ought to thank God I'm not so lame as he seems to be, poor man!

Bomebard. Well! arter that I'm done! Tell you what, Cant; your mind's a sleeping toad o' the rock! Tell me this here: is it forgot that a willan called Stalwart was hipped in a certain late haction by this here werry arm—though Jack Dreadnought says 'twas his'n? Does some'at o' nat'ral sense strike you now?

Cant. There does! (slapping his thigh.) Providence might ha' sent him in our

way in this same crippled man.

Bomebard. It's him! It's him, my gynny o' goold! Let's plant awhile, and twig his dirty hactions unbeknowns to him.
(They retire up the Stage.
Enter a Farmer limping.

Farmer. See what it is to be careless! I ought to ha' known, being up'ards o' forty, that stacking is slippery work of a day, an' so ha' laid my fork down in a workman-like manner, instead of up agin the stack: then I shouldn't been a-going to the doctor with a ripped thigh, I reckon. (*Bomebard and Cant having stolen forward during his speech, now rush upon the Farmer and seize him.*) Murder! Oh, my thigh! Mind my thi—

Bomebard. What! have we napt you at last, then? Oh, you wild 'Rabian o' the desert! Hold on, Cant, my hayro; and let the com-u-nitty re-joice, for Stalwart's capt'red.

Farmer. God forgive you then for taking me for Stalwart! I'm John Crabtree, a poor settler that hurted himself this forenoon very badly.

Cant. Thou hast named God, friend; of what Faith art thou?

Farmer. Why a Christian man, in course.

Cant. Dost believe i' the Bible; the Testament, and the Prayer Book?

Farmer. Sartanly; in course.

Cant. And that Tom Paine was the true and lawful son o' the devil, God keep us! sent i' the world to torment the Faith?

Farmer. Eh?—oh, yes! sartanly.

Cant. I say, friend Bomebard;—if this be Stalwart, his wound has brought him to repentance, seeing he has all the sensual qualities of a good

Christian.

Bomebard. An 'ily tongue's rayther smooth, but he won't git over me with it:

leastways, I'm 'clined that 'ere opinion, under the warios p'int's o' this here case. (smiling grimly.) Off with him!

Farmer. I tell you again, I'm John Crabtree of the Kerrijong!*

Bomebard. In course you air: yes, and you'll soon git kerrijonged, and no mistake!

(making signs significant of his being hanged.) Hold on Cant!

Kerrijong? no, but good English hemp, my cricket. Off to limbo with the scorpion. I'll pull out your mortal tongue by the roots, if you says another sinnable! I 'spose you dont know who I am? You will when I gives you a poke in the guts though!—there! I'm the ragin' lion o' the Windsor Constab'lary! Hold on Cant, my hayro! Off with him.

(Exeunt.)

SCENE III.—The skirt of the Forest. The ruined House in the distance.

Enter STALWART, speaking. Ingratitude is mean as it is vile,
I must allow that. But I ever was,
And ever shall be, the accursed slave
Of lawless passion!—She has given me health
And liberty, but with those gifts evoked
Desires iniquitous, that from their dark
Impulsive depths, like monstrous sea-swells, keep
Blindly upworking,—but to find at length
Their end in worst designs: so true it is,
That heaping benefits upon a villain
Is bargaining for curses. Now, methinks,
Could I but see my villain face, it were
Enough to shame me hence. They think me gone
Since yesterday: and verily I would
The time invited not. But she and Abel
Were by appointment much upon this hour
To meet here;—now, an unexpected matter
To my chance knowledge will detain him hence.

She knows not this, and so will come. What then?
I've gold; I'll try her with it: it will work
The wrong way mightily even with the best.
Ruffian forbear! She comes! 'Twere best to fly!
No—I will meet her. How beautiful she is,
How lovely, and as good. Her innocence
Appals me;—never did I feel before
How terrible is virtue in itself
To him who would assail it.
Enter ADA, speaking.

Ada. He ever till now was punctual. I'm not pleased,
Nor will I look so when he comes, if I
Can meanwhile school mine eyes to veil the light
That breaks in gladness outward from my heart
Whene'er they see him coming.—Ha! our patient?
What holds him here?

Stalwart. Think it not strange, that I
Could not depart without—my villany chokes me! (*Aside.*)

Ada. What would you have?

Stalwart. But leave to kiss your hand.

Ada. Well do so—and depart; for here you walk
In jeopardy.

Stalwart. When do you wed with Abel?

Ada. Why am I questioned thus?

Stalwart. Is Abel rich?

Ada. Not rich: Why do you ask?

Stalwart. Because I know
That matrimony is a field, the soil
Of which inclineth more to weeds than fruit,
Unless it first be well prepared, and stocked
With many appliances that riches only,

To some extent, can buy.

Ada. I think not so.
Besides I care not now to talk of this,
Nor do I think it seemly. Why not go?
You much forget yourself in loitering here.

Stalwart. (feigning to muse.) 'Tis pity he is poor. It might be otherwise.—
And so you value riches lightly? Ah!
To want them, Maiden,—that is, money,—is still
To know the curse of servitude in one
Or more of its vile shapes:—to 'bate the voice—
To mask all natural majesty of eye—
To crimp the cheek with fawning smiles, and smooth
To an unfelt humility the brows,
Before the scornful scrutiny of some
Rich landlord:—rich, and powerful therefore, should
He take offence, even to the damming up
Each source of thy well-being. And to evince,
In presence of a money-god like this,
A thought!—no! but a dream of self-dependence,
Is to offend,—as indirectly slighting
What he considers—or at least would have
Thee to consider, thee and thine, as being
The outward sign of Nature's darlings;—yea,
The very gift of grace!—and such indeed,
In a worldly sense, is Money. Oh! to want
The eloquent dross, is still to have the wings
Of the most humble wish, most guarded hope
A Father's manly bosom knows, and all
The clasping tendrils of a Mother's love,
Shorn to the bleeding quick! See! I have Money.
(He shows a purse of Money.)

Ada. This is not well! indeed it is not well
That you will thus insist, in pouring forth
To ears that would be otherwise employed,
These sour opinions: for even were they sound
In fact, as they are specious, yet they were
Neither acceptable nor proper, urged
In such a place, by such a person. And

The sin of this ingratitude shall hang
A mountainous burthen on thy life, through all
Thy days to come! 'Twill sting thee in thy food,
And be a fiery hell-drop in each draught
That parts thy perjured lips. Then live, wretch!—live
Even for meet punishment!—And now, my Ada,
Let us away, lest breathing the same air
With such a miscreant, taint our moral health.
Exeunt ABEL and ADA.

Stalwart. (*rising.*) Scorned, trampled on, brow-beaten, flogged with words!
But he may thank the grief of recent sickness,
Together with a sudden sense of shame,
That ran at first, like a consuming fire,
Through all my veins, and withered up my strength,
For such an easy conquest as I proved.
How he be-lectured me!—a beardless boy!
And how she seemed to admire her valiant bully,
And to scorn me how deeply? Aye! and scorn,
Whether deserved or not, did ever stamp
An inexpungable hatred in my soul!—
Down gratitude! and come thou atheist spirit,
Revenge!—come smother all I feel of shame!
Look to it, ye happy ones! (*looking after and clenching
his hand at them.*) 'Twill ask you skill:
For though you walked invisible, I would yet
Be found upon your path for misery!
Till then, farewell!—for henceforth with the happy
I wage my war, being myself in hell,
And thence a devil. --- Now to the cave, wherein
'Tis likely that my fellows house themselves;
The likelier if,—as goes the news,—suspicion
Of harbouring them hath glanced upon the Fences.
(Exit.

SCENE IV.—A Room in the Windsor Police Office.

Enter TUNBELLY and the DOORKEEPER.

Tunbilly. Are any of my brother Magistrates
Within, sir?

Doorkeeper (shaking his head.)

No.

Tunbelly. Is that the way you answer
A Justice of the Peace? No! Are you sick
Of your situation—a most easy one?
Or have you, sir, so soon forgot the lesson
I gave you yesterday, touching respect
And carefulness? and which was then elicited,
You most unmannerly dog you! by your treading
With awkward hoof on this my sorry toe?—
Answer me instantly, you ragged-headed,
Tobacco-tainted, dirty-shirted sot you!

Doorkeeper. I humbly axes your Worship's noble pardon,
And do dispise my barber-rarious horror.

Tunbelly. The scamp's no fool! A good apology 'faith!
Well worded,—yes, and pithy too,—for him.
Well! see that you offend no more, and let
Your last thoughts, night by night, and first o' mornings,
Be all employed in graining as it were
Into yourself, some proper and continent mode
Or system of behaviour, when you stand
Before the Justices.— Come here; and now,
As you hope ever to rise in the police,
Mark well, and treasure up, sir, in your memory
Every word that I shall condescend
To speak for your instruction. First then, mark you!
Always appear before superiors
With cleaner hands and face, and with your hair—
Which, by the bye, is heinously neglected,—
With your hair, I say, combed straight, so as to give
A meek cast to your countenance, do you see.
And mark this well too, never bear yourself
So bolt uprightly—thus, whilst in their presence,
Lest you appear forgetful of your great
Inferiority—a thing unpardonable!
But above all, be sure you never smile,
Or look vexatiously facetious, should
A twitch of gout, or indegestion, give

A comical expression to their features;
But seriously respect it, as indicative
Of gentlemanly living, sir, and habits.
And lastly, mark! whenever you may have
Occasion to address them, open thus,
In a subdued voice,—May it please your Worships;
Concluding every answer to a question
From any one of them with the same title:
As—No, your Worship, Yes, your Worship, or
I cannot tell, your Worship; with, do you see,
A reverential dropping of the head
And eye while uttering it.— There, purse up these
My precepts, in that rough colt's head o' thine,
And you will rise, mark that! And now, sir, take
This letter to ---

Doorkeeper. I knows, your Worship, to
Your little ----

Tunbelly. Hush, you savage you! You must
Be diffident of conjecture if you'd rise,
Mark that! But can't you carry it in your hand?
Your pocket may be rent.

Doorkeeper. No, your Worship: I never lets any holes grow in my pockets;
leastways, not now. I've had losses that way, but not lately; the last
teach'd me to darn. 'Twas as this—

Tunbelly. Zounds! tell me none o' your vile stories.
There! be off with the letter.

Doorkeeper. Oh, your Worship, it'll be worth your while to hear; it's full o'
humour. Twas—

Tunbelly. Begone, you unteachable log you!
(drives him off.
That thwack, I'll warrant, made his hard head buzz a bit!
What a mere colt it is! he, he! but I
Bear with him, inasmuch as the correction
Of his stupidity affords me, here,
A little wholesome exercise at times.

But, seriously, these underlings are all
A-wanting in respect: and I have heard
It hinted somewhere, that much corpulence
Is even a moral emetic, as it were,
To outward difference. Zounds! if—But soft,
Mere starvelings will of course console the dry,
Forlorn condition of their own anatomy,
By railing at a—a—gentlemanly
Rotundity of figure. Rotundity?
Ah, then! the truth will out: I would I had
A porter's load less of this same rotundity!
For, on my conscience, I can never take
A peep in the old pierglass that is placed
Within my study—I mean my lunching room,—
Without some thought of a high tilted cart
Set up on end, shafts downward.

Enter CANT running.

Cant. We have reprehended Pharoah, your Worships! We have
reprehended
Pharoah!

Tunbelly. Apprehended Pharoah? I was in the belief that the Red Sea had
apprehended him some little time since.

Cant. Ah, your Worship takes me amiss! I speak by types and shadows and
s'militudes; seeing we have laid hands on one who is no better than a
heathen of Egypt, or Gath, or Askelon, or—

Tunbelly. There! tell me now in plain terms whom you have nabbed;—
never mind
being so learned about it.

Cant. How can I be plain, your Worship; seeing me and the deputy have
'rested that son o' Belial and scourge in the hand of Satan,—Stalwart!

Tunbelly. What?

Cant. I have said it.

Tunbelly. And where is he?

Cant. Bomebard is bringing him up George Street.

Tunbelly. What! by himself? Why did you leave him? Though Ned is brave as a lion, he'll get away from him! I know he'll get away! Eh?

Cant. Oh, no, your Worship; the man hath repented, (save in the matter of denying himself in toto,) and cometh along even like a lamb to the slaughter.

Tunbelly. Say you so? Well done, my fine fellows! Let me see the black dog: let me see him. Lead on!
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE V.—A Street in Windsor.

Enter BOMBARD dragging in the FARMER, with a Rabble at his heels.

Bomebard. Stand off! Do you want to rescue him? Wouldn't you like to go snacks in the hundred pounds reward? Hey, hey, hey!

Farmer. The Justice 'ill know at once, you'll see.

Bomebard. Do you want that there tongue o' your'n pulled out by the roots?—
Here comes the worthy ruler.
Enter TUNBELLY and CANT hastily.

Tunbelly. Where is the villain? Ha, my worthy fellow, Ned, have you nabbed him at last? Which is he?

Bomebard. Behold the scorpiant.

Tunbelly. Why, who have you brought me here for Stalwart?

Bomebard. Himself, I'll take a Bible oath on't.

Tunbelly. The devil you will! What! this is John Crabtree.

Farmer. So I told 'em, your Worship; and how I had hurted myself. But they were too wise to heed the truth, I reckon.
The Rabble set up a shout in derision of BOMEABARD.

Bomebard. Mocked? for being mistook by reason o' fate! and by a com-u-nitty that I ha' watched over for nine long rugged rolling years, like Washintub the 'Merican patr'ot?

Tunbelly. Never mind their jeers, Ned. Though you have been mistaken, yet your zeal is to be commended. Never mind them, my worthy fellow.

One of the Rabble. He needn't swear after this that it was he who shot down Stalwart, seeing he didn't know him from old Farmer Crabtree. Hoo, hoo!
(The Rabble shout again.)

Bomebard. Oh, you roaring crocodiles o' the wilderness!

Tunbelly. Do not let them make you forget yourself. Come away! Lend me your shoulder. Come away, I command you!
(Exeunt TUNBELLY, BOMEABARD, and CANT.)

One of the Rabble. Mind he doesn't take your Worship for Stalwart. Hoo, hoo!
(The Rabble shout again.)

SCENE VI.—Night. A Cave in which torches are burning.

MACBLOOD, RACKROAD, DESPERATE, FILCH, and a number of others, discovered drinking, &c.

Macblood. See you; it is as necessary that one of us should be commissioned to rule the whole, as that I should have a hand to direct this to my mouth. (drinks.) I don't propose myself in particular: each vote freely.

Desperate. I'll ne'er follow a worse leader than our last; and have no hope of finding so good a one. So let's e'en drop the subject with a toast to his memory.

Macblood. Toasting a ghost ever and anon is stale work: however, here's to his—
(As they are about giving the toast, STALWART enters. They start together in alarm, &c.)

Stalwart. Dismiss your foolish terrors! Trust me, I am flesh and blood, and look to be welcomed as such.

Several Bushrangers. Hurra! we're men again!

Rackroad. Tell us to what we owe your life?

Stalwart. 'Tis a long story, and you shall have it another time. Come, Mac, fill me a bumper; and let all give me the song of welcome.

GLEE.

Each lift a bumper to his lip,
But ere he dares a drop to sip
Let him sing --- Welcome, welcome!

(They drink.)

Now over head the tankard fling,
And make the mountain cavern ring,
With --- Welcome, welcome, welcome!

Again—again your voices lift,
Till dell and gully, cave and clift,
Repeat the Ranger's welcome.

The Scene closes as the Glee ends.

* * * * *

Act IV.—A Garden.

SCENE I

Enter ADA and LUCY.

Lucy. So it is fixed—and we must mind to call you
Mistress next week. 'Tis a well-sounding title;
Fuller than Miss; and yet I think withal
'Tis dearly bought, and that one's liberty
Were worth a score such titles.

Ada. Fie, you scoffer!
Twenty indeed were not worth what you term
The purchase—liberty. But one, with Abel,
Were worth my hand and it, were these together
Worth all the world besides.

Lucy. You think so now.
With every maudlin lass, about to wed,
A lover is the pink of all perfection.
But ask them ere they be a twelvemonth wedded,
What proves their lord? Answer: a Jack-in-office!
Yes; that's the sequel: howsoe'er in name
They chance to vary—Cain or Abel—all
Are Jacks in disposition. Faith, they are;
I speak a truth that came into the world
With Adam, and that fretted Eve herself;
And you—even you shall yet approve it.

Ada. No:
I shall not. And, believe me, you are wrong,
If your quick words are loyal to your thoughts,
And not mere rebels to them. But if they
Do absolutely picture forth your mind,
Then am I sorry that you do opine
So ill of men; the more, that knowing one
Like Abel, you should thus confound them all.
Oh, there's no tyranny in hearts like his,
More than there's poison in the dews which lie

The big solemnity of parting lovers.

(Exit. Enter ABEL.)

Abel. See, my sweet Ada, I'm equipt, and need
But the glad energy a smile of thine
Can ever wing my spirit with, to speed me
At once upon my way.

Ada. Go not this evening.
I strangely dread some peril from this journey.
Besides, the sun is steeping in the west,
And ere you can attain the nearest inn
Whereat the wearied traveller rests, he'll hang
His golden robes upon the mountain tops,
And seek his ocean bed. And well you know
The road before you's storied thick with deeds
Of nightly robbery and violence;
The brood, 'tis thought, of that ungrateful man
We once relieved. Now should you meet with him
Prowling upon your path, I fear the blow
You dealt him once would only be remembered.
Wait till to-morrow then.

Abel. Pshaw! my sweet girl,
These are vain fears. Cruel indeed were Fortune,
If she could find it in her heart to be
Unkind to us just now.

Ada. But do you go
Alone? I hope not.

Abel. No, a fellow traveller
Awaits me even now. Dismiss all fear;
And come, my sweet one, see me to the gate.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE II.—Before the Cave. Sunset.

Enter from it STALWART and the rest of the Bushrangers.

Stalwart. Mac and I are enough: more would only excite suspicion.

Rackroad. But are you sure the landlady doesn't know you?

Stalwart. I have been at her house before, but she will hardly remember me thus

disguised. She is a fat lump of folly and prate; and by being so polite, forsooth, as to drink good store of paid-for liquor, we may gather from her by a few well put questions, who lodges there, whom she expects, whether rich or poor, and so forth; and from all this reckon where to pounce for the best booty. And should we find no success in this way, we'll even bring consolation back with us in some of her best brandy, and make a roaring night of it.

Desperate. Aye: fail not bring some of the balm o' Gilead back with you, let what will betide.

Several Bushrangers. If you do, we're out—

Macblood. Of swipe-luck and God's blessing.

Stalwart. We'll bring enough. Come Mac.
(Exit with Macblood.)

Filch. Let's in, lads, and while away the time betwixt this and their return with a good story.

Desperate. Or with a Trial out o' the Kalendar.
(Exeunt.)

SCENE III.—A Room in a Road-side Inn.

Enter Landlady. I can't think what a plague's the matter with all the travellers now-a-days. There's two within, who the moment they've had a snack and a glass or so, are for pushing on, as they vulgarly call it, and at this time o' night too. It's no manner o' use telling 'em the road beyond is full o' robbers—no; they must push on, the beasts! (Knocking at the outer door). I'm coming. (She opens the door.) Come in, gentlemen; you must be famished o' cold:

Enter STALWART and MACBLOOD. and the best thing in the varsal world to drive out cold is good brandy.

Macblood. A couple of stiff glasses then. (Exit Landlady.) An empty house, it seems.

Stalwart. No. There's company within: so have your pistols ready in case of traps.

Macblood. The caution's needless.

Re-enter Landlady with liquors, followed by ABEL, and WALTHAM his fellow-traveller.

Stalwart. (*pressing his hat over his eyes.*) Abel! as I live. But he'll scarcely recollect me thus smutted and disguised. This is well.—(*aside.*) Here's a health to ye, sirs, (*aloud and altering his voice.*)

Abel. Thank you.— I would we might reach Sydney to-night.—(*to Waltham.*) It were not too late even yet.

Landlady. 'Lord love ye! it's a merrikul you've 'scaped as 'tis; seeing Stalwart's howdacious gang's about, and ---

Stalwart. I have heard much of this Stalwart: what sort of a looking fellow may he be, landlady?

Landlady. Any body might know for the matter o' looks: he's a hugheous great man, with a beard to's middle, and some say he deals with Helzebub! I can't say for that; but it's certain he's got no more marcy for travellers than a Yaho o' the wilderness: that's certain, that it is!

Stalwart. Ha, ha! say you so? Though he were the devil himself I must into Sydney to-night, if I go alone.

Macblood. Why, as I am bound for the same place, and in a desperate hurry too,

I'll even bear you company, friend—if you have no objection.

Abel (to Waltham). Here's an excellent opportunity of company:—let us then go with them.

Waltham. If you will have it so.

Abel. If it please you, friend, we two will also accompany you thither.

Stalwart (eagerly). With all my heart.

Landlady. 'Lord ha' mercy on you! You'll repent, when it's too late, for not stopping o'nights where there's clean and smart and civil 'commodations, and the very best o' liquors.

Abel. I'm afraid we delay you.

Macblood. Not at all. Here, landlady, fill me two bottles of brandy, to fight the cold with on the way. --- I mustn't forget that! (aside.)

Abel. And take what is due you out of this.

Landlady. Come this way and I'll settle with you.
(*Exeunt all but STALWART into an inner room.*)

Stalwart. He has quite forgotten me:
And 'tis a sore thing for him that he has,
Since I remember well the stunning blow
His boyish scorn once lent me. But, at length,
I have him in my power, to be revenged
Even as I please. 'Tis very well:—but—silence!
Re-enter all the persons of the scene. Come, friends—and now we halt not,
till we find
The end of our journey.
(*Exeunt all but the LANDLADY.*)

Landlady. Well, I do hope they may be all right well robbed, as a warning to night travellers; 'specially that black-whiskered fellow;—the Lord forgive me

for it!

(Exit.

SCENE IV.—A Chamber.

Enter ADA, with a lighted taper. I fear I have alarmed the house
(listening).

I heard the garden echo, uttering back

The cry I gave when starting from my dream:—

Oh, 'twas a fearful dream! Methought a voice

Came distantly, as out of the dark forest,

Wailing my name:—and when, at length, I thought

'Twas Abel's, and that I had hurried forth

Through dreary shades, and under hanging rocks,

To succour his distress, a shadowy form,

Like one I knew too well, came staggering by,

His hands all dripping blood—which thus (elevating her own) aloft

He shook, as in despair! I shrieked and woke.

(She opens the lattice and looks out.

The night is dark as death. One long black cloud

Broods ominously, like a mighty raven,

Over the way that, even now, perchance,

My Abel treads. O God! may these my fears

Prove phantoms only—not presentiments!

My own—my absent one—may safety walk

Thy fellow-traveller, and thy loved return

Give speedy contradiction to my dream!

--- Some one is stirring! Let them not observe me!

(Exit timidly.

SCENE V.—A gloomy part of the Road.

Enter STALWART, MACBLOOD, ABEL and WALTHAM.

Macblood. Shall it be here? *(apart to Stalwart.*

Stalwart. Aye.

Abel. We have made good speed.

Stalwart. Have we? then halt awhile. Mac! to your work!

Macblood. Well, gentlemen, what think you;—is not this
A very pretty spot to play a robbery in:
A one act piece: eh, sirs?

Abel. Were I a robber,
I well might think so; for the place, indeed,
Is singularly dreary.

Macblood.
Now, sir, we
Being robbers, know it is.
(He and Stalwart draw their pistols.)

Abel. What mean you, men?

Macblood. Only to rob you, if you take it quietly,
And with a decent feeling of the fitness
Of place and time.

Stalwart. Am I unknown to you? *(pushing up his hat.*
Regard me well: for, whip me if I am used
So soon to be forgotten. Heed me well, I say!
Ha! even by this light you know me now!

Abel. The voice!—'tis he! Indeed I know you now,
And know you for a villain!

Stalwart. Aye, before;
But now you'll feel me one.

Abel. We'll try that!—so!
(He strikes Stalwart from him.
Waltham! down with your man, and follow! *(he runs off.*

Stalwart. What!
Another blow? Now shall my vengeance have
No boundary short of death!
(He pursues him.

Macblood. His life will pay for't.

Waltham. Alas! I hope not.

Macblood. Yes! and thine as well.
My deed must cover his.
(*A shot is fired within.* There! the thing's settled.

Waltham. Merciful God! Here, take you all I have,
But spare my life!

Macblood. To let thee live to tell
The manner of this dark night's darker deed,
Would bring the whole country out against us. No!
Go up, accuse in heaven, or down in hell:
But no where else.

Waltham. Nay, pause awhile and think!
For heaven's great sake ---

Macblood. Tush! what have I to do
With heaven?

Waltham. Yet, as you may need yourself
Some pity in misfortunes yet to come,
Think now, and spare me!

Macblood. What have I to do
With pity?

Waltham. Yet, reflect a moment!

Macblood. See,
It were as well to ask yon driving cloud
To be thy horse, and carry thee hence, as strive
To melt a man like me!

Waltham. 'Tis even so!
A tiger, matched with thee, were merciful!
Murder's red phrenzy glares within thine eye:
'Tis worse than death by such a wretch to die!

Macblood. Well; be it so.

(As MACBLOOD levels his pistol at WALTHAM, STALWART rushes in and arrests his arm, so that it is discharged upwards).

Stalwart. Forbear! No more of blood.

Traveller, if thou wouldst live, away with thee!

(WALTHAM runs off—MACBLOOD struggles to follow him.) Dare, and thou diest!

Macblood. What damned folly is this?

Stalwart. Oh, horrible deed!

Macblood. Art frightened?

Stalwart. Is it strange,
Who hath his hands thus red with innocent blood,
That such a man should shudder?

Macblood. 'Tis not thy
First deed of the kind?

Stalwart. No; but it is the worst
That ever damned a soul! You have heard me tell
How that, when lately wandering wounded, I
Was rescued from a misery worse than death,
Though to death leading, by the charity
Of a young maiden and her lover: this
I told you, but I told not all;—no! shame
Forbad the rest.

Macblood. But how does that tale bear
On this night's doings?

Stalwart. Listen, and thou'lt hear.
I was an ingrate to my benefactress;
And, as the wild-dog robs the innocent ewe
Of her white lamb, I, in return, had spoiled
Her young life of its purity; but that he ---

Macblood. Who?

Stalwart. He that yonder welters in his blood,
And stares at the cold heaven with sightless eyes,
Her lover—he came suddenly to her aid,
And held me at his mercy: but, obeying
The impulse of a fatal generosity,
He let me escape.

Macblood. Then you were not aware,
Till dead, who was your victim?

Stalwart. Not aware?
I knew him in the inn, at the first glance;
Yea, even before the fulness of his form
Broke from the flickering shadows that the lamp
Threw round him, coming from the inner room—
So lynx-eyed is the memory of hate—
And him I hated: for the wounds of scorn
Never would heal in me, and he had once
Tongue-scourged me with his scorn. Yet, being sick
Of wrong-shed blood, finding the curse of it,
Even in sleep, to smite me on the brain
As with a fire-brand, I had limited
The scope of my revenge to plundering him,
With bitter taunts—until he struck me. Then,
Then all the rage of my inhuman heart
Woke like an evening storm! In vain he fled—
For hell had shodden my pursuing feet
With its own vengeful lightning, so to help
More surely to the deed that damns me utterly!
Methinks I feel the vapours of perdition
Breathed in my face! Oh, I am filled with horror!
Devils are howling in my imagination,
And mock me to madness!—Let us fly
This horrible place!

Macblood. Not yet awhile—the body
Must first be rifled. And besides, methinks,
As in this case you have acted somewhat wrongly—
Slaying a man you should not—it were fit

We placed the corpse within some hollow log,
Secure from the hungry wild-dogs.

Stalwart. No, no, no!
I'll touch him not again! How could I? What!
Do you take me for the devil? See these hands!
How, as it is, shall I feed my mouth with them?
They'll taint with murder every thing they touch!
The relish of the grave will hang about them
Like putrefaction! (distant thunder) I thought as much.

Macblood. Tush! you're quite shaken, man.

Stalwart. Because I like
Not that same muttering yonder.
(showing symptoms of distraction.)
 What if God,
Upon the dark page of this desolate night,
Be writing it in thunder? (nearer thunder.)

Macblood. Ha, ha, ha!

Stalwart. Laugh you at me? And am I then a coward?

Macblood. I do not say you are a coward.

Stalwart. No!
Well knowing I would beat the scurvy lie
Back on your very lungs, boy! When I said
I feared yon roar, I babbled in a dream:
I sometimes talk in my sleep. (louder thunder). Crack louder! Good!
Outdare me now! Defy it! spit at it!
Nay, follow: and should we chance to meet the devil,
We'll see who'll charge him home. Dost know him, friend?
They say he dances hornpipes. So!
(*Exit.*)

Macblood. His wits
Are playing at blindman's buff. Now, there's a fellow,
That for a trifle, when his blood is up,
Will risk his life;—that in his wrath would slay

His very brother, did he stand between
Him and the object of his wish, and yet
He's superstitious; and, by times, as weak
And sickly in his thoughts of afterclaps,
As they who pray by the hour. Yes! and these
His moody glooms, just now, have touched me also:
Or else, how comes it that I dare not now
Rifle the body, as I purposed? --- Ho!
More to the right, ho!—this way, this way, ho!
(*Exit.*)

SCENE VI.—A distant view of the Cave.

(*Thunder and Lightning.*) Enter RACKROAD and DESPERATE groping their way among the rocks and trees.

Rackroad. Whiew! There's a rare game in the tennis-court above. There was a crack!

Desperate. If they're nailed now, there's an end.

Rackroad. Aye, a rope's end.

Desperate. Well, he that's down can fall no lower.

Rackroad. Unless the rope break.

Desperate. Rope me no rope! Wilt ever croak like a raven?

Rackroad. No. But let's on towards the inn: and do you keep giving the regular howl, lest we pass them in the dark.

(*DESPERATE imitates the cry of the wild-dog, and is answered from within.* 'Tis them, lad! That's Mac's howl: I'd swear to it.

Macblood (*within*). Cheer up, man. What, ho!

Desperate. This way, ho!

(*Thunder and lightning.*)

Enter STALWART and MACBLOOD, while the cry as above is heard in

various directions within.

Macblood. Ha, ye wolves! Why, what has put you all on the tramp in this fashion?

Rackroad. Why, fearing from your long stay, that something amiss had happened,
we were all posting for the inn, with a wide spread, do you see, to prevent our missing you.

(Thunder and lightning. Enter FILCH, and the rest of the Bushrangers, dispersedly.)

Bushrangers. What success? What success?

Macblood. Nothing to speak of. But here's that will warm you, my bloods!
(showing the liquor).

Filch. Trusting to your being so provided when we met, we even brought our
cans in our pockets.

Macblood. Well, fill 'em, and let the toast be—Success to all Bushrangers!

Stalwart. Damn them!
(Exit.)

Rackroad. Why, he's gone?

Macblood. Only, I suppose, to enjoy, undisturbed and alone, the pleasures of
imagination. Come—the toast.

All. Success to all Bushrangers.
(Thunder and lightning.)

Macblood. Now stand round for the Bushrangers' Glee. In a midnight scene like
this, with an accompaniment of thunder, it will be gloriously diabolical.

GLEE.

When the lonely owl cries,
Perch'd like a ghost in the old forest gum,

Then couch we each one as a tiger lies,
Where the night-caught travellers come.
The gale moans o'er us,
And the whisper passes round;
While the crickets chirp in chorus
Under the ground.
Thunder, &c.
First, one hears a distant tramp;
All catch the sound as it comes more near;—
At once we start from out our camp,
And thunder in the victim's ear,
Stand! Thunder, &c.
Here an evil hour hath led thee—
Stand! Thunder, &c.
For the sons of plunder bid thee.

The Scene closes as the Bushrangers retire towards the Cave.

* * * * *

Act V.

SCENE I.—A Garden.

Enter MRS. LESLIE and LUCY GREY.

Lucy. She must be in the garden; for but now
I saw her, from the window, culling flowers
Wherewith to decorate the drooping boughs
Of yon old willow; under which, it seems,
She first consented to become the bride
Of her lost lover.

Mrs. L. 'Tis her constant use,
Singing the while some doleful ditty, which
I think she makes herself, each turns so sadly
Upon her own wild state. But do you think,
Lucy, her reason never will return?

Lucy. Let's hope the best. Oh, 'twas a cruel stroke!
And as the hawk, with unexpected swoop,
Assaults the roostage of the innocent doves,
Suddenly falling on her brain, it scared
Her guileless wits away. Yet is she not
Quite mad, or in the way that most are mad,
Seeing her feelings, though distempered, keep
The old track still;—nay, even her reason trades
In sad realities, though lifted up
Into the cloudier region of her soul
By a wild-drifting fancy. 'Tis her voice!

Enter ADA, singing.

When last she saw her lover, his eye
Was bright as any gem;
His cheek and lips were ruddy and warm,
And she was all to him.

But when she saw her lover again,
His eye was sunk and dim;
His cheek and lips were pallid and cold,
And she was nought to him.

And then to wither within the grave,
They laid each manly limb:
To her may he come never again,
But she shall go to him.

She speaks.

To go down to the pit so soon—so soon!
The old grey head is for the pillow of clay;
But Abel's raven locks were all too fresh
For the cold grave—the damp dust! Oh, my head!
The foolish thing is trying to split. Oh, oh!

Mrs. L. My poor, poor Ada! Why will you grieve thus always?—
Thus banish peace for ever?

Ada. What! not grieve?
If you say peace unto the roaring thunder,
Will it be silent?— If you chide the wild
And wilful wind, when it comes wailing over,
Will it breathe softly? And my grief should be
Louder than thunder! wilder than the wind!
But, mother, I would that I could weep: my brain
Is all on fire—and tears'll put out fire.
Oh, that I could outweep the showery moon!

Lucy. This madness sure is catching.

Ada. Madness! What,
Do you think me mad? I would not for the world
Be thought so.—No! I'm only a little strange,
Having some living creature in my brain
That was not always there;—something that gnaws it.
But surely I could never be so wicked
As to go mad! --- Alas! they shouldn't have killed him!
He was so young and hopeful!

Mrs. L. Be the hand
Accursed, that blighted thus the one bright bloom
That breathed so sweetly on my wintry bough!

Lucy. What! don't you know me, Ada?

Ada. Yes—I know you.
Your name is Lucy, and mine's Ada: nay,
My memory is good. And I remember, too,
The feast we had, under yon willow tree,
The day I promised to be Abel's bride.
They say I wept that day—and, if I did,
I now know why. But Abel was all gladness!
Oh, he sang sweeter than a bird in the Spring!
And, dancing in the glory of his joy,
His step was like the light of evening's star
Upon the rippling river! But he's gone!—
Gone to be clothed with the white clouds that keep
So far away—the small white clouds. --- I have it!
I'll to the mountains where they rest. I'll sneak—
So softly—hush! I'll catch one there; and then
Knot it around me, and it shall bear me away
Like a morning dream! But not without you, mother!
No!—it were cruel to leave you here alone;
But Lucy—she shall stay; because her heart
Though bruised, is not yet broken.

(She sings.

O they that are joyous and hopeful of heart
Are very loth to die:
From the sun and the moon and the stars to part,
And down with the worms in the grave to lie.

Lucy. Alas! methinks I follow her wild words
With thoughts as wild.

Mrs. L. See, Lucy, see! She smiles
At something now; sadly indeed, but sweetly,
As dreaming infancy.

Lucy. What have you there?

Ada. Only a little foolish rose, that looked
This morning in the dews, saying the while
To its sweet self—Behold the pride of the garden!
The blushing bride of the bee! And then the wind
Grew loud and shook it down! I am going now

To let it look into my glass, to see
If it will know itself! I doubt it will not:
For every one is loth to believe an hour
Can work such terrible changes as it can.
I'll go, and give't a peep.

(Exit.)

Mrs. L. Oh, Lucy, Lucy!
I'm so rejoiced! Isn't she calm? quite calm;
And even sensible. She will recover!
I feel quite certain of it now—don't you?
I'll follow her, and keep her in this mood.

(Exit.)

Lucy. An emblem of herself. Mysterious thoughts
Bewilder me! For I remember now,
That when but schoolgirls, often as we talked
Of womanhood, her pensive eyes would fix
As 'twere in distant gaze, and fill with tears,
Even to the special wonder of herself:
As though upon those pleasant days there fell
Some shadowing of these. --- Recover? No!
For that wherein her mother's hopes take root—
That spirit of contemplation which, at times,
Looks through her madness—shows me the disease
Has settled in the fountain of her mind.
Oh, what a sickly and unearthly sense
Must sting existence, when the thoughts are all
Swung up and beaten thus about the bounds
Of the ideal world!—which, now no more
By reason settled, keep extending still,
In infinite circles, till they leave behind
Only a haggard memory of the mass
Of broken figures they would so enclose:
And this the maniac hurries into speech
Pathetically absurd. --- I'll follow her.

(Exit.)

SCENE II.—A rocky place at the mouth of a Ravine, with a distant view of the Cave in the background.

Enter DREADNOUGHT, BOMBARD, CANT, and a number of other Constables.

Dreadnought. Halt awhile, till I look about me here.
(going up the Stage, as if reconnoitering the Cave.)

Bombard (haranguing the rest). Fellow-waryers, hear me! Being a tried man, the Justices o' Windsor have sent me many a long mile to strengthen this here hexpedition. Well then, I've a small request to make in consekence. 'Tis this here, my flowers o' cavalry: if it's a thing as how we does fall in with the Bushrangers, jist let the 'sault be led for'ard by Ned Bombard o' the Windsor Po-lice. There; that's all: and what more can I say? Let deeds proclaim the rest.

Dreadnought. Let them (turning suddenly round and coming forward); and immediately. I did not tell you before, my lads, for a reason I had, of my having certain information, that, since the Fences were taken up on suspicion of harbouring them, Stalwart and his gang have kept house in yonder Cave; and that they are there, even now, I am advised by my own eyes, having just observed several armed men pass into it. Prepare, therefore, for an immediate tussle. They will not avoid us—at least Stalwart himself, and the braver of them, will not; seeing that, with bloody Mac at his heels, and a score of others full as devilish, or worse, he has been ranging about latterly even in search of opposition, like a mad tiger. Be thoroughly prepared then; and Bombard, take you the post you have requested, in our front. Lead on!

Bombard. Eh? ---- why ---- in all reason ----

Dreadnought. Lead on, I say!

Bombard. Y-e-s. (Aside.) O Lord! I'm right-down grabbed! I shall actually be com-pelled to run bang away!
(*Exeunt.*)

SCENE III.—Before the Cave.

Enter from it STALWART, and the rest of the Bushrangers.

Stalwart. Were there a thousand of them, I would not budge!

I'm sick of hiding from such pithless things
As yonder come against us. Paltry wretches!
Vermin that harbour in the sweaty wig
Of belly-swoll'n Legality!—I'm sick of it!
(Partly aside.) And more of being the pale and feverish slave
Of memories that make my sleep a hell,
Alive with mocking fiends. I'd know the worst
These horrible dreams can point at;—know the worst
Such ghostly visitations can forebode
Of penal retribution.

Macblood. Tush! You'll live
To get well, and after that. (goes to the side, looking out.

Rackroad. Ay, many a day. (going to the side.

Stalwart. I would not—no! For what? The very sun
Seems bright to me no longer; for my eyes
Are either blood-shot in their vision, or
There's gore upon its face. The breath of heaven
Blows cool for me no more—I loathe to breathe it!
It comes as from perdition! Light and air,
Food, water—earth's most vital bounties—these
Abhor me and are abhorred: they taste of death,
And minister to madness. Thus the powers
Of natural participation, all
Lie scorched within me—like a blasted grove,
On which the red tongue of the storm hath left
A special malediction. --- Think you, 'tis true
That Mary Fence is dead?
(*To MACBLOOD, who has returned from the side.*

Macblood. 'Tis so reported.
She took her being in prison so to heart,
It crazed her, and she died. But 'tis no time
To think of such things.

Stalwart. And that gentle girl
At Richmond, too, is dead?

Macblood. So Rackroad heard

but nearer than at first.

Enter DREADNOUGHT and his Party; BOMBARD leading, with evident reluctance.

Dreadnought. By the Lord, yon fellows don't seem to need any coaxing to it! They are coming full upon us. They are welcome. Now, my lads, wind up whatever is slack inwardly: for, mark me, he who flinches from his work to-day, shall be asked for to-morrow, if Brown Bess here (tapping his gun) be the coward-hater I take her for.

1st Constable. This is rather a ticklish place to follow them into.

Dreadnought. Ticklish! How ticklish? He's a draught of ditch-water and a poltroon who would shrink from such a pursuit, even though hell were their stronghold! So, as I said before, you have nothing for it, lads, but to wind yourselves up with the key of manly resolution.

2nd Constable. For my part, I would much rather be wound up with a dram.

Dreadnought. Lead on, you valiant dog!

Bombard (aside). I have it! (He feigns to trip, falls, and then roars lustily)—Oh, fiends o' fate!

Dreadnought. Ha! something unlucky has happened to fighting Ned: what is it, I wonder?

Bombard. He's sprained his ankle horrid!

Dreadnought. Not so badly as to compel him to remain behind us at a time like this, has he? (winking to the rest.)

Bombard. Yes. Ned Bombard, for once in this here life, must stay behind

his
bold com-rades, by reason o' fate and a sprained ankle.

Dreadnought. Now, men, are you satisfied that a bladder of wind and Ned Bomebard make a pair. Each of you behind, there, give the poltroon a sound kick as you pass him—and then forward quickly.

Bomebard (being kicked). Oh! oh!—Oh, Jew-Peter, god o' the fernament, has it come to this here!
(Exeunt all but CANT.)

Cant. (spreading out his hands). Oh, false deciple! Thou hast eaten sour grapes. *(going.)*

Bomebard. What, you too? Consider this here. When my ankle's to say properly well, I'll box you, my old boy, for the matter of from five to ten pound in British coin o' the rel-am—there!

Cant (shaking his head mournfully). Oh, Ned, thou art a Judas Carrot! thou art a Judas Carrot!

Bomebard. Carrot here, or carrot there, you has my challenge, my tulip!
(Exit CANT.)

Lead for'ard the 'sault? Yes, hook! *(He rises.)*

Let foolish Cant, there, run on vi'lent death;
Natur', alone, shall stop wise Neddy's breath.
I'll home to Windsor straight, and tell old Roger
That Dreadnought, like an undermining dodger,
Ill-used me out of envy; since my fault
Was only that I wished to head the 'sault—
And, in my eagerness to lead 'em forrid,
Missed footing, fell, and sprained my ankle horrid!
There still, with bounce, the simpletons I'll fright,
And bark the louder that I dare not bite.

(Exit.)

SCENE V.—A small circular vale interspersed with rocks, about midway between the Cave and the mouth of the Ravine, which runs into and across it from each side.

Enter an OLD SHEPHERD, running. Fe, fie on the man—if he was a man—that first invented guns, to frighten a peaceful shepherd from his flock, namely myself, old Harry Harmless! This was the manner on't:—I chanced to bring my sheep here to-day, into this nook, hearing there was nice picking in't; and there was I in the midst o' them, where I do delight to be, taking a comfortable loll under a wild oak, which tree I do 'specially love, because its voice is so low and sleepy, like the drone of my old mother's lullaby—God rest her dear old soul! Well, there was I, when I hears a trampling like. So I looks up; and there I sees, sure enough, right over against the flock, a whole lot of men with guns in their hands; and further to the right, up the gully here, another lot of men, all with guns in their hands too. So with that I started to my feet, and fell to a-running, and a-running, till I came here, and was obligated to stop for lack o' breath. Fie, fie, I say again, on the man that first invented such a bloody-minded weepson as a gun! He was a wild Rooshian of Africa, or a Hottentot of Spain, I'll be sworn—suckled by a Bengal tiger, and taughten all sorts of wickedness by a Yaho of the 'Merriks: for what christian of Europe would invent a gun?—the same having the likeness o' the devil's tail (saving my presence!), the voice of his head, and the murder of his heart—which is a millstone. And, moreover, 'tis certified that he has a club-foot, and therefore, by course, must need a walking-stick: now I could be sworn further, that the same walking-stick to which I delude, is nothing else than a mighty great gun, or a blunderbust, which is all as one. --- Oh, Lord! I'll run; for if there be not a fight here with guns, in less than half-an-hour—why I see double, and 'tis one and the same party I seem to see meeting from there and there—(pointing different ways.) Nay, not so; for there's more in one than t'other. Oh, Lord! I'll run—yes, even to the land's end—to 'scape the death of a shotten man by mistake.
(Exit running. Enter STALWART and the Bushrangers in front, as DREADNOUGHT and the Police appear among the rocks at the back.

Stalwart. Welcome, ye pitiful scrag-ends of the law!
'Tis time that ye were taught the striking difference
'Twixt forest fare, and the callousing of your elbows
Lounging on Lock-up benches!

Dreadnought. We are come, not
To bandy big robustious words about,

Having small skill in scholarship o' the kind,
Being plain men, d'ye see! Three or four words,
Nor long nor learned, is all we have to say:—
Yield or we fire!

Stalwart. Ask the unspancl'd horse,
That never liked the curb, to put his proud
Uplifted head into your hand; and say,
Shall he not toss his mane upon the wind
And neigh forth laughter—laughter of defiance?
So take you mine—hah! hah!—and, with it, this!
*(He fires at them. A volley is discharged on both sides. Some of the
Constables and Bushrangers fall, and STALWART himself staggers
forward.)*

Stalwart. The play is over. That damned fellow has pinked me.

Desperate (supporting him.) Where?

Stalwart. Right in the neck, here.

Macblood. Let's close round him, boys!

Rackroad. Ay, to a man!

Filch. Fear not; we'll stick to him!

Stalwart. Who calls? What icy hand is this, I say,
That has me by the throat?
(Renewed firing. STALWART falls out of DESPERATE'S hands.)

Desperate (stooping to him). How is it with you now?

Stalwart. Hark! Hell is roaring!
Why do you leave me here in the dark? What! Abel?
And you! And you! Was't I that killed you all?
Five—six:—no matter! None but friends should visit
A man so horrible sick! Out with ye! Pah!
Alive with worms? Keep off! What, nearer? Ha!
Embrace not me ye ghastly things! Away!
Ye love me not—(rising suddenly to his knees)

And therefore have ye come
To drink up all the air! Away, I say,
Or I will strike --- (sinking backwards.) Hah! hah!
Well may you triumph now! Guilty! guilty!
I did not plead Not Guilty! Mercy!

He springs upward, falls, and dies. The Bushrangers crowd round the body, grounding their arms in token of surrender; while the Police rush forward to secure them:—the whole forming a Stage picture as the Curtain slowly descends to triumphant music.

Note from Act III, Scene II. "I'm John Crabtree of the Kerrigong": KERRIJONG is the name of a wild, hilly district, a few miles beyond Richmond; so called, from the tree of the same name having been there found in unusual abundance. It is from the inner bark of this tree that the Aborigines are wont to twist the cordage with which they form their nets. It was also used by the early Settlers for tether-ropes, bag-ties, &c. And, moreover, it was said that, during the Croppy outbreak, several of the insurgents were hanged with halters twisted out of the bark of the kerrijong; they being executed in the Bush, under martial law—and the tree which furnished the rope being also the gallows. So, at least, ran an old Colonial tradition;—and to this Mr. BOMBARD is to be supposed to allude, in playing off the above inuendo, after his own very peculiar fashion of dealing in sarcasm.

THE END.

Poems

The Creek of the Four Graves

I verse a Settler's Tale of the old times,—
One told me by our friend, the kindly sage,
Old Egremont, who then went forth with four
Of his most trusty and adventurous men
Into the wilderness,—went forth to seek
New streams and wider pastures for his fast
Augmenting flocks and herds. On foot were all,
For horses then were cattle of too great price
To be much ventured upon mountain routes
And into brush lands perilously pathless.

So went they forth at dawn: and now the sun
That rose behind them as they journeyed out,
Was firing with his nether rim a range
Of unknown mountains that like rampires towered
Full in their front, and his last glances fell
Into the gloomy forest's eastern glades
In golden masses transiently, or flashed
Down on the windings of a nameless creek
That fringed with oaks and the wild willow ran
Noiselessly on, between the pioneers
And those new eminences.

Wilder grew
The scene each moment—beautifully wilder!
For when the sun was all but sunk below
Those barrier mountains, then, within a breeze
That o'er their rigid and enormous backs
Deep fleeced with wood, came whispering down, the wide
Slant sea of leaves stirred in the slanting rays—
Stirred interdazzlingly, as though the trees
That bare them were all thrilling,—tingling all
Even to the roots, for very happiness—
So prompted from within, so sentient, seemed
The bright quick motion.

Halting wearied here,
Our travellers kindled for their first night's camp
The brisk and crackling fire, which also looked
A wilder creature than 'twas elsewhere wont,
Because of the surrounding savageness,
And soon in pannikins the tea was made,
Fragrant and strong, the fresh-sliced rasher broiled
On the live embers, and as soon dispatched
By the keen tooth of healthful appetite.

And as they supped, birds of new shape and plume
And wild strange voice, nestward repairing by,
Oft took their wonder, or between the boles
Of the upslanting forest trees they saw
Perched on the bare abutments of those mountains
The wallaroo look forth: till eastward all
The view had faded into formless gloom,
Night's front; and westward, the high massing woods
Steeped in a dusk and deepening beauty, lay
Heaped all the more distinctly for their darkness
Against the twilight heaven,—a cloudless depth
Yet luminous from the sunset's fading splendor:
And thus for a brief interval they looked
Even like a mighty picture of themselves
Hung in some vaster world.

 Their supper done,
The echoes of the solitary place
Came as in wonder round about to meet
Strange voices moulding a strange speech, as then
Lifted in glee—but to be hushed ere long,
As with the night, in kindred darkness came
O'er the adventurers, each and all, a sense
Of lurking danger.

 But all settled soon
About the well-built fire whose nimble tongues
Sent up continually a strenuous roar
Of fierce delight, and from their fuming pipes
Drawing rude satisfaction, grave discourse
Of their peculiar business brought to each
A steadier mood that reached into the night.

 The simple subject to their minds at length,
Fully discussed, their couches they prepared
Of the green tresses of the willows near,
And four, as pre-arranged stretched out their limbs
Under the dark boughs of the forest high
O'erdoming and traced out against the clear
Wide gaze of heaven, and trustful of the watch
Kept near them by their thoughtful master, soon
Drowsing away forgetful of their toil
And of the perilous vast wilderness
Around them, slept; whilst all things there as well
Showed slumbrous,—yea, the circling forest trees,
Their foremost boles carved from a crowded mass
Less visible, by the watch-fire's bladed gleam
And even the shaded and enormous mountains,

Their bluff brows glooming through the stirless air,
Looked in their quiet solemnly asleep:
Yea, thence surveyed, the universe might have seemed
Coiled in vast rest,—only that one dim cloud
Diffused and shapen like a mighty spider,
Crept as with scrawling legs across the sky
And that the stars in their bright companies,
Cluster by cluster glowingly revealed
As this slow cloud mov'd on, high over all,
Look'd thoughtfully awake.

And now the moon
Up from behind an eastern hill was seen
Conglobing, till a mighty mass she brought
Her under border level with its cone
As thereon resting edge to edge, when straight
Its solid bulk seemed inwardly to grow
Impregnate with her radiance, whilst the trees
That fringed its outline, their huge statures dwarfed
By distance into brambles and yet all
Clearly defined against her ample orb
Even to their sprays, out of its very disk
Appeared to swell in bold relief, as they
Were sculptured from her substance.

Egremont
On all this solemn beauty of the night
Looked out, still wakeful, for sweet thoughts of home
Ingathered to his heart, as by some nice
And subtile interfusion that connects
The loved and cherished (then the most, perhaps,
When past or absent) with the beautiful
And lasting things of Nature. So then thought
The musing Egremont, when suddenly—hark!
A bough cracked loudly in a neighbouring brake,
And drew at once as with a larum, all
His spirits thitherward.

He listened long
With head bent forward, till his held breath grew
A pang and his ears rung. But Silence there
Had recomposed her ruffled wings and now
Brooded it seemed even stillier than before,
Nested in darkness: so that he ere long
To his sweet mood of museful memory
Calmly recurred. ----

But there, again! And hark!—

Oh God! have hell's worst fiends burst howling up
Into the doomed world? Or whence, if not
From diabolic rage, could surge a yell
So horrible as that which now affrights
And upward sends the shuddering air? Alas!
Beings in their enmity as vengeful, come
In vengeance!—For, behold, from the long grass
And nearer brakes, at once, a semi-belt
Of stript and painted savages divulge
Their bounding forms!—full in the flaring light
Thrown forth then suddenly by the fire, as though
Even it had felt the shock the air received
From their so terrible cries!

A moment seen

Thus as they bounded up, on then they came
Closing with weapons brandished high, and so
Rushed in upon the sleepers! three of whom
But started and then weltered quivering under
The first fell blow dealt down on each, by three
Of the most stalwart of their merciless foes!
But one again and yet again heaved up—
Up to his knees, under the crushing strokes
Of the huge nulla-nulla till his own
Warm brains were blinding him! For he was one
Who had with Misery nearly all his days
Lived lonely, and who therefore after hope
Hungered, and thirsted for some taste of good
And now he could not but dispute the fact
Of death even in the fact. For oft 'tis seen
That Fortune's gay and pleasure-pampered child
Consents to his untimely power, with less
Reluctance, less despair, than does the wretch
Who hath been ever blown about the world,
The straw-like sport of Fate's unkindest blast,
Vagrant and tieless,—ever still in him
The craving spirit thus grieves unto itself:

"I never yet was happy—never yet
Tasted unmixed enjoyment and I would
Yet pass on the bright Earth that I have loved,
Some season, though most brief, of happiness,
So should I walk thence forward to my grave,
Whenever in her green and motherly breast
It might await me, more than now prepared,
To house me in its gloom—resigned at heart,
Soothed and subjected to its certainty
Even by the consciousness of having shaped

Some good in being. But to have lived and now
To die thus desolate, is horrible!"

And feeling thus by habit, that poor man
Though the black shadow of untimely death
Hopelessly thickened under every stroke,
Upstruggled desperate, until at last,
One, as in mercy, gave him to the dust,
With all his sorrows.

Egremont, transfixt
With horror—struck as into stone, saw this,
Then turned and fled! Fast fled he, but as fast
His deadly foes went thronging on his track!
Fast! for the merciless yelled in the chase!
And as he fled the forest beasts as well,
In general terror, through the brakes a-head
Crashed scattering, or with madd'ning speed athwart
His course came frequent. On, still on he flies,
Flies for dear life! And still behind him—yea,
Nearer and nearer, hears the rapid dig
Of many feet! ----

And now, what should he do?—
Abruptly turning, the wild creek lay right
Before him! But no time was there for thought,
So on he kept, and plunging from the brink
Sunk to his middle in the flashing stream—
In which the imaged stars seemed all at once
To burst like rockets into one wild blaze
Of writhing light. Then strongly wading through
The ruffled waters he sprung forth and clenching
With iron clutch a stake-like root, that from
The opponent bank protruded up its dark
O'erjutting ledge, went clambering, in his blind
And breathless hurry when ---- O, surely God
Has a peculiar care of those for whom
The daily prayers of spotless womanhood
And helpless infancy are offered up!—
When in its face a cavity he felt,
The upper earth of which was held fast bound
By the close implication of the roots
Of two old tea-trees. Into this he crept,
Just as the dark forms of his hunters thronged
The brink whence he had plunged.

Thereon a space
They paused, to mark what bent his course might take

Over the further bank, so to hold on
The chase more surely. But no form was seen
To shoot up from its outline, nought there stirred,
Wherefore they augured that their prey was yet
Somewhere between; and the whole group, with that,
Plunged forward till the fretted current boiled
Amongst their crowding trunks from bank to bank,
And searching thus the stream across and then
Lengthwise, along the ledges, one by one
Athwart the cavity they passed—so near
That as they waded by, the fugitive
Felt the strong odour of their wetted skins
Pass with them.

But the search was vain. And now
Those wild men marvelled and in consultation,
Then coupling his strange vanishment with one
Of their crude superstitions, fear-struck all
And silent they withdrew. And when the sound
Of their receding steps died from his ear,
Our friend slid forth, and springing up the bank,
Renewed his flight, nor rested from it till
He gained the welcoming shelter of his home.

Return we for a moment to the scene
Of recent death. There the late flaring fire
Now smouldered, for its brands were strewn about
And four stark corpses, plundered to the skin
And brutally mutilated, seemed to stare,
With frozen eyeballs up into the pale
Round countenance of the moon, who high in heaven
With all her starry multitude looked down,
As peacefully down—as on a bridal, there,
Of the warm living, not, alas! on them
Who kept in ghastly silence through the night
Untimely spousals with a desert death!

There afterwards, for many changeful years,
Within a glade that sloped into the bank
Of that wild mountain creek—midway within,
In partial record of a terrible hour
Of human suffering and loss extreme,
Four grassy mounds stretched lengthwise, side by side,
Startled the wanderer;—four grassy mounds
O'erstrewn with skeleton boughs and bleaching leaves
Stript by the wintry-winged gales that roamed
Those solitudes from the old trees which there
Moaned the same leafy dirges that had caught

The heed of dying ages: these were all;
And thence the place was called—passingly called,—
The Creek of the Four Graves. Such was the tale
Egremont told us of the wild old times.

To the Comet of 1843.

Thy purpose, heavenly Stranger, who may know
But Him who linked thee to the starry whole?
We see thou journeyest amid the worlds,
And that is all we know; for of the birth
Of Motion save as the primordial step
Of God's creative power, mankind even yet
May but conjecture, as they did of old,
The shepherd sages of the mystic East.
Yet may we dream of thee, in thy career,
As of a wandering symphony amidst
The planetary voices of the world,
Singing together in their sun-led choirs,
That divine song of an eternal order.

Thus may we dream of thee—and I methinks,
With an especial privilege, for I,
(Unweetingly indeed) of all who watched
Thy coming, in my own land, saw thee first:
Then having wandered forth alone as wont,
To steep my heart in the rich sunset—lo,
I saw, half doubtingly, its fading hues
Leave thee sole wonder of the twilight sky!

But now, since thou hast travelled high in heaven,
Thousands of wondering spirits, all are out
Duly each night with upturned looks, to drink
The mystery of thy beauty.

In thy last
Bright visitation, even thus thou saw'st
The young, the lovely, and the wise of Earth,
A buried generation, thronging forth
In wonder to behold thee pass,—and then
Know thee no more: and when the flaming steps
Of thy unspeakable speed shall carry thee
Beyond our vision, all the beautiful eyes
Now open up in welcome—eyes by love
Made tender as the turtle's, or that speak
The fervent soul and the majestic mind,
Fast closed in darkness shall have given for aye
Their lustre to the grave ere thou again
Drivest thy fiery chariot round the sun!

But orbs as beautiful and loving—yea,
More radiant in their wisdom from a more

Enlarged communion with the soul of Truth,
Shall welcome thee instead, heavenly stranger,
When thou return'st again!

The Bush Fire.

"'Tis nine o'clock:—to bed!" cried Egremont,
Who with his youthful household (for 'tis now
Long since) inhabited a lonely home
In the Australian wilderness, that then
As with an unshorn fleece of gloomy wood
Robed the vast bulk of all the mighty Isle.
But ere retiring finally, he went
Forth as his wont was, to survey the night.

'Twas clear and silent: and the stirless woods
Seemed dreaming in the witch-light of the moon
As like a boat of stained pearl, she hung
Amid the ridges of a wavy cloud—
The only cloud in heaven. While Egremont
Looked thus abroad observingly, he marked
All around him, listing the horizon's verge,
A broad unusual upward glaring gleam,
Such a drear radiance as the setting sun
Effuses when the atmosphere is stormy.

What this might be he wondered—but not long;
Divining soon the cause—a vast Bush Fire!
But deeming it too distant yet for harm,
During the night betiding, to repose
With his bed-faring household he retired.

Sound was their sleep: for honesty of life
Is somewhat lumpish when 'tis once a-bed.
And now the darkness of the night was past,
When with the dreams of Egremont, a strange
And momentarily approaching roar began
To mingle and insinuate through them more
And more of its own import, till a Fire
Huge as the world was their sole theme: and then
He started from his sleep to find the type
A warning! for what else however terrible,
Might breathe with a vitality so fierce
As that which reigned without?

Scarce did he wait
To clothe himself ere forth he rushed; and lo,
Within the circling forest he beheld
A vast and billowy belt of writhing fire,
That shed a wild and lurid splendour up
Against the whitening dawn, come raging on!

Raging and roaring as with ten thousand tongues
That prophesied destruction. On it came,
A dreadful apparition—such as Fear
Conceives when dreaming of the front of hell!

No time was there to lose. "Up—up!" he cried
To all the house. Instantly all within
Was haste and wonder, and in briefest space
The whole-roused family were staring out
In speechless admiration, such as kept
Even Terror dormant;—till more urgently
The voice of Egremont again was heard:—
"Lose not a moment! Follow me at once,
Each with whatever he can grasp of use
And carry unincumbered!"

Right before,
A narrow strip of clearing* like a glade
Stretched out tow'rds a bald summit. Thitherward
The perilled people now were hurrying all,
While in their front, beneath the ridge, a dense
Extent of brushwood into which the Fire's
Bright teeth were eating hungrily, still brought
The danger nearer! Shall they reach that hill
Unscathed, their only refuge? Will they speed
Past the red-rushing peril? Onward yet!
And onward!—till at length the summit's gained,
And halting, they look back—in safety all,
Though breathless.

But no sooner had they past
That fearful brush, than a vast swathe of flame
Lifted and hurried forward by the wind
Over their very passage track, was pitched
With a loud thud like thunder into it—
With such a thud as the sea-swell gives up
From under the ledges of some hanging cliff!
And in an instant all its depth of shade
Was as a lake of hell! And hark! as then,
Even like a ghastly pyramid its mass
Of flames went surging up—up with them still
A cry of mortal agony was heard
Ascending, all so terrible, indeed,
That they who heard it, never, until then,
Might deem a voice so earnest in its fear,
So strenuous in its anguish could have being
In the live bosom of the suffering Earth!
But soon did they divine, even to their loss,

Its import:—there a giant steed, their best,
Had taken refuge, there to die!

All grouped

In safety now upon that hill's bare top—
Egremont and his household looked abroad,
Astonished at the terrors of the time!
Soon sunk their rooftree in the fiery surge,
Which entering next a high-grassed bottom, thick
With bark-ringed trees all standing bleak and leafless,
Tenfold more terrible in its ravage grew,
Upclimbing to their very tops! As when
Upon some day of national festival,
From the tall spars of the ship-crowded port
Innumerable flags in one direction all
Tongue outward, writhing in the wind: even so,
From those dry boles where still the dead bark clings
And from their multifarious mass above
Of leafless boughs, myriads of flaming tongues
Lick upward, or aloft in narrowing flakes
Stream out,—and thence upon the tortured blast
Bicker and flap in one inconstant blaze!

Scared forward by the roaring of the Fire,
A flight of parrots o'er the upper ridge
Comes whizzing, and then sweeping down, alights
Amid the oaks that fringe the base of yon
Precipitous terrace, being deterred from still
Proceeding by the smoke uprolled in front
Like a dim-moving range of spectral mountains.
There they abide, and listen in their fear
To the tremendous riot of the flames
Beyond the ridge line, that keep nearing fast
Though yet unseen from thence—unseen, till now
Furiously seizing on the withered grove
That tops the terrace, all whose spiry shafts
Rush upward, and then culminating, bend
Sheer o'er the oaks wherein the birds are lodged.
All are in flight at once, but from above
As suddenly, a mightier burst of flame
Outsheeteth o'er them!—Down they dip, but it
Keeps swooping with them even to the ground—
Where, in a moment after, all are seen
To writhe convulsed—blasted and plumeless all!

Thus through the day the conflagration raged:
And when the wings of night o'erspread the scene,
Not even their starry blazonry wore such

An aggregated glory to the eye,
As did the blazing dead wood of the forest—
On all hands blazing! Mighty sapless gums
Amid their living kindred, stood all fire—
Boles, branches, all!—like flaming ghosts of trees,
Come from the past within the whiteman's pale
To typify a doom. Such was the prospect:
Illuminated cities were but jests
Compared to it for splendor. But enough!
Where are the words to paint the million shapes
And unimaginable freaks of Fire,
When holding thus its monster carnival
In the primeval forest all night long?

NOTE.—A "strip of clearing" is a strip of land, on which the timber has been felled and burned off, but which is not yet enclosed or cultivated; and "bark-ringed trees" are trees from which a portion of the bark has been chipped away all round for the purpose of killing them as they stand, with the further view of burning them up by the roots when sufficiently decayed, in order to rid the land of them totally and at once. By felling them instead, the Settler must either incur the subsequent expense and trouble of "stumping," or submit to the constant eyesore which a field, with the stumps remaining in it must inevitably present to his "bump of order"—that is, if he have it in any degree of fulness. The descriptive detail of the text may appear overcharged to all those persons who have only witnessed such Bush Fires as occur on our ordinary commons; but in the earlier Colonial times, before the wilderness, generally, was so thickly stocked with cattle as even the remotest locations are at present, our natural grasses often attained to the height of five or six feet, and several kinds of spear grass (or grass trees) even to double that height.

To An Echo On The Banks Of The Hunter

I hear thee Echo! and I start to hear thee
With a strange tremour, as among the hills
Thy voice reverbs and in swift murmurs near me
Dies down the stream, or with its gurgle low
Blends whisp'ringly, until my bosom thrills
With gentle tribulations that endear thee,
But smack not of the Present. 'Twas as though
A spirit of the Past did then insphere thee
Even with the taste of Life's regretted spring,
Waking wild recollections to evince
My Being's transfus'd connexion with each thing
Lov'd, though long since!

It seems but yesterday since last I stood
Beside the HAWKESBURY even as now I stand
By the swift HUNTER, challenging o'er the flood
An Echo thus, but with a glorious brood
Of hopes then glowing round me and a band
Of schoolmates and young creatures of my blood
All quick with joyousness beyond command!
And now, with that delightful day O where
Are those quick joys, glad mates, and hopes of good?
Echo, declare!

Thy voice comes o'er the waters in reply,
To fade as soon! And all their young delights
Decay'd (as thy peculiar accents die)
In the dusk valleys of past days and nights,
To be renewed not, like thy mystic chide!
And one to the other of those joyous creatures,
(Now burthened with their manhoods) in the wide
World's separations even the names as features
Have faded so away! And so, at last,
Have all those glorious hopes become but lonely
And dying echoes of the hollow Past—
All but one only!

And this around my Being only strays
Like a recurring sound. 'Tis that when o'er
My Country shall have swept the ripening days
Of centuries, her better sons shall prize
My lonely voice upon the Past; but more,
That to her daughters as with lustrous eyes
Bathed in the azure of these self-same skies,
They'll gaze upon my page, even then my name

(Now nought) responsive to the loving swell
Of their full souls and winnowed of its blame,
From Time's dim void (an Echo) thus shall come!
And wheresoever Love and Song may dwell,
So live and die in sweet perpetual doom
Over the flood of ages,—still and still the same!
And in this hope the recompense is great
For much I lack, for more that may annoy,
Crowning me oft 'mid these dark days of Fate
With joy—even joy!

Ned Connor

'Twas night—and where a watery sound
Came moaning up the Flat,
Six rude and bearded stockmen round
Their blazing hut-fire sat,
And laughed as on some starting hound
The cracking fuel spat.

And merrier still the log-fire cracks
As night the darker falls,
While not a noisy tongue there lacks
To tell of drunken brawls,
But most of battle with the Blacks
Some bloody tale appals.

Amongst them then Ned Connor spoke,
And up his form he drew:—
What is there in an open stroke
To boast of? You but slew
Those who'd have done, each hell-black one,
The same or worse to you.

But lost among the hills, one day,
Which then was well nigh shut,
I met a Black upon my way,
And thus the matter put
Unto him:—"See! this knife's for thee,
Come, guide me to my hut."

His savage eyes grew huge with joy
As on the prize they bent,
And leading, even like a boy
He capered as he went:
But think you, men, to give the toy
Ned Connor ever meant?

An hour had brought us many a mile
And then, as closed the day,
The savage pointed with a smile,
To where my Station lay:
"There! give to me the knife," said he,
"And let me go my way."

I never meant that he should touch
The thing, as I have said,
And when he stretched his hand to clutch,
A thought came in my head:

I raised my gun, as though in fun—
I fired ---- and he was dead!

The ruffian laughed in his pitiless mood
When ended thus his tale,
But all the rest though men of blood,
With horror seemed to quail,
And saw though he stood boastfully
That Connor too was pale:

For through the moaning of the trees
He seemed to hear the sound
Of his own laughter in the breeze
Keep roaming out till drowned
In wild and bitter mockeries
Up-answering from the ground.

Now what to hear had made them fear,
Had also made them dry:
But strange! the water-pail that late
Brimm'd in the corner nigh
Was empty! In amazement great
There's not a drop, they cry!

Their thirst grew bitter and they said
Come, this will never do!
It is your turn for water, Ned,
Then why not go? He drew
Full hard his breath and from his head
There dripped a sudden dew.

But shaming to be taxed with fear,
He seized the pail and said
What care I? Though the night be drear,
Who ever saw the dead?
And if I fail to fill this pail,
The devil shall, instead.

He sallied forth. A sudden blast
Went sobbing by the door,
Through which they heard his footsteps fast
Recede—and when no more
They heard them, round the fire aghast
They gathered as before.

"I would not go alone to-night
The way that he is gone,"
Said one, "for all the gold my sight
Hath ever fallen upon:
To slay that creature was not right,

I'd say't were he my son!"

And now impatient all and wild
They wondered at his stay,
Till one outspake: "A weanling child
Could not make more delay:
If longer slack in coming back,
He'll bring with him the day."

But while they thus were wondering—hark!
They hear a frantic shriek,
Then nearing footsteps through the dark,
Come waywardly and weak:
And as the dogs did howl and bark,
They stared but feared to speak.

Against the door, that to had swung,
One rushed then and 'twas split;
'Twas Connor! who amid them sprung
And fell into a fit:
And long that night in ghastly plight,
He struggled there in it.

And when his sense returned—again
The sun was rising bright,
But shuddering as in mental pain
He turned him from the light,
And pointing, said—"To bed! to bed!
For Death is in my sight!"

They bore him to his bed straightway,
Those horror-stricken men,
And questioned him as there he lay,
Of what had met his ken:
Within himself he seemed to pray,
And thus bespake them then:—

"I went (you heard), with impious boast
For water to the brook,
But when the threshold I had crost,
All strength my heart forsook;
Each forward step seemed fate—but most
I feared behind to look.

Long murky clouds were hurrying fast
Across the starless sky,
Strange sounds came drowning up the blast
That piped by fits so high:
A winding gleam, and lo! the stream
Went wildly moaning by.

I knew not why, but it struck mine eye
 With a dull damp sense of awe,
And bankward densely crawling by,
 Crude Shapes methought I saw!
But I must not back, I said, alack!
 But down at once and draw.

Now standing at the water's edge,
 Mine eyes thereon I threw,
And, lo! distinctly through the sedge,
 What is it there I view?—
Not mine own shadow from the ledge,
 But him!—the Black I slew!

'Twas no delusion! There he stood
 Within the gleaming brook,
The same as when I shed his blood,
 His stature and his look,
Even to the dread accusing shade
 His dying aspect took!

With backward bound I started round
 And up the bank did flee,
But, ah! as swiftly in my track
 Bare footfalls seemed to be!
Step, step, for mine, close at my back
 I heard, but nought could see!

It was a horrible thing to hear
 Behind me still the sound
I could not bear to have it there,
 And desperate, faced me round,
When through the dark a sudden spark
 Shot upward from the ground!

Staggered as with a stunning stroke
 I could not turn again,
But saw whence came the spark, a smoke
 Arise—I saw it plain,
And from it an earthy odour broke
 That bit me to the brain!

At first I saw it bloating out
 In size not o'er a span,
Then as it slowly wreathed about
 To heighten it began,
Until it took in bulk and look
 The stature of a man!

No stir was near—I might but hear

The beating of my blood
And there within my reach almost,
The horrid Phantom stood!
I stared till fear in fear was lost
So awful was my mood.

I spoke—I know not what—and lo!
The diabolic birth
'Gan wildly writhing to and fro
As if in ghostly mirth
And then against me rushing so,
It dashed me to the earth!

Mine eyes flashed out with sputtering flame—
The ground kept swimming fast—
And roaming round about there came
Wild laughter in the blast!
A moment—and then all was tame,
Forgotten, painless, past.

At length my brain began to swim
As consciousness regrew,
But when with eyeballs strained and dim,
I looked again—I knew
A form stood o'er me, it was him,—
The savage that I slew!

I shrieked, and bounding to my feet,
I fled, but as before,
Bare footsteps tracked me beat for beat
With mine, even to the door:
What then befel I cannot tell—
I know of nothing more!"

He ceased and turning in his bed,
Aloud for mercy cried,
And for three days and nights, 'tis said,
He uttered nought beside;
When raving out with sudden dread,
The haunted Murderer died.

The fearful men around him then,
Each one of them did say,
It was a damn`ed wrong in Ned,
The savage so to slay,
And where he said he saw the dead,
They buried him next day.

To ----

Long ere I knew thee—years of loveless days—
A Shape would gather from my dreams and pour
The soul-sweet influence of its gentle gaze
Into my being, thrilling it to the core,
Then would I wake, with lonely heart to pine
For that nocturnal image:—it was thine!

Thine—for though long with a fond moody heed
I sought to match it with the beauteous creatures
I met in the world's ways, 'twas but to bleed
With disappointment; for all forms, all features,
Yet left it void of living counterpart—
The shadowy Mistress of my yearning heart.

Thine—for when first seen thou didst seem to me
A being known yet beautifully new!
Thus, warranting some sage's theory,
Amid Heaven's sisterhoods, into shining view
Is drawn a long-conjectured star, his name
To fold forever in its virgin flame!

But I forget! Far, far away from thee
Behold, I wander 'mid primeval woods
Where but all savage things are wont to be,
Mixing fond questionings with Solitude's
Wild cadences, as through dim glades by fits
Yet dreaming her ancient dream, illusively she flits.

And now the HUNTER, with a swollen speed
Rushes in thunder at my feet, but wears
A softened charm in that it seems to lead
My willing vision whether Memory rears
Thy rural bower by the stream that erst
With murmurous heed my infant passion nurst.

And with the river's torture, oft a tone
Of that far brook seems blending, accents too
Of the dear voice there heard—that voice alone
Unparagoned of mortal sound, like dew
Honeyed with manna, dropping near me seems,
As oft I listen—lost in Memory's dreams!

But vain these musings! Though my spirit's bride
Thou knew'st not of my love! Though all my days
To come must be inevitably dyed
Or bright or dark through thee—this missive says

Thy lot in life is cast, that thou wilt be
Another's ere I look again on thee!

The bardic doom is on me! Poets make
Beauty immortal and yet luckless miss
The charms they sing,—martyrs at Fortune's stake!
As though their soul's capacity for bliss
Might else give Earth too much of Heaven and kill
The want that strengthens them for prowess still.

Wreath then the Poet's brows with blossoms bright!
Let waters ever, and the sway of trees
Sound through his thoughts, as the renewed delight
Of Even flows around him in a breeze
Laden with dying voices—till the night
Enroof him with her starry mysteries!
For Nature only (fated at his birth!)
May minister unto his love on Earth.

To The Moon.

With silent step behold her steal
Over those envious clouds that hid
Till now her face, then stand—a seal
Of silver on heaven's mighty lid!
So round me would I have her light
In one broad burst of beauty play,
And who whilst thus she rules the night
Would wish the day,
Nor feel his yearning spirit fraught
With sweetly solemn strains of visionary thought?

Love of my childhood! for but when
A child I loved thee of all things—
Yea, with what ecstasies I then
Did hail thee, what dear visionings!
And when between us up the sky
Obscuring glooms have wildly thronged,
With shortened breath and searching eye
How have I longed
For wings that I away might flee
To kiss thy hidden face and dwell awhile with thee.

I sadden! Ah, why bringest thou
Yet later memories to my mind?
I would but gaze upon thee now,
As erst for wonder;—not to find
Dim phantoms of each faded dream
That fanned my heart with pinions dyed
In passion, by old HAWKESBURY'S stream,
Before me glide,
With shades of days all figured o'er
By feelings lost, and hopes that know their place no more!

Nor was it thus thy beauty shone
Upon me fewer summers past—
Thus hopeless, world-distrusting, lone,
And withering in Misfortune's blast!
Many that loved me then were nigh,
Of whom now these I may not trust,
And those forget—are far—or lie
Cold in the dust!
And never may we meet again
Loving and loved as then 'neath thy nocturnal reign!

O Cynthia! it would seem as though

A something from our spirits fell,
Like scents from flowers, Life's eras through
And by which web invisible,
A gathered after-scene of all
Affection builded to our loss,
Is drawn thus in dim funeral
The heart across:
And which where stained the most with gloom
Uncertain Thought is prone to map with spells of doom.

But sober Reason sagelier sings
These visioned mysteries are but
The semblances which former things
Imbued our being with, as put
In act by memory, when is seen
Again some marked associate sight;
And thence it happens, Orb serene,
Why thou to-night
Look'st on me from thy native sky
Like an old friend too fond to talk of things gone by.

Let me this night the Past forget!
For though its dying voices be
At times like tones from Eden, yet
It bosoms too much change for me,—
That when but now my thoughts were given
To all I had suffered—loved and lost!
Turning mine eyes again to heaven,
Tear-quenched almost,
I started with a strange despair,
To find thee—even thee smiling unaltered there!

Hence vain regrets of secret pride!
My human heart, what irks thee so,
What in the scale of Nature tried
Should weigh thy happiness or wo?
Pale millions, so by Fortune cursed,
Have loved for sorrow in the light
Of this yet youthful Moon, since first
She claimed the night,
And thus mature even from her birth,
Chased with pale beam the glooms that swathed the infant Earth.

And be it humbling too, to know
That when this pile of haughty clay
For ages shall have ceased to glow,
Shall be a heap of ashes grey—
Which as the invading ploughshare drills

The unremembered burial ground,
The winds may o'er a hundred hills
Scatter around—
That in the midnight heavens thou
Shalt hang thy unfaded lamp and smile serene as now.

Nay, more than this: could even those,
The Edenites, who sorrow'd here
Ere Noah's tilted ark arose
Or Nimrod chased the bounding deer,
Wherever sepulchered, could they
Shake the cold bonds of death and doom
But for a moment now away,—
Into each tomb
Solemnly gazing, thee they'd find
Even as they dying left thee, watchful Moon, behind!

But shall my thoughts thus widely range
And I no profit therein know?
Seeing that wither, waste and change
Must all that lives thine Orb below;
Shall I not turn with this sole aim,
In act to shun, in heart control,
Whatever dims the heavenward flame,
The essential soul
I feel within, and which must be
A living thing when thou art quenched eternally?

Memory's Genesis

How few through Memory's dreamy scope,
However resolute of hope,
Can view the backward scene where first
Their youth rejoiced—for ever crost—
And not bewail as Adam erst
The Eden they have lost!
Nor feel, alas! with it compared,
The Present but a lengthening wild
Whereon young Passion never fared,
Young Beauty never smiled!
Yet 'tis a melancholy pleasure
To sit by moon-struck Memory's side,
And hear her wild lyre oft remeasure
The story of our youthful pride!
Hours recalling, ah! how rife
With emotions lavished wide
Through the Garden of our Life
Ere all its spring-time roses died,
And (like day's splendours when the sun
Remits in his decline from weaving
A robe of beauty for the Ev'ning)
Fancy's Elysiums, one by one,
Had paled away as the long night came on!

Yes! 'tis a melancholy sweet,
And thus let Memory oft repeat
Life's first tale, that to the core
Retempered by such generous lore,
Our hard'ning spirits, as 'tis meet,
May pity the cold world—the world we trust no more!

Poetry

Rising and setting suns of Liberty—
Mountainous exploits and the wrecks thick strewn
By stormy Passion o'er Life's treacherous sea,
Relieved with shores of green delight, and boon
And starry dreams and the serene pale moon
Of Pathos,—these with all of which they be
Idealisms, are of Poesy
The bodily temple into fitness hewn,
And for its Soul, all that the mind can seize
Of beauty harmonising with the might
Of natural ties and social sympathies
And that deep spirit of Piety whose flight
Is strongest and most heavenward 'mid the blight
Of mortal misery—its Soul are these.

The Vision Of The Rock

I sate upon a lonely peak,
 A backwood river's course to view,
And watched the varying shadows freak
 Its liquid length of gleaming blue,
Streaked by the crane now gliding o'er,
Now checkering to the leafy roar
 Of woods that 'neath me grew,
Or curdling dark as high o'er head
The gathering clouds before the sounding breezes fled.

Beyond, a broad herd grazed the vale,
 Where 'mid the trees, its Station stood;
Beneath, a housewife with her pail
 Plung'd dexterous, smote the booming flood—
Which suddenly from a reedy nook
Aroused the brooding teal that took
 Her flight along the wood
And drew dull murmurs from each grot
And called the passing hawk to circle o'er the spot.

Straight I bethought how once the scene
 Spread in its primal horror there,
When but some lone bird's cry of teen,
 Or howlings from the wild-dog's lair
Or rush of startled kangaroo,
As near some stealthy savage drew
 With hunger in his air,
Or from the stream some casual sound
Broke the dread slumbers there of Solitude profound.

A change came o'er my thoughts—behind
 A length of coming time I threw—
Till round me, on that rock reclined,
 Its folds prophetic Vision drew;
And purpling like the morning, gave
Mine eye of Freedom's births to have
 It seemed an ante-view,
Like as in glorious promise stole
His country's purer weal o'er youthful Hampden's soul.

All round me villages arose
 At once, with orchards clumpty about,
And oft between through piny rows
 Some mansion's pillared porch look out,
And thickening up from alleys green,

Where rustic groups in dance were seen,
Came merry laugh and shout,
While from yet choicer shades the cheer
Of more refined delight fainted like fragrance near.

And in the gusts that over-broke
The voice of neighbouring cities came,
Whose structures in the distance spoke
Of fullest opulence and fame,
O'er fields of ripening plenty viewed,
Or hills with white flocks fleeced, and strewed
With herds that grazed the same;
While on the paven roads between
The frequent chariot flamed with rapid-rolling din.

Now gaining depth the Vision lay
Around my spirit like a law,
So that my reason might not say
But all was real that I saw.
I mark a youth and maiden prest
By Love's sweet power, elude the rest,
And as they nearer draw
I list the vow that each imparts
Folded in the sighed spells of harmonising hearts.

They pass: and lo, a lonely boy
With wandering step goes musing by—
Glory is in his air and joy,
And all the poet in his eye!
And now whilst rich emotions flush
His face as radiant colours blush
And burn in morning's sky,
He sings—and to the charming sound
Troops of angelic Shapes throng into being round.

Before me now an aged man,
Majestic passes: wisdom true
Illumes his brow—the power to scan
All time and look all nature through,
And stately youths of studious mien,
Children of light, with him are seen—
His auditors—and who
Attend the speaking sage along,
As though scintial manna issued from his tongue.

Listen!—He tells of patriot deeds
And lauds the happiness they brought,
He blazons Freedom's holy creeds
With all the affluence of Thought,

Teaches the truths of Virtue's cause
And what are nations' proper laws,
 And what blind Milton taught—
That to avert Oppression's rod
And pull wrong Power down, is—"Glory be to God!"

And now doth his big utterance throw
 A sacred solemnising spell
O'er scenes which yet no record know,
 Round names that now I may not tell!
But there was One—too long unknown!
Whereat, as with a household tone
 Upon the ear it fell,
Each listener's speaking eyes were given
To glisten with a tear and turn awhile to Heaven!

Thus night came on; for hours had flown
 And yet its hold the Vision kept,
Till lulled by many a dying tone,
 I laid me on the rock and slept.
And now the big round moon between
Two western summits hung serene—
 When all with dews bewept
And 'wakened by the loudening gale,
I rose and sought my hearth far gleaming from the vale.

Morning

How beautiful that earliest burst of light
Which floodeth from the opening eyes of morn,
When like a fairy palace dew-bedight
Bough storying over bough upspreads the thorn,
And sweet the melodies which tow'rd the corn
In tassel, or the orchard these invite,
And that most love-like ever fresh delight
Which breathes of many a bloomy thing new born—
Breathes from vine clumps in the moist dells appearing,
Rich meads and river banks. And cheering then
The voice of cattle to their pasture steering,
And the full speech of fieldward hastening men!—
My very boyhood seems renew'd again
'Mid these delights like a delight careering!

A Poet's Home

Here in this lonely rill-engirdled spot,
The world forgetting, by the world forgot,
With one vowed to me with beloved lips
How sweet to draw, as hiddenly from time,
As from its rocks yon shaded fountain slips,
My yet remaining prime.

Here early rising from a sinless bed
How sweet it were to view Aurora shed
Her first white glances o'er the dusky wood,
When powdered as with pearls the sprays all gleam
Through the grey dawn, like prophecies of good
Or like some fairy dream.

And while the clouds imbibed a golden hue,
And purple streaks grained yon ethereal blue,
By the glad voice of every early bird
(As some full lake by breezes in their glee
Is rippled into smiles) how sweetly stirred
My spirit then should be!

And as like burning bullion brightened still
The cloud-hung East, over yon misty hill
I'd watch the sun's ethereal chariot come,
Filling the glades with flakes of chrystal fire
And the green spaces round my rural home,
Where slept mine Heart's Desire.

When, if sweet memories of her sleeping smile
Should my devotion thitherward beguile,
Cheating the morn of its observance due,
My happy voice should not be wanting long
To wile her forth with loving transport true
Or wake her with a song.

"Awake, my fair one! for the glowing skies
Desire thee, and a thousand flowery eyes
Look for thy coming from each pathway side;
With all things fresh and beautiful and bright
The earth's adorned like an Eastern bride,—
Arise, my best delight!

What can be deeper than the heavens o'erbending,
Or what be richer than the colours blending
Amid the green cones of the misty hill!
What gladder than the runnel's silvery fall!

And yet my spirit asketh something still—
'Tis thee, the crown of all!"

Joined by the Angel of my life, behold
The day's unfolded gates of heavenly gold
How lovelier now for her dear loveliness!
The birds, the stream, the forest's leafy stir
Catch from her voice a double power to bless,
And the flowers breathe of her!

The dews are brighter for her love-bright eyes
And the air sweeter for the soul that lies
In every gesture of her gentle face!
So widely Love's invisible spirit flings
The visible enrichment of its grace
O'er all regarded things.

Filled with the fresh keen life that so sublimes
Both mind and body, we should then betimes
Repair us to our cheerful morning meal,
Not more attuned by thankfulness of heart
Well to enjoy, than willing in our weal
To spare a stranger part.

Sufficed and grateful, to her household care
Should she betake her then,—I fieldward fare
To till the thriving maize or guide the plough
Through the rich loam, or while the slant sunshine
Carress'd them, to remark the melons, how
They lumped from out their vine.

Thence to the well kept orchard to behold
The orange trees o'erhung with globes of gold
Or thin the peachy tribes all ruddy cheeked
And clumping from the branches, and with these
The nectarine's fragrant swarms so lushly streaked,
That flavour even the breeze:

To pluck the fig, that in its broad-leafed shade
Secretes its ripeness—even like a maid
Mature for love, who yet through bashfulness
Doth shun or seem to shun each wooer's sight—
Or stay the drooping vine whose every tress
Is bunch'd with clusters bright.

So should the noon draw on: when in yon shade
Beside the rill, on the green herbage laid
In careless luxury my faint limbs should be,
And hearing but the splash of feathered things
Then fluttering downward from some neighbouring tree

To dip their shining wings,

Or the slow-rising and most summery hum
Of gorgeous insects that at times might come
Over the runnel and so voyage by,
Or the light footfall on the farther brink
Of some wild creature, from its covert nigh
Just venturing forth to drink:

I'd calmly think of all my wandering youth
Had suffered, with a heart so dear to Truth
That she at length had portioned it with love,
And then of her who to my very soul
Was what the vitalising Sun above
Is to the natural whole.

Thus rested, when the fiery-winged hours
Were quenching in the west, with freshened powers
The field again in honorable toil
Should hear me ending what the morn begun,
Till I might say, scanning the well-dressed soil,
A good day's work is done.

Then whilst I woodward drove the unharnessed steer
Or for the kine was searching somewhere near
Grouping full-fed in ruminating mood,
The sun should 'light upon yon western hill
Slanting his last beams through the shadowing wood
And up the gleaming rill,

To sink at length and make the clouds above
Golden idealisms of the love
My heart poured out on Nature, and on her
Now waiting me at our peace-hallowed board:
Thus placed, who'd care amongst the great to stir
Or with the rich to hoard?

The pens secured, the final meal in haste
Despatch'd though savoury, both should forth to taste
Eve's odorous breath and with renewed surprise
To find Elysiums painted in the west,-
And looking then into each other's eyes,
Should feel that we were blest.

And when the gloaming followed Evening's flight,
Whilst yet o'er yonder hills a skiey light
Keeps mellowing upward, near to where, first seen,
The glowing Leader of the starry quire
Comes wingedly from out the blue serene,
Even like a bird of fire,

The hushing bounties of those twilight hours
Falling into our souls, as in the flowers'
Balm-breathing bosoms melt the silent dews,
Should freshen every feeling mild and wise
And thence o'er all our charities diffuse
The quiet of the skies.

Thus should the night come on, in solemn guise
To look with all her far ethereal eyes
Upon my happy life, and draw my soul
To wander like a star the stars among
And homeward point from the resplendent pole
Uranian beams of song.

Or whilst the moon, the world's apparent queen,
Came whitening up in majesty serene,
Reminding us of some dear long-past night,
I'd chronicle in rhyme the many things
Of lovely thought that from her mystic light
Had woven them their wings.

The Voice Of The Native Oak

Who hath lain him underneath
A lone oak by a lonely stream,
He hath heard an utterance breathe
Sadder than aught else may seem!

Up in its dusk boughs, out-tressing
Like the hair of a giant's head,
Mournful things beyond our guessing
Day and night are utter`ed.

Even when the waveless air
May only stir the lightest leaf,
A lowly voice keeps moaning there
Wordless oracles of grief.

But when nightly blasts are roaming,
Thus lowly is that voice no more:
Then from the streaming branches coming,
Elfin shrieks are heard to pour.

Till the listener surely deems
That some wierd spirit of the air
Hath made those boughs the lute of themes
Wilder, darker than despair,—

Some lonely spirit that hath dwelt
For ages in one lonely tree—
Some weary spirit that hath felt
The burthen of eternity!

Virginal Love

I love him so,
That though his face I ne'er might see,
In the assurance that he so loved me
This heart of mine would glow
With pulses sweeter than the sweetest be
That colder ones can know.

I love him so,
That to my thought 'twere sweet to sleep
Even in death, believing he would keep
With solemn step and slow,
In Sabbath memory my grave and weep
For her who slept below.

I love him so,
That all desires when he is by
Shrink even from the import of a sigh:
As flowers unseen that grow,
Being mute must so remain, as in the sky
Are stars that none may know!

Eva Gray

Paler, paler, day by day,
Waxeth wordless Eva Gray,
Wasting through the heart away!

How shall those who wish her well,
Lift the shadow erst that fell
Round her from Love's darken'd spell?

Would they have her feast with Song?
Ah! its voices but prolong
Like far echoes Memory's wrong.

Would they to beguile her leisure
Sweet reliefs in music measure?
Music dreams of foregone pleasure.

Would they lure her where the spring
Gives the unshadow'd heart to wing
Upward like a bird and sing?

Still paler, paler, day by day,
Waxeth gentle Eva Gray,—
Wasting like a cloud away.

To Mary

Where Beauty is smiling
 With Love undenied,
Where Gladness is flowing
 From Pleasure's hill-side,
Whatever of charming
 I elsewhere may see,
I can turn from it, Mary,
 To think upon thee.

When winds of affliction
 Blow cold on my rest,
And the pang that will sleep not
 Is loud in my breast,
Still however clinging
 These troubles may be,
I can turn from them, Mary,
 To think upon thee.

When Weariness sleepeth
 And Care is at rest,
When Happiness dreameth
 Of all it loves best,
Then as the moon gazes
 Upon the broad sea,
My soul o'er thy dwelling
 Looks down upon thee!

Emblems

A streamlet is a bright and beauteous creature
In some wide desert, where it keeps apart
Of each wayfarer's heart:
The Star of Evening is a gracious feature,
Instinct as 'twere with all the love that eyes
Have looked through at the skies.

And hence one emblems in its beauteous being
The memory of a Joy that in my heart
Flowed gratefully apart;
The other, to my spiritual seeing,
The perpetuity of Love's white grace
Yet in some heavenly place.

“Yes”

My soul is raying like a star,
My heart is happier than a bird,
And all to hear through fortune's jar
One promissory word.

A sound as simple as the low
Quick sliding gurgle of a rill,
And yet with power to overflow
A world with blissful will!

I feel as though the very air
Was breathe from the heart of Love,
As Pleasure in the sun's bright lair
Sat brooding like a dove!

A billow of the sunny sea,
A cloudlet of the summer sky,
How wide is their felicity—
So widely blest am I!

O Beauty, through one little word
What boundless power is thine to bless!
O Love, a seraph's voice is heard
In thy confiding "Yes!"

Dreams Of The Beloved

Her image haunts me. Lo! I muse at even,
And straight it gathers from the gloom to make
My soul its mirror, which (as some deep lake
Impictures the cerulean smiles of heaven)
Through the hushed night retains it, when 'tis given
To take a warmer presence and incline
A glowing cheek all blushfully to mine,
Saying, "The heart for which thou long hast striven
With pale looks, fancy pale, I grant thee now,
And if for pity, yet more for Love's sweet sake,
My lips shall seal this promise on thy brow."
Thus blest in sleep, who would not weep to wake
When the cold truth from his belief must shake
Such vows, like blossoms from a shatter'd bough?

Absence

Nightly I watch the moon with silvery sheen
 Flaking the city house-tops, till I feel
 Thy memory, Rosa, like a presence, steal
Down in her light: for ever in her mien
Thy soul's similitude my soul hath seen!
 And as she seemeth now a guardian seal
 On Heaven's far bliss, upon my future weal
Even such thy truth is—radiantly serene!
But long my fancy may not entertain
 These bright resemblances—for, lo, a cloud
Blots her away, and in my breast the pain
 Of absent love, recurring, pines aloud!
When shall I look in thy sweet eyes again,—
 Rosa, when cheer thee with like sadness bowed?

Wherever in some wildwood bower
There blooms a honey-yielding flower,
There too dwells a bird to sup
Out of its delicious cup,
And sing betimes, lest it should be
O'erfed into satiety:
So wherever Loveliness
Dwells retired—dwells to bless,
Not dazzle: there some destin'd spirit,
Feeding on its luscious merit,
Can at peace with Passion be
Only through sweet Poesy.

The Enquiry

O say, if into sudden storm
Some future cloud we may not shun
Should burst, and Love's bright world deform,
His and your Poet leaving one
Scorning and scorned of heartless men,—
Belov`ed, would you love me then?

Stung by the world's eternal guile,
Should the defiance of despair
Plant on my cheek its bitter smile,
And writhe so long and whiten there
That it might freshen ne'er again,—
Belov`ed, would you love me then?

Should long, long years of absence scowl
And 'twixt us under heaven's wide cope,
Should regions spread or oceans roll
That question thus might even Hope—
"How can you ever meet again?"
Belov`ed, would you love me then?

* * * * *

Love is wayward, Beauty wilful,
Hence however—ever skilful
Be the wit that like a gem,
Would supremely richen them,
They will sometimes take offence
At the very brightest sense,
As though for happy spite they meant
To clothe delight with discontent.

* * * * *

The manifold hills, forsaken of the sun,
Are dusking into one
Featureless Mightiness gloomed up with dun,
And in the solitude of heaven afar
There shineth a sole star:
Even so the memory of one adored
With all Affection's hoard
Of golden feelings treasured up for truth
In vain throughout our youth,
A far bright mystery, still shines apart
O'er the wide vacancy of Love's lone heart!

The Dream By The Fountain

Thought-weary and sad I reclined by a Fountain
At the head of a white-cedar shaded ravine,
And the breeze that fell over the high-glooming mountain
Sang like Love to me there as I gazed o'er the scene.

Long I'd reclined not till slumber came o'er me,
Grateful as balm to a suffering child;
When a lofty-browed Maiden seemed standing before me
With a lyre in her hand O so sounding and wild!

Bright was her brow, never heaven was brighter!
Her eyes were two midnights of passionate thought!
Light was her motion, a breeze's not lighter,
And her locks were like sunshine and shadow inwrought!

Never before did my bosom inherit
Emotion so thrilling, such exquisite awe!
Never such wonder exalted my spirit
Before as did now through the Vision I saw.

Robed for the chase like a Nymph of Diana,
Her ivory limbs were half given below,—
Bare, that the pure breath of heaven might fan her,
Bare was her bosom of roseate snow.

Then lifting the lyre and with every feeling
Sublim'd as with love, she awakened the strings:
Bliss followed—and half into being came stealing
The motion and light of angelical wings.

Divine were the measures! Each voice of the wildwood
Seemed gathering head in their musical thrills,—
The gladness of rivers that sing of their childhood,
The shoutings of echoes that look from the hills,

The moaning of trees all at midnight in motion
When the breezes seem wandering lost, with a rare
And sweet meaning spirit of human devotion,
All blending and woven together were there!

Ceased then the strain; and as soon as were flowing
Around but the accents that people the wild,
The Lyrist, subdued by her rapture and glowing,
Adjusting her mantle, approached me, and smiled:

Smiled with a look like the radiance of morning
When flushing the crystal of heaven's serene

Blent with that darkness of beauty adorning
The world when the moon first arising is seen.

And repressing it seemed then the fondest suggestions,
Calmly she spake;—I arose to my knees,
Expectant and tremblingly glad of her questions:
And the wild-warbled words that she uttered were these—

"I am the Muse of the evergreen Forest,
I am the Spouse of thy spirit, lone Bard!
Ev'n in the days when thy boyhood thou worest
Thy pastimes drew on thee my fondest regard.

For I felt thee ev'n then wildly, wondrously musing
Of glory and grace by old HAWKESBURY'S side,
Scenes that spread recordless round thee suffusing
With the purple of love—I beheld thee and sighed.

Sighed—for the fire-robe of Thought had enwound thee—
It seemed but the breeze or a sigh of thine own!
I would sweep then this lyre, gliding viewlessly round thee
To give thy emotions full measure and tone.

Since, I have track'd thee through dissolute places,
Seen thee with sorrow long herd with the vain,
Lured into error by false-smiling faces,
Chained by dull Fashion though scorning her chain.

Then would I prompt in the still hour of dreaming
Thoughts of thy beautiful country again,
Of her streams through the shadowy forest far gleaming,
Her hills that re-echo the hunt in the glen.

Till at length I beheld thee arise in devotion
To shake from thy heart the vile bondage it bore,
And I joyed as in sunrise rejoiceth the ocean
Thy footfall to hear on the mountains once more!

Listen, rejoined one, I promise thee glory
Such as shall rise like the day-star apart,
To brighten the current of many a story,
But for this thou must give to the Future thy heart.

Be then the Bard of thy country! O rather
Should such be thy choice than a monarchy wide!
Lo, 'tis the land of the grave of thy father!
'Tis the cradle of Liberty! Think and decide.

Well hast thou chosen." She ceased. Unreplying
And love-faint I gazed on her wildering charms:
Deeper they glowed, her lips trembled, and sighing

She rushed to my heart and dissolved in my arms!

Thus seemed she to pass—and yet something remaining
Like a separate Soul in my soul seemed to be—
An aching delight—an extension that, paining
My being, yet made it more strengthly and free.

She passed—but to leave in my brain a reflexion,
A forevisioned blaze of perpetual sway,
While tones that seem gushings of mystic affection
Flow through me by night and around me by day.

And since, or in cities or solitudes dreary,
Upon the lone hill or more lonely sea-sand,
Though many that blame, few that praise be anear me,
I feel like a monarch of song in the land!

The Master Mariner's Song

(Outward Bound)

Away, away she plunges
With her white sails o'er her spread,
Like the summer clouds that gather
On some hill's piny head;
Still away she plunges rampant
Like a lion roused to wrath,
And the proud wave lies humbled
I' the track of her path.

Ye ho! my gallant sailors
Wear her head from off the land:
As his steed obeys the Arab
How she gives to the hand!
And now like a soul the world forsaking,
She leaves the coast behind,
And the main is her wide dwelling
And her spouse is the wind.

Then pledge we a full measure
To the friends we left to-day,
Whose kind wishes hover o'er us
On our watery way:
Where diurnally remind us
Shall the same bright-brimming rite
Of the eyes that yearned blessings
When last we knew their light!

* * * * *

The leaf-glancing boughs of the o'erdoming trees
Now seem in wild dance to the pipe of the breeze
As clashing and clasping in merry despite
They mass into shadow or quiver in light,
When cut by their motion the slanting moonbeam
Falls sifted like coin on the floor of the stream
That murmurs thereby like a voice in a dream,
Save when the breeze straining in lengthen'd escape
Holds open their sprays for a steadier escape,
Then too bright fragment of Night's ripest blue
Relieving the leaf-work come transiently through,
And broad stars seem glowing as seen amid these
Like apples of fire in the tops of the trees!

Freedom In Faith

His mind alone is kingly who (though one)
But venerates of present things or past
What he believeth good, kneeling to none
Save God and Truth! Who awed not by this vast
And shadowy scheme of Life, but anchored fast
In Love and sitting central like the sun
So gives his mental beams to pierce and run
Through all its secrets while his days may last;
And thus progressive, little faith hath he
For mysteries, till sounding them he hear
The gathered tones of their stirr'd depths agree
With that religious harmony severe
Which anthems to his spiritual ear
The invisible Presence of the Deity.

Finality

A heavy and desolate sense of life
 Is all the Past makes mine—and still
A cold contempt of Fortune's strife,
 Despite the dread
 Of want of bread,
'Numbs, clogs like ice, my weary will.

How little is there on the earth
 That I at length can venerate?
I see at most one world-wide dearth
 Of wisdom free,
 True piety,
Of noble love, of honest hate.

With little hope of higher good
 For Man, for me, of earthly bliss,
Yet I withstand as I've withstood,
 The evil plan
 Man teaches man
Of valuing all things amiss.

There's nothing under the godlike sun
 Worth loving to be bought or sold!—
The only wealth by labour won
 Besides the food
 Supplying blood,
Is human excellence—not gold!

All other things designed or done
 Their only real value miss,
But in so far as this—each one
 And all sustain,
 Adorn, explain,
Secure and enter into this.

Beauty itself were nothing—no,
 But for Love's golden heart and eye;
Nay Truth were dead but for the glow
 Around its shrine
 Of minds divine,
Of martyr minds that may not die.

Why pile we stone on stone to raise
 Jail, fane, or public hall—why plan
Fortress or tower for future days,
 Yet leave unbuilt

To wrong or guilt
That nobler pile—the Mind of Man?

With finer wool the land to dower,
Behold how strongly we are moved—
Even while a Nation's thinking power
Unvalued, yet
Unnamed, we let
All bestial grow, being unimprov'd!

Can then the seed in God's right hand
Of Happiness, when shed below,
Find fitting nurture in a land
Of wilding soil
And selfish toil?
I tell ye Time shall answer, No!

I tell ye that all public good,
All individual worth and peace,
All youthful nobleness of mood,
Like rose-leaves thin
Must wither in
The sordid breath of days like these.

O for a prophet's tongue to teach
The truths I cannot else reveal,
O for a conqueror's power to reach
The holy aim
That doth inflame
And nerve me with a martyr's zeal!

'Tis vain—the sacred wish is vain!
Men but renew the strifes of old:
But value with a greed insane
All devilish skill,
All splendid ill
That fetters Truth with chains of gold!

Consolation

Mine heart is heavy with an ancient sorrow,
My brain is aching with a clinging grief,
And if I seek to smooth away the furrow
It plougheth in my soul, in the relief
And balminess of Song, the cheat is brief!
One feeling still from which the Past did borrow
Exceeding light, reminds me that the morrow
Must drag me farther from its lost belief.
For solace therefore would I dive with Truth
Into the depths of her remotest lore:
Somewhere in Nature's motherly breast there's ruth
Yet for her child though wounded to the core,
Though Life's first objects may beguile no more
And Misery clothe her with the dreams of youth!

* * * * *

An Aboriginal Mother's Lament

O I would further fly, my child, to make thee safer yet
From the unsparing White Man's dread hand all murder wet,
Yet bear thee on as I have borne so stealthily and fleet,
But darkness shuts the forest and thorns are in my feet.
O moan not—I would give this braid that once bound Hibbi's brow,
But for a single palmful of water for thee now!

Ah! spring not to his name, no more to glad us may he come!—
Afar his ashes smoulder beneath the blasted gum,
All charred and blasted by the fire the White Man kindled there,
To burn our murder'd kindred and scorch us to despair.
O moan not—I would give this braid that once bound Hibbi's brow,
But for a single palmful of water for thee now!

And but for thee I would their fire had eaten me as fast:
Hark, do I hear his death-cry yet lengthening up the blast?
But no, when his bound hands had signed the way that we should fly,
Thrown on the pyre fresh bleeding I saw thy father die.
O moan not—I would give this braid, his first fond gift to me,
But for a single palmful of water now for thee!

No more shall his loud tomahawk be plied for our relief,
The streams have lost for ever the shadow of a Chief,
The fading track of his fleet foot may guide not as before,
And the echo of the mountains shall answer him no more!
O moan not -I would give this braid, thy father's gift to me,
But for a single palmful of water now for thee!

* * * * *

IT will be remembered that, a few years back, a party of Stockmen (several of whom were afterwards executed for the crime) made wholesale massacre of a small tribe of defenceless Blacks—to the number, it is believed, of more than a score—heaping their bodies, as they slaughtered them, upon a large fire kindled for the purpose. Of this doomed tribe, one woman only, with her infant, as it appeared subsequently on evidence, escaped the White man's vengeance. The poem is supposed to describe the ejaculations of the mother after having fled to a considerable distance from the scene of the massacre, and when wearied and overtaken by the night.

My Political Belief

O Liberty, yet build thee an august
And best abode in this most virgin clime;
The Old World yet, power-trampled to the dust,
Hath never known thee in thy perfect prime!
Seeing all Rule which at a given time
Expires not, as reposed in Public Trust,
And thence renewable but by Suffrage, must
Against thee in its nature be a crime!
Seeing that all not privileged to name
Their governors—and more, to govern too,
Choosing or chosen, but live unto thy blame!
That all are slaves in act who may not do
Whate'er is virtuous and in spirit who
Believing aught dare not avow the same!

* * * * *

An Anthem For The Australasian League

Shall we sing of Loyalty
To the far South's fiery youth?
Yea—but let the paeon be
Of loyalty to God and Truth:
To Man, to progress, and to all
The free things, nobly free,
Of which their loved Australia shall
The golden cradle be.

Hark! her star-eyed Destinies
Pour their voices o'er the seas—
Hither, to the Land of Gold,
All who would be free!
Here a diadem behold
For immortal Liberty!
Not for Old World queens and kings,
Villain Slavery's outworn things!

Shall we sing of Loyalty
In this new and genial Land?
Yea—but let the paeon be
Of loyalty to Love's command,
To Thought, to Beauty, and to all
The glorious Arts that yet
In golden Australasia shall
Like chrysolites be set.

* * * * *

The Tree Of Liberty

We'll plant a Tree of Liberty
 In the centre of the land,
And round it ranged as guardians be,
 A vowed and trusty band;
And sages bold and mighty soul'd
 Shall dress it day by day:
But woe unto the traitor who
 Would break one branch away.

Then sing the Tree of Liberty
 For the vow that we have made;
May it so flourish that when we
 Are buried in its shade,
Fair Womanhood and Love and Good,
 All pilgrims pure shall go
Its growth to bless for happiness—
 O may it flourish so!

Till felled by gold as bards have told,
 In the Old World once it grew,
But there its fruits were ever sold
 And only to the Few:
But here at last, uncurs'd by caste,
 Each man at Nature's call
Shall pluck as well what none may sell,
 The fruit that blooms for All.

By gold 'twas felled as bards have held
 In the Old World where it grew,
But here the power that there dispelled
 Its life shall be its dew:
The evil bout of Time is out,
 And gold no more a thrall,
Shall here but build for Truth and gild
 The fruit that blooms for All.

Then sing the Tree of Liberty,
 And the men who shall defend
Its glorious future righteously
 For this all-glorious end—
That happiness all men to bless
 Out with its growth may grow—
Our Southern Tree of Liberty
 Shall flourish even so!

Burns

MY OWN WILD BURNS! these rude-wrought rhymes of thine
In golden worth are like the unshapely coin
Of some new realm, yet pure as from the mine—
And Art may well be spared with such alloy
As dims the bullion to improve the die!

I love the truths of Art but more indeed
The simplest truths of Nature; and I read
To find her visibly enthroned on all
His muse hath builded like a fiery wall
Round national faith and patriotic pride
And Love and Valour both at Beauty's side.
Yea, more his outward rudeness, doth impress
Upon me still his innate strengthiness*
Even as imperfect features oft enhance
Th' intrinsic power of some fine countenance.

How various too the spirit of his lyre—
How many-hued his soul's poetic fire!
In his one Muse such qualities we find
Mingled, as most are several in their kind:
Mirth like a billow brightening up before
The blasts of Grief—to die on Misery's shore,
Humour and Scorn and Pathos, with a reach
Above all effort, each exalting each!
Yea, Terror wedding its own sense of evil
To mother Pity—even for the Devil!

But best he moves to tears, or wakes such sighs
As fan the vital fire in Beauty's lustrous eyes.
Hark! when the winding Nith, the Afton, Clyde,
Rave downward or in gleaming quiet glide,
How Passion's very soul keeps burning by
In his wild verse from every covert nigh!
Or by the "bonnie Doon" or "gurgling Ayr,"
What heart-sweet memories like perfumes there
Re-breathe of bloomy joys untimely shed
And Love that followed the belov`ed dead
To Heaven!—and then while Pity weeps aloud
Clad in the pale ideal of a shroud,
Who would exchange the luxury of her woe
For all the pleasures that the heartless know!

* * * * *

* At first sight, it may appear that strength would be here the only proper word, and that the two added syllables are tacked on to it merely for the sake of the metre and rhyme; but the reader will perceive, by the context, that strength is not so much meant as the indication of it; namely, strengthiness.

But should we need relief—another page
Shall blow the trumpet of his warlike rage!
And vilest of the villain herd is he
Who to his battle-dirge can listener be
Nor feel that he could die for Liberty!
Or who, while volleys forth the charging lay
Revoicing Bannockburn's all-glorious day,
From his exalted manhood then not spurns
Whate'er is traitorous, with a shout for Burns!

And now in thought I track with steps of fear
The noble peasant in his wild career.
The haven of his youth is left: the sea
Of Life is loudening all around; and she,
Who 'mid its perilous breakers might have stood
His first sweet love—she is not! Heaven looks bright
Still, and the hills laugh round him for delight,
But, ah! beneath the sun he finds no more
The Eden where his genius dwelt before!
And does he wander by his native Ayr?
The spirit of gladness hath gone up even there—
Up like the blithe notes of the lark when they
Have faded heavenward utterly away.
The more he mixes with his kind in mirth
The more he feels the homelessness of earth,
Till Life's lost charm seems beckoning him afar
In the white beauty of each lovely star!
She is not!—only sweeter is the tone
Of his wild lyre for the wild loss thus known.

But storying thus with love his native streams,
Thus by the life of his poetic dreams
Breathing suggestions that exalt and thrill
Into the spirit of each warrior hill;
Yea lighting Scotia's universal face
With mental beauty and affectionate grace,
Yet, did he die the victim of excess?
Alas! even Poesy by her mute distress
Admits the blot, nor could she save her son,
Her star-bright Rob, her love-anointed one!

Whilst yet the bard by Fortune unsubdued

Had only like a wild bird of the wood
Sung his own simple joys, then happy being good—
Ere he had sounded the world's heart and spurned
The soulless tone its hollowness returned,
His habitudes how temperate we find
From a self-pleasing tunefulness of mind.

But afterwards, that such a being so
Alive to joy and sensitive to woe,
With all in sympathy of rich and rare
Flushing his soul, as in the evening air
A western cloud grows grateful to the sense
With all the sun's unspeakable affluence
Of golden glory—mightily endowed
By genius too, with motives nobly proud
And full-summ'd wings of spiritual flame
Wherewith to mount against the burning eye of Fame;
Yet "bounded in a nutshell," or but wooed
By Fortune from a barren solitude,
Just to be stared at by her minions vain—
A sort of mental monster newly ta'en!
That such a being should resort at length
To whatsoever might repair the strength
Of ruined Joy a moment or inspire
The heart of dying Hope though with fallacious fire,
Was I believe, howe'er the truth appal,
Almost inevitably natural.

Ah, Scotia! it behoved thee then to guard
The worldly welfare of thy peasant bard!
But no, thou wouldst not—and thy gifted son
So placed, again the like career should run—
Again be naked left to Fortune's slurs,
A hound-like spirit in a land of curs!

But ah! if such may always be the fate
Of Genius native to a low estate,
For mercy's sake, nay for the sake of Burns,
Whose spirit methinks tow'rds each poor brother yearns,
Away the mask of kindred let us fling
At once, and brand it as an outcast thing!
Above communion with the rude, by mind
Exalted, and yet shunned by the refined!
Yea, let this warning in its face be hurl'd
As the collective verdict of the world:—

"Enrich the age with beauty if you will,
But you must do so at your peril still!

The sole reward's a life-long lack of bread,
And lastly a most desolate death-bed,
And then some century after, when the loss
And agony of Genius on the cross
Of Passion, shall have spread into a tale
Wherewith to spice the tavern lounge's ale,
Then shall your lowly grave, long grass o'ergrown,
Become a national sentiment in stone!
Yes, then a costly monument shall grace
And guard it in the land, a sacred place!"

Oh, must not Scorn have reeled with laughter—yes,
Even until shocked at her own bitterness,
To see by Scotland such a work up-piled
In honour of its so neglected child
Of grace and glory beautifully wild?
But there it stands—a type (at least to me)
Of intellectual hypocrisy!
Sad Poesy beholding, from it turns
And murmurs—What, a monument to Burns?
No: 'tis a sordid scoff perpetual made—
A final insult to his injured Shade!
The thankless country that denied him bread,
Now gives this stone—for he is safely dead!

* * * * *

Wordsworth

Lofty and strenuous of sentiment
But narrow and partial in its scope and bent,
And thence the bigot of a local set
Of habitudes, meshed round him like a net.
Hence too his intellect, though large it be
By nature, hath one prime deficiency,—
Of moral difference that broad view which leads
The steps of thought beyond the snares of creeds
And circles of opinion, whether they
Be of the Old Time or of yesterday.
Hence too his narrow bias, I suspect,
Even in poesy to attempt a sect.

Still as a Poet he is great and rare,
A King of Thought upon the peak of bare
And rigid majesty, for power immense
Enthroned for ever! And in spirit thence,—
Thence let him waft us on a white-wing'd dream
Within the murmur of some profluent stream,
And there, just whither a dim line of brakes
In the remotest haze of distance shakes,
On his lone rounds let Peter Bell be seen,—
Seen o'er the White Doe on the herbage green
Heard breathing where she lies, and near her there
"The oldest seeming man that ever wore grey hair."
Then shall we find him verily a Seer
Of Nature's myst'ries, simple and severe.

With what a plenitude of pure delight
He triumphs on the mountain's cloudy height,
With what a gleeful harmony of joy
He wanders down the vale "as happy as a boy!"

How in his verse, each picture-pregnant phrase
Full to the eye some given shape conveys,
And thus though in the jarring city pent
Through him we reach the country and content.
Fond Memory apprehends with gladdened eyes
All that is richest in each wilding's dyes
As blending with the beauty and the grace
Of some bright advent of our happier days—
Hears through the sway of greenest boughs, as heard
Even then, the far voice of some favourite bird,
The murmurous industry of bees, the low
Responsive throbs of Echo throbbing slow

Out of some lonely dell, as to the tread
Of our own feet in days for ever fled!
Then of some brook that gushes in his lines
Glad Fancy drinks or on the bank reclines,
While of far cloud, grey rock and ancient tree
The dusky shadows on the page we see:
Yea, the air sweetens as the spells prevail
And our locks seem to wave as in a mountain gale!

Still there remains to tell the charm serene
Wherewith this Bard most sanctifies the scene:
'Tis that with eyes of love he's quick to find
In all its forms meet ministers of Mind
And that with the rare wealth of his own heart
As with a golden chain he interlinks each part.

But vainly the fond spirit of youth may look
For its peculiar food in Wordsworth's book,
Where Passion is but introduced to wear
A vestal's tenderness, demure as fair:
Not as to see it the new soul desires,
In all the splendour of its tragic fires,
Or, at the least, in all the bright distress
And rosy beauty of its wilfulness!

* * * * *

The Verse Of Coleridge's 'Christobel'

Mark yon runnel how 'tis flowing,
Like a sylvan spirit dreaming
Of the Spring-blooms near it blowing
And the sunlight in it gleaming!
Where that shelving rock is spied,
There with a smooth warbling slide
It lapses down into a cool
And brimming, not o'erflowing pool.
Then between its narrow'd banks
Playing mellow gurgling pranks,
It gushes till a channel'd stone
Gives it a more strenuous tone;
Or with an under-swirling spread
Over a wide pebbled bed
It bubbles with a gentle pleasure,
Ere some new mood change the measure:
Such a runnel typeth well
The sweet wild verse of 'Christabel';
But what
The Wonder-World it warbles through?

* * * * *

To My Young Countryman, D. H. D.

Who doubteth when the Morning Star doth light
Its lamp of beauty, that the day is coming?
Or where prime odours track the breeze's flight
That in the vicinage rare flowers are blooming,
Or where the wild bees round about are humming
That there is honey in some cedar's height,
Or that the Sea is heaving into sight
When from afar a surgy sound comes booming?
And surely, as the observer understands
What these pre-signify, as yet behind,
Thy Intellectual Amplitude expands
Before me in the Future when I find
Some early blossom breathing of thy mind—
Some thing of promise fashion'd by thy hands!

* * * * *

A Trooper of France, in desperate need
Had struggled from under his dying steed,
Where Egypt's pyramids appeared:
While on his black war-horse, the Turk
Who had borne him down, to finish his work
Back wheelingly careered.

Taking his resolute stand
Foot deep in his charger's blood,
The soldier of Christendom, sword in hand
That gleamily out-pointing, showed
Like the lightning-tongue of a settling cloud,
His foe awaiting stood.

Urged into whirlwind speed,
On on with a scattering tail
Like the hurrying thunderbolt's smoky trail!
On on with a streaming mane
Like the foremost racks of a hurricane,
On came the Tartar steed!

Then passed with a vengeful clash
Of blades and a lunging downward crash
The imminent shock!
And when its cloud of dust upthrown
Clear'd off, there stood that Trooper alone,
Firm as a rock!

But two steeds and a Moslem in death lay still—

And a kite of the Desert that came, flop, flop,
In heavy flight from a pyramid's top,
In a merry mood
At the scent of blood,
Was circling o'er and screaming shrill.

* * * * *

Records Of Romantic Passion

There's a rare Soul of Poesy which may be
 But concentrated by the chastened dreams
Of constant hearts. Where'er the ministry
 Of beautiful Nature hath enhanced the themes
 Of some Petrarchian mind whose story gleams
Within the Past like a moon-silvered sea,
Or where grey Interest the spirit free
 Of faithful Love hath caged in iron schemes,
 Or round it stirr'd such dangers as o'erdrove
Long Ruin's storm at last—there evermore
 The very airs that whisper to the grove,
The echo's mystery and the streamlet's lore
Savour of Passion and transfusive pour
 Abroad suggestions to heroic Love.

The Flight Of Peace

Trust and Treachery, Wisdom, Folly,
Madness, Mirth and Melancholy,
Love and Hatred, Thrift and Pillage,
All are housed in one small village.

And if such be Life's mix'd being,
Where may Peace from ruin fleeing,
Find a shelter and inherit
All the calm of her own merit?

In a bark of gentle motion
Sailing on the summer ocean?
There worst war the tempest wages
And the whirlpool's hunger rages.

In some lonely new-world bower,
Hidden like a forest flower?
There too, there, to irk the stranger,
Stalks the wild-eyed spirit Danger!

Vainly would she build by roving
Or in hoping or in loving,
Or in solitary spaces,
Having in all times and places,
Or in none a home of beauty
In the fearless heart of Duty,
Dwelling there and seeing
God's right hand all things decreeing.

To My First Born

WASHINGTON HARPUR.

My beautiful! For beautiful thou art
 To me thy father, as the morning light
 Which makes all common objects fresh and bright,
Yea gives them out of the dun void to start
 As they were newly fashion'd from the Night!
For long there was a darkness round my heart,
Until thy mother made her life a part
 Of mine, to pierce it with Love's genial might—
The Aurora she and the young Morning thou
 Of a new era in my worldly way!
Whence it behoves me heedfully to plough
The future for thy sake and for the vow
 That I have made, to make thee (if I may)
 A Man right worthy of our Australia.

Pp. 92, 96, 104, 110, 113, 114, 123, 124, 126: The arrangement of the Rhymes in the Sonnets scattered through this Volume, is somewhat peculiar. In departing from the Italian model in this respect, I am conscious of not being induced thereto by a desire merely to innovate. But carefully trying the form I have here chosen, not to say invented, by my own ear, I venture to believe that it fits the English Sonnet—or rather, the Sonnet in English more agreeably than that usually adopted.

FINIS.
