

Australasia

Wentworth, William Charles (1793-1872)

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All unambiguous end-of-line hyphens have been removed, and the trailing
part of a word has been joined to the preceding line.

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Australasia

A POEM WRITTEN FOR THE CHANCELLOR'S MEDAL AT THE Cambridge Commencement, JULY, 1823.

En unquam patrios longo post tempore fines,
Pauperis et tigurî congestum cespite culmen
Post aliquot mea regna videns mirabor aristas?

Sydney

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PREFACE.

In consenting to the publication of this poem, the Author has been guided rather by the wishes of his friends, than by his own; and he begs it to be distinctly understood, that by this act he does not seek in anywise to impugn the decision of those learned and respectable judges, who have awarded to Mr. Praed's poem the Chancellor's Gold medal. On the contrary, he is free to admit, that in smoothness and melody of versification Mr. Praed's Poem has undoubtedly the superiority over his:— and, altho' he can never be brought to consider mere music the first requisite of poetry:— altho' he can never fall into the ranks of those who

----by numbers judge a poet's song,
And smooth or rough with them is right or wrong:

—Yet—inasmuch as it is the province of a University not to create, but to refine, —not to inspire genius, but to prune its luxuriances, and to subject it to those rules which the great critics of ancient times and of modern have extracted from the pure models of Greece and Rome, —he bows to their award, if not with satisfaction, at least with all due deference and humility. In the distribution of University-honours, he admits that the judges should decide between competitors in poetry, as if these were mere sculptors. They are not to inquire to whose lot a block of the richest marble has fallen, but to ascertain from whom the crude substance, without reference to its intrinsic qualities, has received the highest polish. They are, in fine, to have regard to the artist, and not to the material.

The Author, however, does not mean to imply, that, if his poem and Mr. Praed's had been analysed by other tests, —by the fancy, the vigour, the accuracy, or the art of their respective delineations, the result of the adjudication would have been different. An implication thus arrogant would but ill become him; and he feels moreover that it would be the less decorous, inasmuch as he knows that, however well qualified he might be to decide between others, in his own case he cannot be otherwise than a partial and incompetent judge. And here it is but justice to the umpires to notice, that his poem, as now published, is not precisely in that form in which it was submitted to their consideration. Some trivial corrections, alterations, and omissions have been made in it, by which. it is conceived that the texture of some few of its parts has been softened and improved.

The author feels that his poem would have been much more perfect, if some allusion had been made in it to the religious improvement which has been effected in Australasia, and particularly to the great missionary efforts which are now in progress in the Polynesian Archipelago. An allusion of this nature, as a friend has justly observed to him, naturally belongs to the subject; and its omission too was the less excusable, as it may be considered a species of *ascription glebaeto* the ancient and religious manor from which the subject sprung. He can only plead in apology the hurry in which his poem was written ; little more than three weeks

having elapsed between its commencement and completion. Had he joined the University a month sooner, both the argument and execution of the poem would have been very different.

DEDICATION

MAJOR GENERAL MACQUARIE, LATE Governor and Commander-in-Chief OF THE COLONY OF NEW SOUTH WALES AND ITS DEPENDENCIES.

MY DEAR SIR,

ALTHOUGH I feel that I am scarcely warranted, without your permission, in thus bringing your name before the public; yet—as you are now travelling on the Continent, and as I could not, therefore, obtain that permission without some considerable delay, —I have even ventured to inscribe to you this, the first fruits of Australasian poesy, without your sanction or privity. I have selected you for the patron of this crude effort, not because I could not have found another foster father for this my poetic banding, but because I cannot discover amidst the circle of my friends (and I am sure it would be useless to seek elsewhere), any one to whom its introduction to the public could be confided with equal propriety. In you, Sir, who for so many years have presided over the colonies which are included under the designation which is the subject of this poem ; who have watched over and promoted their growth rather with the warm solicitude of a parent than the frigid superintendence of a governor; who have conducted them through the helplessness of infancy to the first dawn of youth and independence; and who, in resigning the task of their future guidance to other hands, have still left behind you the warmest wishes for their future welfare and prosperity;— I know that every thing Australasian, or connected with the honour and interests of Australasia, will ever find a steady friend and zealous advocate. I feel, therefore, that in this conjuncture I could not apply to any one who would view this hasty production with equal partiality, and be likely to give it that warm countenance and support, which, I fear, will form its chief recommendation. But I will confess that a mere personal consideration of this nature is not the object this dedication. An Australasian myself, I am anxious at a period when a few dastardly and privileged calumniators have dared, not openly, but by insidious implication, to impugn the leading measures which characterized your administration of the government of my country, to testify my gratitude for the services which you have rendered to that country. and to assure you, that, however those services may for the instant be underrated here, they will long live in the heartfelt recollection of those who were the objects of them, and who have had practical proof of their wisdom and humanity. Nor do I utter any doubtful prophecy when I predict, that his Majesty's ministers will soon form a more correct estimate of the zeal, ability, and integrity, with which you have discharged the trust which your Sovereign reposed in you. Calumny is but the foul vapour of a day. As the envious mists that hide the sun quickly disappear, and the glorious luminary breaks forth with renewed force and splendour: thus is it with the benefactors of mankind. Their intentions and acts

may be obscured for a season; but the light of their deeds remains behind, and warms and cheers through generations. The treatment you have met with alford's I admit, but poor encouragement for your successors to tread in your footsteps; but for yourself, Sir, if you need any other consolation than that inward satisfaction which must result from the retrospect of a life, passed like Bayard's, *sans peur et sans reproche*, you should recollect that exalted worth and station have ever been obnoxious to envy and malevolence; and that these are the stings which Heaven has kindly attached to human celebrity, that its possessor may not become too much enamoured of the glories of this world, and forget that the pure unalloyed recompense of his toils is reserved for the next.

I feel that the poem, to which I have thus annexed your name, would have been more complete, if it had contained some allusion, not to those astonishing monuments which you designed and executed in so short a period in the vast Austral Wilderness, —the forests you levelled, the roads you formed, the bridges you built, the palaces you erected, and the towns you founded (for however wonderful, these are perishable memorials of which all traces will one day or other be obliterated;) —but to that high tone of feeling, that great moral reformation, of which, both by your precept, your example, and your institutions you sowed the seeds among all classes of the colonists —seeds, the fruits of which will descend to their remotest posterity. Hereafter, when I shall revisit my country, when the beneficial results of your liberal principles and philanthropic labours shall be present to my senses, and when the sublimities of my native woods and forests shall lend their breathing inspiration to my verse, I shall be better qualified to do justice to such a theme; and am resolved (if Heaven should spare my life a few years longer) to give this poem that extension, of which the subject is susceptible, and of which I consider it to be deserving. This is a debt, Sir, which Australasia owes you, and which I, the humblest of her sons, if no other of them should in the meanwhile anticipate me, will do my utmost to discharge.

That you may at length find in the bosom of your family that repose, which a long life of honourable exertion deserves, and which your declining years require, is the fervent prayer, not of myself alone, but of all those of my compatriots who have Australasian hearts; and I am proud to say, that there are few, very few of them, who do not fall under this denomination.

I remain.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your faithful and obedient Servant.,

W. C. WENTWORTH.

AUSTRALASIA.

LAND of my birth! tho' now, alas! no more
Musing I wander on thy sea-girt shore,
Or climb with eager haste thy barrier cliff,
To catch a glimmer of the distant skiff,
That ever and anon breaks into light,
And then again eludes the aching sight,
Till nearer seen she bends her foaming way
Majestic onward to yon placid bay,
Where Sydney's infant turrets proudly rise,
The new-born glory of the southern skies;—
Dear Australasia can I e'er forget
Thee, Mother Earth? Ah no, my heart e'en yet
With filial fondness loves to call to view
Scenes, which though oft remember'd, still are new;¹
Scenes, where my playful childhood's thoughtless years
Flew swift away, despite of childhood's tears;
Where later too, in manhood's op'ning bloom,
The tangled brake, th' eternal forest's gloom,
The wonted brook, where with some truant mate
I lov'd to plunge, or ply the treach'rous bait;
The spacious harbour with its hundred coves,²
And fairy islets—seats of savage loves.
Again beheld—restampt with deeper die
The fading visions of my infancy:
And shall I now, by Cam's old classic stream,
Forebear to sing, and thou propos'd the theme?
Thy native bard, tho' on a foreign strand,
Shall I be mute, and see a stranger's hand
Attune the lyre, and prescient of thy fame
Foretell the glories that shall grace thy name?
Forbid it, all ye Nine! 'twere shame to thee,
My A ustral parent ;—greater shame to me.

Proud Queen of isles! Thou sittest vast, alone,
A host of vassals bending round thy throne:
Like some fair swan that skims the silver tide,
Her silken cygnets strew'd on every side,
So floatest thou, thy Polynesian brood
Dispers'd around thee on the Ocean flood,
While ev'ry surge, that doth thy bosom lave,

Salutes thee "Empress of the southern wave."

Say, Muse, when first of Europe's roving train
Burst on De Quiros' sight this island-main,
What golden visions rose to fancy's view,
The towns he plunde'd, and the hosts he slew;
How on all sides the argent tripods shone,
And temples richer than Peruvia's sun;
Till av'rice glow'd, while busy thought unfurl'd
The imag'd treasures of the new-found world:
'Twas then, triumphant hope, thy power confess'd
Hush'd the rude tongue, and calm'd the murm'ring breast;
Then still'd sedition's buzz, each contrite soul
With awe and gladness hail'd a chief's controul,
And ev'ry peril, ev'ry hardship past,
Seem'd to have found full recompence at last.
Say too, what terror fix'd the natives' eye,
When first they saw emerging from the sky,
That stranger bark in sullen silence sweep
A wrathful spirit o'er the troubled deep,
Treading with giant stride the subject wave,
The wind his herald, and the tide his slave;
While onward stalking in terrific state
He loom'd portentful of impending fate.
Yet vain the dream of those, the dread of these
For lo ! at length arriv'd with fav'ring breeze
De Quiros 'self directs the straining oar.
And leaps the foremost on the untrod shore—
Follow his band; but dark on ev'ry side
Repulsive forests frown with path untried
While from the hidden foe, the frequent spear
Sings through their ranks, and wakes unwonted fear;
Till struck with awe, they cease the hopeless chase,
And to the ship their sullen course retrace.

Ye primal tribes, lords of this old domain,
Swift-footed hunters of the pathless plain,
Unshackled wanderers, enthusiasts free,
Pure native sons of savage liberty,
Who hold all things in common, earth, sea, air,
Or only occupy the nightly lair,
Whereon each sleeps; who own no chieftain's pow'r,
Save his, that's mightiest of the passing hour;
Say—whence your ancient lineage, what your name
And from what shores your rough forefathers came?
Untutor'd children, fresh from Nature's mould,
No songs have ye to trace the time of old:—
No hidden themes, like these, employ your care,

For you enough the knowledge that ye are:—
Let Learning's sons, who would this secret scan,
Unlock its mystic casket if they can,—
To your unletter'd tastes are sweeter far
The dance of battle, and the song of war,
'Mid hostile ranks the deadly spear to throw,
Or see the foeman stagg'ring 'neath your blow: —
To you, ye sable hunters, sweeter too
To spy the track of bounding kangaroo,
Or long neck'd Emu:—quick with eagle gaze
Her path you follow thro' the tangled maze,
O'er boundless wilds your panting game pursue,
And come, like trusty hounds, at last in view;
Then creeping round her, soon the forest's pride
Is hemm'd with bristly spears that pierce her side.
And now, the labours of the chase being o'er,
And Nature's keen suggestions heard no more,
In uncouth numbers seated in a ring
Your ancient fathers' warlike feats ye sing,
Or striking each his shield, with clatt'ring lance,
The early night exhaust in Pyrrhic dance.

Such, mountain sons of freedom, your delight,
Such your rude sport by day, your mirth by night;
Nor would you these few savage joys forego,
For all the comforts all the arts bestow.
What, if at times the barren chase deny
The scanty fare your niggard wilds supply!
What, if to-day ye miss your sylvan feast!
To-morrow's meal shall thence derive a zest,
Unknown to those who live in slothful ease,
Child of the heath, the mountain, and the breeze.
What, if the wintry blast and pelting rain,
Howl thro' the woods, and inundate the plain!
To some near cave ye fly, which jutting o'er
Wards from your naked limbs the drenching show'r;
While kindled faggots soon with crackling sound
Dispel the gloom, and scatter warmth around,
And, nestling close each to his sable love,
Ye sleep regardless of the storm above.

Hadst thou, old Cynic, seen this unclad crew
Stretch their bare bodies in the nightly dew,
Like hairy Satyrs, midst their Sylvan seats,
Endure both winter's frosts, and summer's heats;
Thy cloak and tub away thou wouldst have cast,
And tried, like them, to brave the piercing blast.

Illustrious Cook ! Columbus off our shore,
To whom was left this unknown world t' explore;
Its untrac'd bounds on faithful chart to mark.
And leave a light where all before was dark :—
And thou, the foremost in fair learning's ranks,
Patron of ey'ry art, departed Banks!
Who wealth disdain'ing, and inglorious ease,
The rocks and quicksands dar'd of unknown seas;-
Immortal Pair! when in yon spacious bay³
Ye mood awhile its wonders to survey,
How little thought ye, that the name, from you
Its graceful shrubs, and beauteous wildflowers drew,
Would serve, in after times, with lasting brand
To stamp the soil, and designate the land,
And to ungenial climes reluctant scare
Full many a hive, that else had settled there!

Ah why, Britannia's pride, Britannia's boast,
Searcher of ev'ry sea, and ev'ry coast,
Lamented Cook! thou bravest, gentlest heart,
Why didst thou fall beneath a savage dart?
Why were thy mangled reliques doom'd to grace
The midnight orgies of a barb'rous race?
Why couldst thou not, thy weary wand'rings past,
At home in honor'd ease recline at last,
And, like the happier partner of thy way,
In cloudless glory close life's setting day ?

And thou, fam'd Gallic Captain la Perouse!
When from this Bay thou led'st thy fated crews,
Did thy twin vessels sink beneath the shock
Of furious hurricane, or hidden rock?
Fell ye o'erpower'd on some barbarian strand,
As fell before Le Langles' butcher'd band?
Linger'd the remnants of thy shipwreck'd host
On some parch'd coral isle, some torrid coast,—
Where no green tree, no cooling brook is seen,
Nought living is, or e'er before had been,
Save some lone mew blown from her rocky nest
Had lit perchance her homeward wing to rest;—
Till gnaw'd by want with joy a comrade dead
They saw, and rav'nous on his body fed,
And soon his bones pick'd bare, with famished eye
Each glar'd around, then drew who first should die;
Till of thy ghastly band the most unblest
Surviv'd, —sad sepulchre of all the rest ;
And now his last meal gorg'd, with phrenzy fir'd,
And raging thirst the last lorn wretch expir'd ?

Whate'er thy fate, thou saw'st the floating arks,
That peopled this new world, the teeming barks,
That ardent Phillip⁴ led to this far shore,
And seeing them, alas! wert seen no more.
Ah! couldst thou now behold what man has done,
Tho' sev'n revolving lustres scarce have run,
How wouldst thou joy to see the savage earth
The smiling parent of so fair a birth !
Lo! thickly planted o'er the glassy bay,
Where Sydney loves her beauties to survey,
And ev'ry morn delighted sees the gleam
Of some fresh pennant dancing in her stream,
A masty forest, stranger vessels moor,
Charg'd with the fruits of ev'ry foreign shore;
While, landward,—the throng'd quay, the creaking crane,
The noisy workman, and the loaded wain,
The lengthen'd street, wide square, and column'd front
Of stately mansion, and the gushing font,
The solemn church, the busy market throng,
And idle loungers saunt'ring slow among,—
The lofty windmills, that with outspread sail
Thick line the hills, and court the rising gale,
Shew that the mournful genius of the plain
Driv'n from his primal solitary reign
Has backward fled, and fix'd his drowsy throne
In untrod wilds, to muse and brood alone.

And thou, fair Port! whose triad⁵ sister coves
Peninsulate these walls; whose ancient groves
High tow'ring southward rear their giant form,
And break the fury of the polar storm;—
Fairest of Ocean's daughters! who dost bend
Thy mournful steps to seek thy absent friend,
Whence she,—coy wild rose⁶ on her virgin couch
Fled loath from Paramatta's am'rous touch;
Skirting thy watry path, lo ! frequent stand
The cheerful villas midst their well-cropp'd land;
Here lowing kine, there bounding coursers graze,
Here waves the corn, and there the woody maize,⁷
And there the tall peach puts forth its pinky bloom,
And there the orange scatters its perfume,
While, as the merry boatmen row along,
The woods are quicken'd with their lusty song.—

Nor here alone hath labor's victor band
Subdued the glebe, and fertiliz'd the land;
For lo! from where, at rocky Portland's head,
Reluctant Hawkesbury quits his sluggard bed

Merging in ocean,—to young Windsor's tow'rs,
And Richmond's high green hills, and native bow'rs,
Thence far along Nepean's pebbled way,
To those rich pastures, where the wild herds stray,⁸
The crowded farm house lines the winding stream
On either side, and many a plodding team
With shining ploughshare turns the neighb'ring soil,
Which crowns with double crop the lab'rer's toil.

Hail mighty ridge!⁹ that from thy azure brow
Survey'st these fertile plains, that stretch below,
And look'st with careless, unobservant eye,
As round thy waist the forked lightnings ply,
And the loud thunders spring with hoarse rebound
From peak to peak, and fill the welkin round
With deaf'ning voice, till with their boist'rous play
Fatigued in mutt'ring peals they stalk away
Parent of this deep stream, this awful flood,
That at thy feet its tributary mud,
Like the fam'd Indian, or Egyptian tide,
Doth pay, but direful scatters woe¹⁰ beside;—
Vast Austral Giant of these rugged steeps,
Within whose secret cells rich glitt'ring heaps
Thick pil'd are doom'd to sleep, till some one spy
The hidden key that opes thy treasury;
How mute, how desolate thy stunted woods,
How dread the chasms, where many an eagle broods,
How dark thy caves, how lone thy torrents' roar,
As down thy cliffs precipitous they pour,
Broke on our hearts, when first¹¹ with vent'rous tread
We dared to rouse thee from thy mountain bed!
Till gain'd with toilsome step thy topmost heath,
We spied the cheering smokes¹² ascend beneath,
And, as a meteor shoots athwart the night,
The boundless champaign burst upon our sight,
Till nearer seen the beauteous landscape grew.
Op'ning like Canaan on rapt Israel's view.

Ye tranquil scenes! too long to man unknown;
Your hills remain'd uncropp'd, your dales unsown:
Yet lo! at last, upon yon distant stream
Increasing Bathurst's¹³ straggling honors beam,
While thick o'erspreading the fresh-cultur'd glade
The ripen'd harvest bends its heavy blade,
And flocks, and herds in thousands strew'd around,
Awake the woodlands with their joyous sound.

Soon, Australasia, may thy inmost plains,

A new Arcadia, teem with simple swains;
Soon a Lycoris' scorn again inspire
A Gallus' song to moan his hopeless tire,
And, while he murmurs forth his plaintive tale,
The list'ning breezes waft it down the vale.

What, though no am'rous shepherd midst thy dells
E'er charm'd responsive Echo from her cells;
What, though nor liquid flute, nor shriller reed,
E'er shot their wild notes o'er thy silent mead ;
Thy blue ey'd daughters, with the flaxen hair,
And taper ankle, do they bloom less fair
Than those of Europe ? do thy primal groves
Ne'er warble forth their feather'd inmates' loves ?
Or say, doth Ceres', or Pomona's reign
With scantier gifts repay thy lab'ring train ?
Ah ! no, 'tis slav'ry's badge, the felon's shame
That stills thy voice and clouds thy op'ning fame ;
'Tis this that makes thy sorrowing Judah weep,
Restrain's her song, and hangs her harp to sleep.

Land of my hope ! soon may this early blot,
Amid thy growing honors, be forgot:—
Soon may a freeman's soul, a freeman's blade,
Nerve ev'ry arm, and gleam thro' ev'ry glade
Nor more the outcast convicts' clanking chains
Deform thy wilds, and stigmatize thy plains:—
And tho' the fathers—these —of thy new race,
From whom each glorious feat, each deathless grace,
Must yet proceed, by whom each radiant gem
Be won —to deck thy future diadem;—
Did not of old th' Imperial Eagle rise,
Unfurl his pinions, and astound the skies?
Hatch'd in an aery fouler far than thine,
Did he not dart from Tiber to the Rhine?
From Dacia's forests to fam'd Calpe's height,
Fear'd not each cow'ring brood his circling flight
From Libya's sands to quiver'd Parthia's shore,
Mark'd not the scatter'd fowl his victor soar ?
From swift Euphrates, to bleak Thule's rock,
Did not opposing Myriads feel the shock
Of his dread talons, and glad tribute pay,
To 'scape the havoc of his murd'rous way ?¹⁴

Yet ne'er, my country, roll thy battle-car
With deadly axle through the ranks of war;
Of foreign rule ne'er may the ceaseless thirst
Pollute thy sons, and render thee accurst

Amid the nations; ne'er may crouch before
Invading legions sallying from thy shore
A distant people, that shall not on thee
Have first disgorg'd its hostile chivalry.
In other climes, Bellona's temples shine,
Ceres', Pomona's, Bacchus', Pan's be thine,
And chaste Minerva's; from thy peaceful plains
May glory's star ne'er charm thy restless swains;
Ne'er may the hope of plunder lure to roam
One Australasian from his happy home;
But rustic arts their tranquil hours employ,
Arts crown'd with plenty, and replete with joy:
Be their's the task to lay with lusty blow
The ancient giants of the forest low,
With frequent fires the cumber'd plain to clear,
To tame the steed, and yoke the stubborn steer,
With cautious plough to rip the virgin earth,
And watch her first born harvest from its birth,
Till ting'd with summer suns the golden glade
Delight the hind, and claim the reaper's blade:—
Their's too the task, with skilful hand to rear
The varied fruits, that gild the ripen'd year;
Whether the melting peach, or juicy pear,
Or golden orange, most engage their care:—
Their's too round stakes, or trellis'd bow'rs to twine
The pliant tendrils of the shooting vine;
And, when beneath their blushing burdens bow
The yielding stems,—the gen'rous juice to stow
In copious jar, which drain'd on festive day
May warm each heart, and chase its glooms away:—
Their's too on flow'ry mead, or thimby steep
To tend with watchful dog the timid sheep;
And as their fleecy charge are lying round,
To wake the woodlands with their pipe's soft sound,
While the charm'd Fauns, and Dryads skulking near,
Leave their lone haunts, and list with raptur'd ear.—

Such be the labours of thy peaceful swains,
Thus may they till, and thus enrich thy plains,
Thus the full flow of population's tide
Its swelling waters pour on ev'ry side : —
As, on the topmost boughs of some old wood,
When outcast rooks first hatch their infant brood,
The tufted nests, as buds each vernal year,
In growing groups, and thicker ranks appear,
Till soon the spacious grove with clam'rous strife
Resounds throughout, and teems with callow life; —

So, Australasia, may thy exil'd band
Spread their young myriads o'er thy lonely land,
Till village spires, and crowded cities rise
In thick succession to the trav'ler's eyes,
And the grim wolf, chas'd from his secret hold,
No more with hungry howl alarm the fold.

Nor be the rustic arts alone thy pride,
The ambient ocean half thy care divide;
Whether thy roving sons on Tropic seas
Spread ev'ry sail, to woo the sportive breeze;—
Or with bare poles, and dauntless bosoms brave
The icy horrors of th' Antarctic wave ;
Till fruitful commerce in thy lap shall pour,
The gifts of ev'ry sea, and ev'ry shore.

And thou, fair Science! pure ethereal light
Beam on her hills. and chase her mental night;
Direct her sons to seek the perfect day,
Where Bacon trac'd, and Newton led the way;
Till bright Philosophy's full orb arise,
To gild her noon, and cheer her ev'ning skies.
But mid the future treasures of their lore,
Still foremost rank the Greek and Latian ore;
Still in the classic search the midnight oil
Be spent, nor deem'd that pleasing labour-toil,
Till to their sight reveal'd all glorious shine
The hidden riches of this ancient mine;
Whether they follow with admiring view
The fam'd retreat of Xenophon's bold few;
Or in Calypso's isle,¹⁵ or Ida's grove,
And by Scamander's boiling eddies rove;¹⁶
Or see the pilf'rer of th' empyrean fire
Chain'd to his rock endure the Thund'rer's ire;¹⁷
Or hear the caverns of the Lemnian shore
Ring with the raving hero's anguish'd roar;¹⁸
Or on Troezen's sands see Phaedra's hate
Draw on Hippolytus a guiltless fate;¹⁹
Or with the glory of th'Augustan reign,
Enraptur'd drink the sweets of Maro's strain;
Or borne along by Tully's whelming flood
Feel all his anger kindling in their blood,
When to wide infamy, and deathless shame,
He dooms the plund'rer's, or the traitor's name.

Celestial poesy! whose genial sway
Earth's furthest habitable shores obey;
Whose inspirations shed their sacred light,

Far as the regions of the Arctic night,
And to the Laplander his Boreal gleam
Endear not less, than Phoebus' brighter beam—
Descend thou also on my native land,
And on some mountain-summit take thy stand;
Thence issuing soon a purer fount be seen,
Than charm'd Castalia or fam'd Hippocrene;
And there a richer, nobler fane arise,
Than on Parnassus met th' adoring eyes.
And tho', bright Goddess, on those far blue hills,
That pour their thousand swift pellucid rills,
Where Warragumba's²⁰ rage has rent in twain
Opposing mountains,—thund'ring to the plain,
No child of song has yet invok'd thy aid,
'Neath their primeval solitary shade,—
Still, gracious pow'r, some kindling soul inspire,
To wake to life my country's unknown lyre,
That from creation's date has slumb'ring lain.
Or only breath'd some savage uncouth strain;—
And grant that yet an Austral Milton's song
Pactolus-like flow deep and rich along;—
An Austral Shakspeare rise, whose living page
To Nature true may charm in ev'ry age ;—
And that an Austral Pindar daring soar,
Where not the Theban Eagle reach'd before.

And, oh Britannia! shouldst thou cease to ride
Despotic Empress of old Ocean's tide;—
Should thy tam'd Lion—spent his former might,—
No longer roar the terror of the fight;—
Should e'er arrive that dark disastrous hour,
When bow'd by luxury, thou yield'st to pow'r;—
When thou, no longer freest of the free
To some proud victor bend'st the vanquish'd knee;—
May all thy glories in another sphere
Relume, and shine more brightly still than here;
May this, thy last-born infant,—then arise,
To glad thy heart, and greet thy parent eyes;
And Australasia float, with flag unfurl'd,
A new Britannia in another world.

NOTES.

(1) This sentiment may appear somewhat paradoxical; but there is more than its parallel in the following lines of Racine's Titus.—

----chaque jour je te vois,
Et te vois toujours pour la première fois.

(2) Port Jackson, on the borders of which the town of Sydney stands.

(3) Botany Bay.

(4) Governor Phillip founder of the Colony of New South Wales.

(5) The town of Sydney is built on a Peninsular formed by three of the Coves out of the hundred, which compose the harbour of Port Jackson.

(6) The town of Parramatta, which is built at the head of Port Jackson, at the distance of about 15 miles from Sydney, was formerly called Rose Hill from the number of wild roses, which grew where it stands; but, in consequence of the rapid extension of this town, and the contact of its population, these flowers have all disappeared; which will explain the allusion contained in these couplets.

(7) The millet or Indian corn, which grows frequently upwards of 15 foot high, and then has more the appearance of a copse, than of a crop of grain, goes by this name.

(8) This is an historical reference. —Shortly after the foundation of the Colony, four cows and a bull, which then formed the greater part of the Colonial herd, strayed away from their keeper, and were not discovered till 15 years afterwards, when they had increased to several thousands. The tract of country, where they were found, and where they still continue, has ever since been called the Cow Pastures.

(9) The author here apostrophizes that chain of mountains which are called the Blue Mountains, and run from North to South dividing the Eastern and well settled part of the Colony from the great Western Wilderness, which has lately been discovered beyond them, and of which but little is yet known.

(10) This is an allusion to the terrific inundations which characterize the Rivers Hawkesbury and Nepean (which in fact are but different branches of one River); these inundations occasionally rise 80 or 90 feet above the level of those rivers, sweeping every thing before them.

(11) The Author was one of the Party that first traversed this chain of mountains, and discovered the boundless country beyond them.

(12) The native-fires.

(13) The town of Bathurst founded by Governor Macquarie in the year 1815 on Bathurst Plains, which are 180 miles distant from Sydney. Since then this town has made a rapid advance in extent and population. It is built on the Macquarie River.

(14) In this and the four preceding couplets, the Author has attempted to give a delineation of the boundaries of the Roman Empire, when it was at the summit of its power.

(15) The Odyssey.

(16) The Iliad.

(17) The Prometheus Of Æschylus.

(18) The Philoctetes of Sophocles.

(19) The Hippolytus of Euripides.

(20) The River Warragumba falls over a succession of cascades into the Nepean River, in conjunction with which it forms one of the grandest basins that can be conceived: the fissure, through which it issues from the Blue Mountains, is little short of a thousand feet perpendicular, and has all the appearance of having been rent asunder by the force of its Waters.

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