

( 104 )

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EXPOSTULATION.

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*Tantane, tam patiens, nullo certamine tolli*

*Dona fines ?*

VIRG.

WHY weeps the muse for England ?

What appears

In England's case to move the muse to tears ?

From side to side of her delightful isle,

Is she not cloath'd with a perpetual smile ?

Can nature add a charm, or art confer

A new found luxury not seen in her ?



Where under heav'n is pleasure more pursued,  
 Or where does cold reflection less intrude ?  
 Her fields a rich expanse of wavy corn  
 Pour'd out from plenty's overflowing horn,  
 Ambrosial gardens in which art supplies  
 The fervor and the force of Indian skies,  
 Her peaceful shores, where busy commerce waits  
 To pour his golden tide through all her gates,  
 Whom fiery suns that scorch the russet spice  
 Of eastern groves, and oceans floor'd with ice ;  
 Forbid in vain to push his daring way  
 To darker climes, or climes of brighter day,  
 Whom the winds waft where'er the billows roll,  
 From the world's girdle to the frozen pole ;  
 The chariots bounding in her wheel-worn streets,  
 Her vaults below where ev'ry vintage meets,  
 Her theatres, her revels, and her sports,  
 The scenes to which not youth alone resorts,  
 But age in spite of weakness and of pain  
 Still haunts, in hope to dream of youth again,

All



All speak her happy—let the muse look round  
 From East to West, no sorrow can be found,  
 Or only what in cottages confin'd,  
 Sighs unregarded to the passing wind;  
 Then wherefore weep for England, what appears  
 In England's case to move the muse to tears?  
 The prophet wept for Israel, wish'd his eyes  
 Were fountains fed with infinite supplies;  
 For Israel dealt in robbery and wrong,  
 There were the scorner's and the slanderer's tongue,  
 Oaths used as playthings or convenient tools,  
 As Int'rest bias'd knaves, or fashion fools,  
 Adult'ry neighing at his neighbour's door,  
 Oppression labouring hard to grind the poor,  
 The partial balance and deceitful weight,  
 The treach'rous smile, a mask for secret hate,  
 Hypocrisy, formality in pray'r,  
 And the dull service of the lip were there.  
 Her women insolent and self-careless'd,  
 By vanity's unwearied finger dress'd,

Forgot



Forgot the blush that virgin fears impart  
 To modest cheeks, and borrowed one from art;  
 Were just such trifles without worth or use,  
 As silly pride and idleness produce,  
 Curl'd, scented, furbelow'd and flounc'd around,  
 With feet too delicate to touch the ground,  
 They stretch'd the neck, and roll'd the wanton eye,  
 And sigh'd for ev'ry fool that flutter'd by.

He saw his people slaves to ev'ry lust,  
 Lewd, avaricious, arrogant, unjust,  
 He heard the wheels of an avenging God  
 Groan heavily along the distant road;  
 Saw Babylon set wide her two leav'd brass  
 To let the military deluge pass;  
 Jerusalem a prey, her glory soil'd,  
 Her princes captive, and her treasures spoil'd;  
 Wept till all Israel heard his bitter cry,  
 Stamp'd with his foot and smote upon his thigh;  
 But wept and stamp'd and smote his thigh in vain,  
 Pleasure is deaf when told of future pain,

And



And sounds prophetic are too rough to suit  
 Ears long accustom'd to the pleasing lute ;  
 They scorn'd his inspiration and his theme,  
 Pronounc'd him frantic and his fears a dream,  
 With self-indulgence wing'd the fleeting hours,  
 Till the foe found them, and down fell the tow'rs,

Long time Assyria bound them in her chain,  
 Till penitence had purg'd the public stain,  
 And Cyrus, with relenting pity mov'd,  
 Return'd them happy to the land they lov'd :  
 There, proof against prosperity, awhile  
 They stood the test of her ensnaring smile,  
 And had the grace in scenes of peace to show  
 The virtue they had learn'd in scenes of woe.  
 But man is frail and can but ill sustain  
 A long immunity from grief and pain,  
 And after all the joys that plenty leads,  
 With tip-toe step vice silently succeeds.

When he that rul'd them with a shepherd's rod,  
 In form a man, in dignity a God,

Came



Came not expected in that humble guise,  
 To sift, and search them with unerring eyes,  
 He found conceal'd beneath a fair outside,  
 The filth of rottenness and worm of pride,  
 Their piety a system of deceit,  
 Scripture employ'd to sanctify the cheat,  
 The pharisee the dupe of his own art,  
 Self-idolized and yet a knave at heart.

When nations are to perish in their sins,  
 'Tis in the church the leprosy begins :  
 The priest whose office is, with zeal sincere  
 To watch the fountain, and preserve it clear,  
 Carelessly nods and sleeps upon the brink,  
 While others poison what the flock must drink ;  
 Or waking at the call of lust alone,  
 Infuses lies and errors of his own :  
 His unsuspecting sheep believe it pure,  
 And tainted by the very means of cure,  
 Catch from each other a contagious spot,  
 The foul forerunner of a general rot :

Then



Then truth is hush'd that heresy may preach,  
 And all is trash that reason cannot reach;  
 Then God's own image on the soul impress'd,  
 Becomes a mock'ry and a standing jest,  
 And faith, the root whence only can arise  
 The graces of a life that wins the skies,  
 Loses at once all value and esteem,  
 Pronounc'd by gray beards a pernicious dream:  
 Then ceremony leads her bigots forth,  
 Prepar'd to fight for shadows of no worth,  
 While truths on which eternal things depend,  
 Find not, or hardly find a single friend:  
 As soldiers watch the signal of command,  
 They learn to bow, to kneel, to sit, to stand,  
 Happy to fill religion's vacant place  
 With hollow form and gesture and grimace.

Such when the teacher of his church was there,  
 People and priest, the sons of Israel were,  
 Stiff in the letter, lax in the design  
 And import of their oracles divine,



Their learning legendary, false, absurd,  
 And yet exalted above God's own word,  
 They drew a curse from an intended good,  
 Puff'd up with gifts they never understood.  
 He judg'd them with as terrible a frown,  
 As if, not love, but wrath had brought him down,  
 Yet he was gentle as soft summer airs,  
 Had grace for other sins, but none for theirs.  
 Through all he spoke a noble plainness ran,  
 Rhet'ric is artifice, the work of man,  
 And tricks and turns that fancy may devise,  
 Are far too mean for him that rules the skies.  
 Th' astonish'd vulgar trembl'd while he tore  
 The mask from faces never seen before ;  
 He stripp'd th' impostors in the noon-day sun,  
 Show'd that they follow'd all they seem'd to shun,  
 Their pray'rs made public, their excesses kept  
 As private as the chambers where they slept.  
 The temple and its holy rites profan'd  
 By mumm'ries he that dwelt in it disdain'd,



Uplifted hands that at convenient times  
 Could act extortion and the worst of crimes,  
 Wash'd with a neatness scrupulously nice,  
 And free from ev'ry taint but that of vice.  
 Judgment, however tardy, mends her pace  
 When obstinacy once has conquer'd grace.  
 They saw distemper heal'd, and life restor'd  
 In answer to the fiat of his word,  
 Confess'd the wonder, and with daring tongue,  
 Blasphem'd th' authority from which it sprung.  
 They knew by sure prognostics seen on high,  
 The future tone and temper of the sky,  
 But grave dissemblers, could not understand  
 That sin let loose speaks punishment at hand.

Ask now of history's authentic page,  
 And call up evidence from ev'ry age,  
 Display with busy and laborious hand  
 The blessings of the most indebted land,  
 What nation will you find, whose annals prove  
 So rich an int'rest in almighty love?

Where



Where dwell they now, where dwelt in antient day  
 A people planted, water'd, blest as they?  
 Let Egypt's plagues, and Canaan's woes proclaim  
 The favours pour'd upon the Jewish name;  
 Their freedom purchas'd for them, at the cost  
 Of all their hard oppressors valued most,  
 Their title to a country not their own,  
 Made sure by prodigies 'till then unknown,  
 For them, the state they left made waste and void,  
 For them, the states to which they went, destroy'd;  
 A cloud to measure out their march by day,  
 By night a fire to cheer the gloomy way,  
 That moving signal summoning, when best  
 Their host to move, and when it stay'd, to rest.  
 For them the rocks dissolv'd into a flood,  
 The dews condens'd into angelic food,  
 Their very garments sacred, old yet new,  
 And time forbid to touch them as he flew,  
 Streams swell'd above the bank, enjoin'd to stand,  
 While they pass'd through to their appointed land,

Their



Their leader arm'd with meekness, zeal and love,  
 And grac'd with clear credentials from above,  
 Themselves secur'd beneath th' Almighty wing,  
 Their God their captain \*, lawgiver, and king.  
 Crown'd with a thousand vict'ries, and at last  
 Lords of the conquer'd soil, there rooted fast,  
 In peace possessing what they won by war,  
 Their name far publish'd and rever'd as far;  
 Where will you find a race like theirs, endow'd  
 With all that man e'er wish'd, or Heav'n bestow'd?

They and they only amongst all mankind  
 Receiv'd the transcript of th' eternal mind,  
 Were trusted with his own engraven laws,  
 And constituted guardians of his cause,  
 Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,  
 And theirs by birth the Saviour of us all.  
 In vain the nations that had seen them rise,  
 With fierce and envious yet admiring eyes,  
 Had sought to crush them, guarded as they were  
 By power divine, and skill that could not err,

\* Vide Joshua v. 14.



Had they maintain'd allegiance firm and sure,  
 And kept the faith immaculate and pure,  
 Then the proud eagles of all-conqu'ring Rome  
 Had found one city not to be o'ercome,  
 And the twelve standards of the tribes unfurl'd:  
 Had bid defiance to the warring world.  
 But grace abus'd brings forth the foulest deeds,  
 As richest soil the most luxuriant weeds;  
 Cur'd of the golden calves their fathers sin,  
 They set up self, that idol god within,  
 View'd a Deliv'rer with disdain and hate,  
 Who left them still a tributary state,  
 Seiz'd fast his hand, held out to set them free  
 From a worse yoke, and nail'd it to the tree;  
 There was the consummation and the crown,  
 The flow'r of Israel's infamy full blown;  
 Thence date their sad declension and their fall,  
 Their woes not yet repeal'd, thence date them all.  
 Thus fell the best instructed in her day,  
 And the most favor'd land, look where we may.

Philosophy



Philosophy indeed on Grecian eyes  
 Had pour'd the day, and clear'd the Roman skies ;  
 In other climes perhaps creative art,  
 With pow'r surpassing theirs perform'd her part,  
 Might give more life to marble, or might fill  
 The glowing tablets with a juster skill,  
 Might shine in fable, and grace idle themes  
 With all th' embroid'ry of poetic dreams ;  
 'Twas theirs alone to dive into the plan  
 That truth and mercy had reveal'd to man,  
 And while the world beside, that plan unknown,  
 Deified useless wood or senseless stone,  
 They breath'd in faith their well-directed pray'rs,  
 And the true God, the God of truth was theirs.

Their glory faded, and their race dispers'd,  
 The last of nations now, though once the first ;  
 They warn and teach the proudest, would they learn,  
 Keep wisdom or meet vengeance in your turn :  
 If we escap'd not, if Heav'n spar'd not us,  
 Peel'd, scatter'd, and exterminated thus ;



If vice receiv'd her retribution due  
 When we were visited, what hope for you?  
 When God arises with an awful frown,  
 To punish lust, or pluck presumption down;  
 When gifts perverted or not duly priz'd,  
 Pleasure o'ervalued and his grace despis'd,  
 Provoke the vengeance of his righteous hand  
 To pour down wrath upon a thankless land,  
 He will be found impartially severe,  
 Too just to wink, or speak the guilty clear.

Oh Israel, of all nations most undone!

Thy diadem displac'd, thy sceptre gone;  
 Thy temple, once thy glory, fall'n and ras'd,  
 And thou a worshipper e'en where thou mayst;  
 Thy services once holy without spot,  
 Mere shadows now, their antient pomp forgot;  
 Thy Levites once a consecrated host,  
 No longer Levites, and their lineage lost,  
 And thou thyself o'er ev'ry country sown,  
 With none on earth that thou canst call thine own;

Cry



Cry aloud thou that sittest in the dust,  
 Cry to the proud, the cruel and unjust,  
 Knock at the gates of nations, rouse their fears,  
 Say wrath is coming and the storm appears,  
 But raise the shrillest cry in British ears,

What ails thee, restless as the waves that roar,  
 And fling their foam against thy chalky shore?  
 Mistress, at least while Providence shall please,  
 And trident-bearing queen of the wide seas—  
 Why, having kept good faith, and often shown  
 Friendship and truth to others, findest thou none?  
 Thou that hast set the persecuted free,  
 None interposes now to succour thee;  
 Countries indebted to thy pow'r, that shine  
 With light deriv'd from thee, would smother thine;  
 Thy very children watch for thy disgrace,  
 A lawless brood, and curse thee to thy face:  
 Thy rulers load thy credit year by year  
 With sums Peruvian mines could never clear,  
 As if like arches built with skilful hand,  
 The more 'twere press'd the firmer it would stand.



The cry in all thy ships is still the same,  
 Speed us away to battle and to fame,  
 Thy mariners explore the wild expanse,  
 Impatient to descry the flags of France,  
 But though they fight as thine have ever fought,  
 Return ashamed without the wreaths they fought :  
 Thy senate is a scene of civil jar,  
 Chaos of contrarieties at war,  
 Where sharp and solid, phlegmatic and light,  
 Discordant atoms meet, ferment and fight,  
 Where obstinacy takes his sturdy stand,  
 To disconcert what policy has plann'd,  
 Where policy is busied all night long  
 In setting right what faction has set wrong,  
 Where flails of oratory thresh the floor,  
 That yields them chaff and dust, and nothing more.  
 Thy rack'd inhabitants repine, complain,  
 Tax'd 'till the brow of labour sweats in vain,  
 War lays a burthen on the reeling state,  
 And peace does nothing to relieve the weight,

Successive



Successive loads succeeding broils impose,  
And sighing millions prophecy the close.

Is adverse providence when ponder'd well,  
So dimly writ or difficult to spell,  
Thou canst not read with readiness and ease,  
Providence adverse in events like these?  
Know then, that heav'nly wisdom on this ball  
Creates, gives birth to, guides, consummates all:  
That while laborious and quick-thoughted man  
Snuffs up the praise of what he seems to plan;  
He first conceives, then perfects his design,  
As a mere instrument in hands divine:  
Blind to the working of that secret pow'r  
That balances the wings of ev'ry hour,  
The busy trifler dreams himself alone,  
Frames many a purpose, and God works his own.  
States thrive or wither as moons wax and wane,  
Ev'n as his will and his decrees ordain;  
While honour, virtue, piety bear sway,  
They flourish, and as these decline, decay.



In just resentment of his injur'd laws,  
 He pours contempt on them and on their cause,  
 Strikes the rough thread of error right athwart  
 The web of ev'ry scheme they have at heart,  
 Bids rottenness invade and bring to dust  
 The pillars of support in which they trust,  
 And do his errand of disgrace and shame  
 On the chief strength and glory of the frame.  
 None ever yet impeded what he wrought,  
 None bars him out from his most secret thought;  
 Darkness itself before his eye is light,  
 And Hell's close mischief naked in his sight.

Stand now and judge thyself—hast thou incurr'd  
 His anger who can waste thee with a word,  
 Who poises and proportions sea and land,  
 Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,  
 And in whose awful sight all nations seem  
 As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream?  
 Hast thou (a sacrilege his soul abhors)  
 Claim'd all the glory of thy prosp'rous wars,

Proud



Proud of thy fleets and armies, stol'n the gem  
 Of his just praise to lavish it on them?  
 Hast thou not learn'd what thou art often told,  
 A truth still sacred, and believ'd of old,  
 That no success attends on spears and swords  
 Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's?  
 That courage is his creature, and dismay  
 The post that at his bidding speeds away,  
 Ghastly in feature, and his stamm'ring tongue  
 With doleful rumor and sad presage hung,  
 To quell the valor of the stoutest heart,  
 And teach the combatant a woman's part?  
 That he bids thousands fly when none pursue,  
 Saves as he will by many or by few,  
 And claims for ever as his royal right  
 Th' event and sure decision of the fight.

Hast thou, though suckl'd at fair freedom's breast,  
 Exported slav'ry to the conquer'd East,  
 Pull'd down the tyrants India serv'd with dread,  
 And rais'd thyself, a greater, in their stead,

Gone



Gone thither arm'd and hungry, returned full,  
 Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,  
 A despot big with pow'r obtain'd by wealth,  
 And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth?  
 With Asiatic vices stor'd thy mind,  
 But left their virtues and thine own behind,  
 And having truck'd thy soul, brought home the fee,  
 To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?

Hast thou by statute shov'd from its design  
 The Savior's feast, his own blest bread and wine,  
 And made the symbols of atoning grace  
 An office-key, a pick-lock to a place,  
 That infidels may prove their title good  
 By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood?  
 A blot that will be still a blot, in spite  
 Of all that grave apologists may write,  
 And though a Bishop toil to cleanse the stain,  
 He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.  
 And hast thou sworn on ev'ry slight pretence,  
 Till perjuries are common as bad pence,

While



While thousands, careless of the damning sin,  
Kiss the book's outside who ne'er look within ?

Hast thou, when heav'n has cloath'd thee with  
disgrace,

And long provok'd, repaid thee to thy face,  
(For thou hast known eclipses, and endur'd  
Dimness and anguish all thy beams obscur'd,  
When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow,  
And never of a fabler hue than now)

Hast thou with heart perverse and conscience fear'd,  
Despising all rebuke, still persever'd,

And having chosen evil, scorn'd the voice

That cried repent—and gloried in thy choice ?

Thy fastings, when calamity at last

Suggests th' expedient of an yearly fast,

What mean they ? Canst thou dream there is a

pow'r

In lighter diet at a later hour,

To charm to sleep the threat'nings of the skies,

And hide past folly from all-seeing eyes ?

The



The fast that wins deliv'rance, and suspends  
 The stroke that a vindictive God intends,  
 Is to renounce hypocrisy, to draw  
 Thy life upon the pattern of the law,  
 To war with pleasures idolized before,  
 To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more.  
 All fasting else, whate'er be the pretence,  
 Is wooing mercy by renew'd offence.

Hast thou within thee sin that in old time  
 Brought fire from heav'n, the sex-abusing crime,  
 Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace  
 Baboons are free from, upon human race ?  
 Think on the fruitful and well-water'd spot  
 That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,  
 Where Paradise seem'd still vouchsaf'd on earth,  
 Burning and scorch'd into perpetual dearth,  
 Or in his words who damn'd the base desire,  
 Suffring the vengeance of eternal fire :  
 Then nature injur'd, scandaliz'd, defil'd,  
 Unveil'd her blushing cheek, look'd on and smil'd,  
 Beheld with joy the lovely scene defac'd,  
 And prais'd the wrath that lay'd her beauties waste.



Far be the thought from any verse of mine,  
 And farther still the form'd and fixt design,  
 To thrust the charge of deeds that I detest,  
 Against an innocent unconscious breast :  
 The man that dares traduce because he can  
 With safety to himself, is not a man :  
 An individual is a sacred mark,  
 Not to be pierc'd in play or in the dark,  
 But public censure speaks a public foe,  
 Unless a zeal for virtue guide the blow.

The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,  
 From mean self-int'rest and ambition clear,  
 Their hope in Heav'n, servility their scorn,  
 Prompt to persuade, expostulate and warn,  
 Their wisdom pure, and giv'n them from above,  
 Their usefulness insur'd by zeal and love,  
 As meek as the man Moses, and withal  
 As bold as in Agrippa's presence, Paul,  
 Should fly the world's contaminating touch  
 Holy and unpolluted—are thine such ?

Except



Except a few with Eli's spirit blest,  
Hophni and Phineas may describe the rest.

Where shall a teacher look in days like these,  
For ears and hearts that he can hope to please?  
Look to the poor—the simple and the plain  
Will hear perhaps thy salutary strain;  
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,  
Speak but the word, will listen and return:  
Alas, not so! the poorest of the flock  
Are proud, and set their faces as a rock,  
Denied that earthly opulence they chuse,  
God's better gift they scoff at and refuse.  
The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,  
Are more intelligent at least, try them:  
Oh vain enquiry! they without remorse  
Are altogether gone a devious course,  
Where beck'ning pleasure leads them, wildly stray,  
Have burst the bands and cast the yoke away.

Now borne upon the wings of truth, sublime,  
Review thy dim original and prime;

This



This island spot of unreclaim'd rude earth,  
 The cradle that receiv'd thee at thy birth,  
 Was rock'd by many a rough Norwegian blast,  
 And Danish howlings scar'd thee as they pass'd;  
 For thou wast born amid the din of arms,  
 And suck'd a breast that panted with alarms.  
 While yet thou wast a grov'ling puling chit,  
 Thy bones not fashion'd and thy joints not knit,  
 The Roman taught thy stubborn knee to bow,  
 Though twice a Cæsar could not bend thee now:  
 His victory was that of orient light,  
 When the sun's shafts disperse the gloom of night:  
 Thy language at this distant moment shows  
 How much the country to the conqu'ror owes,  
 Expressive, energetic and refin'd,  
 It sparkles with the gems he left behind:  
 He brought thy land a blessing when he came,  
 He found thee savage, and he left thee tame,  
 Taught thee to cloath thy pink'd and painted hide,  
 And grace thy figure with a soldier's pride,

He



He sow'd the seeds of order where he went,  
 Improv'd thee far beyond his own intent,  
 And while he rul'd thee by the sword alone,  
 Made thee at last a warrior like his own.  
 Religion if in heav'nly truths attir'd,  
 Needs only to be seen to be admir'd,  
 But thine as dark as witch'ries of the night,  
 Was form'd to harden hearts and shock the sight :  
 Thy Druids struck the well-strung harps they bore,  
 With fingers deeply dy'd in human gore,  
 And while the victim slowly bled to death,  
 Upon the tolling chords rung out his dying breath.  
 Who brought the lamp that with awak'ning  
     beams  
 Dispell'd thy gloom and broke away thy dreams,  
 Tradition, now decrepid and worn out,  
 Babblers of antient fables, leaves a doubt :  
 But still light reach'd thee ; and those gods of thine  
 Woden and Thor, each tott'ring in his shrine,  
 Fell broken and defac'd at his own door,  
 As Dagon in Philistia long before.



But Rome with forceries and magic wand,  
 Soon rais'd a cloud that darken'd ev'ry land,  
 And thine was smother'd in the stench and fog  
 Of Tiber's marshes and the papal bog:  
 Then priests with bulls and briefs and shaven crowns,  
 And griping fists and unrelenting frowns,  
 Legates and delegates with pow'rs from hell,  
 Though heav'nly in pretension, fleec'd thee well;  
 And to this hour to keep it fresh in mind,  
 Some twigs of that old scourge are left behind.\*  
 Thy soldiery the pope's well-manag'd pack,  
 Were train'd beneath his lash and knew the smack,  
 And when he laid them on the scent of blood:  
 Would hunt a Saracen through fire and flood.  
 Lavish of life to win an empty tomb,  
 That prov'd a mint of wealth, a mine to Rome,  
 They left their bones beneath unfriendly skies,  
 His worthless absolution all the prize.  
 Thou wast the veriest slave in days of yore,  
 That ever dragg'd a chain or tugg'd an oar;

K

Thy

\* Which may be found at Doctors Commons.



Thy monarchs arbitrary, fierce, unjust,  
 Themselves the slaves of bigotry or lust,  
 Disdain'd thy counsels, only in distress  
 Found thee a goodly sponge for pow'r to press.  
 Thy chiefs, the lords of many a petty fee,  
 Provok'd and harra's'd, in return plagu'd thee,  
 Call'd thee away from peaceable employ,  
 Domestic happiness and rural joy,  
 To waste thy life in arms, or lay it down  
 In causeless feuds and bick'rings of their own :  
 Thy parliaments ador'd on bended knees  
 The sov'reignty they were conven'd to please ;  
 Whate'er was ask'd, too timid to resist,  
 Comply'd with, and were graciously dismiss'd :  
 And if some Spartan soul a doubt express'd  
 And blushing at the tameness of the rest,  
 Dar'd to suppose the subject had a choice,  
 He was a traitor by the gen'ral voice.  
 Oh slave ! with pow'rs thou didst not dare exert,  
 Verse cannot stoop so low as thy desert,

It



It shakes the sides of splenetic disdain,  
 Thou self-entitled ruler of the main,  
 To trace thee to the date when yon fair sea  
 That clips thy shores, had no such charms for thee,  
 When other nations flew from coast to coast,  
 And thou hadst neither fleet nor flag to boast.

Kneel now, and lay thy forehead in the dust,  
 Blush if thou canst, not petrified, thou must :  
 Act but an honest and a faithful part,  
 Compare what then thou wast, with what thou art,  
 And God's disposing providence confess'd,  
 Obduracy itself must yield the rest—  
 Then thou art bound to serve him, and to prove  
 Hour after hour thy gratitude and love.

Has he not hid thee and thy favour'd land  
 For ages safe beneath his shelt'ring hand,  
 Giv'n thee his blessing on the clearest proof,  
 Bid nations leagu'd against thee stand aloof,  
 And charg'd hostility and hate to roar  
 Where else they would, but not upon thy shore ?



His pow'r secur'd thee when presumptuous Spain  
 Baptiz'd her fleet invincible in vain;  
 Her gloomy monarch, doubtful, and resign'd  
 To ev'ry pang that racks an anxious mind,  
 Ask'd of the waves that broke upon his coast,  
 What tidings? and the surge replied—all lost—  
 And when the Stuart leaning on the Scot,  
 Then too much fear'd and now too much forgot,  
 Pierc'd to the very center of thy realm,  
 And hop'd to seize his abdicated helm,  
 'Twas but to prove how quickly with a frown,  
 He that had rais'd thee could have pluck'd thee down.  
 Peculiar is the grace by thee possess'd,  
 Thy foes implacable, thy land at rest;  
 Thy thunders travel over earth and seas,  
 And all at home is pleasure, wealth and ease.  
 'Tis thus, extending his tempestuous arm,  
 Thy Maker fills the nations with alarm,  
 While his own Heav'n surveys the troubled scene,  
 And feels no change, unshaken and serene.

Freedom,



Freedom, in other lands scarce known to shine,  
 Pours out a flood of splendour upon thine;  
 Thou hast as bright an int'rest in her rays,  
 As ever Roman had in Rome's best days.  
 True freedom is, where no restraint is known  
 That scripture, justice, and good sense disown,  
 Where only vice and injury are tied,  
 And all from shore to shore is free beside,  
 Such freedom is—and Windsor's hoary tow'rs  
 Stood trembling at the boldness of thy pow'rs,  
 That won a nymph on that immortal plain,  
 Like her the fabled Phœbus woo'd in vain;  
 He found the laurel only—happier you,  
 Th' unfading laurel and the virgin too. \*

Now think, if pleasure have a thought to spare,  
 If God himself be not beneath her care;  
 If bus'ness, constant as the wheels of time,  
 Can pause one hour to read a serious rhyme;

\* Alluding to the grant of Magna Charta, which was extorted from king John by the Barons at Runnymede near Windsor.



If the new mail thy merchants now receive,  
 Or expectation of the next give leave,  
 Oh think, if chargeable with deep arrears  
 For such indulgence gilding all thy years,  
 How much though long neglected, shining yet,  
 The beams of heav'nly truth have swell'd the debt.  
 When persecuting zeal made royal sport  
 With tortur'd innocence in Mary's court,  
 And Bonner, blithe as shepherd at a wake,  
 Enjoy'd the show, and danc'd about the stake;  
 The sacred book, its value understood,  
 Receiv'd the seal of martyrdom in blood.  
 Those holy men, so full of truth and grace,  
 Seem to reflection of a diff'rent race,  
 Meek, modest, venerable, wise, sincere,  
 In such a cause they could not dare to fear,  
 They could not purchase earth with such a prize,  
 Nor spare a life too short to reach the skies.  
 From them to thee convey'd along the tide,  
 Their streaming hearts pour'd freely when they died,

Those



Those truths which neither use nor years impair,  
 Invite thee, woo thee, to the bliss they share.  
 What dotage will not vanity maintain,  
 What web too weak to catch a modern brain?  
 The moles and bats in full-assembly find  
 On special search, the keen-ey'd eagle blind.  
 And did they dream, and art thou wiser now?  
 Prove it—if better, I submit and bow.  
 Wisdom and goodness are twin-born, one heart  
 Must hold both sisters, never seen apart.

So then—as darkness overspread the deep,  
 'Ere nature rose from her eternal sleep,  
 And this delightful earth and that fair sky  
 Leap'd out of nothing, call'd by the Most High,  
 By such a change thy darkness is made light,  
 Thy chaos order, and thy weakness, might,  
 And he whose pow'r mere nullity obeys,  
 Who found thee nothing, form'd thee for his praise.  
 To praise him is to serve him, and fulfil,  
 Doing and suff'ring, his unquestion'd will,



'Tis to believe what men inspir'd of old,  
 Faithful and faithfully inform'd, unfold;  
 Candid and just, with no false aim in view,  
 To take for truth what cannot but be true,  
 To learn in God's own school the Christian part,  
 And bind the task assign'd thee to thine heart:  
 Happy the man there seeking and there found,  
 Happy the nation where such men abound.

How shall a verse impress thee? by what name  
 Shall I adjure thee not to court thy shame?  
 By theirs whose bright example unimpeach'd  
 Directs thee to that eminence they reach'd,  
 Heroes and worthies of days past, thy fires?  
 Or his, who touch'd their hearts with hallow'd fires?  
 Their names, alas! in vain reproach an age  
 Whom all the vanities they scorn'd, engage,  
 And his that seraphs tremble at, is hung  
 Disgracefully on ev'ry trifler's tongue,  
 Or serves the champion in forensic war,  
 To flourish and parade with at the bar.

Pleasure



Pleasure herself perhaps suggests a plea,  
 If int'rest move thee, to persuade ev'n thee;  
 By ev'ry charm that smiles upon her face,  
 By joys possess'd, and joys still held in chace,  
 If dear society be worth a thought,  
 And if the feast of freedom cloy thee not,  
 Reflect that these and all that seems thine own,  
 Held by the tenure of his will alone,  
 Like angels in the service of their Lord,  
 Remain with thee, or leave thee at his word;  
 That gratitude and temp'rance in our use  
 Of what he gives, unsparing and profuse,  
 Secure the favour and enhance the joy,  
 That thankless waste and wild abuse destroy.

But above all reflect, how cheap soe'er  
 Those rights that millions envy thee, appear,  
 And though resolv'd to risk them, and swim down  
 The tide of pleasure, heedless of his frown,  
 That blessings truly sacred, and when giv'n  
 Mark'd with the signature and stamp of Heav'n,

The



The word of prophecy, those truths divine  
 Which make that Heav'n, if thou desire it, thine;  
 (Awful alternative! believ'd, belov'd,  
 Thy glory, and thy shame if unimprov'd,)  
 Are never long vouchsaf'd, if push'd aside  
 With cold disgust or philosophic pride,  
 And that judicially withdrawn, disgrace,  
 Error and darkness occupy their place.

A world is up in arms, and thou, a spot  
 Not quickly found if negligently fought,  
 Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,  
 Endur'st the brunt, and dar'st defy them all:  
 And wilt thou join to this bold enterprize  
 A bolder still, a contest with the skies?  
 Remember, if he guard thee and secure,  
 Whoe'er assails thee, thy success is sure;  
 But if he leave thee, though the skill and pow'r  
 Of nations sworn to spoil thee and devour,  
 Were all collected in thy single arm,  
 And thou couldst laugh away the fear of harm,

That



That strength would fail, oppos'd against the push  
And feeble onset of a pigmy rush.

Say not (and if the thought of such defence  
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence)  
What nation amongst all my foes is free  
From crimes as base as any charg'd on me?  
Their measure fill'd—they too shall pay the debt  
Which God, though long forborn, will not forget;  
But know, that wrath divine, when most severe,  
Makes justice still the guide of his career,  
And will not punish in one mingled crowd,  
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.

Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,  
Still murm'ring with the solemn truths I teach,  
And while, at intervals, a cold blast sings  
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,  
My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament  
A nation scourg'd, yet tardy to repent.  
I know the warning song is sung in vain,  
That few will hear, and fewer heed the strain :

But



But if a sweeter voice, and one design'd  
 A blessing to my country and mankind,  
 Reclaim the wand'ring thousands, and bring home  
 A flock so scatter'd and so wont to roam,  
 Then place it once again between my knees,  
 The fount of truth will then be sure to please,  
 And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,  
 In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,  
 Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.

**H O P E.**