

Wild Notes: From the Lyre of a Native Minstrel

Tompson, Charles (1807-1883)

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2002



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Source Text:

Prepared against the print edition published by Albion Press Sydney,
1826

All quotation marks are retained as data.

First Published: 1826

setis australian etexts poetry 1810-1839

Wild Notes

From the Lyre of a Native Minstrel

Sydney

Albion Press

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Dedication

TO THE REV. HENRY FULTON, CASTLEREAGH-HOUSE.

DEAR SIR,

To you, beneath whose kind and fostering tuition I lived the rosy hours of childhood, and imbibed those qualities which were erewhile the early promptures of my muse, I respectfully inscribe these buddings of my fancy; considering that, in acting thus, I am but performing a small part of that grateful duty I owe you, as my former *tutor*, with which title your paternal behaviour always blended the joint idea of father and friend.

Believe me, dear Sir,

with the highest respect and veneration,

your obedient and grateful Servant,

CHARLES TOMPSON, JUN.

Clydesdale, March 1, 1826.

Retrospect

Retrospect; Or, A Review of my Scholastic Days.

“O, festus dies hominis!” . . . O, the Joyful Day of Man!

WHY, (when the hours of school-day bliss are o'er,
And puerile pleasures charm the mind no more,
When childhood shrinks before youth's riper day,
Like morning dews by sunbeams chas'd away,)
Delights the mind with exstasy to dwell
On joys her earlier moments lov'd so well?
Why do those dreams, to golden memory dear,
More bright than Life's progressive day appear,
And Fancy rush, with repercussive spring,
To where she first essay'd her callow wing?
Some spell ineffable the mind employs,
To paint the birth-place of her infant joys!

O FULTON! tutor of my early hour,
Nurse of its shoot—its bud—its op'ning flow'r—
Beneath whose fost'ring hand the scion rose,
Beneath whose grafted counsels still it grows,
Deign to accept the blossom of that tree,
The only gift the muse can offer thee!

Come, Inspiration, from thy radiant bow'rs,
Wave thy light wand, her fancy's slumb'ring flow'rs,
Bid * EVAN'S name resound her hills among,
And Memory prompt and Truth record the song!
Hark! with sweet sounds th' aërial billows swell,
Some muse respires them from her sylvan cell;—
“Fair † CASTLEREAGH!” she sings, or seems to sing,
And woods, and lawns, and meads, the strain responsive ring.

Majestic daughter of th' expansive plain ‡
Where rural stillness holds her placid reign!
Once, 'mid thy woods, a happy child I stray'd,
Or rambled careless o'er thy vista'd glade,
Traced the blue windings of some woodland rill,
Or, lab'ring, gain'd the summit of yon' hill
To view the green redundancy below,
Roll, like old Ocean, when the tempests blow.
Nor could sublimer objects then impart
One ray of pleasure to my bounding heart;
And, if it rov'd beyond those golden hours,
Hope, in perspective, strew'd the path with flow'rs.
Thus Time fled on, 'till youth's maturer day

Called into life my soul's expanding sway;—
More solid thoughts my moments then engage,
And Knowledge tempts me with her open page,
'Till now life's business drives his sober team,
And sheds, o'er all my mind, a mellowing beam;—
Those visions fade that charm'd its thoughts before,
And fairy forms and landscapes glow no more.

When dawning Phoebus shed his golden hue,
To robe yon mountains and dispel the dew,
Our little band, awaking from repose,
Obedient to the oft-heard chime, arose,
Banish'd each thought of indolence away,
And, with new zeal, commenced the studious day.
On tardy wings the measur'd moments flew,
Till Time's broad lapse his silken veil withdrew;
The welcome hour arrives,—then all repair
To join their tutor in th' unstudy'd pray'r.
(To him, kind pastor! was the blessing given,
To ask the boon and to be heard in heaven,—
If e'er 'twas order'd that the good above
Plants of our GOD should be, and children of his love.
Swiftly elaps'd the recreative hour,
And Pallas soon resum'd her latent pow'r,
Again retrac'd her long-accustomed round,
Her reign, with truth and laureate honours, crown'd,—
Again it fled—once more the wonted chime
Strikes on our ear, and tells the lapse of Time,
Then Heav'n incites us on her sacred way,
To offer up thanksgiving and to pray.
Thus flow the hours of pure unclouded joy,—
No cares to ruffle and no sweets to cloy,—
Meek our engagements, calm as evening air,—
The peaceful moments sanctified by pray'r,
Down seas of bliss our little shallops glide,
And fairy islets spangle all the tide.

O happy days! unvalued while ye glow,
Unheeded felt until ye cease to flow,
How oft have I, for freedom panting strong,
Thought the task tedious and the school-hours long!
How often wish'd to cast their chain away,
And burst the barrier of youth's ling'ring day!
How often wish'd for pinions like the dove,
That I might careless fly, or freely rove,
Shake off the shackles that my will confined,
And be the helm to prompt and guide my mind?
But these were thoughts youth's riper hours disown,

Thoughts of a child, and of a child alone.
Nature has giv'n all creatures to be free,
And Man in embryo pants for liberty;
It is a charm instructive, and which dwells
In all, and all to one great wish impels;—
It bids the Negro spurn his galling chain,
And curse—tho' vainly curse—its unearn'd pain;
It bids the captive lion, in his grate,
Burst its strong bars and re-assume his state;
By it impell'd, the youngling eagle flies,
Spurns the low plain and soars along the skies.
But yet it most befits the human race;
Man's bosom is its noblest dwelling place;
Down from the cradle to the dying couch,
He feels the influence of its quick'ning touch,
And, e'en when weary life is almost o'er,
When one faint throb 'twill heave, and heave no more,
Then wakes the soul beneath its kindling ray,
And mounts and flutters in the beam of day,
Thrice happy days! the nurse of ev'ry joy,
And ev'ry sweet that ripen'd man employ,
Tranquil probation to the genius giv'n,
And mild indulgence of a smiling Heav'n!
True, on the disk of their reflective glass,
The world, in miniature, is seen to pass;
Each passion, temper, action, law, and rule,
That sways the world is found within a school:
The fire but sparkling, or the torpid seed
But feebly shooting of each manly deed;
There marbles—balls, are emblematic toys
Of those which re-engage Earth's elder boys
And puerile zeal, affection, hatred, strife,
The embryo bus'ness of all human life.
Pleasing reflection! when the mental eye
Reviews the business of years gone bye,
To think how sweet our infancy was spent,
Our minds, like slender twigs, tow'rd virtue bent,
And led by Science, thro' her flow'ry maze,
With ardent bosoms, emulous of praise.
On scenes like these the mind delights to look,
The fav'rite pages in life's narrow book!
How pleasant was it, when the drowsy hum
Of study ended with the setting sun;
When, tir'd with application thro' the day,
We rush'd at once with all our hearts to play!
In diff'rent sports engage the cheerful train;
Some urge the bounding ball across the plain,

Some whirl the top, or bid the arrow fly
Straight to the butt, or upward to the sky;
While other hearts, whom softer pleasures move,
Prefer the converse of the friend they love,
With him, how sweet to spend the leisure hours!
To pluck unstain'd affection's early flow'rs!
To pour, unask'd, within his faithful breast,
What griefs disturb you, or what thoughts molest?
T' accept what consolation he could give;
'Twas happy thus, if happy here to live!
O, early friendship! what thy sweets impart,
Let him confess who owns a kindred heart—
Him, who has felt thy sympathetic strain
Breathe in each thought, and throb in ev'ry vein!
He can appreciate (and only he)
Thee, pure incitement of the Deity!
O! I have felt thy mild serene controul
Guide my young steps and lighten all my soul,
And mem'ry yet, reverting to the scene,
Feels thee anew, nor heeds the years between!
But who can paint the pleasure that possess'd
Each lively bosom and each cheek confess'd,
When the long hoped for holiday was come,
When ev'ry latent energy rush'd home,
And close divan commenc'd the joyful day,
To prove how best its hours would glide away?
At length, to blue Nepean's flow'ry side,
We rush at once, and plunge us in the tide,
The kindly waves a sweet reflection give,
And the lax nerves a livelier tone receive;—
For now, when Sol pours blazing ardour down,
And fiery red sheds all the torrid zone—
When the streams languish, and the pastures fade,
And yawning fissures crack the thirsty glade—
When the clear heav'ns the silent pray'rs deride,
And e'en one show'r to cheer them is deny'd,
A wasting flame breathes in the genial beams,
And the sad system courts the sick'ning streams;
Ah! then, ye cool, ye murm'ring Naiads! tell
What luxuries within Nepean's bankments dwell!
Refresh'd, thro' * Zean fields we heedless rove,
To where Pomona revels in the grove;
We feel the goddess's ambrosial breath,
Luxurious curling in the shade beneath;
Her luscious † peach diffuses fragrance round,
From cluster'd branches bending to the ground;—
We mount—we gather; and, now well supply'd,

We homeward bend beneath the orchard's pride
Till on the hours of sober evening creep,
And, faint and weary, Nature sinks to sleep.

O, dreams of bliss! that, o'er the infant brain,
Wave your light wand and beck your fairy train;
There, in idea, 'twill retrace the day,
Again 'twill study, and again 'twill play;
'Twill rove, perhaps, amid ethereal flow'rs,
Or dwell with angels in celestial bow'rs;
'Twill fearless climb the dark impending steep,
Bend o'er the flood and plunge along the deep;
More guilty dreams the mind cannot employ,
Whose charm is innocence, whose gladness joy:
O, could man ever own such dreams as these,
His days all happiness—his nights all peace,
E'en angels might for human semblance sigh,
And gladly shake off immortality!

The sun beams high—and hark! a tinkling chime
Marks one more vestige in the path of Time:
It is the day, by God in mercy giv'n
To man to spend in penitence to heav'n.
The church invites, and, when we enter there,
Let Apathy not shew the face of Pray'r,
Nor roving thoughts (the path by idlers trod)
Teach the lost heart to aberrate from God!
But O let piety our bosoms charm!
Meek be our pray'rs, and our thanksgivings warm!
As self-impos'd be thought the happy task,
And let us truly wish for what we ask!
The pastor's sacred tongue diffuses round
The Gospel truths with holy precepts crown'd;
For him bright hands prepare, in realms above,
A wreath of glory and a crown of love!
For, pious in himself, his lips impart
Those conscious truths that live within his heart;
Cheerful in life, and to his calling true,
He knows the Word by books and practice too!
At length, the tributary off'ring o'er,
The rustics meet before the chapel door;
Then softer thoughts their simple bosoms move,
To glance affection on the maid they love,
And, half-averted, from her piercing eye,
To catch the sly responses as they fly:
In recognition, oft the hearty hand,
Good-nature presses round the friendly band,
With grace less polish'd, but a will more free,

Than e'en adorns the courts of royalty:
The kind enquiry made for absent friends,
The frank, rude greeting each to other sends,
The rural compliment, the titt'ring jest,
The blush that's prompted by the artless breast,
The vague report, and all th' important news
That Memory o'er her simple tablet strews,
Engage, or to the drear churchyard they go,
(Hearts unaccustom'd to dissemble woe,)
And sadly seek, within that final home,
For some dear friend's or parent's hallow'd tomb,
Then drooping mournfully o'er those who sleep,
Indulge their feelings, and in silence weep.

Here let Reflection cast her sober eye
O'er the sad trophies of mortality!
Life is a sandy base, which if we trust,
Our minds, our spirits, centre in the dust;
We feel no monitor—no heavenly thrill—
Prompt us to good, or bid us shrink from ill,
But all the soul, by worldly frenzy tost,
Trusts in itself, and is for ever lost.
'Tis thus, self-wise, the atheist's bosom swells,
Nor thought of God nor hell within him dwells;
His soul is sin, to profanation grown;
Bound to himself, and to himself alone;
He spurns those truths, to man divinely giv'n,
And laughs and scoffs at promises of Heav'n!
Not so, the man whom sacred precepts move
To own the influence of a Saviour's love,
Angels await to set his spirit free
And waft it up to immortality!

Within these sad, sad sepulchres, repose
Hearts throbbing once with human joys and woes,
Knees that, in holy penitence, have knelt,
And frames that felt whatever we have felt;
A heap of dust is all that now remains,
Oblivion seals their pleasures and their pains;
They shared, as we must share, the common lot,
By some remember'd—but by more forgot;
Yet, when their fellow pilgrims here may cast
A melancholy view on moments past,
And think on those their bosoms then held dear,
Nature *will* drop a sympathetic tear,
O'ershade the brow and heave th' half stifled sigh,
And look with sadness upon times gone bye.
Here keen regret a rugged tombstone rears,

Fix'd up with sighs, and sculptured o'er with tears,
A simple structure—now by Seasons worn,
And hid 'neath many a knot of shelt'ring thorn,
Thick spreading vines a blooming mantle wave,
And wrap the slumb'rer in a flowery grave.
Ah! what avail those lips that sweetly move
With all the soft artillery of Love?
Eyes whose refulgence might eclipse the day,
And forms and features where the Graces play?
Beauty must stoop when Death's stern mandates come,
And, with Deformity, divide the tomb;
But Virtue, then triumphant, will arise,
For ever fair and blooming, to the skies!

Near where the chapel rears its modest top,
And graceful crowns the gently-falling slope,
There is a site, where once a hamlet stood,
But now o'ergrown with weeds and underwood;
Within whose neighbour'ing shade dear mem'ry views
The place where childhood first essay'd the * muse,
There, many a scheme of golden life I drew,
And many a happy peaceful moment flew;
Then, in its prime, the new-born hamlet stood,
Like Circe's palace, circled by a wood,
But sudden Desolation o'er it shed
His desert influence, and its tenants † fled—
Save ‡ one, who linger'd, like a faithful mate,
Within its purlieu and prolonged its fate;
A sturdy cyclop, whom the forging god
Rear'd in his black Sicilian abode,—
Long did his sledge and bellows echo round
A merry clanking and a roaring sound,
Till roving thoughts his *iron* mind possess'd
And he, at length, retired behind the rest.
Such was its fate—forsaken now by all,
One tott'ring ruin tells its timeless fall.
Here while I gaze, a golden glimm'ring ray
Shoots down aslant and brings the close of day,
It sheds on ev'ry shrub a brighter green,
And gives a fresh enchantment to the scene;
It bids wrapt Fancy bound with livelier spring,
And wake and re-essay her weary wing.
E'en so, EUGENIUS' friend—(his faded eye
Immerging fast into mortality,
Chill Death awaiting in its sombre robe,
T'enwrap his frame and catch his last faint throb,)
One lambent glance illumed his ling'ring end,

It flash'd affection on his weeping friend,—
Then fled his spirit to that unknown shore
Where all are wafted, to return no more.

Fair CASTLEREAGH! I trace thy landscape round,
Each well known spot to me is sacred ground;
In ev'ry mead—in every bow'r or tree,
Some dear companion—some old friend I see;
The myrtle grove that skirts thy sloping sides,
And the tall summit from the plain divides,
The rich * acacias waving o'er the rill
That pours its scanty stream beneath the hill;
Thy spreading vale—but here let mem'ry tax
The rude invasions of the spoiling † axe,
That chased the dryads from th' affrighted glade,
And lopped each shrub that once composed their shade.
Thus Art extends her civilizing reign,
Bows the tall wood and casts it on the plain,
Drives Nature's beauties from their seat away,
And plants a train less lovely far than they;
The landscape shines beneath a borrowed hue,
But graceless more, and different from the true.

Nurse of my joys! while yet I muse on thee,
The prospects vanish and the shadows flee,
Darkness extends her sad and drowsy reign,
And in a mist envelopes all the plain;
But yet for ever will thy scenes appear
Sweet to reflection, and to memory dear;
And, when their charms bright recollection gives,
And my tranced soul the rosy hours relives,
Fancy around will breathe an endless spring,
And the glad muse, of thee, in choicest numbers sing!

* EVAN,—the district in which Castlereagh seminary is situated.

† The residence of the Rev. Henry Fulton.

‡ Castlereagh hill.

* *Zea mays*, is the botanical name of the Indian corn, which is abundantly cultivated on the banks of the Nepean.

† It may not be out of place to remark, that peaches of an excellent quality also abound on the Nepean borders, and flourish almost spontaneously.

* In an acacian grove, the “neighbouring shade” of Castlereagh hamlet, I penned my first poetical effusion, which is annexed, intitled “An Ode to Spring”; I was then about twelve years of age.

† The Hamlet of Castlereagh was founded by the late lamented MACQUARIE, in

the latter part of his administration, and a school house erected therein, together with a few cottages belonging to private individuals; but, from a deficiency of that invaluable element *water*, it was deserted almost in its birth. The chapel yet stands and is used as a church, by the inhabitants of the Nepean district. One rude wood frame alone remains of the cottages alluded to. Since this period, however, Mr LEES, a substantial farmer on the Nepean borders, has erected a commodious house, &c. nearer the parsonage.

‡ This disciple of Vulcan (yclepped Langlay) continued some time after the other tenants of the hamlet, and often used to amuse me, in a fine evening when walking out, with the merry clank of his anvil and his jovial song.

* *Acacia decurrens*—The green wattle.

† When I was a pupil at Castlereagh Seminary, the extensive valley, spreading from the foot of the hill to Nepean river, was robed in its native beauty, and covered with forest; but, since the formation of clearing gangs, that forest has been cut down.

Odes

I. A Bacchanalian Ode,

**On the xxxviith Anniversary of the Colonization of New South
Wales, January 26, 1825.**

Strophe I.

Strike, strike the bold convivial lyre!
Let lofty paeans wake the soul!
Let ivy'd bands each heart entwine,
In one harmonious whole!
Fill, fill the goblet high!
The full libation pour!
Why should decrepid Care intrude,
When Bacchus rules the hour?
E'en Age resigns his cynic rod,
And, smiling, owns the potent god
With dropping clusters crowned;
The jovial hours their pinions hide,
And, unregarded, swiftly glide
When bumpers flow around!

Antistrophe I.

Once more old Time rolls round the day,
When Philips, with his roving band,
Chased the wild genius of our shore,
And hailed the wond'ring strand:
Then infant Science, in the wild,
Raised her approving form and smiled,
A maid before unknown,
And fixed, amid encircling hills,
The basis of her throne.

Strophe II.

Oppression's adamantine hand,
His wreath of lashes long has twined,
And Flattery's fawning language driven
Each gen'rous feeling from the mind:
But hark! the joyful shout,
By happy thousands given:
"Grim Slav'ry flies affrighted from his throne,
"And LIBERTY (bless'd maid) descends from heaven!"

Antistrophe II.

No longer droops the mournful brow,
The sad—the weeping eye,
But Joy, an inmate long estranged,
Smiles from yon western sky!
Hope, 'neath the veil of future years,
Sees proud AUSTRALIA to an empire rise;
While, led by honor o'er the waves,
Unrivalled Commerce flies,
And congregated nations pour
The wealth of worlds from every shore!

Strophe III.

United, in this social pray'r,
Let every patriot bosom glow!
“O, may the joys, now budding fair,
“Like fruitful blossoms, to perfection grow!
May every boon that heav'n can show'r
“Our grateful anxious wishes crown,
“Till the loud trump of Truth proclaim
“Content, peace, freedom—all our own.”
Then, hand in hand,
Ye jovial friends,
To patriot lips the goblet join;
Let night the rosy draught prolong,
Nor quit the banquet and the song,
Till morn's bright summons through the casements shine!

Ode II. To Sylvia,

On Her Birth-day.

Sweet breathe the gales. Apollo round him strews
Bright beams of gold, and melts-the vernal dews,
While not a cloud, through all th' etherial way,
Shrouds the blue heavens or dims the florid day.
Now wakes Vertumnus from his dull repose,
And breathes new life on every budding rose,
The blooms, obedient to his circling wand,
Burst their light bondage and at once expand.
O thou, whose eyes eclipse Apollo's fire,
Fair Sylvia! whisper rapture to my lyre,
Give these weak strains with pleasing charms to teem,
And thou, their sweet inspirer, be their theme!

Hail, happy morn! whose ruddy blushes bring
The natal rites of Sylvia and of Spring:
They, hand in hand, in every fragrant bow'r,
Tint the young leaf or paint the op'ning flow'r,
Graceful, o'er lawns and smiling valleys move,
Charm the bright year and wake all hearts to love,

O, could the Muse her glowing wishes pour,
For joys, fair nymph, to grace this envied hour;
Around thy brows, perennial wreathes should twine,
And beams of happiness unfading shine;
Here language fails:—for still my speaking heart
Mocks my faint lips and leaves untold a part.

'Twere vain t' invoke new charms the joy to crown;
Beauty and worth already are thine own:
Union divine! whose happy bonds include
All that is amiable, fair, and good.
Yet O, to heav'n, presiding spirit, bear
The wish of friendship and the Muse's pray'r!

Still may, meek Innocence! thy blushful grace,
With virgin crimson, paint that angel face;
Celestial truth those guileless lips controul,
And warm benevolence inspire her soul;
Still kindling virtues every charm impart
And form a brighter OEgis round her heart!
And Sylvia, while below, the flowing hours
All happy smile upon thy path of flow'rs,
For thee, may seraphs heav'nly garlands twine,

And bliss await thee in a brighter clime.

Ode III. To Laura,

On Her Birth-day

Lives there a heart that never felt the pow'r
Of Beauty's eye, in love's exstatic hour,
Or, free alike from every passion's sway,
Wastes its dull span in apathy away?
Let such be silent. But th' obedient line,
When Beauty prompts, Parnassean pow'rs be mine!
Be mine to weep when sadness shrouds her tongue,
And when she's joyful—tune the ready song!

Then hail, fair Laura!—hail this happy hour,
When thou wert born, Australia's loveliest flow'r!
O, may such joys as graced thy natal morn,
With brighter glow this day's career adorn!
And haste, pervading Flora, haste and bring
The blended sweetness of thy kindred Spring,
And weave a wreath to grace th' angelic fair,
A garland fit for beauty's queen to wear!

Say, shall the Muse invoke the powers divine
To give thee virtue?—'Tis already thine.
Beauty and all her charms?—Alike 'twere vain,
Perfection clasps thee in her fairy chain!
Th' Idalian goddess, rich in every grace,
Beamed an imperfect emblem of thy face;
Like some fair shepherdess, whom fabled tales
Give to inhabit Aon's flow'ry vales,
Thine Innocence; or like the virgin snow
Whose flakes, on Parnass' top, for ever glow.

But, beauteous Laura! while the partial Heav'n
Gives thee what else to mortal can be giv'n,
This is denied;—O may it gracious prove,
And teach thee pity as THOU taught'st me love!

Ode IV. To Sylvia,

On Her Birth-day

Dear Sylvia, while the rosy spring
Renews thy natal day,
For friendship's sake, what less can I
Than tune a vernal lay?
When nature laughs, and joy pervades
The renovated scene,
When every mead and every bow'r
Resumes its robe of green,
Shall thy dear memory beam on me,
And I not touch the lyre for thee?

Forbid it all ye sweets that deck
The joyful hours of spring;
Forbid it, too, thou smiling boy,
With silken flutt'ring wing!
O! were the power, as is the will,
To this fond bosom giv'n,
What bliss—what transport were not thine,
Beneath yon ample heav'n?
But since it cannot be, receive
The best of wishes I can give!

May thy fair form, but more thy mind,
Still charm th' enamour'd view!
Thy tender heart, when mis'ry calls,
Its dictates still pursue!
Virtue is thine, (unfading flower,
Pure growth of realms above!)
O may it flourish long with thee,
The wand to guide thy love,
And Innocence, thy cherub face,
Confess her fav'rite dwelling place!

Remains there yet another grace
And not already thine?
Yes, there is one, I blush to sing,
An attribute divine:
May *pitying* angels hover o'er,
And shed their power on thee!
And O, my Sylvia, wilt thou beam
That influence on me?
From thee and Love in vain I fly,

I weeping live, and living—die.

Ode V. To Sylvia

Hast thou not seen some captive bird
 Impatient flit within the wire,
And seek the bliss of liberty,
 With anxious fond desire?

Or hast thou not beheld, in chains,
 Some poor unhappy pris'ner pine?
E'en such a wretched slave am I,
 E'en such hard fetters mine.

But yet from these I differ too,
 For they would cast their chains away,
While I exult to wear the badge
 Of thy unpitying sway.

Then deign, fair nymph, one smile of love,
 One ray of ruddy hope impart!
O, give this life the pow'r to live,
 And heal the wounded heart!

Ode VI. Farewell

**To the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Horton, of the Wesleyan Mission,
on the Eve of their Departure from New South Wales to Van
Diemen's Land, 1825.**

Farewell! yet, while the rolling billows
 Waft you o'er their parent deep,
Let the shade of recent friendship
 Sometimes sympathise and weep!

When, with soft and prosp'rous breezes,
 Heav'n propels the swelling sails,
Think, my pray'r is speeding for you—
 Read my wishes in the gales!

But, should storms the waters blacken,
 And dark clouds deform the sky,
And the troubled ocean, roaring,
 Roll its billowy mountains high,

Then, when cheerless eyes and bosoms,
 (Heav'n avert such lot from you!)
Swell tow'rd heav'n in supplication,
 Think that I am weeping too!

May, to cheer your happy voyage,
 Storms fly off and whirlwinds cease,
And Tasmania's favour'd haven
 Prove to you a home of peace!

Thither, while the waves you're plowing,
 I will seek some lonely cell,
Doubtful, hoping,—hopeless, asking,
 “Must this be a last farewell?”

Ode VII. To Spring

*

O Thou who, unexpected, steal'st serene
 Into the bosom of the fertile year,
Tell me of climates which I ne'er have seen,
 And let me feel the fragrance thou dost bear!

For with thy presence, nature is adorned,
 Clad in gay green, luxuriant and mild,
Erewhile the embryo blossom lay unformed,
 In sweet profusion scattered o'er the wild;

'Till, by degrees, it op'ning to the sun,
 Now spreads, enamour'd, to his warmer ray;
At length, by aged infirmity o'ercome,
 'Twill, once more closing, droop and die away.

Thus, in the midst of pleasures, man's cut off,
 Struck by the never-erring arm of death;
Tho' some, above their fellows, rise aloft,
 Yet fate, at length, will stop their vital breath.

Ode VIII. The Voyage

From the German of Solomon Gessner.

It flies—the gilded vessel flies,
That wafts my Daphnis o'er the main,
A lovelier sun, to distant isles.
O, may no stormy blasts arise,
But zephyr skim the curling plain,
And Cupids wanton in her smiles!

Ye waves, that on your bosom bear
The happy bark that shrines my love,
Float smooth and sparkle round her sides!
Gods! when my Daphnis' looks you share,
Her thoughts to me will homeward rove
Swifter than roll your billowy tides.

Ye shores, amid whose citron groves
A thousand little warblers sing,
Bid them for her their notes attune!
Ye fairy bow'rs, where Flora loves
To bind the earliest wreaths of spring,
Invite her from the beam of noon!

Sea, be thy surface ever bright,
And bid eternal calm preside!
My lovely Daphnis is thy care;
Thy orb, refulgent source of light,
Reflected in the lucid tide,
Is not so spotless, not so fair!

Fly forth my song, and bid the plain—
The grove—the vale—the mossy stream—
Resound celestial Daphnis' praise!
Tell them, 'when, from the frothy main,
'Resplendent rose the Cnidian queen,
She own'd not half so soft a grace.'

Thus, while I sing the nymph I love
And vainly hope to paint her charms,
Pierced with the pangs of doubt I burn,
Then Ah, my fair, no longer rove;
Come and dispel these dire alarms;
Return, my angel, O return!

* This was written at Castlereagh seminary, in 1818, when I was but twelve years of age, My youth, at that time, may prove an excuse for my offering it to the public.



Elegies

I. On the Death of Maj. Gen. Macquarie, The Late Much Lamented Governor of Australia

WHAT mournful cause, on every sorrowing brow,
Sheds the dark poppies of corroding woe,
Shrouds every thought in melancholy deep,
And moves each heart to sadden and to weep?
Hark! o'er the waves the plaints of mourning rise,
And Grief's black ministers pervade the skies,
And a sad voice proclaims, from yonder shore,
"Weep, nation, weep, Macquarie is no more!

"Down a long vista of untarnished days,
Glad merit crown'd him with thy children's praise;
With fost'ring hand he nursed thine infant fame,
And ebbing nature heard him sigh—thy name!

"Shrined in some valley of his native North,
Slumber the reliques of departed worth,
Eternal requiems to his spirit swell,
From guardian seraphs hov'ring o'er the cell;
There, while the Scot his heartfelt tribute pays
Of sorrow for thy patriot's number'd days,
Canst thou, indiff'rent, gazing on his bier,
Forbear to stain it with one sacred tear?
Deep in the warm recesses of each heart
His lib'ral virtues held a grateful part,
And if, in life, he own'd a people's love,
Say, shall, in death, his spirit cease to move?

MACQUARIE! candid, gen'rous, noble, free,
All, 'neath perfection, blended, shone in thee!
Thou, when the hapless widow pined for bread,
Shed bounty o'er, and raised her drooping head;
When Affluence spurned the beggar from his door,
Cheered by thy smiles he felt no longer poor;
The orphan child, whose supplicating tongue
Craved scanty pittance of th' unbending throng,
His artless tale despised or disbelieved,
Ask but of thee, was pitied and relieved;
Did mis'ry to thy door a victim send?
Thy willing influence proved a saving friend;
Large were thy means, yet far beneath thy will—
Here praise must cease, for language here stands still.

Farewell, lost Excellence! If ruling fate

Show'rs bliss celestial on the good and great,
To thy triumphant soul the joy was given,
To quaff immortal sweets that bloom in heaven.
Then stoop, kind Father, from that bright abode,
Teach Rulers virtue—bid them dare be good.
Obey the promptures of a gen'rous mind,
And trace th' example thou hast left behind!

II.

WRITTEN in the Verandah of the Chapel at the deserted hamlet of "BLACK TOWN," an Establishment formed by Government some years since, for the purpose of civilizing the aboriginal Natives of Australia, and teaching them the art of agriculture, &c. on the new Richmond-road, about 28 miles distant from the metropolis. It is much to be lamented that the poor heathen possessors were allowed to desert the Establishment, as much good emanated from the Rules first adopted there. Mr. WALKER, of the Wesleyan Mission, formerly officiated in the Chapel, and was entrusted with the care of the Pupils and Establishment. That gentleman has since left it, and at the time I wrote the following Elegy, the Chapel and Cottages were deserted, the latter in ruins, and the whole scene exhibited the strongest marks of desolation.

I, however, now understand, that it is the intention of the Government to renew the Establishment.

FROM this dull portal (whence th' expectant eye
Surveys the partial, forest-bounded sky,
Roves o'er a portion of neglected ground,
With ruin'd huts and fences scatter'd round,
There, sated, closes on the dreary view,
No charms to tempt—no beauties to pursue)
Fancy awakes her meditative pow'rs
To paint the visions of departed hours.
Pourtrays the annals of the subject scene,
And gives to memory what it once has been.

Ill-fated hamlet! from each tott'ring shed,
Thy sable inmates perhaps for ever fled,
(Poor restless wand'rers of the woody plain!
The skies their covert—nature their domain)
Seek, with the birds, the casual dole of heav'n,
Pleas'd with their lot—content with what is giv'n.
Time was, and recent mem'ry speaks it true,
When round each little cot a garden grew,
A field whose culture serv'd a two-fold part,
Food and instruction in the rural art.
The lordling tenant and his sable wife
Were taught to prize the sweets of social life,
And send their offspring, in the dawn of youth,

To schools of learning and the paths of truth.*

Poor thoughtless almsman of the frugal wild!
All, all blush'd once to own this darkling child;
Scarce twelve revolving years their course have run
Since reformation's work was not begun;
In that dark era, thus the yearning heart
Taught the warm lip its dictates to impart;
“Lòst child! shall *we* the savage part pursue?
“Must all despise thee for thy sable hue?
“Will Charity no warm vicegerent send
“To own thee—Brother, or to call thee—Friend?
“True! there are some whose panting bosoms thirst,
“With holy zeal, to raise thee from the dust,
“T' infuse those truths to burden'd sinners giv'n,
“And fix thy wand'ring, reckless mind on heav'n;
“But these bright thoughts th' unwilling Fates deride;
“The will is theirs—th' ability deny'd.
“And shall, on these alone, the wretch repose
“T' apply the healing styptic to his woes?
“Ah, no! Young Hope, unwilling to expire,
“Yet, with light pinions, fans her slumb'ring fire!
“The day will come—nor distant be that day,
“When Superstition's mists shall melt away,
“And bright'ning beams of Truth's triumphant light
“From his lost empire chase the fiend of night!”

The day did come—the day so oft besought,
That on its wing the sacred balsam brought,
And gave a man to rule our Austral clime,
(His flow'r since gather'd by the hand of Time)
Who mourn'd the rigours of our brother's fate
And strove t' illumine his unenlightened state;
Reason enforc'd what Charity began,
And Heav'n approv'd the philanthropic* plan.
Soon from the plain a modest structure rose,
Doom'd for the sable proselyte's† repose,
Within whose walls that lasting boon was given,
The pow'r to trace Salvation's path to Heav'n:
There too, thro' Learning's maze, the youth were led
And views of civil arts before them spread;
Nor beam'd this soft benevolence in vain;
Warm Emulation broke the Gothic chain,
Docile, they struggled for contested bays
And snatch'd, from cultur'd youth, the meed of praise!
Go on, Britannia! consummate thy plan,
And train the hopeful pupil up to man;
What thousands here will then attest thy worth,

And bless the hour when Ocean gave the birth;
Thee, on whose walls resplendent and unfurl'd,
Meek Salem's banners wave and Christianize the world!

O bless'd Idea! by the Pow'rs above,
Shed on a heart, exalted in their love;
T' wake from sullen night the grov'ling soul,
And subject it to Reason's wise controul,
To breathe the spirit of enliv'ning truth,
And teach the bliss of Heav'n—eternal youth!
To thee, MACQUARIE, was the dictate giv'n,
Thou wert the chosen Delegate of Heav'n
Thousands adore thee for th' angelic deed,
And for thy parted soul invoke the Christian's meed!

Ill-fated Hamlet! round thy dull domain
Lone Silence holds her melancholy reign;
This lowly structure, where each Sabbath press'd
A pious group, by strangers is possess'd;
Thy once fair dawning beauties all are gone,
Thy gardens fallow lie, with weeds o'ergrown,
Wild flow'rs and spindling grass alone are seen
Where cornfield wav'd their undulating green,
Dark vines along the untrod footpaths creep,
And all the desert Landscape seems to weep.

Thus, shall Man's proudest, noblest projects fade,
And, with their founder, in the dust be laid;
Th' imperial palace and the lowly cot
Alike must share this universal lot,
And bow before th' all conquering scythe of Time—
Such was proud Ilion's fate, and such (alas!) is thine!

III. An Elegy on Winter in Argyleshire

“WITH cheerless gloom and storm-portending clouds
Rude Winter brushes from Antarctic wilds,
The front of Heav'n, in murky vapors shrouds,
Then bursts his sounding freightage o'er our isles.

“No more are heard the thrush's mellow notes,
No more the plover mounts the ev'ning breeze,
No more the soaring lark on aether floats,
Spoil'd of their honours, mourn the leafless trees.

“The front of Heav'n, erewhile so right and gay,
Now scowls on Nature's universal scene,
And shatt'ring hail, and howling tempests play,
Where wav'd one nodding canopy of green.

“No more the brook, in rippling murmers, glides,
And, with its silver tinkling, soothes the ear,
Nor * Wollondilly, smile thy gentle tides,
But swoll'n to torrents, toward ocean bear.”

Thus 'plain'd I, while, by Wollondilly's stream,
With ling'ring step. I sought my devious way,
A little naiad marked my plaintive theme,
And thus, in chiding numbers, seemed to say:—

“Why, mortal, mourn'st thou nature's beauties gone?
Why hang desponding strains upon thy tongue?
Repine not! for a little season flown,
Renewed in loveliness they'll rise ere long.

“When howling Winter's stormy course is run,
When his chill blasts to northern climes are driven,
Then shall Spring's blooming bosom greet the Sun,
And joy shine forth from bounty-beaming Heaven.”

Thus sung the nymph, when, from the pebbly bed
O'er which the bubbling stream delights to play,
Adown its maze her airy image fled,
On the bleak gale her accents died away.

As round the earth the changeful seasons roll,
Before the vernal Sun dark vapours fly;
So, from the dust, mounts the aspiring soul
To join her kindred spirits in the sky.

IV. To Sylvia

Written on a Summer Evening.

Now sinks the sun behind the western hills,
And balmy Eve assumes her placid sway,
Soft whispers murmur from the tinkling rills,
And gentle zephyrs on their surface play.

The low of herds—the wood-dove's am'rous coo,
Alone are wafted on the passing gale;
Calm silence bids my sighs revert to you,
Angelic Sylvia! "flow'ret of the vale."

Must I alone eternally deplore,
And sigh, unheeded, to th' unconscious wind?
Must this lost heart enjoy sweet rest no more,
And e'er despair a soft return to find?

Cupid, invidious scourge of human ties!
Oft strikes alone the poor despairing swain,
Bids him exhaust his days in hopeless sighs,
And waste his nights in tears—but all in vain.

But say, is such my lot?—sweet Sylvia, say,
Must I for ever with this anguish burn?
Still waste the dreary night and live-long day,
And sigh, despairing of a fond return?

* The Children were instructed, by the Rev. Mr. WALKER, in the articles of the Christian Creed, and in the more refined though less essential rudiments of literature.

* The "Native Institution," established by Macquarie in 1814.

† The School-house of the Institution, at Parramatta, was also erected by Gov. Macquarie.

* In a former publication of this Elegy, the River alluded to was called "Nepean," of which Wollondilly is properly the source. It rises in Argyleshire.

Miscellaneous Pieces

The Storm; A Fragment;

In Imitation of Cowper

Dark lowered the sky, the rumbling thunder roll'd,
And light'ning's vivid flash, athwart the gloom,
Appalling, seemed to burst the vault of heaven;
From the rent clouds down swept a deluge loud,
Of rain, harsh, pattering o'er the turbid brine;
The angry billows dashed their rocky bourne,
Delib'rate yet; 'till, from the brooding south,
A sweeping gale convulsed their wide domain,
That, now transformed to one continuous sheet
Of foam, in liquid mountains sought the shore.

'Twas then, exposed to all the ruthless war
Of the contending elements, a bark,
Tight-fraught with merchandize, and homeward-bound,
Drew my attention to her piteous plight.
(Poor hapless mariners! how can ye brook
The fierce unbridled fury of the storm?)

Still ruthless raged the ordnance of heaven
The frail devoted bark its only sport,
Sole buffet of its rage, she long withstood,
And her tough bulwarks had well nigh outborne,
When (destiny unmarked!) th' ill-fated keel
Struck on a rock, whose top the billows washed;
O'er her broad stern the waves tremendous broke;
Th' electric fluid thro' her rigging played—
Her masts—her cordage—devastating all,
'Till the ribb'd hulk no longer marr'd its force,
But tott'ring sunk into the yawning gulph,
A sad example of the wrath of heaven!

The dismal cry of seamen in despair,
Clinging, for succour, to a floating yard,
The dying groan—the sinner's last brief prayer,
But faintly wafted on the passing gale,
Would draw some pity from the hardest heart,
But e'en the few who fondly sought to live,
'Neath 'whelming billows found a timeless grave.

O, what a scene to wound the feeling breast,
To chill the crimson current in its course!

The blasts, less rude, still howled among the cliffs,

Some random bolts played harmless o'er the deep,
The thunder's hollow voice, but murm'ring faint
At awful intervals, and almost quelled,
Seemed like the threat'ning plaint of discontent,
Causeless and muttered from an ingrate's tongue.
I paused;—by slow degrees the scene was changed;
The sea grew calm—the boist'rous gale expired,
And all the roaring tempests sunk to sleep;
Nor one faint human accent met the ear,
Nor floating fragment of the wreck remained:
A tear—the tribute due to kindred dust,
(Sweet child of Sympathy, and Pity's pledge!)
I dropp'd—then, melancholy musing, fled.

Habakkuk, Chap. III

Paraphrased.

O, for a beam, from Sion's sacred hill,
Of inspiration! then my soaring muse
Would wake, with hope, her bold aspiring lyre
To notes of rapture! Such the seer inspired,
Whose holy strains essayed to paint his God!

“Perfection, indefinitude supreme!
Let not thy direful wrath for ever blaze,
But Mercy's gentle voice arrest its power;
Here let me sing, in bold seraphic notes,
How keen, on favoured Israel's heathen foes,
The fatal arrows of thy vengeance fell!

“I saw and trembled;—while transcendant rays,
Shot from the Majesty divine, illumed
Heaven's canopy and earth's remotest verge;
Refulgent Teman beamed ethereal fire,
And lofty Paran owned the present God.
Before his glorious form the baleful plague
(Dire harbinger of wrath!) and igneous flame
Swept o'er the guilty land. Supreme he stood;
All comprehensive, o'er the subject world,
His eye terrific rolled, at one full gaze
Including Earth e'en to her utmost bourne,
Awful he frowned, and, with a potent arm,
Dispersed the warring nations; mount on mount
He hurled; Earth shook, and Ocean trembling heaved,
Cushan's bright valleys felt the shock divine,
And Midian's limits in affliction wept.
Thy bow was bent;—the Earth submissive yawned,
And foaming rivers rushed impetuous in.
Mountains beheld, and tottered to their base;
Fix'd in yon shining arch, the radiant sun,
The pallid moon, and all the starry host
Forgot their circling orbits, and stood still.
In indignation just, thro' Earth's dull realms,
Thy blazing chariot rolled, and flames of wrath
Flashed from thy world-compelling eye on heaven!

“These marked the tender parent—these the God!
These rained destruction o'er his people's foes,
But these saved Israel, and released his flock!

“What, tho' no more the fig her fruits diffuse,
No more the luscious vine her nectar yields,
No more the press with streaming oil o'erflow;
Tho' fade the pastures and the flocks decay?
Still shall my bursting heart with rapture swell,
Still to my God, its grateful homage pour,”
And dwell, with hope, on joys that bloom in heaven,
The pilgrim's goal—the sinner's home of peace,
Where all is bright, and Love Eternal reigns!

NOTE.—The Chapter is literally paraphrased from the commencement to where the inverted commas terminate; the last three lines are the conclusion I have naturally drawn in order to amplify the piece.

Zimeo

In the Style of Cowper.

In a slave-cultured isle, on the verge of the main,
Sable Zimeo's form was reclined;
He wept his dark destiny, gazed on his chain,
And mingled his sighs with the wind.

“O ye Gods!” he exclaimed, “whose beneficent care
Shields the innocent sufferer from woe;
Permit me no longer these shackles to bear,
Some gleam of soft pity bestow!

“In the dawn of my youth, dear companions! with you,
When I rambled in Afric's green shade.
When my hours, 'mid your smiles, so delightfully flew,
I dreamed not they ever would fade.

“On the lip of my Ninda, when panting with love,
With what exstasy heaved my fond heart!
When we vowed by those pow'rs in the mansions above,
That we never—no, never, would part.

‘The bright sun of prosperity glistened awhile,
Diffusing ephemeral rays;
I basked 'neath the phantom's encouraging smile,
And bliss was the badge of my days!

“Till a little black cloud, wing'd by demons of air,
And urged by the fates from below,
Interposed 'tween my sight and that sun's cheering glare,
And hurled me from bliss into woe.

“Inured to the arts of seduction and wile,
White merchants arrived in our bay,
Allured us on board, unsuspecting of guile,
And bore us in triumph away.

“On that accurst day all my happiness fled,
My Ninda—my country—my home;
Here slavery's ignoble fetters are spread,
Here liberty never will come!

“O, never!—what horrors compose that dread word,
But this weary pilgrimage o'er,
I go where the sound of sweet mercy is heard,
Where mis'ry's remember'd no more.

“See, bright from elysium, a seraph appears,
And smiling she calls me away;
“ ‘My Zimeo, quit this dull region of tears!
Lo, thy Ninda!’ ”—“Loved shade, I obey.”

Oblivion shed her dark veil o'er his woes;
Young Hope soothed the horrors of death;
From the cliff where he pondered, undaunted he rose,
And plunged in the billows beneath.

Sonnet to Spring

I.

Gay blooming goddess of the flow'ry year,
Enchanting Spring, thou youth of nature, hail!
What artless beauties in thy train appear,
What balmy fragrance swells th' ambrosial gale,

II.

All nature, ravished, owns thy quick'ning power,
In brighter prospect, lo the landscape spreads!
Aërial music wakes in ev'ry bower,
Sings thro' the brake or carols o'er the meads.

III.

The sportive streamlet, as it purls along,
Laving, with modest kiss, its verdant steep,
In softer cadence wafts the woodland song,
And lulls the fond of solitude to sleep;
My Chloe seeks me in our fav'rite grove
And all creation wears the look of love!

Song

My Sylvia frowns on her love:

Ah! hope from this bosom is fled,
That syren that o'er my fond heart,
So lately her influence shed.

And must I for ever despair

To own the dear girl I adore?
And will the bright day-spring of love
Ne'er brighten my hemisphere more?

'Tis past!—on the heart that is her's

She frowns with contempt and disdain,
And seems to exult in the cause
That gives my fond bosom such pain.

Yet, trust me, dear Sylvia, this lip

That sighs nought but mis'ry and you,
Is the harbinger pure of a heart
That will ever—yes, ever prove true!

Mira, “The Flow'r of the Vale;”

A Song.

AIR, “JESSIE O' DUMBLAIN.’

Calm Eve hangs her shades o'er yon wood-crowned blue mountain,
Grey mists slowly wreath o'er the upland and dale,
The moon, rising cloudless, just silvers the fountain
That lulls to soft slumbers “the flow'r of the vale.”

Than the blooming young rose-bud her cheeks are more bonnie;
Compared with her lips, the red coral is pale;
Far sweeter, and fairer, and dearer than ony.
Is lovely young Mira, “the flow'r of the vale.”

How modest—how beauteous the lily's pale blossom!
Delicious the odours its petals exhale!
Yet a flow'ret, enraptured, I've clasped to my bosom,
More modest—more fragrant—“the rose of the vale.”

O soft on yon hill Cynthia's silver beam slumbers,
And the wood-dove's coo tenderly floats on the gale,
Yet softer *her* glance and far gentler the numbers
That flow from the lips of this “rose of the vale.”

When sickness or age every grace shall deflower,
Her lovelier mind o'er their touch will prevail;
Such sweetness, such goodness, such ravishing power,
Blend alone in my Mira, “the flow'r of the vale.”

In some lone little cot, from the gay world secluded,
O what would the scorn of the wealthy avail,
While I clasped the sweet angel who never deluded
The heart that now pants for “the rose of the vale?”

A Song, for January 26, 1824;

Being the XXXVI. Anniversary of the Colonization of New South Wales.

When first above the briny surge
Australia reared her tow'ring crest,
The roaring gales confounded fled,
The troubled billows sunk to rest,
And proud above the azure flood,
Fixed and immoveable she stood,

The tritons, with their writhen shells,
Made all the hollow grotts rebound;
Earth to her inmost centre shook,
Old Ocean trembled at the sound,
And, august, from his chrystal caves,
Rose Neptune, sovereign of the waves.

This hand his foaming steeds restrained,
And that the mighty trident bore,
Which, when the angry monarch strikes,
His empire roars from shore to shore.
He raged not now; but, with a smile
Prophetic, thus addressed our isle:

“Commerce, on halcyon wings, shall hail
Thy havens, yet to man unknown,
And loyalty shall stamp thy name
‘The brightest gem in Albion's crown;’
While the prolific bosom pours
Earth's richest gifts in lavish show'rs.”

Thus spoke the god, then dived beneath;
The peaceful calm was now no more,
The howling gales resumed their ire,
The billows dashed the sounding shore,
And wind and waves, without controul,
Bellowed their rage from pole to pole.

Ages have rolled their circling orbs
Since dumb Creation heard the tale,
Still each returning year beheld
Rude Darkness o'er our isle prevail;
But now the dawn of science gleams
And Hope streams wide her ruddy beams,

Peace lifts her olive sceptre high,
Brown Industry assumes the plough,
Commerce expands her canvas wings,
Wealth points where honour guides the prow;
These, happy Australasia, these
Proclaim thee 'Queen of Southern Seas!'

This is the joy-inspiring day
That gave these blessings to our lot,
Then let us share the social rites,
Join hands, all malice be forgot!
The little star, once marked by none,
Now shines a bright—a BLAZING SUN!
