



THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS,

And Other Poems.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THERE IS A HAPPY LAND."

"O Nature! whose Elysian scenes disclose
His bright perfections at whose word they rose,
Next to that Power who formed thee and sustains
Be thou the great inspirer of my strains.
Still, as I touch the lyre, do thou expand
Thy genuine charms, and guide an artless hand."

COWPER.

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Preface.



It is sometimes urged by the critics that the "request of friends" is no sufficient reason for the publication of compositions which their writer knows to be of an unpretending character. And yet I can offer no other excuse, if excuse be necessary, for the publication of the present volume. Many of the pieces which it contains have previously appeared in periodicals, newspapers, and volumes; others have had a wide circulation as leaflets; and I have, therefore, been repeatedly asked to collect and issue them in a more permanent and convenient form. I do not arrogate to myself the illustrious name of Poet; yet I have the satisfaction of knowing that my simple utterances have found their way to sympathizing hearts. And I may, perhaps, be allowed to hope that, now they are presented in a less fugitive shape, their circle of readers will be increased. It is something to give expression to even the commonest thoughts and most or-

dinary feeling in language which is easily remembered, or to embody in the lowliest verse an idea or a suggestion which may touch a single heart, or elevate a single mind. And if I have been, or yet may be, so far successful, I shall ever be grateful to Him who has thus enabled me to benefit others while greatly improving my own few hours of leisure.

One, at least, of the hymns in this little volume ("The Happy Laud") has attained so wide a popularity, that the reader may not be displeased to learn the circumstances in which it was written. Many years ago, I was spending an evening with a family of friends, and the lady of the house played several musical compositions of great beauty. Among these was a sweet and tender air which charmed me exceedingly. On asking the name of it, I was told it was "an Indian air, called 'Happy Land.'" It immediately occurred to me that such a melody could not fail to be popular in Sunday schools, if wedded to appropriate words. And, accordingly, I wrote the little hymn, which has since spread over all the world, and been translated into almost all languages. It was sung daily in my classes, in the Niddry Street School; and on a visit by Mr. James Gall (now Rev. James Gall), he was so delighted with the music and hymn, that he noted down the simple air, had it harmonized, set to the words, and published in his "Sacred Songs;" and from his father's well-known printing and publishing house, it was copied into hymn-books every-

where, and so became a general favourite: and it was not until a year or two after my removal to Madras College, St. Andrews, in 1840, that I knew anything of the existence of the Indian song, beginning,—

“ I have come from a happy land
Where care is unknown.”

I need not say that the references to my hymn which have appeared in numerous biographies, and the anecdotes which have reached me of the blessing it has proved to both young and old, in many lands, have been to me a source of the highest gratification and thankfulness.

With these few words of introduction, I commend my little volume to the goodwill of the critic and the indulgent reader.

A. YOUNG.

EDINBURGH.





University Prize Poems.

THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND.

" O Caledonia ! stern and wild,
Meet nurse for a poetic child. "

ARGUMENT.—*Invocation to the lyre—Land of the Gael—Caledonian bravery—Allusion to the Aborigines of Northern Scotland—Apostrophe to the Muse—Hills—Grampians—Roman invasion—Ben Nevis—Ascent of some hill, to survey the plain below—Magnificence and antiquity of mountains—Waterfalls—A simile—Highland villages—Castles of the chiefs—Clans and minstrels—Influence of banners in the battle-field—Prince Charles Stuart—Culloden—Defeat of the Prince's army—Seeks a refuge among the mountains—Escapes to France—Apostrophe to Mary, Queen of Scots—Massacre of Glencoe—Ossian—Superstitions of the Highlanders—Dissuasive in favour of religion—Peace essential to a nation's welfare—Filial reverence of Scotchmen for their native land—Beauties of Nature in Scotland—Eyre of the eagle—Cairngorm—Liberty conducive to the cultivation of genius—Undaunted heroism of the Highland regiments—Napoleon—Waterloo—Picture of an emigrant family—Oppression of the chiefs—Dukedom of Athol—Apostrophe to Dunkeld—Times of Macbeth—Dunkeld Cathedral—A Sabbath in the Highlands—Scottish heroes—The Covenanters—Shepherds—Beauty of pastoral poetry*

—*Evening scene—Islands of Caledonia—Iona—Times and piety of St. Columba—Isle of Staffa—Apostrophe illustrative of Nature—Jura—The Island of Arran—Feudal times—Happier days shine on Scotland now, through the instrumentality of education—Highland dress prohibited—Hamlets—Highland hospitality—Lochs—Pibroch and coronach—The Trosachs—Sir Walter Scott—Lady of the Lake—Loveliness of Highland scenery—Cairns—Fall of evening—Apostrophe to the lyre—Conclusion.*

I.



COME from thy pendent bough, my own loved
lyre!

Where, in the breeze, thou hast neglected
hung;

The ivy-folds have twined around thy wire,
And long hast thou remained unknown, unsung.
But thou wert not forgotten, though unstrung;
The echo of thy song is sounding still:
Far in the woods thy plaintive notes have rung,
And waked the slumbers of the distant hill,
Or mingled in the flow that marked the mountain rill.

II.

Come from thy pendent bough, so bright with dew,
So much accordant with thine own sweet strain,
And let me string thy sacred chords anew,
And tune thy numbers to my song again.
I sing of Scotia, and her heath-clad plain,
Her towering hill and deep descending vale:
The rugged mountain, linked in hoary chain,
Shall wing thy echoes back, through wood and dale,
Till every distant isle shall bid the minstrel hail.

III.

Land of the noble Gael ! immortal land !¹
Unconquered dwelling of the brave and free !
What raptured soul shall paint thy "rugged strand" ?
What minstrel-harp shall fitly sing of thee ?
Oh, dear art thou, my native land, to me !
Dear is the fame of ancient Caledon !
Thy name, beloved, has spread from sea to sea ;
And distant climes, in admiration, own
That honoured Scotia stands, in name and fame, alone.

IV.

And thou art matchless in thy prowess, too,
Illustrious birth-land of the nobly brave !
No human hand could e'er thy might subdue,
No haughty despot claim thee as his slave.²
Thy purple heath in other lands may wave,
Thy thistle there may bend its sacred head,
Thy dauntless sons repose in foreign grave ;
But never shall the foot of foeman tread
Or stain the hallowed soil for which their fathers bled.

V.

What magic sway, what talismanic power,
Shall wake the slumbers of thy hoary age ?
What daring hand shall fix thy dawning hour,
And read thy annals on Creation's page ?
Where were thy hills and glens amid the rage
And rush of ocean, from its confines hurled,
When sea and sky united to presage
The doom and destiny which fate unfurled,
And poured in fury down upon a fallen world ?

VI.

Whence came that people, in the ancient time,
Who found a home and resting-place in thee ?
Say, were they exiles from a foreign clime,
Or some lone island far amid the sea ?
And did they love thee, generous, fair, and free,
Because of bondage in their own left land ?
First of a noble race, whoe'er you be,
That thus sought refuge on our mountain strand,
The Muse would bid you hail, illustrious little band !

VII.

Oh, spread thy flight, enraptured Muse, away
On wings of thought to Scotia's hills and streams !
And there luxuriate all the live-long day
Beneath the glory of the summer beams.
Come o'er the spirit of my waking dreams,
Ethereal essence, in sublime review,
And let me fitly sing, in glowing themes,
The dread magnificence, and beauty too,
Which now before me rise, as blissful visions do.

VIII.

Source of ten thousand streams, eternal hills !
Alike companions of the earth and heaven,
Around thy hoary head the tempest thrills,
And endless snows are in their fury driven ;
Amid thy towering peaks, so rent and riven
By lightning's lurid glare, and ages past,
The lordly eagle has its dwelling given,
Secure amid the elemental blast,
And at whose height immense the mind recoils aghast.

IX.

Ye Grampian heights! sublime, stupendous range!³
 August mementoes of a former day!
 The nations and the states of time may change,
 And pass, like shadows in their dream, away;
 But thou, undimmed amid thy dread array,
 Shalt live coëval with duration's span;
 And when, among the ruins of decay,
 Are laid the lofty rock-built towers of man,
 Thy awful hills shall stand, as when the world began.

X.

Here, 'mid the glory of the ancient time,
 When every land acknowledged Roman sway,
 Brave Caledonia, in her might sublime,
 In proud defiance mocked their vain array.
 What though the nations round in bondage lay,
 Like vassal-serfs beneath a tyrant's dread,—
 As soon those hills shall shrink from ocean's spray,
 And to the tempest bend their lofty head,
 As o'er those sacred wilds shall Roman banners spread.

XI.

And thou, Ben Nevis, "monarch" of them all!⁴
 Presiding genius of thy mountain race,
 The spirits of the air have hung their pall,
 In mantled foldings, round thine aged face;
 And in the cold and desolate embrace
 Of endless snows thou rear'st thy hoary head;
 While, in their fragrance round thy spreading base,
 The heath and wild-flower have their beauty shed,
 Like lingering beams of life among the countless dead.

XII.

Here let me climb some gently rising height,
Arrayed resplendent in the sunshine's glow,
And fondly gaze, with rapturous delight,
Upon the rich and varied scene below.
Here let me paint the pure and flowery show
Of native beauty, scattered all around ;
And be my song the deep and fervent flow
Of him who, high on Pisgah's holy ground,
Beheld the promised land, in matchless beauty crowned.

XIII.

Well may I sing, as did the bard of old,
"O Caledonia! who is like to thee?"
Thy mountain-tops are tinged with purest gold,
And silver brightness beams upon thy sea :
Oh, may thy green and fertile valleys be
The land of peace—the patriot's loved abode ;
Thy children, down to latest ages, free ;
And all those altars where their fathers bowed,
Be altars sacred still, to Freedom and to God!

XIV.

Here mountains, towering to the vaulted sky,
In wild magnificence arise around,
And rear their old and awful heads on high,
Like ancient spirits waked from sleep profound ;
And from the confines of that sacred ground,
Where long they slumbered in sublime repose,
The echoes of their dream mysterious bound
From hill to hill, o'er heath and drifting snows,
Till far in distant lands the lingering echoes close.

XV.

Here, from the trackless and impending steep,
Where human foot has found no resting-place,
The rushing cataract, with foaming leap
And dashing fury, seeks the mountain's base,
Till, through the verdant vales, we fondly trace
The noble river and the gentle stream.
And ever as they urge their onward race,
How meekly sweet, how beautiful they seem !
How like the closing hour of love's angelic dream !

XVI.

So when the howling winds have ceased to blow,
And ocean's angry surges rage no more,
The troubled billows, soothed and hushed and low,
In gentle eddies die along the shore—
So, when the tempests of this world are o'er,
The humble Christian calmly sinks to rest ;
His hopes are vision now, though faith before,
And all those fears which wrung his heaving breast
Are known no more, among the mansions of the blest.

XVII.

How sweetly beautiful, my own loved land,
Thy scattered villages are spread below ;
And, in their might, thy lordly castles stand,
Like guardian spirits, on the mountain's brow.
But, Caledonia, where, ah ! where art thou
In all thy majesty of former days ?
Where are thy trusty clans and chieftains now ?⁵
And where the minstrel bard, whose welcome lays
Oft told of conquests won in loud acclaim of praise ?⁶

XVIII.

Where are those banners now, ye men of might,
 Beneath whose magic shade your clansmen fought ?
 Oh, is that spirit sunk in endless night
 Which, in the field, such nameless wonders wrought ?
 Where now that kingly pomp, so dearly bought—
 Those deadly feuds, which stained your peaceful plains ?⁷
 And where the haughty Sassenach,* who sought
 To bind your noble sons in vassal chains,
 And make your mountain-home the purchase of his gains ?

XIX.

Time was when Scotia, like the nations round,
 Could boast a native Prince, august and free,
 Whose honoured name, with greenest laurels crowned,
 Was loved at home, and feared beyond the sea.
 Oh, fated day ! unhappy land for thee,⁸
 Which saw the glory of thy greatness fade—
 Which saw the issue of that dread decree
 In fullest fury poured upon thy head,
 Till all thy chosen men were left among the dead.

XX.

Oh, who shall paint the horrors of that day
 Which dawned in beauty on Culloden's plain ?⁹
 Which saw thee marshalled in sublime array—
 A host of heroes in a Prince's train ?
 No faithless heart was there, no coward stain
 Bedimmed the glory of devotion's fire ;
 Ten thousand trusty hearts resolved to gain
 New honours for their loved but injured sire,
 And bid their monarch, hail ! or in his cause expire.

* A Gaelic term for the English.

XXI.

And it was even so ; for soon, afar,
 In shining panoply, the foemen came ;
 Thy peaceful valleys rung with clang of war,
 And Scotia trembled for her Prince's fame.
 In awful pomp and glare, the lurid flame
 Of lightning's flash from peak to peak was driven :
 What Southern foe could brook such deadly aim,
 Or dare " the dread artillery of Heaven,"
 When from duration's throne the massive rocks were riven ?

XXII.

Awhile the star of sudden conquest shone
 In doubtful light above the Celtic plume.
 Oh that, as then, the field had been thine own,¹⁰
 And thou hadst flourished in unfading bloom !
 But dire reverse, inevitable doom,
 And all attendant ills were left for thee ;
 Thy verdant plains became one common tomb,
 Where sleep the ashes of thy great and free,
 And where Old Scotia's fame and greatness ceased to be.

XXIII.

Amid thy woods and wilds, so lonely now,
 Unhappy Prince, thou sought'st a hiding-place :¹¹
 Thy leal and trusty clans no longer bow,
 With filial love, before their monarch's face.
 O last and noblest of an injured race !
 Thy sun is set, thy glory dimmed for aye ;
 But future nations shall delight to trace
 The glowing record of thy kingly sway, [away.
 When other names, renowned, have passed, like dreams,

XXIV.

Nor shall the willing Muse forget to sing,
In plaintive song, that parting time of yore,
When conquered Scotia's sad and exiled king
Sought friends and refuge on a foreign shore.
Much did thy faithful chiefs the fate deplore
Which hung mysterious o'er their monarch's head,
And in their mad despair lamented sore
The direful doom and destiny which spread
Such carnage o'er the field where thine own heroes bled.

XXV.

And Mary! thou, than whom no fairer flower
E'er beamed in beauty on our Scottish plains,¹²
What friendly hand shall shade that evil hour
Which saw thee captive in a rival's chains?
When shall oblivion wipe away those stains
Which dim the lustre of those golden years,
When England's queen usurped a nation's reins,
And doomed to death, amid a nation's tears,
The monarch of their land, the loveliest of her peers?

XXVI.

And foulest blot on History's varied page,
Unmatched display of perfidy and woe,
What tragic Muse shall faithfully engage
To paint thy dark and dismal tale, Glencoe?¹³
Peace slept upon thy hills, and winter's snow
Lay deep and trackless o'er thy mountain glen;
No sound was heard save Cona's onward flow,
For sable night had spread her curtain then,
Nor fear nor danger seemed to wait Clanranald's men.

XXVII.

Glenlyon's boasted chief was feasted there,¹⁴
And blessed the bounty of MacIan's sway ;
His vassal slaves partook the generous fare,
And mirth and friendship closed the festive day.
But little recked he of that bloody fray
Which o'er him hung like ruin's wasting flame,
Which fixed the brand of vilest treachery
Upon Breadalbane's deep dishonoured name,
And covers all his deeds with infamy and shame.

XXVIII.

Unconscious of their doom, the clansmen lay
Hushed in the stillness of unbroken sleep ;
No welcome moonbeam shed its silver ray
Upon a deed of blood so dark and deep ;
All, all was still, save when the hoary steep
Responded faintly to the eagle's cry ;
When from his hiding-place, with murderous sweep,
The demon of revenge, with glistening eye,
Began his work of death in matchless cruelty.

XXIX.

Dire consternation spread from hill to dale,
And death and carnage held triumphant sway.
Oh ! could the widows' tears no more prevail,
Or wake such brutal hearts to sympathy ?
'Twas vain indeed, for age and infancy
Alike were doomed by bloody hands to die !
In mangled heaps the many corses lay ;
And oft the last and long expiring sigh
Rose trembling on the gale, amid the mountains high.

XXX.

And there was heard a wild and wailing woe,
 Through all the confines of that drear domain ;
 The helpless fled to perish in the snow,
 Refusing to be comforted again.
 They saw their noblest and their dearest slain,
 And all their cottage homes in ashes laid ;
 Where could they seek a safe asylum then,
 Where could the wounded find a secret shade
 Which tyranny and blood could not with death invade ?

XXXI.

Oh ! there was one who fell to rise no more—
 A young and beautiful and gentle child,¹⁶
 Whose flaxen locks, befouled with clotted gore,
 Waved in the tempest of that lonely wild ;
 And with imploring look, so sweetly mild,
 He raised his weeping eyes in Mercy's name :
 And as in hope the kneeling suppliant smiled,
 Glenlyon wept ; but one, more savage, came,
 And pierced that guileless heart with fiendish fatal aim.

XXXII.

Those dark and mouldering desolated walls,
 Which frown stupendous o'er the gulf below,¹⁶
 Tell where MacIan in his own bright halls¹⁷
 In former ages met his deadliest foe ;
 Tell where began that awful overthrow
 Which stains for aye the annals of our clime.
 Yes ! let a nation's indignation go
 From age to age along the stream of Time,
 And brand with deathless scorn the guilt of such a crime.

XXXIII.

But though such gloom impends thy lonely dell,
And claims the tribute of affection's tear,
Oh! still, Glencoe, thy name with wizard spell
To every bard, to every heart is dear.
Amid thy woods and rocky wilds so drear,
Thine own loved Ossian strung his matchless lyre;¹⁸
And Morven's hills and Cona's waters clear
In sweetest echoes caught the poet's fire,
Till all the welkin rung in one sublimest choir.

XXXIV.

And who may strike that matchless lyre again,
And sing of Fingal as it oft hath sung?
Oh! who shall wake the spirit of that strain,
Which slumbers now the leafy woods among?
The mountain zephyr, as it glides along,
Holds high and awful intercourse with thee;
And ever as the echo of thy song
Ascends sublime in loftiest minstrelsy,
Sweet lyre, thy whispers set the captive spirit free.

XXXV.

Sleep by the waters of thy mossy stream,
Immortal minstrel, in eternal bloom!
The stars of evening shed their beauteous beam
In lingering loveliness around thy tomb;
And by their sweet and holy light illumed
The hallowed spot where sleeps thy sacred shade;
While purple heath and mountain flowers perfume
With incense rich and pure the tributes laid
As offerings on thy shrine, by pious pilgrims made.

XXXVI.

How oft, ye cloud-capped hills, at fall of eve,
 When midnight darkness covers all the sky,
 The spirits of the dead are seen to leave
 Their awful homes, in lurid panoply ;
 And on the wings of night careering high
 To some far distant solitary dell,
 In solemn conclave, where no human eye
 E'er looked upon their vigils, they foretell
 The destinies of man, 'mid song and mystic spell.

XXXVII.

And when some noble clan was doomed to be
 In woe, and death, and desolation laid,¹⁹
 How oft in awful wail has fate's decree
 Mysterious rung o'er hill and leafy glade !
 How oft, in thin and ghastly garb arrayed,
 Have guardian spirits sped their airy flight,
 In fitful mazes where the hoary shade
 Of deepest gloom pervades the reign of night,
 And dwellers with the dead arise to life and light !

XXXVIII.

Oh ! who shall lift the dreary veil that shrouds
 Our future destiny in dreams unknown,
 Or fearless penetrate those sable clouds
 Which Superstition weaves around her throne ?²⁰
 When shall Religion claim the world its own,
 And Truth maintain an undisputed sway ?
 Then Peace shall live, celestial Peace alone,
 And gloom and error vanish all away,
 Like lingering night before the beams of brightest day.

XXXIX.

Yes, heavenly Peace, how sweet thy blest domain !
How much conducive to a nation's weal !
Long hast thou smiled on Scotia's favoured plain ;
And longer still may she thy influence feel,
Thy richest, dearest energy reveal,
And shed a halo round our happy land ;
May War's dread element no longer peal
Its awful thunders on our sea-girt strand,
Nor famine spread on her its cold and withering hand.

XL.

Such are thy bloom and prosperous beauty now,
Thou "praise and envy" of surrounding fame :
Divine philosophy enwreathes thy brow,
And bids thee welcome to her best acclaim.
Oh, may the nations who revere thy name
Partake those blessings which have long been thine !
And long may pure devotion's holy flame,
Like Brunswick's glorious star, effulgent shine
On every heart and home with influence benign !

XLI.

Well may thy sons, dear Caledonia, love
With filial reverence thy sacred soil ;
One flood of beauty spreads thy skies above,
And flowery verdure clothes thy fields the while.
Here, in the rocky glen and deep defile,
Dread Winter's dreary desolation reigns ;
And gentle Summer walks with loveliest smile,
In queenly majesty along thy plains ;
While Autumn crowns thy year with rich and golden gains.

XLII.

And there is music in thy rippling rills,
 Which soothes the bosom by its native chime ;
 And there is language in thy towering hills,
 Which speaks to all in eloquence sublime.
 Long have thy rocks withstood the war of Time,
 And bade defiance to the raging storm ;
 The eaglet nestles in its loftier clime,
 And scans with piercing eye each varied form
 Which dares thy awful steep, thou beauteous Cairngorm. ²¹

XLIII.

Land of the brave and good, my native land !
 The page of song is bright in praise of thee ;
 No son of thine shall stain with impious hand
 The glorious records of thy bravery !
 Oh, may those patriot hearts undaunted be,
 Like walls of adamant around our isle,
 To guard from foreign foe that mystic tree
 Which blooms supernal on our mountain soil,
 And underneath whose shade the sons of genius smile !

XLIV.

Who has not heard of those gigantic deeds,
 Those dread achievements of departed days, ²²
 When far in battle-field, 'mid prancing steeds
 And furious combat's desolating blaze,
 Our mountain-heroes boldly rushed, to raise
 Britannia's banner in triumphant fight ;
 When Gallic foemen trembled with amaze,
 And stained their prowess in ignoble flight,
 Or sunk in death before such prodigies of might ? ²³

XLV.

Ah ! who that heard can e'er again forget
The more than mortal energy of thine,
Which dimmed a despot's sun for ever set,²⁴
And swept in fury his heroic line ?
Yes, Caledonia ; fame and truth combine
To laud thy conquest and thy mercy too ;
And sooner shall thy mountains know decline,
And pass away as fleeting shadows do,
Than time shall blot thy name from deathless Waterloo.

XLVI.

Well may thy sons, beloved Scotia ! sigh,
When doomed to exile on a foreign shore ;
Well may they gaze in tearful agony²⁵
Upon a land which shall be theirs no more.
'Twas thus in times of old, when chieftains bore,
In lordly pride, such high despotic sway,—²⁶
The weeping clansmen, in their anguish, tore
Their hearts, and homes, and little ones away,
To seek in sunnier climes the beams of brighter day.

XLVII.

'Twas thus in wailings of unbroken woe
They wandered forth an outcast band, to mourn ;
Their native hills were all deserted now,
And they had left their cottage hearths forlorn.
Ah ! well they knew they should no more return,
To lay their ashes where their fathers slept !
The beauteous rose might deck the mountain thorn,
And summer smile where they in anguish wept,
But they far hence would be o'er ocean's billows swept.

XLVIII.

Yet would they keep, in sealed and deathless love,
 The fond remembrance of their native home ;
 And though propitious skies might shine above,
 And they in peace 'mid verdant valleys roam,
 Still would the image of their country come
 In sweetest vision o'er their spirit's dream ;
 And oft at evening-tide, o'er ocean's foam,
 Their pensive thoughts would seek the setting beam
 That shed its softened light upon their mountain stream.

XLIX.

Such were the dreams that fled o'er their mind,
 And all their fears and all their hopes were one.
 The gray-haired patriarch they left behind,
 With streaming eyes embraced his parting son ;
 He knew his closing race would soon be run,
 And thus he prayed with upward lifted eyes :—
 “ Oh, let thy will, Almighty Power, be done,
 And shed thy richest blessings from the skies
 On these my children dear, my only earthly ties !

L.

“ And let the mercy of my father's God
 Protect and bless and comfort them for aye ;
 And as I kneel upon this hallowed sod,
 Whose dewy turf must soon enshrine my clay,
 One fervent wish before thy throne I lay :
 Oh ! may this wish in fullest hope be given,—
 That though we part to meet no more, we may,
 When o'er the billows of life's waters driven,
 Unite with holier joy, to part no more, in heaven !”

LI.

And when the good old sire had ceased to speak,
One gush of feeling rent each aching breast.
In sweet and lingering light, the last faint streak
Of parting day illumed the golden west ;
Already was the moon's autumnal crest
In orient radiance o'er the mountains hung ;
No sounds awoke that calm and peaceful rest,
Save when was heard their last and farewell song,
Which faintly, far away, in trembling accents rung.

LII.

And they have left their loved and lovely land,
And they shall gaze upon its hills no more !
The heather-bell may bloom on Scotia's strand,
And rippling waters kiss its pebbled shore ;
But they have gone, as some have gone before,
To rest their spirits in a distant clime ;
And coming years shall not again restore
Their sweet green vales and mountain heights sublime,
For they have ceased to claim inheritance in time.

LIII.

Bright in the east the beams of dawning day
Effulgent shed the glories of their light ;
And flowery summer's pure and genial ray
Supplants the footsteps of retiring night.
Here would I linger with supreme delight,
Illustrious Athol ! 'mid thy waving woods ;²⁷
Here would the Muse, in high aërial flight,
Surmount those vales where awful Silence broods,
And hold sweet converse in thy gorgeous solitudes.

LIV.

And thou, Dunkeld, whose calm and Sabbath smile²⁸
 In richest beauty meets my raptured view,
 Oh! as I roam through memory's "long-drawn aisle,"
 And there the vision of my dreams renew,—
 Arise again as thou wert wont to do,
 In all thy peaceful loveliness arrayed;
 And be thy sky the pure cerulean blue,
 Whose light has oft upon thy waters played,
 And spread a mellow bloom around thy sylvan shade!

LV.

How oft in other and more awful times
 Than those which smile upon our country now,
 Has Scotland's blackened catalogue of crimes
 Ignoble hung around her fallen brow!
 Blood stained thy verdant meads, and every bough
 Instinctive trembled in the tempest's thrill;
 The wizard spirits sought thy shade, and thou
 Responsive rung in wailings loud and shrill, [hill.²⁹
 From Birnam's clustering wood to famed Dunsinane's

LVI.

And sounds were heard which none may hear again,
 And lurid lights around thy mountains played;
 Dark Superstition held her triumphs then,³⁰
 And veiled thy beauty in her midnight shade.
 But thou art now in other garb arrayed,
 Sublime remembrance of departed dreams.
 Oh! as I roam in peace thy dewy glades,
 And gaze enraptured on thy shining streams,
 Inspire the Muse to sing in nobler, glowing themes.

LVII.

Bright in the sunset of departed years
 Those sacred visions to my mind arise ;
 Thy old and hallowed pile majestic rears
 Its mouldering turrets to thy cloudless skies.³¹
 Oh ! noblest structure in a nation's eyes—
 Terrestrial dwelling of the " Lofty One"—
 How oft have holy thoughts and pensive sighs
 Within thy walls from pilgrim's bosom gone,
 On pure devotion's wing, as incense to the throne.

LVIII.

But now around these venerated walls
 The mantling ivy in profusion spreads ;
 And in those awful, consecrated halls,
 Where ghostly fathers bent adoring heads,—
 Even there the foot of reckless wanderer treads
 With steps unmindful of such sacred sod ;
 And as he muses on thy wasting shades,
 And altars sacred to devotion's God,
 He reads thy glory gone—thy name is Ichabod.

LIX.

Oh ! I remember well those holy hours
 Of blissful thought which I have passed in thee :
 Thy valleys smiled in all the bloom of flowers,
 And balmy zephyrs wafted o'er the lea ;
 Thy rustic villagers, from labour free,
 In gladness hied them to the house of prayer ;
 Thy chime of Sabbath-bells was dear to me.
 For truth, and peace, and loveliness were there,
 To bid the spirit rest that sought relief from care.

LX.

And in the murmur of thy noble stream,
And in the echo of thy fretted aisle,
The heavenly accents of that holy theme
Spoke peace to man, abundant peace the while ;
And in the melody of Nature's smile
Was blended deep the sweet seraphic strain.
Oh ! what could then the raptured soul beguile
With dreams of distant hope or earthly gain,
When Peace had spread around her beautiful domain !

LXI.

O Scotia ! much thy virtues are revered,
Unfading honours crown thy humble head ;
To patriot hearts thou ever art endeared,
For in their cause thy noblest sons have bled.
But though a Wallace and a Bruce have spread
To every land the terror of thy fame,
The fathers of the Covenant have shed
The brightest glories round thy sacred name,
And from thy children they immortal honours claim.

LXII.

Sweet be your lot, ye sons of rural toil,
Who tend your bleating flocks on hill and plain ;
May bounteous Heaven in richest blessings smile,
And crown your labours with abundant gain !
Nor shall the fond and willing Muse disdain
To wake her numbers in such lowly theme,
When Israel's mighty king in loftiest strain,
And Mantua's classic bard in loved esteem,
Of humble shepherd sung, and sang of vale and stream.

LXIII.

Of't o'er the heath-clad mead at evening-tide
The plaided rustics bend their homeward way ;
While o'er the echoing hill is heard to glide
The joyful hum of village far away.
Sweet consummation of departed day !
To meet again when summer's task is done ;
And in the calm and leafy wood to stray,
Where mossy streams in sweetest cadence run,
And where affection's smile and dearest love are won.

LXIV.

How sweet to linger at the cottage door,
And fondly gaze upon the sunlit skies,
When from afar the softened echoes pour
Upon the heart their mountain melodies !
O scene of bliss ! the fevered soul would prize
In deathless truth such sweet and Sabbath hours ;
And while such dreams of peaceful thought arise,
Perfumed in all the redolence of flowers, [showers.
Oh ! be their sunshine bright, their skies undimmed by

LXV.

Far 'mid the beauty of the western waves,
Thy verdant islands, Caledonia, lie ;
And through their dark and melancholy caves
The howling winds on wings of fury fly.
And ever as the midnight hour draws nigh,
And ocean spirits hover on the gale,
At solemn intervals is heard the sigh
Of shipwrecked mariners, whose dying wail
In piercing accents tells a sad and dismal tale.

LXVI.

Here famed Iona rears its sacred head,³²
 And claims from pious hearts their best regard ;
 Here sleep the ashes of the mighty dead,—
 The king, the priest, the courtier, and the bard.³³
 Meet resting-place for those whose high reward
 Was sought in nobler and sublimer skies ;
 For those who first with exultation heard
 The soothing voice of truth and mercy rise,
 Like angel whispers breathed in heavenly melodies.

LXVII.

Isle of the sea, beloved Iona, hail !
 Bright spot of earth compared to all around ;³⁴
 When shall the song of sacred truth prevail,
 Where shall the record of thy fame be found ?
 When shall again such noble zeal abound
 As blessed the spirit of thy better days ?
 When famed Columba trod thy classic ground,³⁵
 And bade the splendour of religion blaze,
 Till all admiring lands had sung his deathless praise.

LXVIII.

Illustrious theme on which to moralize,
 Unfailing source of deep and lofty song ;
 Oh ! as I see those splendid ruins rise³⁶
 Whose fame and being ages shall prolong,
 Come from amid that bright and sainted throng,
 Immortal essence, where thy glories shine,
 And let thy mantle fall on me, among
 The least of those who worship at thy shrine,
 And bid my spirit glow with energy divine.

LXIX.

Nor shall the Muse forget to wing her flight
 To wondrous Staffa's oft-frequented isle,³⁷
 Where autumn's sunbeam pours its latest light,
 And starry hosts display their sweetest smile.
 What wild magnificence, illustrious pile,
 Pervades the grandeur of thy solemn shade!
 What noble architect, with giant toil,
 The deep foundations of thy glory laid,
 And reared above the waves such gorgeous colonnade?

LXX.

How rich is Nature in omnific power,
 How deep the wisdom of her high decrees!
 The lofty mountain, and the tender flower,
 The howling tempest, and the balmy breeze,—
 These all proclaim her mysteries, and these
 Are spread afar in every varied clime:
 Those scattered emeralds set in "silver seas,"
 Which stand coëval with Creation's prime,
 Bespeak in Nature's cause an agency sublime.

LXXI.

And these are spread in loveliest vista now,
 Like gems of ocean of a thousand dyes:
 Here lofty Jura lifts her shining brow,³⁸
 And nightly whispers to the moonlit skies;
 And far beyond, the heights of Arran rise³⁹
 In awful grandeur from Atlantic deeps;
 In proudest majesty her might defies
 The wild tempestuous hurricane, which sweeps
 In desolating rage around her rocky steeps.

LXXII.

Oh ! I could linger here and gaze on thee,
 Thou ever-beauteous, ever-varying scene ;
 And fondly musing on thy land and sea,
 Recall the glory of thy times again.
 Where now the spirit of that feudal reign,
 Which spread o'er thee the horrid pomp of war ;⁴⁰
 When jealous chieftains sped the marshalled plain,
 And sought, with banners streaming from afar, [star ?
 To dim the light which beamed on thee from Freedom's

LXXIII.

Far other toils engage thy people now,
 Far other sounds awake the evening sky :
 For holy men have trod thy plains, and thou
 Hast heard the voice of Wisdom from on high ;⁴¹
 And now those dreams of dark delusion fly,
 Which long have brooded o'er these noble isles ;
 And valleys ring in guileless revelry
 And sweet contentment fondly sits, and smiles
 In glens which sheltered oft the foeman and his spoils.

LXXIV.

And rural beauty decks thy deep green hills,
 And nobler thoughts possess the Scottish mind ;
 The direful note of war no longer thrills
 In doubtful echoes on the trembling wind.
 Thy garb of varied hue is now enshrined
 Among the annals of thy matchless name ;⁴²
 And with the plough and pruning-hook combined,
 Thy trusty swords have gathered truer fame
 Than ever claymore could in deeds of prowess claim.

LXXV.

And Scotia's hamlets teem with happy hearts,
 And kindness beams in every glistening eye;
 The graphic page its meed of praise imparts,
 And lauds her boundless hospitality.⁴³
 Those lovely "lochs," on which the evening sky⁴⁴
 Reflects the glories of its heavenly beam,
 Resound the hymns of pious melody,⁴⁵
 Which come in plaintive and harmonious theme
 From shallop far away upon the moonlit stream.

LXXVI.

And I have roamed thy sweet and sunny plains,
 Belov'd land! where chieftains nobly fought;
 And I have listened to thy mountain strains
 In all the rapture of ecstatic thought;
 And I have heard the pibroch's thrilling note
 In solemn coronach lament the dead,⁴⁶
 Till distant hills and valleys far remote
 Renewed the echo as it faintly spread,
 And died upon the breeze that wafted o'er my head.

LXXVII.

Yet is there one sweet spot of holy ground
 More lovely far than all the world beside:
 It is where Nature's sweetest smiles abound,
 And Fancy's visions float on fairy tide;
 It is the land amid whose flowery pride
 The "Great Magician" woke his potent spell;⁴⁷
 And where the spirits of his heroes glide—
 From famed Glenfinlas to that lovely dell⁴⁸
 Where Ellen's noble name and fame for ever dwell.⁴⁹

LXXVIII.

Oh! in that gorgeous paradise of bloom
 My spirit glowed with inspiration's fire;
 And as I saw the silver stars relume,
 And heard the music of their heavenly choir,
 I seized with trembling hand that sylvan lyre
 Which oft hath blessed me by its gentle strain;
 And as I linger now in fond desire
 To hear the echo of that song again,
 Its dreams are all away in shadows o'er the plain.

LXXIX.

And moonlight beauty sleeps on Lomond's wave,
 And there is glory in that cloudless sky;
 Those mystic stones which mark a chieftain's grave,⁵⁰
 And point the spot where village worthies lie,—
 Oh! these awake the soul's sincerest sigh,
 And tell the record of their simple tale.
 But as I gaze, with sad and tearful eye,
 Upon that peaceful, solitary vale,
 The shades of evening fall on mountain, stream, and dale.

LXXX.

And now, my own loved lyre, thy task is done,
 And I must leave thee in thy native dell;
 Those chiming streams may still as sweetly run
 As when I listened to thy soothing spell.
 Yet am I sad to bid thee thus farewell,
 Thou dear companion of my happier days!
 Oh! could thy chords in nobler raptures swell,
 And claim the proudest attributes of praise,
 I could not love thee more for such exalted lays!

LXXXI.

For I have loved thee with devotion's love,
And I will love thee in devotion still.
Those bright blue skies may ever shine above,
And shed their glory on the gushing rill ;
But blissful dreams of thee for ever will
Upon this heart in hallowed beauty shine.
And if the zephyr, wafting o'er the hill,
Shall wake again those slumbering chords of thine,
Oh ! be their numbers strung to melody divine.

