TO ORKNEY.

Land of the whirlpool, torrent, foam,
Where oceans meet in maddening shock;
The beetling cliff, the shelving holm,
The dark, insidious rock;
Land of the bleak, the treeless moor,
The sterile mountain, seared and riven;
The shapeless cairn, the ruined tower,
Scathed by the bolts of heaven;
The yawning gulf, the treacherous sand—
I love thee still, my native land!

Land of the dark, the Runic rhyme,
The mystic ring, the cavern hoar,
The Scandinavian seer, sublime
In legendary lore;
Land of a thousand sea-kings' graves—
Those tameless spirits of the past,
Fierce as their subject Arctic waves,
Or hyperborean blast;
Though polar billows round thee foam,
I love thee!—thou wert once my home.

With glowing heart and island lyre,
Ah! would some native bard arise
To sing, with all a poet's fire,
Thy stern sublimities—
The roaring flood, the rushing stream,
The promontory wild and bare,
The pyramid where sea-birds scream
Aloft in middle air,
The Druid temple on the heath,
Old even beyond tradition's breath.
The Temple of Nature.

Though I have roamed through verdant glades,
    In cloudless climes, ’neath azure skies;
Or plucked from beauteous Orient meads
    Flowers of celestial dyes;
Though I have laved in limpid streams
    That murmur over golden sands,
Or basked amid the fulgent beams
    That flame o’er fairer lands;
Or stretched me in the sparry grot,—
My country! thou wert ne’er forgot.

DAVID VEDDER.
(Native of Deerness; 1790-1854.)