

THE WORKS OF WILLIAM BLAKE

By William Blake

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POETICAL SKETCHES

To Spring

O Thou with dewy locks, who lookest down
Thro' the clear windows of the morning, turn
Thine angel eyes upon our western isle,
Which in full choir hails thy approach, O Spring!

The hills tell each other, and the list'ning
Valleys hear; all our longing eyes are turnèd
Up to thy bright pavilions: issue forth,
And let thy holy feet visit our clime.

Come o'er the eastern hills, and let our winds
Kiss thy perfumèd garments; let us taste
Thy morn and evening breath; scatter thy pearls
Upon our love-sick land that mourns for thee.

O deck her forth with thy fair fingers; pour
Thy soft kisses on her bosom; and put
Thy golden crown upon her languish'd head,
Whose modest tresses were bound up for thee.

To Summer

O thou who passest thro' our valleys in
Thy strength, curb thy fierce steeds, allay the heat
That flames from their large nostrils! thou, O Summer,
Oft pitched'st here thy golden tent, and oft
Beneath our oaks hast slept, while we beheld
With joy thy ruddy limbs and flourishing hair.

Beneath our thickest shades we oft have heard
Thy voice, when noon upon his fervid car
Rode o'er the deep of heaven; beside our springs
Sit down, and in our mossy valleys, on

Some bank beside a river clear, throw thy
Silk draperies off, and rush into the stream:
Our valleys love the Summer in his pride.

Our bards are fam'd who strike the silver wire:
Our youth are bolder than the southern swains:
Our maidens fairer in the sprightly dance:
We lack not songs, nor instruments of joy,

Nor echoes sweet, nor waters clear as heaven,
Nor laurel wreaths against the sultry heat.

To Autumn

O Autumn, laden with fruit, and stainèd
With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit
Beneath my shady roof; there thou may'st rest,
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe,
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!
Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.

˘The narrow bud opens her beauties to
The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;
Blossoms hang round the brows of Morning, and
Flourish down the bright cheek of modest Eve,
Till clust'ring Summer breaks forth into singing,
And feather'd clouds strew flowers round her head.

˘The spirits of the air live on the smells
Of fruit; and Joy, with pinions light, roves round
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees.'
Thus sang the jolly Autumn as he sat;
Then rose, girded himself, and o'er the bleak
Hills fled from our sight; but left his golden load.

To Winter

˘O Winter! bar thine adamantine doors:
The north is thine; there hast thou built thy dark
Deep-founded habitation. Shake not thy roofs,
Nor bend thy pillars with thine iron car.'

He hears me not, but o'er the yawning deep
Rides heavy; his storms are unchain'd, sheathèd
In ribbèd steel; I dare not lift mine eyes,
For he hath rear'd his sceptre o'er the world.

Lo! now the direful monster, whose skin clings
To his strong bones, strides o'er the groaning rocks:
He withers all in silence, and in his hand
Unclothes the earth, and freezes up frail life.

He takes his seat upon the cliffs,--the mariner
Cries in vain. Poor little wretch, that deal'st

With storms!--till heaven smiles, and the monster
Is driv'n yelling to his caves beneath mount Hecla.

To the Evening Star

Thou fair-hair'd angel of the evening,
Now, whilst the sun rests on the mountains, light
Thy bright torch of love; thy radiant crown
Put on, and smile upon our evening bed!
Smile on our loves, and while thou drawest the
Blue curtains of the sky, scatter thy silver dew
On every flower that shuts its sweet eyes
In timely sleep. Let thy west wind sleep on
The lake; speak silence with thy glimmering eyes,
And wash the dusk with silver. Soon, full soon,
Dost thou withdraw; then the wolf rages wide,
And the lion glares thro' the dun forest:
The fleeces of our flocks are cover'd with
Thy sacred dew: protect them with thine influence,

To Morning

O holy virgin! clad in purest white,
Unlock heav'n's golden gates, and issue forth;
Awake the dawn that sleeps in heaven; let light
Rise from the chambers of the east, and bring
The honey'd dew that cometh on waking day.
O radiant morning, salute the sun
Rous'd like a huntsman to the chase, and with
Thy buskin'd feet appear upon our hills.

Fair Elenor

The bell struck one, and shook the silent tower;
The graves give up their dead: fair Elenor
Walk'd by the castle gate, and lookèd in.
A hollow groan ran thro' the dreary vaults.

She shriek'd aloud, and sunk upon the steps,
On the cold stone her pale cheeks. Sickly smells
Of death issue as from a sepulchre,
And all is silent but the sighing vaults.

Chill Death withdraws his hand, and she revives;
Amaz'd, she finds herself upon her feet,

And, like a ghost, thro' narrow passages
Walking, feeling the cold walls with her hands.

Fancy returns, and now she thinks of bones
And grinning skulls, and corruptible death
Wrapp'd in his shroud; and now fancies she hears
Deep sighs, and sees pale sickly ghosts gliding.

At length, no fancy but reality
Distracts her. A rushing sound, and the feet
Of one that fled, approaches--Ellen stood
Like a dumb statue, froze to stone with fear.

The wretch approaches, crying: `The deed is done;
Take this, and send it by whom thou wilt send;
It is my life--send it to Elenor:--
He's dead, and howling after me for blood!

`Take this,' he cried; and thrust into her arms
A wet napkin, wrapp'd about; then rush'd
Past, howling: she receiv'd into her arms
Pale death, and follow'd on the wings of fear.

They pass'd swift thro' the outer gate; the wretch,
Howling, leap'd o'er the wall into the moat,
Stifling in mud. Fair Ellen pass'd the bridge,
And heard a gloomy voice cry `Is it done?'

As the deer wounded, Ellen flew over
The pathless plain; as the arrows that fly
By night, destruction flies, and strikes in darkness.
She fled from fear, till at her house arriv'd.

Her maids await her; on her bed she falls,
That bed of joy, where erst her lord hath press'd:
`Ah, woman's fear!' she cried; `ah, cursèd duke!
Ah, my dear lord! ah, wretched Elenor!

`My lord was like a flower upon the brows
Of lusty May! Ah, life as frail as flower!
O ghastly death! withdraw thy cruel hand,
Seek'st thou that flow'r to deck thy horrid temples?

`My lord was like a star in highest heav'n
Drawn down to earth by spells and wickedness;

My lord was like the opening eyes of day
When western winds creep softly o'er the flowers;

`But he is darken'd; like the summer's noon
Clouded; fall'n like the stately tree, cut down;
The breath of heaven dwelt among his leaves.
O Elenor, weak woman, fill'd with woe!

Thus having spoke, she raisèd up her head,
And saw the bloody napkin by her side,
Which in her arms she brought; and now, tenfold
More terrified, saw it unfold itself.

Her eyes were fix'd; the bloody cloth unfolds,
Disclosing to her sight the murder'd head
Of her dear lord, all ghastly pale, clotted
With gory blood; it groan'd, and thus it spake:

`O Elenor, I am thy husband's head,
Who, sleeping on the stones of yonder tower,
Was 'reft of life by the accursèd duke!
A hirèd villain turn'd my sleep to death!

`O Elenor, beware the cursèd duke;
O give not him thy hand, now I am dead;
He seeks thy love; who, coward, in the night,
Hirèd a villain to bereave my life.'

She sat with dead cold limbs, stiffen'd to stone;
She took the gory head up in her arms;
She kiss'd the pale lips; she had no tears to shed;
She hugg'd it to her breast, and groan'd her last.

Song

How sweet I roam'd from field to field
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He show'd me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
He led me through his gardens fair
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May dews my wings were wet,
 And Phoebus fir'd my vocal rage;
 He caught me in his silken net,
 And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
 Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;
 Then stretches out my golden wing,
 And mocks my loss of liberty.

Song

My silks and fine array,
 My smiles and languish'd air,
 By love are driv'n away;
 And mournful lean Despair
 Brings me yew to deck my grave;
 Such end true lovers have.

His face is fair as heav'n
 When springing buds unfold;
 O why to him was't giv'n
 Whose heart is wintry cold?
 His breast is love's all-worshipp'd tomb,
 Where all love's pilgrims come.

Bring me an axe and spade,
 Bring me a winding-sheet;
 When I my grave have made
 Let winds and tempests beat:
 Then down I'll lie as cold as clay.
 True love doth pass away!

Song

Love and harmony combine,
 And around our souls entwine
 While thy branches mix with mine,
 And our roots together join.

Joys upon our branches sit,
 Chirping loud and singing sweet;
 Like gentle streams beneath our feet
 Innocence and virtue meet.

Thou the golden fruit dost bear,
 I am clad in flowers fair;
 Thy sweet boughs perfume the air,
 And the turtle buildeth there.

There she sits and feeds her young,
 Sweet I hear her mournful song;
 And thy lovely leaves among,
 There is love, I hear his tongue.

There his charming nest doth lay,
 There he sleeps the night away;
 There he sports along the day,
 And doth among our branches play.

Song

I love the jocund dance,
 The softly breathing song,
 Where innocent eyes do glance,
 And where lips the maiden's tongue.

I love the laughing vale,
 I love the echoing hill,
 Where mirth does never fail,
 And the jolly swain laughs his fill.

I love the pleasant cot,
 I love the innocent bow'r,
 Where white and brown is our lot,
 Or fruit in the mid-day hour.

I love the oaken seat,
 Beneath the oaken tree,
 Where all the old villagers meet,
 And laugh our sports to see.

I love our neighbours all,
 But, Kitty, I better love thee;
 And love them I ever shall;
 But thou art all to me.

Song

Memory, hither come
 And tune your merry notes:

And, while upon the wind
 Your music floats,
 I'll pore upon the stream
 Where sighing lovers dream,
 And fish for fancies as they pass
 Within the watery glass.

I'll drink of the clear stream,
 And hear the linnet's song;
 And there I'll lie and dream
 The day along:
 And when night comes, I'll go
 To places fit for woe,
 Walking along the darken'd valley
 With silent Melancholy.

Mad Song

The wild winds weep,
 And the night is a-cold;
 Come hither, Sleep,
 And my griefs unfold:
 But lo! the morning peeps
 Over the eastern steeps,
 And the rustling beds of dawn
 The earth do scorn.

Lo! to the vault
 Of pavèd heaven,
 With sorrow fraught
 My notes are driven:
 They strike the ear of night,
 Make weep the eyes of day;
 They make made the roaring winds,
 And with tempests play.

Like a fiend in a cloud,
 With howling woe
 After night I do crowd,
 And with night will go;
 I turn my back to the east
 From whence comforts have increas'd
 For light doth seize my brain
 With frantic pain.

Song

Fresh from the dewy hill, the merry year
 Smiles on my head and mounts his flaming car;
 Round my young brows the laurel wreathes a shade,
 And rising glories beam around my head.

My feet are wing'd, while o'er the dewy lawn,
 I meet my maiden risen like the morn:
 O bless those holy feet, like angels' feet;
 O bless those limbs, beaming with heav'nly light.

Like as an angel glitt'ring in the sky
 In times of innocence and holy joy;
 The joyful shepherd stops his grateful song
 To hear the music of an angel's tongue.

So when she speaks, the voice of Heaven I hear;
 So when we walk, nothing impure comes near;
 Each field seems Eden, and each calm retreat;
 Each village seems the haunt of holy feet.

But that sweet village where my black-eyed maid
 Closes her eyes in sleep beneath night's shade,
 Whene'er I enter, more than mortal fire
 Burns in my soul, and does my song inspire.

Song

When early morn walks forth in sober grey,
 Then to my black-eyed maid I haste away;
 When evening sits beneath her dusky bow'r,
 And gently sighs away the silent hour,
 The village bell alarms, away I go,
 And the vale darkens at my pensive woe.

To that sweet village, where my black-eyed maid
 Doth drop a tear beneath the silent shade,
 I turn my eyes; and pensive as I go
 Curse my black stars and bless my pleasing woe.

Oft when the summer sleeps among the trees,
 Whisp'ring faint murmurs to the scanty breeze,
 I walk the village round; if at her side
 A youth doth walk in stolen joy and pride,
 I curse my stars in bitter grief and woe,
 That made my love so high and me so low.

O should she e'er prove false, his limbs I'd tear
 And throw all pity on the burning air;
 I'd curse bright fortune for my mixèd lot,
 And then I'd die in peace and be forgot.

To the Muses

Whether on Ida's shady brow,
 Or in the chambers of the East,
 The chambers of the sun, that now
 From ancient melody have ceas'd;

Whether in Heaven ye wander fair,
 Or the green corners of the earth,
 Or the blue regions of the air
 Where the melodious winds have birth;

Whether on crystal rocks ye rove,
 Beneath the bosom of the sea
 Wand'ring in many a coral grove,
 Fair Nine, forsaking Poetry!

How have you left the ancient love
 That bards of old enjoy'd in you!
 The languid strings do scarcely move!
 The sound is forc'd, the notes are few

Gwin King of Norway

Come, kings, and listen to my song:
 When Gwin, the son of Nore,
 Over the nations of the North
 His cruel sceptre bore;

The nobles of the land did feed
 Upon the hungry poor;
 They tear the poor man's lamb, and drive
 The needy from their door.

'The land is desolate; our wives
 And children cry for bread;
 Arise, and pull the tyrant down!
 Let Gwin be humblèd!'

Gordred the giant rous'd himself
 From sleeping in his cave;

He shook the hills, and in the clouds
The troubl'd banners wave.

Beneath them roll'd, like tempests black,
The num'rous sons of blood;
Like lions' whelps, roaring abroad,
Seeking their nightly food.

Down Bleron's hills they dreadful rush,
Their cry ascends the clouds;
The trampling horse and clanging arms
Like rushing mighty floods!

Their wives and children, weeping loud,
Follow in wild array,
Howling like ghosts, furious as wolves
In the bleak wintry day.

'Pull down the tyrant to the dust,
Let Gwin be humblèd,'
They cry, 'and let ten thousand lives
Pay for the tyrant's head.'

From tow'r to tow'r the watchmen cry,
'O Gwin, the son of Nore,
Arouse thyself! the nations, black
Like clouds, come rolling o'er!'

Gwin rear'd his shield, his palace shakes,
His chiefs come rushing round;
Each, like an awful thunder cloud,
With voice of solemn sound:

Like rearèd stones around a grave
They stand around the King;
Then suddenly each seiz'd his spear,
And clashing steel does ring.

The husbandman does leave his plough
To wade thro' fields of gore;
The merchant binds his brows in steel,
And leaves the trading shore;

The shepherd leaves his mellow pipe,
And sounds the trumpet shrill;

The workman throws his hammer down
To heave the bloody bill.

Like the tall ghost of Barraton
Who sports in stormy sky,
Gwin leads his host, as black as night
When pestilence does fly,

With horses and with chariots--
And all his spearmen bold
March to the sound of mournful song,
Like clouds around him roll'd.

Gwin lifts his hand--the nations halt;
'Prepare for war!' he cries--
Gordred appears!--his frowning brow
Troubles our northern skies.

The armies stand, like balances
Held in th' Almighty's hand;--
'Gwin, thou hast fill'd thy measure up:
Thou'rt swept from out the land.'

And now the raging armies rush'd
Like warring mighty seas;
The heav'ns are shook with roaring war,
The dust ascends the skies!

Earth smokes with blood, and groans and shakes
To drink her children's gore,
A sea of blood; nor can the eye
See to the trembling shore!

And on the verge of this wild sea
Famine and death doth cry;
The cries of women and of babes
Over the field doth fly.

The King is seen raging afar,
With all his men of might;
Like blazing comets scattering death
Thro' the red fev'rous night.

Beneath his arm like sheep they die,
And groan upon the plain;

The battle faints, and bloody men
Fight upon hills of slain.

Now death is sick, and riven men
Labour and toil for life;
Steed rolls on steed, and shield on shield,
Sunk in this sea of strife!

The god of war is drunk with blood;
The earth doth faint and fail;
The stench of blood makes sick the heav'ns;
Ghosts glut the throat of hell!

O what have kings to answer for
Before that awful throne;
When thousand deaths for vengeance cry,
And ghosts accusing groan!

Like blazing comets in the sky
That shake the stars of light,
Which drop like fruit unto the earth
Thro' the fierce burning night;

Like these did Gwin and Gordred meet,
And the first blow decides;
Down from the brow unto the breast
Gordred his head divides!

Gwin fell: the sons of Norway fled,
All that remain'd alive;
The rest did fill the vale of death,
For them the eagles strive.

The river Dorman roll'd their blood
Into the northern sea;
Who mourn'd his sons, and overwhelm'd
The pleasant south country.

An Imitation of Spenser

Golden Apollo, that thro' heaven wide
Scatter'st the rays of light, and truth's beams,
In lucent words my darkling verses dight,
And wash my earthy mind in thy clear streams,
That wisdom may descend in fairy dreams,
All while the jocund hours in thy train

Scatter their fancies at thy poet's feet;
 And when thou yields to night thy wide domain,
 Let rays of truth enlight his sleeping brain.

For brutish Pan in vain might thee assay
 With tinkling sounds to dash thy nervous verse,
 Sound without sense; yet in his rude affray,
 (For ignorance is Folly's leasing nurse
 And love of Folly needs none other's curse)
 Midas the praise hath gain'd of lengthen'd ears,
 For which himself might deem him ne'er the worse
 To sit in council with his modern peers,
 And judge of tinkling rimes and elegances terse.

And thou, Mercurius, that with wingèd brow
 Dost mount aloft into the yielding sky,
 And thro' Heav'n's halls thy airy flight dost throw,
 Entering with holy feet to where on high
 Jove weighs the counsel of futurity;
 Then, laden with eternal fate, dost go
 Down, like a falling star, from autumn sky,
 And o'er the surface of the silent deep dost fly:

If thou arrivest at the sandy shore
 Where nought but envious hissing adders dwell,
 Thy golden rod, thrown on the dusty floor,
 Can charm to harmony with potent spell.
 Such is sweet Eloquence, that does dispel
 Envy and Hate that thirst for human gore;
 And cause in sweet society to dwell
 Vile savage minds that lurk in lonely cell

O Mercury, assist my lab'ring sense
 That round the circle of the world would fly,
 As the wing'd eagle scorns the tow'ry fence
 Of Alpine hills round his high aëry,
 And searches thro' the corners of the sky,
 Sports in the clouds to hear the thunder's sound,
 And see the wingèd lightnings as they fly;
 Then, bosom'd in an amber cloud, around
 Plumes his wide wings, and seeks Sol's palace high.

And thou, O warrior maid invincible,
 Arm'd with the terrors of Almighty Jove,
 Pallas, Minerva, maiden terrible,
 Lov'st thou to walk the peaceful solemn grove,

In solemn gloom of branches interwove?
 Or bear'st thy AEGIS o'er the burning field,
 Where, like the sea, the waves of battle move?
 Or have thy soft piteous eyes beheld
 The weary wanderer thro' the desert rove?
 Or does th' afflicted man thy heav'nly bosom move?

Blind Man's Buff

When silver snow decks Susan's clothes,
 And jewel hangs at th' shepherd's nose,
 The blushing bank is all my care,
 With hearth so red, and walls so fair;
 `Heap the sea-coal, come, heap it higher,
 The oaken log lay on the fire.'
 The well-wash'd stools, a circling row,
 With lad and lass, how fair the show!
 The merry can of nut-brown ale,
 The laughing jest, the love-sick tale,
 Till, tir'd of chat, the game begins.
 The lasses prick the lads with pins;
 Roger from Dolly twitch'd the stool,
 She, falling, kiss'd the ground, poor fool!
 She blush'd so red, with sidelong glance
 At hob-nail Dick, who griev'd the chance.
 But now for Blind man's Buff they call;
 Of each encumbrance clear the hall--
 Jenny her silken 'kerchief folds,
 And blear-eyed Will the black lot holds.
 Now laughing stops, with `Silence! hush!'
 And Peggy Pout gives Sam a push.
 The Blind man's arms, extended wide,
 Sam slips between:-- `O woe betide
 Thee, clumsy Will!--but titt'ring Kate
 Is penn'd up in the corner straight!
 And now Will's eyes beheld the play;
 He thought his face was t'other way.
 `Now, Kitty, now! what chance hast thou,
 Roger so near thee!--Trips, I vow!
 She catches him--then Roger ties
 His own head up--but not his eyes;
 For thro' the slender cloth he sees,
 And runs at Sam, who slips with ease
 His clumsy hold; and, dodging round,
 Sukey is tumbled on the ground!--
 `See what it is to play unfair!

Where cheating is, there's mischief there.'
 But Roger still pursues the chase,--
 `He sees! he sees!' cries, softly, Grace;
 `O Roger, thou, unskill'd in art,
 Must, surer bound, go thro' thy part!
 Now Kitty, pert, repeats the rimes,
 And Roger turns him round three times,
 Then pauses ere he starts--but Dick
 Was mischief bent upon a trick;
 Down on his hands and knees he lay
 Directly in the Blind man's way,
 Then cries out `Hem!' Hodge heard, and ran
 With hood-wink'd chance--sure of his man;
 But down he came. -- Alas, how frail
 Our best of hopes, how soon they fail!
 With crimson drops he stains the ground;
 Confusion startles all around.
 Poor piteous Dick supports his head,
 And fain would cure the hurt he made.
 But Kitty hasted with a key,
 And down his back they straight convey
 The cold relief; the blood is stay'd,
 And Hodge again holds up his head.
 Such are the fortunes of the game,
 And those who play should stop the same
 By wholesome laws; such as all those
 Who on the blinded man impose
 Stand in his stead; as, long a-gone,
 When men were first a nation grown,
 Lawless they liv'd, till wantonness
 And liberty began t' increase,
 And one man lay in another's way;
 Then laws were made to keep fair play.

King Edward the Third

PERSONS

King Edward	The Black Prince	Queen Philippa
Duke of Clarence	Sir John Chandos	Sir Thomas Dagworth
Sir Walter Manny	Lord Audley	Lord Percy
Bishop William,		Peter Blunt,
<i>Dagworth's man</i>		<i>a common soldier</i>

Scene: *The Coast of France. King Edward and Nobles before it. The Army.*

King. O thou, to whose fury the nations are
 But as dust, maintain thy servant's right!
 Without thine aid, the twisted mail, and spear,
 And forgèd helm, and shield of seven-times beaten brass,
 Are idle trophies of the vanquisher.
 When confusion rages, when the field is in a flame,
 When the cries of blood tear horror from heav'n,
 And yelling Death runs up and down the ranks,
 Let Liberty, the charter'd right of Englishmen,
 Won by our fathers in many a glorious field,
 Enerve my soldiers; let Liberty
 Blaze in each countenance, and fire the battle.
 The enemy fight in chains, invisible chains, but heavy;
 Their minds are fetter'd, then how can they be free?
 While, like the mounting flame,
 We spring to battle o'er the floods of death!
 And these fair youths, the flow'r of England,
 Venturing their lives in my most righteous cause,
 O sheathe their hearts with triple steel, that they
 May emulate their fathers' virtues.
 And thou, my son, be strong; thou fightest for a crown
 That death can never ravish from thy brow,
 A crown of glory -- but from thy very dust
 Shall beam a radiance, to fire the breasts
 Of youth unborn! Our names are written equal
 In fame's wide-trophied hall; 'tis ours to gild
 The letters, and to make them shine with gold
 That never tarnishes: whether Third Edward,
 Or the Prince of Wales, or Montacute, or Mortimer,
 Or ev'n the least by birth, shall gain the brightest fame,
 Is in His hand to whom all men are equal.
 The world of men are like the num'rous stars
 That beam and twinkle in the depth of night,
 Each clad in glory according to his sphere;
 But we, that wander from our native seats
 And beam forth lustre on a darkling world,
 Grow larger as we advance: and some, perhaps
 The most obscure at home, that scarce were seen
 To twinkle in their sphere, may so advance
 That the astonish'd world, with upturn'd eyes,
 Regardless of the moon, and those that once were bright,
 Stand only for to gaze upon their splendour.
 [*He here knights the Prince, and other young Nobles.*]
 Now let us take a just revenge for those

Brave Lords, who fell beneath the bloody axe
 At Paris. Thanks, noble Harcourt, for 'twas
 By your advice we landed here in Brittany,
 A country not yet sown with destruction,
 And where the fiery whirlwind of swift war
 Has not yet swept its desolating wing.--
 Into three parties we divide by day,
 And separate march, but join again at night;
 Each knows his rank, and Heav'n marshal all. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene: English Court. Lionel, Duke of Clarence; Queen Philippa; Lords; Bishop, &c

Clarence. My Lords, I have by the advice of her
 Whom I am doubly bound to obey, my Parent
 And my Sovereign, call'd you together.
 My task is great, my burden heavier than
 My unfledg'd years;
 Yet, with your kind assistance, Lords, I hope
 England shall dwell in peace; that, while my father
 Toils in his wars, and turns his eyes on this
 His native shore, and sees commerce fly round
 With his white wings, and sees his golden London
 And her silver Thames, throng'd with shining spires
 And corded ships, her merchants buzzing round
 Like summer bees, and all the golden cities
 In his land overflowing with honey,
 Glory may not be dimm'd with clouds of care.
 Say, Lords, should not our thoughts be first to commerce?
 My Lord Bishop, you would recommend us agriculture?

Bishop. Sweet Prince, the arts of peace are great,
 And no less glorious than those of war,
 Perhaps more glorious in the philosophic mind.
 When I sit at my home, a private man,
 My thoughts are on my gardens and my fields,
 How to employ the hand that lacketh bread.
 If Industry is in my diocese,
 Religion will flourish; each man's heart
 Is cultivated and will bring forth fruit:
 This is my private duty and my pleasure.
 But, as I sit in council with my Prince,
 My thoughts take in the gen'ral good of the whole,
 And England is the land favour'd by Commerce;
 For Commerce, tho' the child of Agriculture,
 Fosters his parent, who else must sweat and toil,
 And gain but scanty fare. Then, my dear Lord,

Be England's trade our care; and we, as tradesmen,
Looking to the gain of this our native land.

Clar. O my good Lord, true wisdom drops like honey
From your tongue, as from a worshipp'd oak.
Forgive, my Lords, my talkative youth, that speaks
Not merely what my narrow observation has
Pick'd up, but what I have concluded from your lessons.
Now, by the Queen's advice, I ask your leave
To dine to-morrow with the Mayor of London:
If I obtain your leave, I have another boon
To ask, which is the favour of your company.
I fear Lord Percy will not give me leave.

Percy. Dear Sir, a prince should always keep his state,
And grant his favours with a sparing hand,
Or they are never rightly valuèd.
These are my thoughts; yet it were best to go
But keep a proper dignity, for now
You represent the sacred person of
Your father; 'tis with princes as 'tis with the sun;
If not sometimes o'er-clouded, we grow weary
Of his officious glory.

Clar. Then you will give me leave to shine sometimes,
My Lord?

Lord. Thou hast a gallant spirit, which I fear
Will be imposèd on by the closer sort. [*Aside*

Clar. Well, I'll endeavour to take
Lord Percy's advice; I have been usèd so much
To dignity that I'm sick on 't.

Queen Phil. Fie, fie, Lord Clarence! you proceed not to business,
But speak of your own pleasures.
I hope their Lordships will excuse your giddiness.

Clar. My Lords, the French have fitted out many
Small ships of war, that, like to ravening wolves,
Infest our English seas, devouring all
Our burden'd vessels, spoiling our naval flocks.
The merchants do complain and beg our aid.

Percy. The merchants are rich enough,
Can they not help themselves?

Bish. They can, and may; but how to gain their will
Requires our countenance and help.

Percy. When that they find they must, my Lord, they will:
Let them but suffer awhile, and you shall see
They will bestir themselves.

Bish. Lord Percy cannot mean that we should suffer
This disgrace: if so, we are not sovereigns
Of the sea -- our right, that Heaven gave

To England, when at the birth of nature
 She was seated in the deep; the Ocean ceas'd
 His mighty roar, and fawning play'd around
 Her snowy feet, and own'd his awful Queen.
 Lord Percy, if the heart is sick, the head
 Must be aggriev'd; if but one member suffer,
 The heart doth fail. You say, my Lord, the merchants
 Can, if they will, defend themselves against
 These rovers: this is a noble scheme,
 Worthy the brave Lord Percy, and as worthy
 His generous aid to put it into practice.

Percy. Lord Bishop, what was rash in me is wise
 In you; I dare not own the plan. 'Tis not

Mine. Yet will I, if you please,
 Quickly to the Lord Mayor, and work him onward
 To this most glorious voyage; on which cast
 I'll set my whole estate,
 But we will bring these Gallic rovers under.

Queen Phil. Thanks, brave Lord Percy; you have the thanks
 Of England's Queen, and will, ere long, of England. [*Exeunt*]

Scene. At Cressy. Sir Thomas Dagworth and Lord Audley meeting.

Audley. Good morrow, brave Sir Thomas; the bright morn
 Smiles on our army, and the gallant sun
 Springs from the hills like a young hero
 Into the battle, shaking his golden locks
 Exultingly: this is a promising day.

Dagworth. Why, my Lord Audley, I don't know.
 Give me your hand, and now I'll tell you what
 I think you do not know. Edward's afraid of Philip.

Audley. Ha! Ha! Sir Thomas! you but joke;
 Did you e'er see him fear? At Blanchetaque,
 When almost singly he drove six thousand
 French from the ford, did he fear then?

Dagw. Yes, fear -- that made him fight so.

Aud. By the same reason I might say tis fear
 That makes you fight.

Dagw. Mayhap you may: look upon Edward's face,
 No one can say he fears; but when he turns
 His back, then I will say it to his face;
 He is afraid: he makes us all afraid.
 I cannot bear the enemy at my back.
 Now here we are at Cressy; where to-morrow,
 To-morrow we shall know. I say, Lord Audley,

That Edward runs away from Philip.

Aud. Perhaps you think the Prince too is afraid?

Dagw. No; God forbid! I'm sure he is not.
He is a young lion. O! I have seen him fight
And give command, and lightning has flashèd
From his eyes across the field: I have seen him
Shake hands with death, and strike a bargain for
The enemy; he has danc'd in the field
Of battle, like the youth at morris-play.
I'm sure he's not afraid, nor Warwick, nor none--
None of us but me, and I am very much afraid.

Aud. Are you afraid too, Sir Thomas?

I believe that as much as I believe
The King's afraid: but what are you afraid of?

Dagw. Of having my back laid open; we turn
Our backs to the fire, till we shall burn our skirts.

Aud. And this, Sir Thomas, you call fear? Your fear
Is of a different kind then from the King's;
He fears to turn his face, and you to turn your back.
I do not think, Sir Thomas, you know what fear is.

Enter Sir John Chandos.

Chand. Good morrow, Generals; I give you joy:
Welcome to the fields of Cressy. Here we stop,
And wait for Philip.

Dagw. I hope so.

Aud. There, Sir Thomas, do you call that fear?

Dagw. I don't know; perhaps he takes it by fits.
Why, noble Chandos, look you here--
One rotten sheep spoils the whole flock;
And if the bell-wether is tainted, I wish
The Prince may not catch the distemper too.

Chand. Distemper, Sir Thomas! what distemper?
I have not heard.

Dagw. Why, Chandos, you are a wise man,
I know you understand me; a distemper
The King caught here in France of running away.

Aud. Sir Thomas, you say you have caught it too.

Dagw. And so will the whole army; 'tis very catching,
For, when the coward runs, the brave man totters.
Perhaps the air of the country is the cause.
I feel it coming upon me, so I strive against it;
You yet are whole; but, after a few more
Retreats, we all shall know how to retreat
Better than fight. -- To be plain, I think retreating

Too often takes away a soldier's courage.

Chand. Here comes the King himself: tell him your thoughts
Plainly, Sir Thomas.

Dagw. I've told him before, but his disorder
Makes him deaf.

Enter King Edward and Black Prince.

King. Good morrow, Generals; when English courage fails
Down goes our right to France.
But we are conquerors everywhere; nothing
Can stand our soldiers; each man is worthy
Of a triumph. Such an army of heroes
Ne'er shouted to the Heav'ns, nor shook the field.
Edward, my son, thou art
Most happy, having such command: the man
Were base who were not fir'd to deeds
Above heroic, having such examples.

Prince. Sire, with respect and deference I look
Upon such noble souls, and wish myself
Worthy the high command that Heaven and you
Have given me. When I have seen the field glow,
And in each countenance the soul of war
Curb'd by the manliest reason, I have been wing'd
With certain victory; and 'tis my boast,
And shall be still my glory, I was inspir'd
By these brave troops.

Dagw. Your Grace had better make
Them all generals.

King. Sir Thomas Dagworth, you must have your joke,
And shall, while you can fight as you did at
The Ford.

Dagw. I have a small petition to your Majesty.

King. What can Sir Thomas Dagworth ask that Edward
Can refuse?

Dagw. I hope your Majesty cannot refuse so great
A trifle; I've gilt your cause with my best blood,
And would again, were I not forbid
By him whom I am bound to obey: my hands
Are tièd up, my courage shrunk and wither'd,
My sinews slacken'd, and my voice scarce heard;
Therefore I beg I may return to England.

King. I know not what you could have ask'd, Sir Thomas,
That I would not have sooner parted with
Than such a soldier as you have been, and such a friend:
Nay, I will know the most remote particulars

Of this your strange petition: that, if I can,
I still may keep you here.

Dagw. Here on the fields of Cressy we are settled
Till Philip springs the tim'rous covey again.
The wolf is hunted down by causeless fear;
The lion flees, and fear usurps his heart,
Startled, astonish'd at the clam'rous cock;
The eagle, that doth gaze upon the sun,
Fears the small fire that plays about the fen.
If, at this moment of their idle fear,
The dog doth seize the wolf, the forester the lion,
The negro in the crevice of the rock
Doth seize the soaring eagle; undone by flight,
They tame submit: such the effect flight has
On noble souls. Now hear its opposite:
The tim'rous stag starts from the thicket wild,
The fearful crane springs from the splashy fen,
The shining snake glides o'er the bending grass;
The stag turns head and bays the crying hounds,
The crane o'ertaken fighteth with the hawk,
The snake doth turn, and bite the padding foot.
And if your Majesty's afraid of Philip,
You are more like a lion than a crane:
Therefore I beg I may return to England.

King. Sir Thomas, now I understand your mirth,
Which often plays with Wisdom for its pastime,
And brings good counsel from the breast of laughter.
I hope you'll stay, and see us fight this battle,
And reap rich harvest in the fields of Cressy;
Then go to England, tell them how we fight,
And set all hearts on fire to be with us.
Philip is plum'd, and thinks we flee from him,
Else he would never dare to attack us. Now,
Now the quarry's set! and Death doth sport
In the bright sunshine of this fatal day.

Dagw. Now my heart dances, and I am as light
As the young bridegroom going to be married.
Now must I to my soldiers, get them ready,
Furbish our armours bright, new-plume our helmets;
And we will sing like the young housewives busied
In the dairy: my feet are wing'd, but not
For flight, an please your grace.

King. If all my soldiers are as pleas'd as you,
Twill be a gallant thing to fight or die;
Then I can never be afraid of Philip.

Dagw. A raw-bon'd fellow t'other day pass'd by me;

I told him to put off his hungry looks --
 He answer'd me, 'I hunger for another battle.'
 I saw a little Welshman with a fiery face;
 I told him he look'd like a candle half
 Burn'd out; he answer'd, he was 'pig enough
 To light another pattle.' Last night, beneath
 The moon I walk'd abroad, when all had pitch'd
 Their tents, and all were still;
 I heard a blooming youth singing a song
 He had compos'd, and at each pause he wip'd
 His dropping eyes. The ditty was 'If he
 Return'd victorious, he should wed a maiden
 Fairer than snow, and rich as midsummer.'
 Another wept, and wish'd health to his father.
 I chid them both, but gave them noble hopes
 These are the minds that glory in the battle,
 And leap and dance to hear the trumpet sound.

King. Sir Thomas Dagworth, be thou near our person;
 Thy heart is richer than the vales of France:
 I will not part with such a man as thee.
 If Philip came arm'd in the ribs of death,
 And shook his mortal dart against my head,
 Thou'dst laugh his fury into nerveless shame!
 Go now, for thou art suited to the work,
 Throughout the camp; inflame the timorous,
 Blow up the sluggish into ardour, and
 Confirm the strong with strength, the weak inspire,
 And wing their brows with hope and expectation:
 Then to our tent return, and meet to council. [*Exit Dagworth*]

Chand. That man's a hero in his closet, and more
 A hero to the servants of his house
 Than to the gaping world; he carries windows
 In that enlargèd breast of his, that all
 May see what's done within.

Prince. He is a genuine Englishman, my Chandos,
 And hath the spirit of Liberty within him.
 Forgive my prejudice, Sir John; I think
 My Englishmen the bravest people on
 The face of the earth.

Chand. Courage, my Lord, proceeds from self-dependence.
 Teach man to think he's a free agent,
 Give but a slave his liberty, he'll shake
 Off sloth, and build himself a hut, and hedge
 A spot of ground; this he'll defend; 'tis his
 By right of Nature: thus set in action,
 He will still move onward to plan conveniences,

Till glory fires his breast to enlarge his castle;
 While the poor slave drudges all day, in hope
 To rest at night.

King. O Liberty, how glorious art thou!
 I see thee hov'ring o'er my army, with
 Thy wide-stretch'd plumes; I see thee
 Lead them on to battle;
 I see thee blow thy golden trumpet, while
 Thy sons shout the strong shout of victory!
 O noble Chandos, think thyself a gardener,
 My son a vine, which I commit unto
 Thy care: prune all extravagant shoots, and guide
 Th' ambitious tendrils in the paths of wisdom;
 Water him with thy advice; and Heav'n
 Rain fresh'ning dew upon his branches! And,
 O Edward, my dear son! learn to think lowly of
 Thyself, as we may all each prefer other--
 'Tis the best policy, and 'tis our duty. [*Exit King Edward.*]

Prince. And may our duty, Chandos, be our pleasure.
 Now we are alone, Sir John, I will unburden,
 And breathe my hopes into the burning air,
 Where thousand Deaths are posting up and down,
 Commission'd to this fatal field of Cressy.
 Methinks I see them arm my gallant soldiers,
 And gird the sword upon each thigh, and fit
 Each shining helm, and string each stubborn bow,
 And dance to the neighing of our steeds.
 Methinks the shout begins, the battle burns;
 Methinks I see them perch on English crests,
 And roar the wild flame of fierce war upon
 The throngèd enemy! In truth I am too full
 It is my sin to love the noise of war.
 Chandos, thou seest my weakness; strong Nature
 Will bend or break us: my blood, like a springtide
 Does rise so high to overflow all bounds
 Of moderation; while Reason, in her
 Frail bark, can see no shore or bound for vast
 Ambition. Come, take the helm, my Chandos,
 That my full-blown sails overset me not
 In the wild tempest: condemn my venturous youth,
 That plays with danger, as the innocent child
 Unthinking plays upon the viper's den:
 I am a coward in my reason, Chandos.

Chand. You are a man, my Prince, and a brave man,
 If I can judge of actions; but your heat
 Is the effect of youth, and want of use:

Use makes the armèd field and noisy war
 Pass over as a summer cloud, unregarded,
 Or but expected as a thing of course.
 Age is contemplative; each rolling year
 Brings forth fruit to the mind's treasure-house:
 While vacant youth doth crave and seek about
 Within itself, and findeth discontent,
 Then, tir'd of thought, impatient takes the wing,
 Seizes the fruits of time, attacks experience,
 Roams round vast Nature's forest, where no bounds
 Are set, the swiftest may have room, the strongest
 Find prey; till tired at length, sated and tired
 With the changing sameness, old variety,
 We sit us down, and view our former joys
 With distaste and dislike.

Prince. Then, if we must tug for experience,
 Let us not fear to beat round Nature's wilds,
 And rouse the strongest prey: then, if we fall,
 We fall with glory. I know the wolf
 Is dangerous to fight, not good for food,
 Nor is the hide a comely vestment; so
 We have our battle for our pains. I know
 That youth has need of age to point fit prey,
 And oft the stander-by shall steal the fruit
 Of th' other's labour. This is philosophy;
 These are the tricks of the world; but the pure soul
 Shall mount on native wings, disdain
 Little sport, and cut a path into the heaven of glory,
 Leaving a track of light for men to wonder at.
 I'm glad my father does not hear me talk;
 You can find friendly excuses for me, Chandos.
 But do you not think, Sir John, that if it please
 Th' Almighty to stretch out my span of life,
 I shall with pleasure view a glorious action
 Which my youth master'd?

Chand. Considerate age, my Lord, views motives,
 And not acts; when neither warbling voice
 Nor trilling pipe is heard, nor pleasure sits
 With trembling age, the voice of Conscience then,
 Sweeter than music in a summer's eve,
 Shall warble round the snowy head, and keep
 Sweet symphony to feather'd angels, sitting
 As guardians round your chair; then shall the pulse
 Beat slow, and taste and touch and sight and sound and smell,
 That sing and dance round Reason's fine-wrought throne

Shall flee away, and leave them all forlorn;
Yet not forlorn if Conscience is his friend. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene. In Thomas Dagworth's Tent. Dagworth, and William his Man.

Dagw. Bring hither my armour, William.

Ambition is the growth of ev'ry clime.

Will. Does it grow in England, sir?

Dagw. Aye, it grows most in lands most cultivated.

Will. Then it grows most in France; the vines here are finer than any we have in England.

Dagw. Aye, but the oaks are not.

Will. What is the tree you mentioned? I don't think I ever saw it.

Dagw. Ambition.

Will. Is it a little creeping root that grows in ditches?

Dagw. Thou dost not understand me, William.

It is a root that grows in every breast;

Ambition is the desire or passion that one man

Has to get before another, in any pursuit after glory;

But I don't think you have any of it.

Will. Yes, I have; I have a great ambition to know every thing, Sir.

Dagw. But when our first ideas are wrong, what follows must all be wrong, of course; 'tis best to know a little, and to know that little aright.

Will. Then, Sir, I should be glad to know if it was not ambition that brought over our King to France to fight for his right?

Dagw. Tho' the knowledge of that will not profit thee much, yet I will tell you that it was ambition.

Will. Then, if ambition is a sin, we are all guilty in coming with him, and in fighting for him.

Dagw. Now, William, thou dost thrust the question home; but I must tell you that, guilt being an act of the mind, none are guilty but those whose minds are prompted by that same ambition.

Will. Now, I always thought that a man might be guilty of doing wrong without knowing it was wrong.

Dagw. Thou art a natural philosopher, and knowest truth by instinct, while reason runs aground, as we have run our argument. Only remember, William, all have it in their power to know the motives of their own actions, and 'tis a sin to act without some reason.

Will. And whoever acts without reason may do a great deal of harm without knowing it.

Dagw. Thou art an endless moralist.

Will. Now there's a story come into my head, that I will tell your honour if you'll give me leave.

Dagw. No, William, save it till another time; this is no time for story-telling. But here comes one who is as entertaining as a good story!

Enter Peter Blunt

Peter. Yonder's a musician going to play before the King; it's a new song about the French and English; and the Prince has made the minstrel a squire, and given him I don't know what, and I can't tell whether he don't mention us all one by one; and he is to write another about all us that

are to die, that we may be remembered in Old England, for all our blood and bones are in France; and a great deal more that we shall all hear by and by; and I came to tell your honour, because you love to hear war-songs.

Dagw. And who is this minstrel, Peter, dost know?

Peter. O aye, I forgot to tell that; he has got the same name as Sir John Chandos, that the Prince is always with -- the wise man that knows us all as well as your honour, only ain't so good-natured.

Dagw. I thank you, Peter, for your information; but not for your compliment, which is not true. There's as much difference between him and me as between glittering sand and fruitful mould; or shining glass and a wrought diamond, set in rich gold, and fitted to the finger of an Emperor; such is that worthy Chandos.

Peter. I know your honour does not think anything of yourself, but everybody else does.

Dagw. Go, Peter, get you gone; flattery is delicious, even from the lips of a babbler. [*Exit Peter.*]

Will. I never flatter your honour.

Dagw. I don't know that.

Will. Why, you know, Sir, when we were in England, at the tournament at Windsor, and the Earl of Warwick was tumbled over, you ask'd me if he did not look well when he fell; and I said no, he look'd very foolish; and you was very angry with me for not flattering you.

Dagw. You mean that I was angry with you for not flattering the Earl of Warwick. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene. *Sir Thomas Dagworth's Tent. Sir Thomas Dagworth -- to him enter Sir Walter Manny.*

Sir Walter. Sir Thomas Dagworth, I have been weeping
Over the men that are to die to-day.

Dagw. Why, brave Sir Walter, you or I may fall.

Sir Walter. I know this breathing flesh must lie and rot,
Cover'd with silence and forgetfulness. --
Death wons in cities' smoke, and in still night,
When men sleep in their beds, walketh about!
How many in wallèd cities lie and groan,
Turning themselves upon their beds,
Talking with Death, answering his hard demands!
How many walk in darkness, terrors are round
The curtains of their beds, destruction is
Ready at the door! How many sleep
In earth, cover'd with stones and deathly dust,
Resting in quietness, whose spirits walk
Upon the clouds of heaven, to die no more!
Yet death is terrible, tho' borne on angels' wings.
How terrible then is the field of Death,
Where he doth rend the vault of heaven,
And shake the gates of hell!
O Dagworth, France is sick! the very sky,
Tho' sunshine light it, seems to me as pale
As the pale fainting man on his death-bed,

Whose face is shown by light of sickly taper
 It makes me sad and sick at very heart,
 Thousands must fall to-day.

Dagw. Thousands of souls must leave this prison-house,
 To be exalted to those heavenly fields,
 Where songs of triumph, palms of victory,
 Where peace and joy and love and calm content
 Sit singing in the azure clouds, and strew
 Flowers of heaven's growth over the banquet-table.
 Bind ardent Hope upon your feet like shoes,
 Put on the robe of preparation,
 The table is prepar'd in shining heaven,
 The flowers of immortality are blown;
 Let those that fight fight in good steadfastness,
 And those that fall shall rise in victory.

Sir Walter. I've often seen the burning field of war,
 And often heard the dismal clang of arms;
 But never, till this fatal day of Cressy,
 Has my soul fainted with these views of death.
 I seem to be in one great charnel-house,
 And seem to scent the rotten carcases;
 I seem to hear the dismal yells of Death,
 While the black gore drops from his horrid jaws;
 Yet I not fear the monster in his pride --
 But O! the souls that are to die to-day!

Dagw. Stop, brave Sir Walter; let me drop a tear,
 Then let the clarion of war begin;
 I'll fight and weep, 'tis in my country's cause;
 I'll weep and shout for glorious liberty.
 Grim War shall laugh and shout, deckèd in tears,
 And blood shall flow like streams across the meadows,
 That murmur down their pebbly channels, and
 Spend their sweet lives to do their country service;
 Then shall England's verdure shoot, her fields shall smile,
 Her ships shall sing across the foaming sea,
 Her mariners shall use the flute and viol,
 And rattling guns, and black and dreary war,
 Shall be no more.

Sir Walter. Well, let the trumpet sound, and the drum beat;
 Let war stain the blue heavens with bloody banners;
 I'll draw my sword, nor ever sheathe it up
 Till England blow the trump of victory,
 Or I lay stretch'd upon the field of death. [*Exeunt.*]

Scene. In the Camp. Several of the Warriors meet at the King's Tent with a Minstrel, who sings the following Song:

O sons of Trojan Brutus, cloth'd in war,
 Whose voices are the thunder of the field,
 Rolling dark clouds o'er France, muffling the sun
 In sickly darkness like a dim eclipse,
 Threatening as the red brow of storms, as fire
 Burning up nations in your wrath and fury!

Your ancestors came from the fires of Troy,
 (Like lions rous'd by light'ning from their dens,
 Whose eyes do glare against the stormy fires),
 Heated with war, fill'd with the blood of Greeks,
 With helmets hewn, and shields coverèd with gore,
 In navies black, broken with wind and tide:

They landed in firm array upon the rocks
 Of Albion; they kiss'd the rocky shore;
 `Be thou our mother and our nurse,' they said;
 `Our children's mother, and thou shalt be our grave,
 The sepulchre of ancient Troy, from whence
 Shall rise cities, and thrones, and arms, and awful pow'rs.'

Our fathers swarm from the ships. Giant voices
 Are heard from the hills, the enormous sons
 Of Ocean run from rocks and caves, wild men,
 Naked and roaring like lions, hurling rocks,
 And wielding knotty clubs, like oaks entangled
 Thick as a forest, ready for the axe.

Our fathers move in firm array to battle;
 The savage monsters rush like roaring fire,
 Like as a forest roars with crackling flames,
 When the red lightning, borne by furious storms,
 Lights on some woody shore; the parchèd heavens
 Rain fire into the molten raging sea.

The smoking trees are strewn upon the shore,
 Spoil'd of their verdure. O how oft have they
 Defy'd the storm that howlèd o'er their heads!
 Our fathers, sweating, lean on their spears, and view
 The mighty dead: giant bodies streaming blood.
 Dread visages frowning in silent death.

Then Brutus spoke, inspir'd; our fathers sit
 Attentive on the melancholy shore:
 Hear ye the voice of Brutus -- `The flowing waves
 Of time come rolling o'er my breast,' he said;

`And my heart labours with futurity:
Our sons shall rule the empire of the sea.

`Their mighty wings shall stretch from east to west.
Their nest is in the sea, but they shall roam
Like eagles for the prey; nor shall the young
Crave or be heard; for plenty shall bring forth,
Cities shall sing, and vales in rich array
Shall laugh, whose fruitful laps bend down with fulness.

`Our sons shall rise from thrones in joy,
Each one buckling on his armour; Morning
Shall be prevented by their swords gleaming,
And Evening hear their song of victory:

Their towers shall be built upon the rocks,
Their daughters shall sing, surrounded with shining spears.
`Liberty shall stand upon the cliffs of Albion,
Casting her blue eyes over the green ocean;
Or, tow'ring, stand upon the roaring waves,
Stretching her mighty spear o'er distant lands;
While, with her eagle wings, she covereth
Fair Albion's shore, and all her families.'

Prologue, intended for a Dramatic Piece of King Edward the Fourth

O for a voice like thunder, and a tongue
To drown the throat of war! When the senses
Are shaken, and the soul is driven to madness,
Who can stand? When the souls of the oppressèd
Fight in the troubled air that rages, who can stand?
When the whirlwind of fury comes from the
Throne of God, when the frowns of his countenance
Drive the nations together, who can stand?
When Sin claps his broad wings over the battle,
And sails rejoicing in the flood of Death;
When souls are torn to everlasting fire,
And fiends of Hell rejoice upon the slain,
O who can stand? O who hath causèd this?
O who can answer at the throne of God?
The Kings and Nobles of the Land have done it!
Hear it not, Heaven, thy Ministers have done it!

Prologue to King John

Justice hath heaved a sword to plunge in Albion's breast; for Albion's sins are crimson dy'd, and the red scourge follows her desolate sons. Then Patriot rose; full oft did Patriot rise, when Tyranny hath stain'd fair Albion's breast with her own children's gore. Round his majestic feet deep thunders roll; each heart does tremble, and each knee grows slack. The stars of heaven tremble; the roaring voice of war, the trumpet, calls to battle. Brother in brother's blood must bathe -- rivers of death. O land most hapless! O beauteous island, how forsaken! Weep from thy silver fountains, weep from thy gentle rivers! The angel of the island weeps. Thy widowed virgins weep beneath thy shades. Thy aged fathers gird themselves for war. The sucking infant lives to die in battle; the weeping mother feeds him for the slaughter. The husbandman doth leave his bending harvest. Blood cries afar! The land doth sow itself! The glittering youth of courts must gleam in arms. The aged senators their ancient swords assume. The trembling sinews of old age must work the work of death against their progeny; for Tyranny hath stretch'd his purple arm, and `Blood!' he cries; `the chariots and the horses, the noise of shout, and dreadful thunder of the battle heard afar!' Beware, O proud! thou shalt be humbled; thy cruel brow, thine iron heart, is smitten, though lingering Fate is slow. O yet may Albion smile again, and stretch her peaceful arms, and raise her golden head exultingly! Her citizens shall throng about her gates, her mariners shall sing upon the sea, and myriads shall to her temples crowd! Her sons shall joy as in the morning! Her daughters sing as to the rising year!

A War Song to Englishmen

Prepare, prepare the iron helm of war,
 Bring forth the lots, cast in the spacious orb;
 Th' Angel of Fate turns them with mighty hands,
 And casts them out upon the darken'd earth!
 Prepare, prepare!

Prepare your hearts for Death's cold hand! prepare
 Your souls for flight, your bodies for the earth;
 Prepare your arms for glorious victory;
 Prepare your eyes to meet a holy God!
 Prepare, prepare!

Whose fatal scroll is that? Methinks 'tis mine!
 Why sinks my heart, why faltereth my tongue?
 Had I three lives, I'd die in such a cause,
 And rise, with ghosts, over the well-fought field.
 Prepare, prepare!

The arrows of Almighty God are drawn!
 Angels of Death stand in the louring heavens!
 Thousands of souls must seek the realms of light,
 And walk together on the clouds of heaven!
 Prepare, prepare!

Soldiers, prepare! Our cause is Heaven's cause;
 Soldiers, prepare! Be worthy of our cause:
 Prepare to meet our fathers in the sky:
 Prepare, O troops, that are to fall to-day!
 Prepare, prepare!

Alfred shall smile, and make his harp rejoice;
 The Norman William, and the learnèd Clerk,
 And Lion Heart, and black-brow'd Edward, with
 His loyal queen, shall rise, and welcome us!
 Prepare, prepare!

The Couch of Death

The veiled Evening walked solitary down the western hills, and Silence reposed in the valley; the birds of day were heard in their nests, rustling in brakes and thickets; and the owl and bat flew round the darkening trees: all is silent when Nature takes her repose. -- In former times, on such an evening, when the cold clay breathed with life, and our ancestors, who now sleep in their graves, walked on the steadfast globe, the remains of a family of the tribes of Earth, a mother and a sister, were gathered to the sick bed of a youth. Sorrow linked them together; leaning on one another's necks alternately -- like lilies dropping tears in each other's bosom -- they stood by the bed like reeds bending over a lake, when the evening drops trickle down. His voice was low as the whisperings of the woods when the wind is asleep, and the visions of Heaven unfold their visitation. `Parting is hard and death is terrible; I seem to walk through a deep valley, far from the light of day, alone and comfortless! The damps of death fall thick upon me! Horrors stare me in the face! I look behind, there is no returning; Death follows after me; I walk in regions of Death, where no tree is, without a lantern to direct my steps, without a staff to support me.' Thus he laments through the still evening, till the curtains of darkness were drawn. Like the sound of a broken pipe, the aged woman raised her voice. `O my son, my son, I know but little of the path thou goest! But lo! there is a God, who made the world; stretch out thy hand to Him.' The youth replied, like a voice heard from a sepulchre, `My hand is feeble, how should I stretch it out? My ways are sinful, how should I raise mine eyes? My voice hath used deceit, how should I call on Him who is Truth? My breath is loathsome, how should He not be offended? If I lay my face in the dust, the grave opens its mouth for me; if I lift up my head, sin covers me as a cloak. O my dear friends, pray ye for me! Stretch forth your hands that my Helper may come! Through the void space I walk, between the sinful world and eternity! Beneath me burns eternal fire! O for a hand to pluck me forth!' As the voice of an omen heard in the silent valley, when the few inhabitants cling trembling together; as the voice of the Angel of Death, when the thin beams of the moon give a faint light, such was this young man's voice to his friends. Like the bubbling waters of the brook in the dead of night, the aged woman raised her cry, and said, `O Voice, that dwellest in my breast, can I not cry, and lift my eyes to Heaven? Thinking of this, my spirit is turned within me into confusion! O my child, my child, is thy breath infected? so is mine. As the deer wounded, by the brooks of water, so the arrows of sin stick in my flesh; the poison hath entered into my marrow.' Like rolling waves upon a desert shore, sighs succeeded sighs; they covered their faces and wept. The youth lay silent, his mother's arm was under his head; he was like a cloud tossed by the winds, till the sun shine, and the drops of rain glisten, the yellow

harvest breathes, and the thankful eyes of the villagers are turned up in smiles. The traveller, that hath taken shelter under an oak, eyes the distant country with joy. Such smiles were seen upon the face of the youth: a visionary hand wiped away his tears, and a ray of light beamed around his head. All was still. The moon hung not out her lamp, and the stars faintly glimmered in the summer sky; the breath of night slept among the leaves of the forest; the bosom of the lofty hill drank in the silent dew, while on his majestic brow the voice of Angels is heard, and stringed sounds ride upon the wings of night. The sorrowful pair lift up their heads, hovering Angels are around them, voices of comfort are heard over the Couch of Death, and the youth breathes out his soul with joy into eternity.

Contemplation

Who is this, that with unerring step dares tempt the wilds, where only Nature's foot hath trod? 'Tis Contemplation, daughter of the grey Morning! Majestical she steppeth, and with her pure quill on every flower writeth Wisdom's name; now lowly bending, whispers in mine ear, 'O man, how great, how little, thou! O man, slave of each moment, lord of eternity! seest thou where Mirth sits on the painted cheek? doth it not seem ashamed of such a place, and grow immoderate to brave it out? O what an humble garb true Joy puts on! Those who want Happiness must stoop to find it; it is a flower that grows in every vale. Vain foolish man, that roams on lofty rocks, where, 'cause his garments are swoln with wind, he fancies he is grown into a giant! Lo, then, Humility, take it, and wear it in thine heart; lord of thyself, thou then art lord of all. Clamour brawls along the streets, and destruction hovers in the city's smoke; but on these plains, and in these silent woods, true joys descend: here build thy nest; here fix thy staff; delights blossom around; numberless beauties blow; the green grass springs in joy, and the nimble air kisses the leaves; the brook stretches its arms along the velvet meadow, its silver inhabitants sport and play; the youthful sun joys like a hunter roused to the chase, he rushes up the sky, and lays hold on the immortal coursers of day; the sky glitters with the jingling trappings. Like a triumph, season follows season, while the airy music fills the world with joyful sounds.' I answered, 'Heavenly goddess! I am wrapped in mortality, my flesh is a prison, my bones the bars of death; Misery builds over our cottage roofs, and Discontent runs like a brook. Even in childhood, Sorrow slept with me in my cradle; he followed me up and down in the house when I grew up; he was my schoolfellow: thus he was in my steps and in my play till he became to me as my brother. I walked through dreary places with him, and in church-yards; and I oft found myself sitting by Sorrow on a tomb-stone.'

Samson

Samson, the strongest of the children of men, I sing; how he was foiled by woman's arts, by a false wife brought to the gates of death! O Truth! that shinest with propitious beams, turning our earthly night to heavenly day, from presence of the Almighty Father, thou visitest our darkling world with blessed feet, bringing good news of Sin and Death destroyed! O whiterobed Angel, guide my timorous hand to write as on a lofty rock with iron pen the words of truth, that all who pass may read. -- Now Night, noontide of damned spirits, over the silent earth spreads her pavilion, while in dark council sat Philista's lords; and, where strength failed, black thoughts in ambush lay. Their helmed youth and aged warriors in dust together lie, and Desolation spreads his wings over the land of Palestine: from side to side the land groans, her prowess lost, and

seeks to hide her bruised head under the mists of night, breeding dark plots. For Dalila's fair arts have long been tried in vain; in vain she wept in many a treacherous tear. `Go on, fair traitress; do thy guileful work; ere once again the changing moon her circuit hath performed, thou shalt overcome, and conquer him by force unconquerable, and wrest his secret from him. Call thine alluring arts and honest-seeming brow, the holy kiss of love, and the transparent tear; put on fair linen that with the lily vies, purple and silver; neglect thy hair, to seem more lovely in thy loose attire; put on thy country's pride, deceit, and eyes of love decked in mild sorrow; and sell thy lord for gold.' For now, upon her sumptuous couch reclined in gorgeous pride, she still entreats, and still she grasps his vigorous knees with her fair arms. `Thou lov'st me not! thou'rt war, thou art not love! O foolish Dalila! O weak woman! it is death clothed in flesh thou lovest, and thou hast been encircled in his arms! Alas, my lord, what am I calling thee? Thou art my God! To thee I pour my tears for sacrifice morning and evening. My days are covered with sorrow, shut up, darkened! By night I am deceived! Who says that thou wast born of mortal kind? Destruction was thy father, a lioness suckled thee, thy young hands tore human limbs, and gorged human flesh. Come hither, Death; art thou not Samson's servant? 'Tis Dalila that calls, thy master's wife; no, stay, and let thy master do the deed: one blow of that strong arm would ease my pain; then should I lay at quiet and have rest. Pity forsook thee at thy birth! O Dagon furious, and all ye gods of Palestine, withdraw your hand! I am but a weak woman. Alas, I am wedded to your enemy! I will go mad, and tear my crisped hair; I'll run about, and pierce the ears o' th' gods! O Samson, hold me not; thou lovest me not! Look not upon me with those deathful eyes! Thou wouldst my death, and death approaches fast.' Thus, in false tears, she bath'd his feet, and thus she day by day oppressed his soul: he seemed a mountain; his brow among the clouds; she seemed a silver stream, his feet embracing. Dark thoughts rolled to and fro in his mind, like thunder clouds troubling the sky; his visage was troubled; his soul was distressed. `Though I should tell her all my heart, what can I fear? Though I should tell this secret of my birth, the utmost may be warded off as well when told as now.' She saw him moved, and thus resumes her wiles. `Samson, I'm thine; do with me what thou wilt: my friends are enemies; my life is death; I am a traitor to my nation, and despised; my joy is given into the hands of him who hates me, using deceit to the wife of his bosom. Thrice hast thou mocked me and grieved my soul. Didst thou not tell me with green withs to bind thy nervous arms; and, after that, when I had found thy falsehood, with new ropes to bind thee fast? I knew thou didst but mock me. Alas, when in thy sleep I bound thee with them to try thy truth, I cried, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" Then did suspicion wake thee; how didst thou rend the feeble ties! Thou fearest nought, what shouldst thou fear? Thy power is more than mortal, none can hurt thee; thy bones are brass, thy sinews are iron. Ten thousand spears are like the summer grass; an army of mighty men are as flocks in the valleys; what canst thou fear? I drink my tears like water; I live upon sorrow! O worse than wolves and tigers, what canst thou give when such a trifle is denied me? But O! at last thou mockest me, to shame my over-fond inquiry. Thou toldest me to weave thee to the beam by thy strong hair; I did even that to try thy truth; but, when I cried "The Philistines be upon thee!" then didst thou leave me to bewail that Samson loved me not.' He sat, and inward griev'd; he saw and lov'd the beauteous suppliant, nor could conceal aught that might appease her; then, leaning on her bosom, thus he spoke: `Hear, O Dalila! doubt no more of Samson's love; for that fair breast was made the ivory palace of my inmost heart, where it shall lie at rest: for sorrow is the lot of all of woman born: for care was I brought forth, and labour is my lot: nor matchless might, nor wisdom, nor every gift enjoyed, can from the heart of man hide sorrow. Twice was my birth foretold from heaven, and twice a sacred vow enjoined me that I should

drink no wine, nor eat of any unclean thing; for holy unto Israel's God I am, a Nazarite even from my mother's womb. Twice was it told, that it might not be broken. "Grant me a son, kind Heaven," Manoa cried; but Heaven refused. Childless he mourned, but thought his God knew best. In solitude, though not obscure, in Israel he lived, till venerable age came on: his flocks increased, and plenty crowned his board, beloved, revered of man. But God hath other joys in store. Is burdened Israel his grief? The son of his old age shall set it free! The venerable sweetener of his life receives the promise first from Heaven. She saw the maidens play, and blessed their innocent mirth; she blessed each new-joined pair; but from her the long-wished deliverer shall spring. Pensive, alone she sat within the house, when busy day was fading, and calm evening, time for contemplation, rose from the forsaken east, and drew the curtains of heaven: pensive she sat, and thought on Israel's grief, and silent prayed to Israel's God; when lo! an angel from the fields of light entered the house. His form was manhood in the prime, and from his spacious brow shot terrors through the evening shade. But mild he hailed her, "Hail, highly favoured!" said he; "for lo! thou shalt conceive, and bear a son, and Israel's strength shall be upon his shoulders, and he shall be called Israel's Deliverer. Now, therefore, drink no wine, and eat not any unclean thing, for he shall be a Nazarite to God." Then, as a neighbour, when his evening tale is told, departs, his blessing leaving, so seemed he to depart: she wondered with exceeding joy, nor knew he was an angel. Manoa left his fields to sit in the house, and take his evening's rest from labour -- the sweetest time that God has allotted mortal man. He sat, and heard with joy, and praised God, who Israel still doth keep. The time rolled on, and Israel groaned oppressed. The sword was bright, while the ploughshare rusted, till hope grew feeble, and was ready to give place to doubting. Then prayed Manoa: "O Lord, thy flock is scattered on the hills! The wolf teareth them, Oppression stretches his rod over our land, our country is ploughed with swords, and reaped in blood. The echoes of slaughter reach from hill to hill. Instead of peaceful pipe the shepherd bears a sword, the ox-goad is turned into a spear. O when shall our Deliverer come? The Philistine riots on our flocks, our vintage is gathered by bands of enemies. Stretch forth thy hand, and save!" Thus prayed Manoa. The aged woman walked into the field, and lo! again the angel came, clad as a traveller fresh risen on his journey. She ran and called her husband, who came and talked with him. "O man of God," said he, "thou comest from far! Let us detain thee while I make ready a kid, that thou mayest sit and eat, and tell us of thy name and warfare; that, when thy sayings come to pass, we may honour thee." The Angel answered, "My name is Wonderful; inquire not after it, seeing it is a secret; but, if thou wilt, offer an offering unto the Lord."

APPENDIX TO POETICAL SKETCHES*Song by a Shepherd*

Welcome, stranger, to this place,
Where joy doth sit on every bough,
Paleness flies from every face;
We reap not what we do not sow.

Innocence doth like a rose
Bloom on every maiden's cheek;
Honour twines around her brows,
The jewel health adorns her neck.

Song by an Old Shepherd

When silver snow decks Sylvio's clothes,
And jewel hangs at shepherd's nose,
We can abide life's pelting storm,
That makes our limbs quake, if our hearts be warm.

Whilst Virtue is our walking-staff,
And Truth a lantern to our path,
We can abide life's pelting storm,
That makes our limbs quake, if our hearts be warm.

Blow, boisterous wind, stern winter frown,
Innocence is a winter's gown.
So clad, we'll abide life's pelting storm,
That makes our limbs quake, if our hearts be warm.

SONGS FROM AN ISLAND IN THE MOON

I

Little Phoebus came strutting in,
 With his fat belly and his round chin.
 What is it you would please to have?
 Ho! Ho!
 I won't let it go at only so and so!

II

Honour and Genius is all I ask,
 And I ask the Gods no more!
 No more! No more!
 No more! No more! } *The Three Philosophers bear chorus.*

III

When Old Corruption first begun,
 Adorn'd in yellow vest,
 He committed on Flesh a whoredom --
 O, what a wicked beast!

From then a callow babe did spring,
 And Old Corruption smil'd
 To think his race should never end,
 For now he had a child.

He call'd him Surgery and fed
 The babe with his own milk;
 For Flesh and he could ne'er agree:
 She would not let him suck.

And this he always kept in mind;
 And form'd a crooked knife,
 And ran about with bloody hands
 To seek his mother's life.

And as he ran to seek his mother
 He met with a dead woman.
 He fell in love and married her --
 A deed which is not common!

She soon grew pregnant, and brought forth
 Scurvy and Spotted Fever,
 The father grinn'd and skipt about,
 And said `I'm made for ever!

`For now I have procur'd these imps
 I'll try experiments.'
 With that he tied poor Scurvy down,
 And stopt up all its vents.

And when the child began to swell
 He shouted out aloud --
 `I've found the dropsy out, and soon
 Shall do the world more good.'

He took up Fever by the neck,
 And cut out all its spots;
 And, thro' the holes which he had made,
 He first discover'd guts.

IV

Hear then the pride and knowledge of a sailor!
 His sprit sail, fore sail, main sail, and his mizen.
 A poor frail man -- God wot! I know none frailer,
 I know no greater sinner than John Taylor.

V

The Song of Phoebe and Jellicoe

Phoebe drest like beauty's queen,
 Jellicoe in faint pea-green,
 Sitting all beneath a grot,
 Where the little lambkins trot.

Maidens dancing, loves a-sporting,
 All the country folks a-courting,
 Susan, Johnny, Bob, and Joe,
 Lightly tripping on a row.

Happy people, who can be
 In happiness compar'd with ye?
 The pilgrim with his crook and hat
 Sees your happiness complete.

VI

Lo! the Bat with leathern wing,
 Winking and blinking,
 Winking and blinking,
 Winking and blinking,
 Like Dr Johnson.

Quid. `O ho!" said Dr. Johnson
 To Scipio Africanus,
Suction. `A ha!" to Dr. Johnson
 Said Scipio Africanus,

And the Cellar goes down with a step. (*Grand Chorus.*)

VII

Ist Vo. Want Matches?
2nd Vo. Yes! Yes! Yes!
Ist Vo. Want Matches?
2nd Vo. No!
Ist Vo. Want Matches?
2nd Vo. Yes! Yes! Yes!
Ist Vo. Want Matches?
2nd Vo. No!

VIII

As I walk'd forth one May morning
 To see the fields so pleasant and so gay,
 O! there did I spy a young maiden sweet,
 Among the violets that smell so sweet,
 smell so sweet,
 smell so sweet,
 Among the violets that smell so sweet.

IX

Hail Matrimony, made of Love!
 To thy wide gates how great a drove
 On purpose to be yok'd do come;
 Widows and Maids and Youths also,
 That lightly trip on beauty's toe,
 Or sit on beauty's bum.

Hail fingerfooted lovely Creatures!
 The females of our human natures,
 Formèd to suckle all Mankind.
 'Tis you that come in time of need,
 Without you we should never breed,
 Or any comfort find.

For if a Damsel's blind or lame,
 Or Nature's hand has crook'd her frame,
 Or if she's deaf, or is wall-eyed;
 Yet, if her heart is well inclin'd,
 Some tender lover she shall find
 That panteth for a Bride.

The universal Poultice this,
 To cure whatever is amiss
 In Damsel or in Widow gay!
 It makes them smile, it makes them skip;
 Like birds, just curèd of the pip,
 They chirp and hop away.

Then come, ye maidens! come, ye swains!
 Come and be cur'd of all your pains
 In Matrimony's Golden Cage --

X

To be or not to be
 Of great capacity,
 Like Sir Isaac Newton,
 Or Locke, or Doctor South,
 Or Sherlock upon Death --
 I'd rather be Sutton!

For he did build a house
 For agèd men and youth,
 With walls of brick and stone;
 He furnish'd it within
 With whatever he could win,
 And all his own.

He drew out of the Stocks
 His money in a box,
 And sent his servant
 To Green the Bricklayer,

And to the Carpenter;
He was so fervent.

The chimneys were threescore,
The windows many more;
And, for convenience,
He sinks and gutters made,
And all the way he pav'd
To hinder pestilence.

Was not this a good man --
Whose life was but a span,
Whose name was Sutton --
As Locke, or Doctor South,
Or Sherlock upon Death,
Or Sir Isaac Newton?

XI

This city and this country has brought forth many mayors
To sit in state, and give forth laws out' of their old oak chairs,
With face as brown as any nut with drinking of strong ale --
Good English hospitality, O then it did not fail!

With scarlet gowns and broad gold lace, would make a yeoman sweat;
With stockings roll'd above their knees and shoes as black as jet
With eating beef and drinking beer, O they were stout and hale --
Good English hospitality, O then it did not fail!

Thus sitting at the table wide the mayor and aldermen
Were fit to give law to the city; each ate as much as ten:
The hungry poor enter'd the hall to eat good beef and ale --
Good English hospitality, O then it did not fail!

XII

O, I say, you Joe,
Throw us the ball!
I've a good mind to go
And leave you all.
I never saw such a bowler
To bowl the ball in a tansy,
And to clean it with my hankercher
Without saying a word.

That Bill's a foolish fellow;
 He has given me a black eye.
 He does not know how to handle a bat
 Any more than a dog or a cat:
 He has knock'd down the wicket,
 And broke the stumps,
 And runs without shoes to save his pumps.

XIII

Leave, O leave me to my sorrows;
 Here I'll sit and fade away,
 Till I'm nothing but a spirit,
 And I lose this form of clay.

Then if chance along this forest
 Any walk in pathless ways,
 Thro' the gloom he'll see my shadow
 Hear my voice upon the breeze.

XIV

There's Doctor Clash,
 And Signor Falalazole,
 O they sweep in the cash
 Into their purse hole!
 Fa me la sol, La me fa sol!

Great A, little A,
 Bouncing B!
 Play away, play away,
 You're out of the key!
 Fa me la sol, La me fa sol!

Musicians should have
 A pair of very good ears,
 And long fingers and thumbs,
 And not like clumsy bears.
 Fa me la sol, La me fa sol!

Gentlemen! Gentlemen!
 Rap! Rap! Rap!
 Fiddle! Fiddle! Fiddle!
 Clap! Clap! Clap!
 Fa me la sol, La me fa sol!

SONGS OF INNOCENCE

Introduction

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

`Pipe a song about a Lamb!'
So I piped with merry cheer.
`Piper, pipe that song again;'
So I piped: he wept to hear.

`Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer:'
So I sang the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

`Piper, sit thee down and write
In a book, that all may read.'
So he vanish'd from my sight,
And I pluck'd a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
And I stain'd the water clear,
And I wrote my happy songs
Every child may joy to hear.

The Echoing Green

The Sun does arise,
And make happy the skies;
The merry bells ring
To welcome the Spring;
The skylark and thrush,
The birds of the bush,
Sing louder around
To the bells' cheerful sound,
While our sports shall be seen
On the Echoing Green.

Old John, with white hair,
Does laugh away care,
Sitting under the oak,
Among the old folk.

They laugh at our play,
 And soon they all say:
 'Such, such were the joys
 When we all, girls and boys,
 In our youth time were seen
 On the Echoing Green.'

Till the little ones, weary,
 No more can be merry;
 The sun does descend,
 And our sports have an end.
 Round the laps of their mothers
 Many sisters and brothers,
 Like birds in their nest,
 Are ready for rest,
 And sport no more seen
 On the darkening Green.

The Lamb

Little Lamb, who made thee?
 Dost thou know who made thee?
 Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
 By the stream and o'er the mead;
 Gave thee clothing of delight,
 Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
 Gave thee such a tender voice,
 Making all the vales rejoice?
 Little Lamb, who made thee?
 Dost thou know who made thee?
 Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
 Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
 He is callèd by thy name,
 For He calls Himself a Lamb.
 He is meek, and He is mild;
 He became a little child.
 I a child, and thou a lamb,
 We are callèd by His name.
 Little Lamb, God bless thee!
 Little Lamb, God bless thee!

The Shepherd

How sweet is the Shepherd's sweet lot!
 From the morn to the evening he strays;

He shall follow his sheep all the day,
And his tongue shall be fillèd with praise.

For he hears the lamb's innocent call,
And he hears the ewe's tender reply;
He is watchful while they are in peace,
For they know when their Shepherd is nigh.

Infant Joy

`I have no name:
I am but two days old.'
What shall I call thee?
`I happy am,
Joy is my name.'
Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty Joy!
Sweet Joy, but two days old.
Sweet Joy I call thee
Thou dost smile,
I sing the while,
Sweet joy befall thee!

The Little Black Boy

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
And I am black, but O! my soul is white;
White as an angel is the English child,
But I am black, as if bereav'd of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
And, sitting down before the heat of day,
She took me on her lap and kissèd me,
And, pointing to the east, began to say:

`Look on the rising sun, -- there God does live,
And gives His light, and gives His heat away;
And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive
Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

`And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Is but a cloud, and like a shady grove, `For when our souls have learn'd the heat to
bear,

The cloud will vanish; we shall hear His voice,
 Saying: "Come out from the grove, My love and care,
 And round My golden tent like lambs rejoice."

Thus did my mother say, and kissèd me;
 And thus I say to little English boy.
 When I from black and he from white cloud free,
 And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat, till he can bear
 To lean in joy upon our Father's knee;
 And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
 And be like him, and he will then love me.

Laughing Song

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
 And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;
 When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
 And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;

When the meadows laugh with lively green,
 And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene,
 When Mary and Susan and Emily
 With their sweet round mouths sing `Ha, Ha, He!'

When the painted birds laugh in the shade,
 Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread,
 Come live, and be merry, and join with me,
 To sing the sweet chorus of `Ha, Ha, He!'

Spring

Sound the flute!
 Now it's mute.
 Birds delight
 Day and night;
 Nightingale
 In the dale,
 Lark in sky,
 Merrily,

Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little boy,
 Full of joy;

Little girl,
 Sweet and small;
 Cock does crow,
 So do you;
 Merry voice,
 Infant noise,

Merrily, merrily, to welcome in the year.

Little lamb,
 Here I am;
 Come and lick
 My white neck;
 Let me pull
 Your soft wool;
 Let me kiss
 Your soft face:

Merrily, merrily, we welcome in the year.

A Cradle Song

Sweet dreams, form a shade
 O'er my lovely infant's head;
 Sweet dreams of pleasant streams
 By happy, silent, moony beams.

Sweet sleep, with soft down
 Weave thy brows an infant crown.
 Sweet sleep, Angel mild,
 Hover o'er my happy child.

Sweet smiles, in the night
 Hover over my delight;
 Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,
 All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
 Chase not slumber from thy eyes.
 Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,
 All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep, sleep, happy child,
 All creation slept and smil'd;
 Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
 While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
 Holy image I can trace.
 Sweet babe, once like thee,
 Thy Maker lay and wept for me,

Wept for me, for thee, for all,
 When He was an infant small.
 Thou His image ever see,
 Heavenly face that smiles on thee

Smiles on thee, on me, on all;
 Who became an infant small.
 Infant smiles are His own smiles;
 Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

Nurse's Song

When the voices of children are heard on the green,
 And laughing is heard on the hill,
 My heart is at rest within my breast,
 And everything else is still.

'Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
 And the dews of night arise;
 Come, come leave off play, and let us away
 Till the morning appears in the skies.'

'No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,
 And we cannot go to sleep;
 Besides, in the sky the little birds fly,
 And the hills are all cover'd with sheep.'

'Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,
 And then go home to bed.'
 The little ones leapèd and shoutèd and laugh'd
 And all the hills echoèd.

Holy Thursday

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
 The children walking two and two, in red and blue and green,
 Grey-headed beadles walk'd before, with wands as white as snow,
 Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames' waters flow.

O what a multitude they seem'd, these flowers of London town!
 Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own.

The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to Heaven the voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of Heaven among.
Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the poor;
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

The Blossom

Merry, merry sparrow!
Under leaves so green,
A happy blossom
Sees you, swift as arrow,
Seek your cradle narrow
Near my bosom.

Pretty, pretty robin!
Under leaves so green,
A happy blossom
Hears you sobbing, sobbing,
Pretty, pretty robin,
Near my bosom.

The Chimney Sweeper

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry `weep! 'weep! 'weep! 'weep!'
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curl'd like a lamb's back, was shav'd: so I said
'Hush, Tom! never mind it, for when your head's bare
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight!--
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them lock'd up in coffins of black.

And by came an Angel who had a bright key,
And he open'd the coffins and set them all free;
Then down a green plain leaping, laughing, they run,
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
 They rise upon clouds and sport in the wind;
 And the Angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
 He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke; and we rose in the dark,
 And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
 Tho' the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm;
 So if all do their duty they need not fear harm.

The Divine Image

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
 All pray in their distress;
 And to these virtues of delight
 Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
 Is God, our Father dear,
 And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love
 Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart,
 Pity a human face,
 And Love, the human form divine,
 And Peace, the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
 That prays in his distress,
 Prays to the human form divine,
 Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
 In heathen, Turk, or Jew;
 Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell
 There God is dwelling too.

Night

The sun descending in the west,
 The evening star does shine;
 The birds are silent in their nest,
 And I must seek for mine.
 The moon, like a flower,
 In heaven's high bower,

With silent delight
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have took delight.
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright;
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are cover'd warm;
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm.
If they see any weeping
That should have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,
They pitying stand and weep;
Seeking to drive their thirst away,
And keep them from the sheep.
But if they rush dreadful,
The angels, most heedful,
Receive each mild spirit,
New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
Shall flow with tears of gold,
And pitying the tender cries,
And walking round the fold,
Saying `Wrath, by His meekness,
And, by His health, sickness
Is driven away
From our immortal day.

`And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
I can lie down and sleep;
Or think on Him who bore thy name,
Graze after thee and weep.
For, wash'd in life's river.
My bright mane for ever

Shall shine like the gold
As I guard o'er the fold.'

A Dream

Once a dream did weave a shade
O'er my Angel-guarded bed,
That an emmet lost its way
Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, 'wilder'd, and forlorn,
Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
Over many a tangled spray,
All heart-broke I heard her say:

'O, my children! do they cry?
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see:
Now return and weep for me.'

Pitying, I dropp'd a tear;
But I saw a glow-worm near,
Who replied: 'What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night?

'I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetle's hum;
Little wanderer, hie thee home.'

On Another's Sorrow

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?
Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow fill'd?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He who smiles on all
 Hear the wren with sorrows small,
 Hear the small bird's grief and care,
 Hear the woes that infants bear,

And not sit beside the nest,
 Pouring pity in their breast;
 And not sit the cradle near,
 Weeping tear on infant's tear;

And not sit both night and day,
 Wiping all our tears away?
 O, no! never can it be!
 Never, never can it be!

He doth give His joy to all;
 He becomes an infant small;
 He becomes a man of woe;
 He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
 And thy Maker is not by;
 Think not thou canst weep a tear,
 And thy Maker is not near.

O! He gives to us His joy
 That our grief He may destroy;
 Till our grief is fled and gone
 He doth sit by us and moan.

The Little Boy Lost

'Father! father! where are you going?
 O do not walk so fast.
 Speak, father, speak to your little boy,
 Or else I shall be lost.'

The night was dark, no father was there;
 The child was wet with dew;
 The mire was deep, and the child did weep,
 And away the vapour flew.

The Little Boy Found

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
 Led by the wand'ring light,

Began to cry; but God, ever nigh,
Appear'd like his father, in white.

He kissèd the child, and by the hand led,
And to his mother brought,
Who in sorrow pale, thro' the lonely dale,
Her little boy weeping sought.

SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

Introduction

Hear the voice of the Bard!
 Who present, past, and future, sees;
 Whose ears have heard
 The Holy Word
 That walk'd among the ancient trees,

Calling the lapsèd soul,
 And weeping in the evening dew;
 That might control
 The starry pole,
 And fallen, fallen light renew!

`O Earth, O Earth, return!
 Arise from out the dewy grass;
 Night is worn,
 And the morn
 Rises from the slumberous mass.

`Turn away no more;
 Why wilt thou turn away.
 The starry floor,
 The wat'ry shore,
 Is giv'n thee till the break of day.'

Earth's Answer

Earth rais'd up her head
 From the darkness dread and drear.
 Her light fled,
 Stony dread!
 And her locks cover'd with grey despair.

`Prison'd on wat'ry shore,
 Starry Jealousy does keep my den:
 Cold and hoar,
 Weeping o'er,
 I hear the Father of the Ancient Men.

`Selfish Father of Men!
 Cruel, jealous, selfish Fear!
 Can delight,

Chain'd in night,
The virgins of youth and morning bear?

`Does spring hide its joy
When buds and blossoms grow?
Does the sower
Sow by night,
Or the ploughman in darkness plough?

`Break this heavy chain
That does freeze my bones around.
Selfish! vain!
Eternal bane!
That free Love with bondage bound.'

Nurse's Song

When the voices of children are heard on the green
And whisp'rings are in the dale,
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
And the dews of night arise;
Your spring and your day are wasted in play,
And your winter and night in disguise.

The Fly

Little Fly,
Thy summer's play
My thoughtless hand
Has brush'd away.

Am not I
A fly like thee?
Or art not thou
A man like me?

For I dance,
And drink, and sing,
Till some blind hand
Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
And strength and breath,

And the want
Of thought is death;

Then am I
A happy fly,
If I live
Or if I die.

The Tiger

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did he smile his work to see?
Did he who made the Lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye,
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

The Little Girl Lost

In futurity
I prophetic see
That the earth from sleep
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise and seek
For her Maker meek;
And the desert wild
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,
Where the summer's prime
Never fades away,
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old
Lovely Lyca told;
She had wander'd long
Hearing wild birds' song.

`Sweet sleep, come to me
Underneath this tree.
Do father, mother, weep?
Where can Lyca sleep?

`Lost in desert wild
Is your little child.
How can Lyca sleep
If her mother weep?

`If her heart does ache
Then let Lyca wake;
If my mother sleep,
Lyca shall not weep.

`Frowning, frowning night,
O'er this desert bright,
Let thy moon arise
While I close my eyes.'

Sleeping Lyca lay
While the beasts of prey,
Come from caverns deep,
View'd the maid asleep.

The kingly lion stood,
And the virgin view'd,
Then he gamboll'd round
O'er the hallow'd ground.

Leopards, tigers, play
 Round her as she lay,
 While the lion old
 Bow'd his mane of gold

And her bosom lick,
 And upon her neck
 From his eyes of flame
 Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness
 Loos'd her slender dress,
 And naked they convey'd
 To caves the sleeping maid.

The Little Girl Found

All the night in woe
 Lyca's parents go
 Over valleys deep,
 While the deserts weep.

Tired and woe-begone,
 Hoarse with making moan,
 Arm in arm seven days
 They trac'd the desert ways.

Seven nights they sleep
 Among shadows deep,
 And dream they see their child
 Starv'd in desert wild.

Pale, thro' pathless ways
 The fancied image strays
 Famish'd, weeping, weak,
 With hollow piteous shriek.

Rising from unrest,
 The trembling woman prest
 With feet of weary woe:
 She could no further go.

In his arms he bore
 Her, arm'd with sorrow sore;
 Till before their way
 A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain:
 Soon his heavy mane
 Bore them to the ground.
 Then he stalk'd around,

Smelling to his prey;
 But their fears allay
 When he licks their hands,
 And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes
 Fill'd with deep surprise;
 And wondering behold
 A spirit arm'd in gold.

On his head a crown;
 On his shoulders down
 Flow'd his golden hair.
 Gone was all their care.

'Follow me,' he said;
 'Weep not for the maid;
 In my palace deep
 Lyca lies asleep.'

Then they followèd
 Where the vision led,
 And saw their sleeping child
 Among tigers wild.

To this day they dwell
 In a lonely dell;
 Nor fear the wolfish howl
 Nor the lions' growl.

The Cold and the Pebble

'Love seeketh hot itself to please,
 Nor for itself hath any care,
 But for another gives its ease,
 And builds a Heaven in Hell's despair.'

So sung a little Clod of Clay,
 Trodden with the cattle's feet,
 But a Pebble of the brook
 Warbled out these metres meet:

`Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a Hell in Heaven's despite.'

The Little Vagabond

But the Ale-house is healthy and pleasant and warm;
Besides I can tell where I am used well,
Such usage in Heaven will never do well.

But if at the Church they would give us some ale,
And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,
We'd sing and we'd pray all the livelong day,
Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach, and drink, and sing,
And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;
And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at church,
Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.

And God, like a father, rejoicing to see
His children as pleasant and happy as He,
Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the barrel,
But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.

Holy Thursday

Is this a holy thing to see
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reduc'd to misery,
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine,
And their fields are bleak and bare,
And their ways are fill'd with thorns:
It is eternal winter there.

For where'er the sun does shine,
And where'er the rain does fall,

Babe can never hunger there,
Nor poverty the mind appal.

A Poison Tree

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I water'd it in fears,
Night and morning with my tears;
And I sunnèd it with smiles,
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright;
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole
When the night had veil'd the pole:
In the morning glad I see
My foe outstretch'd beneath the tree.

The Angel

I dreamt a dream! what can it mean?
And that I was a maiden Queen,
Guarded by an Angel mild:
Witless woe was ne'er beguil'd!

And I wept both night and day,
And he wip'd my tears away,
And I wept both day and night,
And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings and fled;
Then the morn blush'd rosy red;
I dried my tears, and arm'd my fears
With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again:
I was arm'd, he came in vain;
For the time of youth was fled,
And grey hairs were on my head

The Sick Rose

O Rose, thou art sick!
 The invisible worm,
 That flies in the night,
 In the howling storm,

Has found out thy bed
 Of crimson joy;
 And his dark secret love
 Does thy life destroy.

To Tirzah

Whate'er is born of mortal birth
 Must be consumèd with the earth,
 To rise from generation free:
 Then what have I to do with thee?

The sexes sprung from shame and pride,
 Blow'd in the morn; in evening died;
 But Mercy chang'd death into sleep;
 The sexes rose to work and weep.

Thou, Mother of my mortal part,
 With cruelty didst mould my heart,
 And with false self-deceiving tears
 Didst bind my nostrils, eyes, and ears;

Didst close my tongue in senseless clay,
 And me to mortal life betray:
 The death of Jesus set me free:
 Then what have I to do with thee?

The Voice of the Ancient Bard

Youth of delight, come hither,
 And see the opening morn,
 Image of truth new-born.
 Doubt is fled, and clouds of reason,
 Dark disputes and artful teasing.
 Folly is an endless maze,
 Tangled roots perplex her ways.
 How many have fallen there!
 They stumble all night over bones of the dead,

And feel they know not what but care,
And wish to lead others, when they should be led.

My Pretty Rose-Tree

A flower was offer'd to me,
Such a flower as May never bore;
But I said 'I've a pretty Rose-tree,'
And I passèd the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my pretty Rose-tree,
To tend her by day and by night,
But my Rose turn'd away with jealousy,
And her thorns were my only delight.

Ah! Sun-Flower

Ah, Sun-flower! weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun;
Seeking after that sweet golden clime,
Where the traveller's journey is done;

Where the Youth pined away with desire,
And the pale Virgin shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves, and aspire
Where my Sun-flower wishes to go.

The Lily

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn,
The humble Sheep a threat'ning horn;
While the Lily white shall in love delight,
Nor a thorn, nor a threat, stain her beauty bright.

The Garden of Love

I went to the Garden of Love,
And saw what I never had seen:
A Chapel was built in the midst,
Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
And 'Thou shalt not 'writ over the door;
So I turn'd to the Garden of Love
That so many sweet flowers bore;

And I saw it was fillèd with graves,
 And tomb-stones where flowers should be;
 And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,
 And binding with briars my joys and desires.

A Little Boy Lost

`Nought loves another as itself,
 Nor venerates another so,
 Nor is it possible to Thought
 A greater than itself to know:

`And, Father, how can I love you
 Or any of my brothers more?
 I love you like the little bird
 That picks up crumbs around the door.'

The Priest sat by and heard the child,
 In trembling zeal he seiz'd his hair:
 He led him by his little coat,
 And all admir'd the priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,
 `Lo! what a fiend is here,' said he,
 `One who sets reason up for judge
 Of our most holy Mystery.'

The weeping child could not be heard,
 The weeping parents wept in vain;
 They stripp'd him to his little shirt,
 And bound him in an iron chain;

And burn'd him in a holy place,
 Where many had been burn'd before:
 The weeping parents wept in vain.
 Are such things done on Albion's shore?

Infant Sorrow

My mother groan'd, my father wept,
 Into the dangerous world I leapt;
 Helpless, naked, piping loud,
 Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands,
 Striving against my swaddling-bands,

Bound and weary, I thought best
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

The Schoolboy

I love to rise in a summer morn
When the birds sing on every tree;
The distant huntsman winds his horn,
And the skylark sings with me.
O! what sweet company.

But to go to school in a summer morn,
O! it drives all joy away;
Under a cruel eye outworn,
The little ones spend the day
In sighing and dismay.

Ah! then at times I drooping sit,
And spend many an anxious hour,
Nor in my book can I take delight,
Nor sit in learning's bower,
Worn thro' with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy
Sit in a cage and sing?
How can a child, when fears annoy,
But droop his tender wing,
And forget his youthful spring?

O! father and mother, if buds are nipp'd
And blossoms blown away,
And if the tender plants are stripp'd
Of their joy in the springing day,
By sorrow and care's dismay,

How shall the summer arise in joy,
Or the summer fruits appear?
Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,
Or bless the mellowing year,
When the blasts of winter appear?

London

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,

And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every black'ning church appals;
And the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

A Little Girl Lost

*Children of the future age,
Reading this indignant page,
Know that in a former time,
Love, sweet Love, was thought a crime!*

In the Age of Gold,
Free from winter's cold,
Youth and maiden bright
To the holy light,
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair,
Fill'd with softest care,
Met in garden bright
Where the holy light
Had just remov'd the curtains of the night.

There, in rising day,
On the grass they play;
Parents were afar,
Strangers came not near,
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet,
They agree to meet
When the silent sleep

Waves o'er heaven's deep,
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white
Came the maiden bright;
But his loving look,
Like the holy book,
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

`Ona! pale and weak!
To thy father speak:
O! the trembling fear.
O! the dismal care,
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair!'

The Chimney-sweeper

A little black thing among the snow,
Crying `weep! 'weep!' in notes of woe!
`Where are thy father and mother, say?`--
`They are both gone up to the Church to pray

`Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smil'd among the winter's snow,
They clothèd me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

`And because I am happy and dance and sing,
They think they have done me no injury,
And are gone to praise God and His Priest and King,
Who make up a Heaven of our misery.'

The Human Abstract

Pity would be no more
If we did not make somebody poor;
And Mercy no more could be
If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings peace,
Till the selfish loves increase;
Then Cruelty knits a snare,
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
And waters the ground with tears;

Then Humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
Of Mystery over his head;
And the caterpillar and fly
Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,
Ruddy and sweet to eat;
And the raven his nest has made
In its thickest shade.

The Gods of the earth and sea
Sought thro' Nature to find this tree;
But their search was all in vain:
There grows one in the Human brain.

APPENDIX TO THE SONGS OF INNOCENCE AND OF EXPERIENCE

A Divine Image

Cruelty has a human heart,
And Jealousy a human face;
Terror the human form divine,
And Secrecy the human dress.
The human dress is forgèd iron,
The human form a fiery forge,
The human face a furnace seal'd,
The human heart its hungry gorge.

POEMS FROM THE ROSSETTI MANUSCRIPT PART I

Written *circa* 1793

Never seek to tell thy Love

Never seek to tell thy love,
Love that never told can be;
For the gentle wind does move
Silently, invisibly.

I told my love, I told my love,
I told her all my heart;
Trembling, cold, in ghastly fears,
Ah! she doth depart.

Soon as she was gone from me,
A traveller came by,
Silently, invisibly:
He took her with a sigh.

I laid me down upon a Bank

I laid me down upon a bank,
Where Love lay sleeping;
I heard among the rushes dank
Weeping, weeping.

Then I went to the heath and the wild,
To the thistles and thorns of the waste;
And they told me how they were beguil'd,
Driven out, and compell'd to be chaste.

I saw a Chapel all of Gold

I saw a Chapel all of gold
That none did dare to enter in,
And many weeping stood without,
Weeping, mourning, worshipping.

I saw a Serpent rise between
The white pillars of the door,
And he forc'd and forc'd and forc'd;
Down the golden hinges tore,

And along the pavement sweet,
 Set with pearls and rubies bright,
 All his shining length he drew,
 Till upon the altar white

Vomiting his poison out
 On the Bread and on the Wine.
 So I turn'd into a sty,
 And laid me down among the swine.

I asked a Thief

I askèd a thief to steal me a peach:
 He turnèd up his eyes.
 I ask'd a lithe lady to lie her down:
 Holy and meek, she cries.

As soon as I went
 An Angel came:
 He wink'd at the thief,
 And smil'd at the dame;

And without one word said
 Had a peach from the tree,
 And still as a maid
 Enjoy'd the lady.

I heard an Angel singing

I heard an Angel singing
 When the day was springing:
 `Mercy, Pity, Peace
 Is the world's release.'

Thus he sang all day
 Over the new-mown hay,
 Till the sun went down,
 And haycocks lookèd brown.

I heard a Devil curse
 Over the heath and the furze:
 `Mercy could be no more
 If there was nobody poor,

`And Pity no more could be,
 If all were as happy as we.'

At his curse the sun went down,
And the heavens gave a frown.

Down pour'd the heavy rain
Over the new reap'd grain;
And Misery's increase
Is Mercy, Pity, Peace.

A Cradle Song

Sleep! sleep! beauty bright,
Dreaming o'er the joys of night;
Sleep! sleep! in thy sleep
Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet Babe, in thy face
Soft desires I can trace,
Secret joys and secret smiles,
Little pretty infant wiles.

As thy softest limbs I feel,
Smiles as of the morning steal
O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
Where thy little heart does rest.

O! the cunning wiles that creep
In thy little heart asleep.
When thy little heart does wake
Then the dreadful lightnings break,

From thy cheek and from thy eye,
O'er the youthful harvests nigh.
Infant wiles and infant smiles
Heaven and Earth of peace beguiles.

Silent, silent Night

Silent, silent Night,
Quench the holy light
Of thy torches bright;

For possess'd of Day,
Thousand spirits stray
That sweet joys betray.

Why should joys be sweet
Usèd with deceit,
Nor with sorrows meet?

But an honest joy
Does itself destroy
For a harlot coy.

I fear'd the fury of my wind

I fear'd the fury of my wind
Would blight all blossoms fair and true;
And my sun it shin'd and shin'd,
And my wind it never blew.

But a blossom fair or true
Was not found on any tree;
For all blossoms grew and grew
Fruitless, false, tho' fair to see.

Infant Sorrow

i

My mother groan'd, my father wept;
Into the dangerous world I leapt,
Helpless, naked, piping loud,
Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

ii

Struggling in my father's hands,
Striving against my swaddling-bands,
Bound and weary, I thought best
To sulk upon my mother's breast.

iii

When I saw that rage was vain,
And to sulk would nothing gain,
Turning many a trick and wile
I began to soothe and smile.

iv

And I sooth'd day after day,
Till upon the ground I stray;
And I smil'd night after night,
Seeking only for delight.

v

And I saw before me shine
Clusters of the wand'ring vine;
And, beyond, a Myrtle-tree
Stretch'd its blossoms out to me.

vi

But a Priest with holy look,
In his hands a holy book,
Pronouncèd curses on his head
Who the fruits or blossoms shed.

vii

I beheld the Priest by night;
He embrac'd my Myrtle bright:
I beheld the Priest by day,
Where beneath my vines he lay.

viii

Like a serpent in the day
Underneath my vines he lay:
Like a serpent in the night
He embrac'd my Myrtle bright.

ix

So I smote him, and his gore
Stain'd the roots my Myrtle bore;
But the time of youth is fled,
And grey hairs are on my head.

Why should I care for the men of Thames

Why should I care for the men of Thames,
Or the cheating waves of charter'd streams;

Or shrink at the little blasts of fear
That the hireling blows into my ear?

Tho' born on the cheating banks of Thames,
Tho' his waters bathèd my infant limbs,
The Ohio shall wash his stains from me:
I was born a slave, but I go to be free!

Thou has a lap full of seed

Thou hast a lap full of seed,
And this is a fine country.
Why dost thou not cast thy seed,
And live in it merrily.

Shall I cast it on the sand
And turn it into fruitful land?
For on no other ground
Can I sow my seed,
Without tearing up
Some stinking weed.

In a Myrtle Shade

Why should I be bound to thee,
O my lovely Myrtle-tree?
Love, free Love, cannot be bound
To any tree that grows on ground.

O! how sick and weary I
Underneath my Myrtle lie;
Like to dung upon the ground,
Underneath my Myrtle bound.

Oft my Myrtle sigh'd in vain
To behold my heavy chain:
Oft my Father saw us sigh,
And laugh'd at our simplicity.

So I smote him, and his gore
Stain'd the roots my Myrtle bore.
But the time of youth is fled,
And grey hairs are on my head.

To my Myrtle

To a lovely Myrtle bound,
 Blossoms show'ring all around,
 O how sick and weary I
 Underneath my Myrtle lie!
 Why should I be bound to thee,
 O my lovely Myrtle-tree?

To Nobodaddy

Why art thou silent and invisible,
 Father of Jealousy?
 Why dost thou hide thyself in clouds
 From every searching eye?

Why darkness and obscurity
 In all thy words and laws,
 That none dare eat the fruit but from
 The wily Serpent's jaws?
 Or is it because secrecy gains females' loud applause?

Are not the joys of morning sweeter

Are not the joys of morning sweeter
 Than the joys of night?
 And are the vigorous joys of youth
 Ashamed of the light?

Let age and sickness silent rob
 The vineyards in the night;
 But those who burn with vigorous youth
 Pluck fruits before the light.

The Wild Flower's Song

As I wander'd the forest,
 The green leaves among,
 I heard a Wild Flower
 Singing a song.

I slept in the earth
 In the silent night,
 I murmur'd my fears
 And I felt delight.

'In the morning I went,
As rosy as morn,
To seek for new joy;
But I met with scorn.'

Day

The sun arises in the East,
Cloth'd in robes of blood and gold;
Swords and spears and wrath increas'd
All around his bosom roll'd,
Crown'd with warlike fires and raging desires.

The Fairy

'Come hither, my Sparrows,
My little arrows.
If a tear or a smile
Will a man beguile,
If an amorous delay
Clouds a sunshiny day,
If the step of a foot
Smites the heart to its root,
'Tis the marriage-ring --
Makes each fairy a king.'

So a Fairy sung.
From the leaves I sprung;
He leap'd from the spray
To flee away;
But in my hat caught,
He soon shall be taught.
Let him laugh, let him cry,
He's my Butterfly;
For I've pull'd out the sting
Of the marriage-ring.

Motto to the Songs of Innocence and of Experience

The Good are attracted by men's perceptions,
And think not for themselves;
Till Experience teaches them to catch
And to cage the fairies and elves.

And then the Knave begins to snarl,
And the Hypocrite to howl;

And all his good friends show their private ends,
And the eagle is known from the owl.

Lafayette

I

`Let the brothels of Paris be openèd
With many an alluring dance,
To awake the physicians thro' the city!'
Said the beautiful Queen of France.

II

The King awoke on his couch of gold,
As soon as he heard these tidings told:
`Arise and come, both fife and drum,
And the famine shall eat both crust and crumb.'

III

The Queen of France just touch'd this globe,
And the pestilence darted from her robe;
But our good Queen quite grows to the ground,
And a great many suckers grow all around.

IV

Fayette beside King Lewis stood;
He saw him sign his hand;
And soon he saw the famine rage
About the fruitful land.

Fayette beheld the Queen to smile
And wink her lovely eye;
And soon he saw the pestilence
From street to street to fly.

VI

Fayette beheld the King and Queen
In curses and iron bound;
But mute Fayette wept tear for tear,
And guarded them around.

VII

Fayette, Fayette, thou'rt bought and sold
And sold is thy happy morrow;
Thou gavest the tears of pity away
In exchange for the tears of sorrow.

VIII

Who will exchange his own fireside
For the stone of another's door?
Who will exchange his wheaten loaf
For the links of a dungeon-floor?

IX

O who would smile on the wintry seas
And pity the stormy roar?
Or who will exchange his new-born child
For the dog at the wintry door?

APPENDIX TO THE EARLIER POEMS IN THE ROSSETTI MANUSCRIPT

A Fairy leapt upon my knee
Singing and dancing merrily;
I said, 'Thou thing of patches, rings,
Pins, necklaces, and such-like things,
Disgracer of the female form,
Thou paltry, gilded, poisonous worm!
Weeping, he fell upon my thigh,
And thus in tears did soft reply:
'Knowest thou not, O Fairies' lord!
How much by us contemn'd, abhorr'd,
Whatever hides the female form
That cannot bear the mortal storm?
Therefore in pity still we give
Our lives to make the female live;
And what would turn into disease
We turn to what will joy and please.'

POEMS FROM THE ROSSETTI MANUSCRIPT PART II

Written *circa* 1800-1810

My Spectre around me night and day

i

My spectre around me night and day
Like a wild beast guards my way;
My Emanation far within
Weeps incessantly for my sin.

ii

`A fathomless and boundless deep,
There we wander, there we weep;
On the hungry craving wind
My Spectre follows thee behind.

iii

`He scents thy footsteps in the snow,
Wheresoever thou dost go,
Thro' the wintry hail and rain.
When wilt thou return again?

iv

`Dost thou not in pride and scorn
Fill with tempests all my morn,
And with jealousies and fears
Fill my pleasant nights with tears?

v

`Seven of my sweet loves thy knife
Has bereavèd of their life.

Their marble tombs I built with tears,
And with cold and shuddering fears.

vi

Seven more loves weep night and day
Round the tombs where my loves lay,
And seven more loves attend each night
Around my couch with torches bright.

vii

And seven more loves in my bed
Crown with wine my mournful head,
Pitying and forgiving all
Thy transgressions great and small.

viii

When wilt thou return and view
My loves, and them to life renew?
When wilt thou return and live?
When wilt thou pity as I forgive?

a

O'er my sins thou sit and moan:
Hast thou no sins of thy own?
O'er my sins thou sit and weep,
And lull thy own sins fast asleep.

b

What transgressions I commit
Are for thy transgressions fit.
They thy harlots, thou their slave;
And my bed becomes their grave.

ix

`Never, never, I return:
 Still for victory I burn.
 Living, thee alone I'll have;
 And when dead I'll be thy grave.

x

`Thro' the Heaven and Earth and Hell
 Thou shalt never, never quell:
 I will fly and thou pursue:
 Night and morn the flight renew.'

c

`Poor, pale, pitiable form
 That I follow in a storm;
 Iron tears and groans of lead
 Bind around my aching head.

xi

`Till I turn from Female love
 And root up the Infernal Grove,
 I shall never worthy be
 To step into Eternity.

xii

`And, to end thy cruel mocks,
 Annihilate thee on the rocks,
 And another form create
 To be subservient to my fate.

xiii

`Let us agree to give up love,
 And root up the Infernal Grove;
 Then shall we return and see
 The worlds of happy Eternity.

xiv

`And throughout all Eternity
 I forgive you, you forgive me.
 As our dear Redeemer said:
 "This the Wine, and this the Bread."

When Klopstock England defied

When Klopstock England defied,
 Uprose William Blake in his pride;
 For old Nobodaddy aloft
 . . . and belch'd and cough'd;
 Then swore a great oath that made Heaven quake,
 And call'd aloud to English Blake.
 Blake was giving his body ease,
 At Lambeth beneath the poplar trees.
 From his seat then started he
 And turn'd him round three times three.
 The moon at that sight blush'd scarlet red,
 The stars threw down their cups and fled,
 And all the devils that were in hell,

Answerèd with a ninefold yell.
 Klopstock felt the intripled turn,
 And all his bowels began to churn,
 And his bowels turn'd round three times three,
 And lock'd in his soul with a ninefold key; . . .
 Then again old Nobodaddy swore
 He ne'er had seen such a thing before,
 Since Noah was shut in the ark,
 Since Eve first chose her hellfire spark,
 Since 'twas the fashion to go naked,
 Since the old Anything was created . . .

Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau

Mock on, mock on, Voltaire, Rousseau;
 Mock on, mock on; 'tis all in vain!
 You throw the sand against the wind,
 And the wind blows it back again.

And every sand becomes a gem
 Reflected in the beams divine;

Blown back they blind the mocking eye,
But still in Israel's paths they shine.

The Atoms of Democritus
And Newton's Particles of Light
Are sands upon the Red Sea shore,
Where Israel's tents do shine so bright.

I saw a Monk of Charlemaine

i

I saw a Monk of Charlemaine
Arise before my sight:
I talk'd to the Grey Monk where he stood
In beams of infernal light.

ii

Gibbon arose with a lash of steel,
And Voltaire with a wracking wheel:
The Schools, in clouds of learning roll'd,
Arose with War in iron and gold.

iii

`Thou lazy Monk,' they said afar,
`In vain condemning glorious War,
And in thy cell thou shall ever dwell.
Rise, War, and bind him in his cell!'

iv

The blood red ran from the Grey Monk's side,
His hands and feet were wounded wide,
His body bent, his arms and knees
Like to the roots of ancient trees.

v

`I see, I see,' the Mother said,

`My children will die for lack of bread.
What more has the merciless tyrant said?
The Monk sat down on her stony bed.

vi

His eye was dry, no tear could flow;
A hollow groan first spoke his woe.
He trembled and shudder'd upon the bed;
At length with a feeble cry he said:

vii

`When God commanded this hand to write
In the studious hours of deep midnight,
He told me that all I wrote should prove
The bane of all that on Earth I love.

viii

`My brother starv'd between two walls;
Thy children's cry my soul appals:
I mock'd at the wrack and griding chain;
My bent body mocks at their torturing pain.

ix

`Thy father drew his sword in the North;
With his thousands strong he is marchèd forth;
Thy brother has armèd himself in steel
To revenge the wrongs thy children feel.

x

`But vain the sword and vain the bow,
They never can work War's overthrow;
The hermit's prayer and the widow's tear
Alone can free the world from fear.

xi

`The hand of Vengeance sought the bed
To which the purple tyrant fled;
The iron hand crush'd the tyrant's head,
And became a tyrant in his stead.

xii

`Until the tyrant himself relent,
The tyrant who first the black bow bent,
Slaughter shall heap the bloody plain:
Resistance and War is the tyrant's gain.

xiii

`But the tear of love -- and forgiveness sweet,
And submission to death beneath his feet --
The tear shall melt the sword of steel,
And every wound it has made shall heal.

xiv

`For the tear is an intellectual thing,
And a sigh is the sword of an Angel King,
And the bitter groan of the martyr's woe
Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow.'

Morning

To find the Western path,
Right thro' the Gates of Wrath
I urge my way;
Sweet Mercy leads me on
With soft repentant moan:
I see the break of day.

The war of swords and spears,
Melted by dewy tears,
Exhales on high;
The Sun is freed from fears,
And with soft grateful tears
Ascends the sky.

The Birds

He. Where thou dwellest, in what grove,
Tell me Fair One, tell me Love;
Where thou thy charming nest dost build,
O thou pride of every field!

She. Yonder stands a lonely tree,
There I live and mourn for thee;
Morning drinks my silent tear,
And evening winds my sorrow bear.

He. O thou summer's harmony,
I have liv'd and mourn'd for thee;
Each day I mourn along the wood,
And night hath heard my sorrows loud.

She. Dost thou truly long for me?
And am I thus sweet to thee?
Sorrow now is at an end,
O my Lover and my Friend!

He. Come, on wings of joy we'll fly
To where my bower hangs on high;
Come, and make thy calm retreat
Among green leaves and blossoms sweet.

You don't believe

You don't believe -- I won't attempt to make ye:
You are asleep -- I won't attempt to wake ye.
Sleep on! sleep on! while in your pleasant dreams
Of Reason you may drink of Life's clear streams.
Reason and Newton, they are quite two things;
For so the swallow and the sparrow sings.

Reason says `Miracle': Newton says `Doubt.'
Aye! that's the way to make all Nature out.
`Doubt, doubt, and don't believe without experiment':
That is the very thing that Jesus meant,
When He said `Only believe! believe and try!
Try, try, and never mind the reason why!'

If it is true what the Prophets write

If it is true, what the Prophets write,
That the heathen gods are all stocks and stones,
Shall we, for the sake of being polite,
Feed them with the juice of our marrow-bones?

And if Bezaleel and Aholiab drew
What the finger of God pointed to their view,
Shall we suffer the Roman and Grecian rods
To compel us to worship them as gods?

They stole them from the temple of the Lord
And worshipp'd them that they might make inspirèd art abhorr'd;

The wood and stone were call'd the holy things,
And their sublime intent given to their kings.
All the atonements of Jehovah spurn'd,
And criminals to sacrifices turn'd.

I will tell you what Joseph of Arimathea

I will tell you what Joseph of Arimathea
Said to my Fairy: was not it very queer?
'Pliny and Trajan! What! are you here?
Come before Joseph of Arimathea.
Listen patient, and when Joseph has done
'Twill make a fool laugh, and a fairy fun.'

Why was Cupid a boy

Why was Cupid a boy,
And why a boy was he?
He should have been a girl,
For aught that I can see.

For he shoots with his bow,
And the girl shoots with her eye,
And they both are merry and glad,
And laugh when we do cry.

And to make Cupid a boy
Was the Cupid girl's mocking plan;
For a boy can't interpret the thing
Till he is become a man.

And then he's so pierc'd with cares,
And wounded with arrowy smarts,

That the whole business of his life
Is to pick out the heads of the darts.

'Twas the Greeks' love of war
Turn'd Love into a boy,
And woman into a statue of stone--
And away fled every joy.

Now Art has lost its mental charms

'Now Art has lost its mental charms
France shall subdue the world in arms.'
So spoke an Angel at my birth;
Then said 'Descend thou upon earth,
Renew the Arts on Britain's shore,
And France shall fall down and adore.
With works of art their armies meet
And War shall sink beneath thy feet.
But if thy nation Arts refuse,
And if they scorn the immortal Muse,
France shall the arts of peace restore
And save thee from the ungrateful shore.'

Spirit who lov'st Britannia's Isle
Round which the fiends of commerce smile --

Cetera desunt

I rose up at the dawn of day

I rose up at the dawn of day--
'Get thee away! get thee away!
Pray'st thou for riches? Away! away!
This is the Throne of Mammon grey.'

Said I: This, sure, is very odd;
I took it to be the Throne of God.
For everything besides I have:
It is only for riches that I can crave.

I have mental joy, and mental health,
And mental friends, and mental wealth;
I've a wife I love, and that loves me;
I've all but riches bodily.

I am in God's presence night and day,
 And He never turns His face away;
 The accuser of sins by my side doth stand,
 And he holds my money-bag in his hand.

For my worldly things God makes him pay,
 And he'd pay for more if to him I would pray;
 And so you may do the worst you can do;
 Be assur'd, Mr. Devil, I won't pray to you.

Then if for riches I must not pray,
 God knows, I little of prayers need say;
 So, as a church is known by its steeple,
 If I pray it must be for other people.

He says, if I do not worship him for a God,
 I shall eat coarser food, and go worse shod;
 So, as I don't value such things as these,
 You must do, Mr. Devil, just as God please.

The Caverns of the Grave I've seen

The Caverns of the Grave I've seen,
 And these I show'd to England's Queen.
 But now the Caves of Hell I view,
 Who shall I dare to show them to?
 What mighty soul in Beauty's form
 Shall dauntless view the infernal storm?
 Egremont's Countess can control
 The flames of Hell that round me roll;
 If she refuse, I still go on
 Till the Heavens and Earth are gone,
 Still admir'd by noble minds,
 Follow'd by Envy on the winds,
 Re-engrav'd time after time,
 Ever in their youthful prime,
 My designs unchang'd remain.
 Time may rage, but rage in vain.
 For above Time's troubled fountains,
 On the great Atlantic Mountains,
 In my Golden House on high,
 There they shine eternally.

ADDENDUM TO THE LATER POEMS IN THE ROSSETTI MANUSCRIPT

To the Queen

The Door of Death is made of gold,
That mortal eyes cannot behold;
But when the mortal eyes are clos'd,
And cold and pale the limbs repos'd,
The soul awakes; and, wond'ring, sees
In her mild hand the golden Keys:
The Grave is Heaven's Golden Gate,
And rich and poor around it wait;
O Shepherdess of England's fold,
Behold this Gate of Pearl and Gold!

To dedicate to England's Queen
The visions that my soul has seen,
And, by her kind permission, bring
What I have borne on solemn wing,
From the vast regions of the Grave,
Before her throne my wings I wave;
Bowing before my Sov'reign's feet,
'The Grave produc'd these blossoms sweet
In mild repose from earthly strife;
The blossoms of Eternal Life!

POEMS FROM THE ROSSETTI MANUSCRIPT PART III

Written *circa* 1810

The Everlasting Gospel

á

The Vision of Christ that thou dost see
 Is my vision's greatest enemy.
 Thine has a great hook nose like thine,
 Mine has a snub nose like to mine.
 Thine is the Friend of all Mankind;
 Mine speaks in parables to the blind.
 Thine loves the same world that mine hates;
 Thy heaven doors are my hell gates.
 Socrates taught what Meletus
 Loath'd as a nation's bitterest curse,
 And Caiaphas was in his own mind
 A benefactor to mankind.
 Both read the Bible day and night,
 But thou read'st black where I read white.

Â

Was Jesus gentle, or did He
 Give any marks of gentility?
 When twelve years old He ran away,
 And left His parents in dismay.
 When after three days' sorrow found,
 Loud as Sinai's trumpet-sound:
 `No earthly parents I confess--
 My Heavenly Father's business!
 Ye understand not what I say,
 And, angry, force Me to obey.
 Obedience is a duty then,
 And favour gains with God and men.
 John from the wilderness loud cried;
 Satan gloried in his pride.
 `Come,' said Satan, `come away,
 I'll soon see if you'll obey!
 John for disobedience bled,
 But you can turn the stones to bread.
 God's high king and God's high priest
 Shall plant their glories in your breast,

If Caiaphas you will obey,
 If Herod you with bloody prey
 Feed with the sacrifice, and be
 Obedient, fall down, worship me.'
 Thunders and lightnings broke around,
 And Jesus' voice in thunders' sound:
 'Thus I seize the spiritual prey.
 Ye smiters with disease, make way.
 I come your King and God to seize,
 Is God a smiter with disease?'
 The God of this world rag'd in vain:
 He bound old Satan in His chain,
 And, bursting forth, His furious ire
 Became a chariot of fire.
 Throughout the land He took His course,
 And trac'd diseases to their source.
 He curs'd the Scribe and Pharisee,
 Trampling down hypocrisy.
 Where'er His chariot took its way,
 There Gates of Death let in the Day,
 Broke down from every chain and bar;
 And Satan in His spiritual war
 Dragg'd at His chariot-wheels: loud howl'd
 The God of this world: louder roll'd
 The chariot-wheels, and louder still
 His voice was heard from Zion's Hill,
 And in His hand the scourge shone bright;
 He scourg'd the merchant Canaanite
 From out the Temple of His Mind,
 And in his body tight does bind
 Satan and all his hellish crew;
 And thus with wrath He did subdue
 The serpent bulk of Nature's dross,
 Till He had nail'd it to the Cross.
 He took on sin in the Virgin's womb
 And put it off on the Cross and tomb
 To be worshipp'd by the Church of Rome.

&gama;

Was Jesus humble? or did He
 Give any proofs of humility?
 Boast of high things with humble tone,
 And give with charity a stone?
 When but a child He ran away,
 And left His parents in dismay.

When they had wander'd three days long
 These were the words upon His tongue:
 `No earthly parents I confess:
 I am doing My Father's business.'
 When the rich learnèd Pharisee
 Came to consult Him secretly,
 Upon his heart with iron pen
 He wrote `Ye must be born again.'
 He was too proud to take a bribe;
 He spoke with authority, not like a Scribe.
 He says with most consummate art
 `Follow Me, I am meek and lowly of heart,
 As that is the only way to escape
 The miser's net and the glutton's trap.'
 What can be done with such desperate fools
 Who follow after the heathen schools?
 I was standing by when Jesus died;
 What I call'd humility, they call'd pride.
 He who loves his enemies betrays his friends.
 This surely is not what Jesus intends;
 But the sneaking pride of heroic schools,
 And the Scribes' and Pharisees' virtuous rules,
 For He acts with honest, triumphant pride,
 And this is the cause that Jesus died.
 He did not die with Christian ease,
 Asking pardon of His enemies:
 If He had, Caiaphas would forgive;
 Sneaking submission can always live.
 He had only to say that God was the Devil,
 And the Devil was God, like a Christian civil;
 Mild Christian regrets to the Devil confess
 For affronting him thrice in the wilderness;
 He had soon been bloody Caesar's elf,
 And at last he would have been Caesar himself,
 Like Dr. Priestly and Bacon and Newton--
 Poor spiritual knowledge is not worth a button!
 For thus the Gospel Sir Isaac confutes:
 `God can only be known by His attributes;
 And as for the indwelling of the Holy Ghost,
 Or of Christ and His Father, it's all a boast
 And pride, and vanity of the imagination,
 That disdains to follow this world's fashion.'
 To teach doubt and experiment
 Certainly was not what Christ meant.
 What was He doing all that time,
 From twelve years old to manly prime?

Was He then idle, or the less
 About His Father's business?
 Or was His wisdom held in scorn
 Before His wrath began to burn
 In miracles throughout the land,
 That quite unnerv'd the Seraph band?
 If He had been Antichrist, Creeping Jesus,
 He'd have done anything to please us;
 Gone sneaking into synagogues,
 And not us'd the Elders and Priests like dogs;
 But humble as a lamb or ass
 Obey'd Himself to Caiaphas.
 God wants not man to humble himself:
 That is the trick of the Ancient Elf.
 This is the race that Jesus ran:
 Humble to God, haughty to man,
 Cursing the Rulers before the people
 Even to the Temple's highest steeple,
 And when He humbled Himself to God
 Then descended the cruel rod.
 `If Thou humblest Thyself, Thou humblest Me.
 Thou also dwell'st in Eternity.
 Thou art a Man: God is no more:
 Thy own Humanity learn to adore,
 For that is My spirit of life.
 Awake, arise to spiritual strife,
 And Thy revenge abroad display
 In terrors at the last Judgement Day.
 God's mercy and long suffering
 Is but the sinner to judgment to bring.
 Thou on the Cross for them shalt pray--
 And take revenge at the Last Day.'
 Jesus replied, and thunders hurl'd:
 `I never will pray for the world.
 Once I did so when I pray'd in the Garden;
 I wish'd to take with Me a bodily pardon.'
 Can that which was of woman born,
 In the absence of the morn,
 When the Soul fell into sleep,
 And Archangels round it weep,
 Shooting out against the light
 Fibres of a deadly night,
 Reasoning upon its own dark fiction,
 In doubt which is self-contradiction?
 Humility is only doubt,
 And does the sun and moon blot out,

Rooting over with thorns and stems
 The buried soul and all its gems.
 This life's five windows of the soul
 Distorts the Heavens from pole to pole,
 And leads you to believe a lie
 When you see with, not thro', the eye
 That was born in a night, to perish in a night,
 When the soul slept in the beams of light.

ä

This was spoken by my Spectre to Voltaire, Bacon, &c.
 Did Jesus teach doubt? or did He
 Give any lessons of philosophy,
 Charge Visionaries with deceiving,
 Or call men wise for not believing? . . .

å

Was Jesus born of a Virgin pure
 With narrow soul and looks demure?
 If He intended to take on sin
 The Mother should an harlot been,
 Just such a one as Magdalen,
 With seven devils in her pen.
 Or were Jew virgins still more curs'd,
 And more sucking devils nurs'd?
 Or what was it which He took on
 That He might bring salvation?
 A body subject to be tempted,
 From neither pain nor grief exempted;
 Or such a body as might not feel
 The passions that with sinners deal?
 Yes, but they say He never fell.
 Ask Caiaphas; for he can tell.--
 `He mock'd the Sabbath, and He mock'd
 The Sabbath's God, and He unlock'd
 The evil spirits from their shrines,
 And turn'd fishermen to divines;
 O'erturn'd the tent of secret sins,
 And its golden cords and pins,
 In the bloody shrine of war
 Pour'd around from star to star,--
 Halls of justice, hating vice,
 Where the Devil combs his lice.
 He turn'd the devils into swine

That He might tempt the Jews to dine;
 Since which, a pig has got a look
 That for a Jew may be mistook.
 "Obey your parents."--What says He?
 "Woman, what have I to do with thee?
 No earthly parents I confess:
 I am doing My Father's business."
 He scorn'd Earth's parents, scorn'd Earth's God,
 And mock'd the one and the other's rod;
 His seventy Disciples sent
 Against Religion and Government--
 They by the sword of Justice fell,
 And Him their cruel murderer tell.
 He left His father's trade to roam,
 A wand'ring vagrant without home;
 And thus He others' labour stole,
 That He might live above control.
 The publicans and harlots He
 Selected for His company,
 And from the adulteress turn'd away
 God's righteous law, that lost its prey.'

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Was Jesus chaste? or did He
 Give any lessons of chastity?
 The Morning blush'd fiery red:
 Mary was found in adulterous bed;
 Earth groan'd beneath, and Heaven above
 Trembled at discovery of Love
 Jesus was sitting in Moses' chair.
 They brought the trembling woman there.
 Moses commands she be ston'd to death.
 What was the sound of Jesus' breath?
 He laid His hand on Moses' law;
 The ancient Heavens, in silent awe,
 Writ with curses from pole to pole,
 All away began to roll.
 The Earth trembling and naked lay
 In secret bed of mortal clay;
 On Sinai felt the Hand Divine
 Pulling back the bloody shrine;
 And she heard the breath of God,
 As she heard by Eden's flood:
 `Good and Evil are no more!
 Sinai's trumpets cease to roar!

Cease, finger of God, to write!
The Heavens are not clean in Thy sight.
Thou art good, and Thou alone;
Nor may the sinner cast one stone.
To be good only, is to be
A God or else a Pharisee.
Thou Angel of the Presence Divine,
That didst create this Body of Mine,
Wherefore hast thou writ these laws
And created Hell's dark jaws?
My Presence I will take from thee:
A cold leper thou shalt be.
Tho' thou wast so pure and bright
That Heaven was impure in thy sight,
Tho' thy oath turn'd Heaven pale,
Tho' thy covenant built Hell's jail,
Tho' thou didst all to chaos roll
With the Serpent for its soul,
Still the breath Divine does move,
And the breath Divine is Love.
Mary, fear not! Let me see
The seven devils that torment thee.
Hide not from My sight thy sin,
That forgiveness thou may'st win.
Has no man condemnèd thee?
'No man, Lord.' 'Then what is he
Who shall accuse thee? Come ye forth,
Fallen fiends of heavenly birth,
That have forgot your ancient love,
And driven away my trembling Dove.
You shall bow before her feet;
You shall lick the dust for meat;
And tho' you cannot love, but hate,
Shall be beggars at Love's gate.
What was thy love? Let Me see it;
Was it love or dark deceit?'
'Love too long from me has fled;
'Twas dark deceit, to earn my bread;
'Twas covet, or 'twas custom, or
Some trifle not worth caring for;
That they may call a shame and sin
Love's temple that God dwelleth in,
And bide in secret hidden shrine
The naked Human Form Divine,
And render that a lawless thing
On which the Soul expands its wing.

But this, O Lord, this was my sin,
 When first I let these devils in,
 In dark pretence to chastity
 Blaspheming Love, blaspheming Thee,
 Thence rose secret adulteries,
 And thence did covet also rise.
 My sin Thou hast forgiven me;
 Canst Thou forgive my blasphemy?
 Canst Thou return to this dark hell,
 And in my burning bosom dwell?
 And canst Thou die that I may live?
 And canst Thou pity and forgive?'
 Then roll'd the shadowy Man away
 From the limbs of Jesus, to make them His prey,
 An ever devouring appetite,
 Glittering with festering venoms bright;
 Crying `Crucify this cause of distress,
 Who don't keep the secrets of holiness!
 The mental powers by diseases we bind;
 But He heals the deaf, the dumb, and the blind.
 Whom God has afflicted for secret ends,
 He comforts and heals and calls them friends.'
 But, when Jesus was crucified,
 Then was perfected His galling pride.
 In three nights He devour'd His prey,
 And still He devours the body of clay;
 For dust and clay is the Serpent's meat,
 Which never was made for Man to eat.

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Seeing this False Christ, in fury and passion
 I made my voice heard all over the nation.
 What are those . . .

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Epilogue

I am sure this Jesus will not do,
 Either for Englishman or Jew.

THE PICKERING MANUSCRIPT

The Smile

There is a smile of love,
 And there is a smile of deceit,
 And there is a smile of smiles
 In which these two smiles meet.

And there is a frown of hate,
 And there is a frown of disdain,
 And there is a frown of frowns
 Which you strive to forget in vain,

For it sticks in the heart's deep core
 And it sticks in the deep backbone--
 And no smile that ever was smil'd,
 But only one smile alone,

That betwixt the cradle and grave
 It only once smil'd can be;
 And, when it once is smil'd,
 There's an end to all misery.

The Golden Net

Three Virgins at the break of day:
 `Whither, young man, whither away
 Alas for woe! alas for woe!
 They cry, and tears for ever flow.
 The one was cloth'd in flames of fire,
 The other cloth'd in iron wire,
 The other cloth'd in tears and sighs
 Dazzling bright before my eyes.
 They bore a Net of golden twine
 To hang upon the branches fine.
 Pitying I wept to see the woe
 That Love and Beauty undergo,
 To be consum'd in burning fires
 And in ungratified desires,
 And in tears cloth'd night and day
 Melted all my soul away.
 When they saw my tears, a smile
 That did Heaven itself beguile,
 Bore the Golden Net aloft
 As on downy pinions soft,

Over the Morning of my day.
 Underneath the net I stray,
 Now entreating Burning Fire
 Now entreating Iron Wire,
 Now entreating Tears and Sighs--
 O! when will the morning rise?

The Mental Traveller

I travell'd thro' a land of men,
 A land of men and women too;
 And heard and saw such dreadful things
 As cold earth-wanderers never knew.

For there the Babe is born in joy
 That was begotten in dire woe;
 Just as we reap in joy the fruit
 Which we in bitter tears did sow.

And if the Babe is born a boy
 He's given to a Woman Old,
 Who nails him down upon a rock,
 Catches his shrieks in cups of gold.

She binds iron thorns around his head,
 She pierces both his hands and feet,
 She cuts his heart out at his side,
 To make it feel both cold and heat.

Her fingers number every nerve,
 Just as a miser counts his gold;
 She lives upon his shrieks and cries,
 And she grows young as he grows old.

Till he becomes a bleeding Youth,
 And she becomes a Virgin bright;
 Then he rends up his manacles,
 And binds her down for his delight.

He plants himself in all her nerves,
 Just as a husbandman his mould;
 And she becomes his dwelling-place
 And garden fruitful seventyfold.

And agèd Shadow, soon he fades,
 Wandering round an earthly cot,

Full fillèd all with gems and gold
Which he by industry had got.

And these are the gems of the human soul,
The rubies and pearls of a love-sick eye,
The countless gold of the aching heart,
The martyr's groan and the lover's sigh.

They are his meat, they are his drink
He feeds the beggar and the poor
And the wayfaring traveller:
For ever open in his door.

His grief is their eternal joy;
They make the roofs and walls to ring;
Till from the fire on the hearth
A little Female Babe does spring.

And she is all of solid fire
And gems and gold, that none his hand
Dares stretch to touch her baby form,
Or wrap her in his swaddling-band.

But she comes to the man she loves,
If young or old, or rich or poor;
They soon drive out the Agèd Host,
A beggar at another's door.

He wanders weeping far away,
Until some other take him in;
Oft blind and age-bent, sore distrest,
Until he can a Maiden win.

And to allay his freezing age,
The poor man takes her in his arms;
The cottage fades before his sight,
The garden and its lovely charms.

The guests are scatter'd thro' the land,
For the eye altering alters all;
The senses roll themselves in fear,
And the flat earth becomes a ball;

The stars, sun, moon, all shrink away
A desert vast without a bound,

And nothing left to eat or drink,
And a dark desert all around.

The honey of her infant lips,
The bread and wine of her sweet smile,
The wild game of her roving eye,
Does him to infancy beguile;

For as he eats and drinks he grows
Younger and younger every day;
And on the desert wild they both
Wander in terror and dismay.

Like the wild stage she flees away,
Her fear plants many a thicket wild;
While he pursues her night and day,
By various arts of love beguil'd;

By various arts of love and hate,
Till the wide desert planted o'er
With labyrinths of wayward love,
Where roam the lion, wolf, and boar.

Till he becomes a wayward Babe,
And she a weeping Woman Old.
Then many a lover wanders here;
The sun and stars are nearer roll'd;

The trees bring forth sweet ecstasy
To all who in the desert roam;
Till many a city there is built,
And many a pleasant shepherd's home.

But when they find the Frowning Babe,
Terror strikes thro' the region wide:
They cry `The Babe! the Babe is born!
And flee away on every side.

For who dare touch the Frowning Form,
His arm is wither'd to its root;
Lions, boars, wolves, all howling flee,
And every tree does shed its fruit.

And none can touch that Frowning Form,
Except it be a Woman Old;

She nails him down upon the rock,
And all is done as I have told.

The Land of Dreams

Awake, awake, my little boy!
Thou wast thy mother's only joy;
Why dost thou weep in thy gentle sleep?
Awake! thy father does thee keep.

`O, what land is the Land of Dreams?
What are its mountains, and what are its streams?
O father! I saw my mother there,
Among the lilies by waters fair.

`Among the lambs, clothèd in white,
She walk'd with her Thomas in sweet delight.
I wept for joy, like a dove I mourn;
O! when shall I again return?'

Dear child, I also by pleasant streams
Have wander'd all night in the Land of Dreams;
But tho' calm and warm the waters wide,
I could not get to the other side.

`Father, O father! what do we here
In this land of unbelief and fear?
The Land of Dreams is better far,
Above the light of the morning star.'

Mary

Sweet Mary, the first time she ever was there,
Came into the ball-room among the fair;
The young men and maidens around her throng,
And these are the words upon every tongue;

`An Angel is here from the heavenly climes,
Or again does return the golden times;
Her eyes outshine every brilliant ray,
She opens her lips--'tis the Month of May.'

Mary moves in soft beauty and conscious delight,
To augment with sweet smiles all the joys of the night,
Nor once blushes to own to the rest of the fair
That sweet Love and Beauty are worthy our care.

In the morning the villagers rose with delight,
 And repeated with pleasure the joys of the night,
 And Mary arose among friends to be free,
 But no friend from henceforward thou, Mary, shalt see.

Some said she was proud, some call'd her a whore,
 And some, when she passèd by, shut to the door;
 A damp cold came o'er her, her blushes all fled;
 Her lilies and roses are blighted and shed.

`O, why was I born with a different face?
 Why was I not born like this envious race?
 Why did Heaven adorn me with bountiful hand,
 And then set me down in an envious land?

`To be weak as a lamb and smooth as a dove,
 And not to raise envy, is call'd Christian love;
 But if you raise envy your merit's to blame
 For planting such spite in the weak and the tame.

`I will humble my beauty, I will not dress fine,
 I will keep from the ball, and my eyes shall not shine;
 And if any girl's lover forsakes her for me
 I'll refuse him my hand, and from envy be free.'

She went out in morning attir'd plain and neat;
 `Proud Mary's gone mad,' said the child in the street;
 She went out in morning in plain neat attire,
 And came home in evening bespatter'd with mire.

She trembled and wept, sitting on the bedside,
 She forgot it was night, and she trembled and cried;
 She forgot it was night, she forgot it was morn,
 Her soft memory imprinted with faces of scorn;

With faces of scorn and with eyes of disdain,
 Like foul fiends inhabiting Mary's mild brain;
 She remembers no face like the Human Divine,
 All faces have envy, sweet Mary, but thine;

And thine is a face of sweet love in despair,
 And thine is a face of mild sorrow and care,
 And thine is a face of wild terror and fear
 That shall never be quiet till laid on its bier.

The Crystal Cabinet

The Maiden caught me in the wild,
 Where I was dancing merrily;
 She put me into her Cabinet,
 And lock'd me up with a golden key.

This Cabinet is form'd of gold
 And pearl and crystal shining bright,
 And within it opens into a world
 And a little lovely moony night.

Another England there I saw,
 Another London with its Tower,
 Another Thames and other hills,
 And another pleasant Surrey bower,

Another Maiden like herself,
 Translucent, lovely, shining clear,
 Threefold each in the other clos'd--
 O, what a pleasant trembling fear!

O, what a smile! a threefold smile
 Fill'd me, that like a flame I burn'd;
 I bent to kiss the lovely Maid,
 And found a threefold kiss return'd.

I strove to seize the inmost form
 With ardour fierce and hands of flame,
 But burst the Crystal Cabinet,
 And like a weeping Babe became--

A weeping Babe upon the wild,
 And weeping Woman pale reclin'd,
 And in the outward air again
 I fill'd with woes the passing wind.

The Grey Monk

'I die, I die!' the Mother said,
 'My children die for lack of bread.
 What more has the merciless tyrant said?'
 The Monk sat down on the stony bed.

The blood red ran from the Grey Monk's side,
 His hands and feet were wounded wide,
 His body bent, his arms and knees
 Like to the roots of ancient trees.

His eye was dry; no tear could flow:
 A hollow groan first spoke his woe.
 He trembled and shudder'd upon the bed;
 At length with a feeble cry he said:

`When God commanded this hand to write
 In the studious hours of deep midnight,
 He told me the writing I wrote should prove
 The bane of all that on Earth I love.

`My brother starv'd between two walls,
 His children's cry my soul appalls;
 I mock'd at the wrack and griding chain,
 My bent body mocks their torturing pain.

`Thy father drew his sword in the North,
 With his thousands strong he marchèd forth;
 Thy brother has arm'd himself in steel,
 To avenge the wrongs thy children feel.

`But vain the sword and vain the bow,
 They never can work War's overthrow.
 The hermit's prayer and the widow's tear
 Alone can free the world from fear.

`For a tear is an intellectual thing,
 And a sigh is the sword of an Angel King,
 And the bitter groan of the martyr's woe
 Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow.

`The hand of Vengeance found the bed
 To which the purple tyrant fled;
 The iron hand crush'd the tyrant's head,
 And became a tyrant in his stead.'

Auguries of Innocence

To see a World in a grain of sand,
 And a Heaven in a wild flower,
 Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand,
 And Eternity in an hour.
 A robin redbreast in a cage
 Puts all Heaven in a rage.
 A dove-house fill'd with doves and pigeons
 Shudders Hell thro' all its regions.
 A dog starv'd at his master's gate

Predicts the ruin of the State.
A horse misus'd upon the road
Calls to Heaven for human blood.
Each outcry of the hunted hare
A fibre from the brain does tear.
A skylark wounded in the wing,
A cherubim does cease to sing.
The game-cock clipt and arm'd for fight
Does the rising sun affright.
Every wolf's and lion's howl
Raises from Hell a Human soul.
The wild deer, wandering here and there,
Keeps the Human soul from care.
The lamb misus'd breeds public strife,
And yet forgives the butcher's knife.
The bat that flits at close of eve
Has left the brain that won't believe.
The owl that calls upon the night
Speaks the unbeliever's fright.
He who shall hurt the little wren
Shall never be belov'd by men.
He who the ox to wrath has mov'd
Shall never be by woman lov'd.
The wanton boy that kills the fly
Shall feel the spider's enmity.
He who torments the chafer's sprite
Weaves a bower in endless night.
The caterpillar on the leaf
Repeats to thee thy mother's grief.
Kill not the moth nor butterfly,
For the Last Judgement draweth nigh.
He who shall train the horse to war
Shall never pass the polar bar.
The beggar's dog and widow's cat,
Feed them, and thou wilt grow fat.
The gnat that sings his summer's song
Poison gets from Slander's tongue.
The poison of the snake and newt
Is the sweat of Envy's foot.
The poison of the honey-bee
Is the artist's jealousy.
The prince's robes and beggar's rags
Are toadstools on the miser's bags.
A truth that's told with bad intent
Beats all the lies you can invent.
It is right it should be so;

Man was made for joy and woe;
And when this we rightly know,
Thro' the world we safely go.
Joy and woe are woven fine,
A clothing for the soul divine;
Under every grief and pine
Runs a joy with silken twine.
The babe is more than swaddling-bands;
Throughout all these human lands
Tools were made, and born were hands,
Every farmer understands.
Every tear from every eye
Becomes a babe in Eternity;
This is caught by Females bright,
And return'd to its own delight.
The bleat, the bark, bellow, and roar
Are waves that beat on Heaven's shore.
The babe that weeps the rod beneath
Writes revenge in realms of death.
The beggar's rags, fluttering in air,
Does to rags the heavens tear.
The soldier, arm'd with sword and gun,
Palsied strikes the summer's sun.
The poor man's farthing is worth more
Than all the gold on Afric's shore.
One mite wrung from the labourer's hands
Shall buy and sell the miser's lands
Or, if protected from on high,
Does that whole nation sell and buy.
He who mocks the infant's faith
Shall be mock'd in Age and Death.
He who shall teach the child to doubt
The rotting grave shall ne'er get out.
He who respects the infant's faith
Triumphs over Hell and Death.
The child's toys and the old man's reasons
Are the fruits of the two seasons.
The questioner, who sits so sly,
Shall never know how to reply.
He who replies to words of Doubt
Doth put the light of knowledge out.
The strongest poison ever known
Came from Caesar's laurel crown.
Nought can deform the human race
Like to the armour's iron brace.
When gold and gems adorn the plough

To peaceful arts shall Envy bow.
 A riddle, or the cricket's cry,
 Is to Doubt a fit reply.
 The emmet's inch and eagle's mile
 Make lame Philosophy to smile.
 He who doubts from what he sees
 Will ne'er believe, do what you please.
 If the Sun and Moon should doubt,
 They'd immediately go out.
 To be in a passion you good may do,
 But no good if a passion is in you.
 The whore and gambler, by the state
 Licensed, build that nation's fate.
 The harlot's cry from street to street
 Shall weave Old England's winding-sheet.
 The winner's shout, the loser's curse,
 Dance before dead England's hearse.
 Every night and every morn
 Some to misery are born.
 Every morn and every night
 Some are born to sweet delight.
 Some are born to sweet delight,
 Some are born to endless night.
 We are led to believe a lie
 When we see not thro' the eye,
 Which was born in a night, to perish in a night,
 When the Soul slept in beams of light.
 God appears, and God is Light,
 To those poor souls who dwell in Night;
 But does a Human Form display
 To those who dwell in realms of Day.

Long John Brown and Little Mary Bell

Little Mary Bell had a Fairy in a nut,
 Long John Brown had the Devil in his gut;
 Long John Brown lov'd little Mary Bell,
 And the Fairy drew the Devil into the nutshell.

Her Fairy skipp'd out and her Fairy skipp'd in;
 He laugh'd at the Devil, saying `Love is a sin.'
 The Devil he raged, and the Devil he was wroth,
 And the Devil enter'd into the young man's broth.

He was soon in the gut of the loving young swain,
 For John ate and drank to drive away love's pain;

But all he could do he grew thinner and thinner,
Tho' he ate and drank as much as ten men for his dinner.

Some said he had a wolf in his stomach day and night,
Some said he had the Devil, and they guess'd right;
The Fairy skipp'd about in his glory, joy and pride,
And he laugh'd at the Devil till poor John Brown died.

Then the Fairy skipp'd out of the old nutshell,
And woe and alack for pretty Mary Bell!
For the Devil crept in when the Fairy skipp'd out,
And there goes Miss Bell with her fusty old nut.

William Bond

I wonder whether the girls are mad,
And I wonder whether they mean to kill,
And I wonder if William Bond will die,
For assuredly he is very ill.

He went to church in a May morning,
Attended by Fairies, one, two, and three;
But the Angels of Providence drove them away,
And he return'd home in misery.

He went not out to the field nor fold,
He went not out to the village nor town,
But he came home in a black, black cloud,
And took to his bed, and there lay down.

And an Angel of Providence at his feet,
And an Angel of Providence at his head,
And in the midst a black, black cloud,
And in the midst the sick man on his bed.

And on his right hand was Mary Green,
And on his left hand was his sister Jane,
And their tears fell thro' the black, black cloud
To drive away the sick man's pain.

'O William, if thou dost another love,
Dost another love better than poor Mary,
Go and take that other to be thy wife,
And Mary Green shall her servant be.'

`Yes, Mary, I do another love,
Another I love far better than thee,
And another I will have for my wife;
Then what have I to do with thee?

`For thou art melancholy pale,
And on thy head is the cold moon's shine,
But she is ruddy and bright as day,
And the sunbeams dazzle from her eyne.'

Mary trembled and Mary chill'd,
And Mary fell down on the right-hand floor,
That William Bond and his sister Jane
Scarce could recover Mary more.

When Mary woke and found her laid
On the right hand of her William dear,
On the right hand of his loved bed,
And saw her William Bond so near,

The Fairies that fled from William Bond
Dancèd around her shining head;
They dancèd over the pillow white,
And the Angels of Providence left the bed.

I thought Love lived in the hot sunshine,
But O, he lives in the moony light!
I thought to find Love in the heat of day,
But sweet Love is the comforter of night.

Seek Love in the pity of others' woe,
In the gentle relief of another's care,
In the darkness of night and the winter's snow,
In the naked and outcast, seek Love there!

POEMS FROM LETTERS

To my dearest Friend, John Flaxman, these lines:

I bless thee, O Father of Heaven and Earth! that ever I saw Flaxman's
face:
Angels stand round my spirit in Heaven; the blessèd of Heaven are my
friends upon Earth
When Flaxman was taken to Italy, Fuseli was given to me for a season;
And now Flaxman hath given me Hayley, his friend, to be mine --
such my lot upon Earth!
Now my lot in the Heavens is this: Milton lov'd me in childhood and
show'd me his face;
Ezra came with Isaiah the Prophet, but Shakespeare in riper years gave
me his hand;
Paracelsus and Behmen appear'd to me; terrors appear'd in the
Heavens above;
The American War began; all its dark horrors pass'd before my face
Across the Atlantic to France; then the French Revolution commenc'd
in thick clouds;
And my Angels have told me that, seeing such visions, I could not
subsist on the Earth,
But by my conjunction with Flaxman, who knows to forgive
nervous fear.

12 Sept., 1800

To my dear Friend, Mrs. Anna Flaxman

This song to the flower of Flaxman's joy,
To the blossom of hope for a sweet decoy;
Do all that you can, or all that you may,
To entice him to Felpham and far away.

Away to sweet Felpham, for Heaven is there;
The Ladder of Angels descends thro' the air;
On the turret its spiral does softly descend,
Thro' the village then winds, at my cot it does end.

You stand in the village and look up to Heaven;
The precious stones glitter on flights seventy-seven;
And my brother is there, and my friend and thine
Descend and ascend with the bread and the wine.

The bread of sweet thought and the wine of delight
Feed the village of Felpham by day and by night,

And at his own door the bless'd Hermit does stand,
Dispensing unceasing to all the wide land.

To Thomas Butts

To my friend Butts I write
My first vision of light,
On the yellow sands sitting.
The sun was emitting
His glorious beams
From Heaven's high streams.
Over sea, over land,
My eyes did expand
Into regions of air,
Away from all care;
Into regions of fire,
Remote from desire;
The light of the morning
Heaven's mountains adorning:
In particles bright,
The jewels of light
Distinct shone and clear.
Amaz'd and in fear
I each particle gazèd,
Astonish'd, amazèd;
For each was a Man
Human-form'd. Swift I ran,
For they beckon'd to me,
Remote by the sea,
Saying: `Each grain of sand,
Every stone on the land,
Each rock and each hill,
Each fountain and rill,
Each herb and each tree,
Mountain, hill, earth, and sea,
Cloud, meteor, and star,
Are men seen afar.'
I stood in the streams
Of Heaven's bright beams,
And saw Felpham sweet
Beneath my bright feet,
In soft Female charms;
And in her fair arms
My Shadow I knew,
And my wife's Shadow too,
And my sister, and friend.

We like infants descend
 In our Shadows on earth,
 Like a weak mortal birth.
 My eyes, more and more,
 Like a sea without shore,
 Continue expanding,
 The Heavens commanding;
 Till the jewels of light,
 Heavenly men beaming bright,
 Appear'd as One Man,
 Who complacent began
 My limbs to enfold
 In His beams of bright gold;
 Like dross purg'd away
 All my mire and my clay.
 Soft consum'd in delight,
 In His bosom sun-bright
 I remain'd. Soft He smil'd,
 And I heard His voice mild,
 Saying: `This is My fold,
 O thou ram horn'd with gold,
 Who awakest from sleep
 On the sides of the deep.
 On the mountains around
 The roarings resound
 Of the lion and wolf,
 The loud sea, and deep gulf.
 These are guards of My fold,
 O thou ram horn'd with gold!
 And the voice faded mild:
 I remain'd as a child;
 All I ever had known
 Before me bright shone:
 I saw you and your wife
 By the fountains of life.
 Such the vision to me
 Appear'd on the sea.

To Mrs. Butts

Wife of the friend of those I most revere,
 Receive this tribute from a harp sincere;
 Go on in virtuous seed-sowing on mould
 Of human vegetation, and behold
 Your harvest springing to eternal life,
 Parent of youthful minds, and happy wife!

To Thomas Butts

With Happiness stretch'd across the hills
 In a cloud that dewy sweetness distils;
 With a blue sky spread over with wings,
 And a mild sun that mounts and sings;
 With trees and fields full of fairy elves,
 And little devils who fight for themselves --
 Rememb'ring the verses that Hayley sung
 When my heart knock'd against the root of my tongue --
 With angels planted in hawthorn bowers,
 And God Himself in the passing hours;
 With silver angels across my way,
 And golden demons that none can stay;
 With my father hovering upon the wind,
 And my brother Robert just behind,
 And my brother John, the evil one,
 In a black cloud making his moan, --
 Tho' dead, they appear upon my path,
 Notwithstanding my terrible wrath;
 They beg, they entreat, they drop their tears,
 Fill'd full of hopes, fill'd full of fears --
 With a thousand angels upon the wind
 Pouring disconsolate from behind
 To drive them off, and before my way
 A frowning thistle implores my stay.
 What to others a trifle appears
 Fills me full of smiles or tears;
 For double the vision my eyes do see,
 And a double vision is always with me.
 With my inward eye, 'tis an Old Man grey,
 With my outward, a Thistle across my way.
 'If thou goest back,' the Thistle said,
 'Thou art to endless woe betray'd;
 For here does Theotormon lour,
 And here is Enitharmon's bower;
 And Los the Terrible thus hath sworn,
 Because thou backward dost return,
 Poverty, envy, old age, and fear,
 Shall bring thy wife upon a bier;
 And Butts shall give what Fuseli gave,
 A dark black rock and a gloomy cave.'

I struck the Thistle with my foot,
 And broke him up from his delving root.
 'Must the duties of life each other cross?'

Must every joy be dung and dross?
 Must my dear Butts feel cold neglect
 Because I give Hayley his due respect?
 Must Flaxman look upon me as wild,
 And all my friends be with doubts beguil'd?
 Must my wife live in my sister's bane,
 Or my sister survive on my love's pain?
 The curses of Los, the terrible Shade,
 And his dismal terrors make me afraid.'
 So I spoke, and struck in my wrath
 The Old Man weltering upon my path.
 Then Los appear'd in all his power:
 In the sun he appear'd, descending before
 My face in fierce flames; in my double sight
 'Twas outward a sun, inward Los in his might.
 `My hands are labour'd day and night,
 And ease comes never in my sight.
 My wife has no indulgence given
 Except what comes to her from Heaven.
 We eat little, we drink less,
 This Earth breeds not our happiness.
 Another sun feeds our life's streams,
 We are not warmèd with thy beams;
 Thou measurest not the time to me,
 Nor yet the space that I do see;
 My mind is not with thy light array'd,
 Thy terrors shall not make me afraid.'

When I had my defiance given,
 The sun stood trembling in heaven;
 The moon, that glow'd remote below,
 Became leprous and white as snow;
 And every soul of men on the earth
 Felt affliction, and sorrow, and sickness, and dearth.
 Los flam'd in my path, and the sun was hot
 With the bows of my mind and the arrows of thought.
 My bowstring fierce with ardour breathes;
 My arrows glow in their golden sheaves;
 My brothers and father march before;
 The heavens drop with human gore.

Now I a fourfold vision see,
 And a fourfold vision is given to me;
 'Tis fourfold in my supreme delight,
 And threefold in soft Beulah's night,

And twofold always. -- May God us keep
From single vision, and Newton's sleep!

To Thomas Butts

O! why was I born with a different face?
Why was I not born like the rest of my race?
When I look, each one starts; when I speak, I offend;
Then I'm silent and passive, and lose every friend.

Then my verse I dishonour, my pictures despise,
My person degrade, and my temper chastise;
And the pen is my terror, the pencil my shame;
All my talents I bury, and dead is my fame.

I am either too low, or too highly priz'd;
When elate I'm envied; when meek I'm despis'd.

THE MARRIAGE OF HEAVEN AND HELL

Engraved *circa* 1790

The Argument

Rintrah roars, and shakes his fires in the burden'd air;
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.

Once meek, and in a perilous path,
The just man kept his course along
The vale of death.
Roses are planted where thorns grow,
And on the barren heath
Sing the honey bees.

Then the perilous path was planted,
And a river and a spring
On every cliff and tomb,
And on the bleachèd bones
Red clay brought forth;

Till the villain left the paths of ease,
To walk in perilous paths, and drive
The just man into barren climes.

Now the sneaking serpent walks
In mild humility,
And the just man rages in the wilds
Where lions roam.

Rintrah roars, and shakes his fires in the burden'd air;
Hungry clouds swag on the deep.

As a new heaven is begun, and it is now thirty-three years since its advent, the Eternal Hell revives. And lo! Swedenborg is the Angel sitting at the tomb: his writings are the linen clothes folded up. Now is the dominion of Edom, and the return of Adam into Paradise. See Isaiah xxxiv and xxxv chap.

Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and Repulsion, Reason and Energy, Love and Hate, are necessary to Human existence.

From these contraries spring what the religious call Good and Evil. Good is the passive that obeys Reason. Evil is the active springing from Energy.

Good is Heaven. Evil is Hell.

The Voice of the Devil

All Bibles or sacred codes have been the causes of the following Errors:--

1. That Man has two real existing principles, viz. a Body and a Soul.
2. That Energy, call'd Evil, is alone from the Body; and that Reason, call'd Good, is alone from the Soul.
3. That God will torment Man in Eternity for following his Energies.

But the following Contraries to these are True:--

1. Man has no Body distinct from his Soul; for that call'd Body is a portion of Soul discern'd by the five Senses, the chief inlets of Soul in this age.
2. Energy is the only life, and is from the Body; and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy.
3. Energy is Eternal Delight.

Those who restrain Desire, do so because theirs is weak enough to be restrained; and the restrainer or Reason Usurps its place and governs the unwilling.

And being restrained, it by degrees becomes passive, till it is only the shadow of Desire.

The history of this is written in *Paradise Lost*, and the Governor or Reason is call'd Messiah.

And the original Archangel, or possessor of the command of the Heavenly Host, is call'd the Devil or Satan, and his children are call'd Sin and Death.

But in the Book of Job, Milton's Messiah is called Satan.

For this history has been adopted by both parties.

It indeed appear'd to Reason as if Desire was cast out; but the

Devil's account is, that the Messiah fell, and formed a Heaven of what he stole from the Abyss.

This is shown in the Gospel, where he prays to the Father to send the Comforter, or Desire, that Reason may have Ideas to build on; the Jehovah of the Bible being no other than he who dwells in flaming fire.

Know that after Christ's death, he became Jehovah.

But in Milton, the Father is Destiny, the Son a Ratio of the five senses, and the Holy-ghost Vacuum!

Note. The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels and God, and at liberty when of Devils and Hell, is because he was a true Poet, and of the Devil's party without knowing it.

A Memorable Fancy

As I was walking among the fires of Hell, delighted with the enjoyments of Genius, which to Angels look like torment and insanity, I collected some of their Proverbs; thinking that as the sayings used in a nation mark its character, so the Proverbs of Hell show the nature of Infernal wisdom better than any description of buildings or garments.

When I came home, on the abyss of the five senses, where a flatsided steep frowns over the present world, I saw a mighty Devil, folded in black clouds, hovering on the sides of the rock; with corroding fires he wrote the following sentence now perceived by the minds of men, and read by them on earth:--

*How do you know but ev'ry Bird that cuts the airy way,
Is an immense World of Delight, clos'd by your senses five?*

Proverbs of Hell

*In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy.
Drive your cart and your plough over the bones of the dead.
The road of excess leads to the palace of wisdom.
Prudence is a rich, ugly old maid courted by Incapacity.
He who desires but acts not, breeds pestilence.
The cut worm forgives the plough.
Dip him in the river who loves water.
A fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees.
He whose face gives no light, shall never become a star.
Eternity is in love with the productions of time.
The busy bee has no time for sorrow.
The hours of folly are measur'd by the clock; but of wisdom, no clock can measure.
All wholesome food is caught without a net or a trap.
Bring out number, weight, and measure in a year of dearth.
No bird soars too high, if he soars with his own wings.
A dead body revenges not injuries.
The most sublime act is to set another before you.
If the fool would persist in its folly he would become wise.
Folly is the cloak of knavery.
Shame is Pride's cloak.
Prisons are built with stones of law, brothers with bricks of Religion.
The pride of the peacock is the glory of God.*

*The lust of the goat is the bounty of God.
 The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God.
 The nakedness of woman is the work of God.
 Excess of sorrow laughs. Excess of joy weeps.
 The roaring of lions, the howling of wolves, the raging of the stormy sea, and the
 destructive sword are portions of eternity too great for the eye of man.
 The fox condemns the trap, not himself.
 Joys impregnate. Sorrows bring forth.
 Let man wear the fell of the lion, woman the fleece of the sheep.
 The bird a nest, the spider a web, man friendship.
 The selfish, smiling fool, and the sullen, frowning fool shall be both thought wise,
 that they may be a rod.
 What is now proved was once only imagin'd.*

*The rat, the mouse, the fox, the rabbit watch the roots; the lion, the tiger, the
 horse, the elephant watch the fruits.
 The cistern contains: the fountain overflows.
 One thought fills immensity.
 Always be ready to speak your mind, and a base man will avoid you.
 Everything possible to be believ'd is an image of truth.
 The eagle never lost so much time as when he submitted to learn of the crow.
 The fox provides for himself; but God provides for the lion.
 Think in the morning. Act in the noon. Eat in the evening. Sleep in the night.
 He who has suffer'd you to impose on him, knows you.
 As the plough follows words, so God rewards prayers.
 The tigers of wrath are wiser than the horses of instruction.
 Expect poison from the standing water.
 You never know what is enough unless you know what is more than enough.
 Listen to the fools reproach! it is a kingly title!
 The eyes of fire, the nostrils of air, the mouth of water, the beard of earth.
 The weak in courage is strong in cunning.
 The apple tree never asks the beech how he shall grow; nor the lion, the horse,
 how he shall take his prey.
 The thankful receiver bears a plentiful harvest.
 If others had not been foolish, we should be so.
 The soul of sweet delight can never be defil'd.
 When thou seest an eagle, thou seest a portion of Genius; lift up thy head!
 As the caterpillar chooses the fairest leaves to lay her eggs on, so the priest lays
 his curse on the fairest joys.
 To create a little flower is the labour of ages.
 Damn braces. Bless relaxes.
 The best wine is the oldest, the best water the newest.
 Prayers plough not! Praises reap not!
 Joys laugh not! Sorrows weep not!
 The head Sublime, the heart Pathos, the genitals Beauty, the hands and feet
 Proportion.*

*As the air to a bird or the sea to a fish, so is contempt to the contemptible.
The crow wish'd everything was black, the owl that everything was white.
Exuberance is Beauty.
If the lion was advised by the fox, he would be cunning.
Improvement makes straight roads; but the crooked roads without improvement
are roads of Genius.*

*Sooner murder an infant in its cradle than nurse unacted desires.
Where man's not, nature is barren.
Truth can never be told so as to be understood, and not be believ'd.
Enough! or Too much.*

The ancient Poets animated all sensible objects with Gods or Geniuses, calling them by the names and adorning them with the properties of woods, rivers, mountains, lakes, cities, nations, and whatever their enlarged and numerous senses could perceive.

And particularly they studied the Genius of each city and country, placing it under its Mental Deity;

Till a System was formed, which some took advantage of, and enslav'd the vulgar by attempting to realise or abstract the Mental Deities from their objects--thus began Priesthood;

Choosing forms of worship from poetic tables.

And at length they pronounc'd that the Gods had order'd such things. Thus men forgot that All Deities reside in the Human breast.

A Memorable Fancy

The Prophets Isaiah and Ezekiel dined with me, and I asked them how they dared so roundly to assert that God spoke to them; and whether they did not think at the time that they would be misunderstood, and so be the cause of imposition.

Isaiah answer'd: `I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite organical perception; but my senses discover'd the infinite in everything, and as I was then persuaded, and remain confirm'd, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God, I cared not for consequences, but wrote.'

Then I asked: `Does a firm persuasion that a thing is so, make it so?'

He replied: `All Poets believe that it does, and in ages of imagination this firm persuasion removed mountains; but many are not capable of a firm persuasion of anything.'

Then Ezekiel said: `The philosophy of the East taught the first principles of human perception. Some nations held one principle for the origin, and some another: we of Israel taught that the Poetic Genius (as you now call it) was the first principle and all the others merely derivative, which was the cause of our despising the Priests and Philosophers of other countries, and

prophesying that all Gods would at last be proved to originate in ours and to be the tributaries of the Poetic Genius. It was this that our great poet, King David, desired so fervently and invokes so pathetically, saying by this he conquers enemies and governs kingdoms; and we so loved our God, that we cursed in his name all the Deities of surrounding nations, and asserted that they had rebelled. From these opinions the vulgar came to think that all nations would at last be subject to the Jews.'

'This,' said he, 'like all firm persuasions, is come to pass; for all nations believe the Jews' code and worship the Jews' god, and what greater subjection can be?'

I heard this with some wonder, and must confess my own conviction. After dinner I ask'd Isaiah to favour the world with his lost works; he said none of equal value was lost. Ezekiel said the same of his.

I also asked Isaiah what made him go naked and barefoot three years. He answer'd: 'The same that made our friend Diogenes, the Grecian.'

I then asked Ezekiel why he ate dung, and lay so long on his right and left side. He answer'd, 'The desire of raising other men into a perception of the infinite: this the North American tribes practise, and is he honest who resists his genius or conscience only for the sake of present ease or gratification?'

The ancient tradition that the world will be consumed in fire at the end of six thousand years is true, as I have heard from Hell.

For the cherub with his flaming sword is hereby commanded to leave his guard at tree of life; and when he does, the whole creation will be consumed and appear infinite and holy, whereas it now appears finite and corrupt.

This will come to pass by an improvement of sensual enjoyment.

But first the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged; this I shall do by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid.

If the doors of perception were cleansed everything would appear to man as it is, infinite.

For man has closed himself up till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern.

A Memorable Fancy

I was in a Printing-house in Hell, and saw the method in which knowledge is transmitted from generation to generation.

In the first chamber was a Dragon-Man, clearing away the rubbish from a cave's mouth; within, a number of Dragons were hollowing the cave.

In the second chamber was a Viper folding round the rock and the cave, and others adorning it with gold, silver, and precious stones.

In the third chamber was an Eagle with wings and feathers of air: he caused the inside of the cave to be infinite. Around were numbers of Eagle-like men who built palaces in the immense cliffs.

In the fourth chamber were Lions of flaming fire, raging around and melting the metals into living fluids.

In the fifth chamber were Unnamed forms, which cast the metals into the expanse.

There they were received by Men who occupied the sixth chamber, and took the forms of books and were arranged in libraries.

The Giants who formed this world into its sensual existence, and now seem to live in it in chains, are in truth the causes of its life and the sources of all activity; but the chains are the cunning of weak and tame minds which have power to resist energy. According to the proverb, the weak in courage is strong in cunning.

Thus one portion of being is the Prolific, the other the Devouring. To the Devourer it seems as if the producer was in his chains; but it is not so, he only takes portions of existence and fancies that the whole.

But the Prolific would cease to be Prolific unless the Devourer, as a sea, received the existence of his delights.

Some will say: 'Is not God alone the Prolific?' I answer: 'God only Acts and Is, in existing beings or Men.'

These two classes of men are always upon earth, and they should be enemies: whoever tries to reconcile them seeks to destroy existence.

Religion is an endeavour to reconcile the two.

Note. Jesus Christ did not wish to unite, but to separate them, as in the Parable of sheep and goats! And He says: 'I came not to send Peace, but a Sword.'

Messiah or Satan or Tempter was formerly thought to be one of the Antediluvians who are our Energies.

A Memorable Fancy

An Angel came to me and said: 'O pitiable, foolish young man! O horrible! O dreadful state! Consider the hot, burning dungeon thou art preparing for thyself to all Eternity, to which thou art going in such career.'

I said, 'Perhaps you will be willing to show me my eternal lot, and we will contemplate together upon it, and see whether your lot or mine is most desirable.'

So he took me thro' a stable, and thro' a church, and down into the church vault, at the end of which was a mill. Thro' the mill we went, and came to a cave. Down the winding cavern we groped our tedious way, till a void boundless as a nether sky appear'd beneath us, and we held by the roots of trees, and hung over this immensity. But I said: 'If you please, we will commit ourselves to this void, and see whether Providence is here also. If you will not, I will.' But he answer'd: 'Do not presume, O young man, but as we here remain, behold thy lot which will soon appear when the darkness passes away.'

So I remain'd with him, sitting in the twisted root of an oak. He was suspended in a fungus, which hung with the head downward into the deep.

By degrees we beheld the infinite Abyss, fiery as the smoke of a burning city; beneath us, at an immense distance, was the sun, black but shining; but round it were fiery tracks on which revol'd vast spiders, crawling after their prey, which flew, or rather swum, in the infinite deep, in the most terrific shapes of animals sprung from corruption; and the air was full of them, and seem'd composed of them--these are Devils, and are called Powers of the Air. I now asked my companion which was my eternal lot? He said: 'Between the black and white spiders.'

But now, from between the black and white spiders, a cloud and fire burst and rolled thro' the deep, blackening all beneath; so that the nether deep grew black as a sea, and rolled with a terrible noise. Beneath us was nothing now to be seen but a black tempest, till looking East between the clouds and the waves we saw a cataract of blood mixed with fire, and not many stones' throw from us appear'd and sunk again the scaly fold of a monstrous serpent. At last, to the East, distant about three degrees, appear'd a fiery crest above the waves. Slowly it reared like a ridge of golden rocks, till we discover'd two globes of crimson fire, from which the sea fled away in clouds of smoke; and now we saw it was the head of Leviathan. His forehead was divided into streaks of green and purple like those on a tiger's forehead. Soon we saw his mouth and red gills hang just above the raging foam, tinging the black deep with beams of blood, advancing toward us with all the fury of a Spiritual Existence.

My friend the Angel climb'd up from his station into the mill: I remain'd alone, and then this appearance was no more; but I found myself sitting on a pleasant bank beside a river, by moonlight, hearing a harper, who sung to the harp; and his theme was: 'The man who never alters his opinion is like standing water, and breeds reptiles of the mind.'

But I arose and sought for the mill, and there I found my Angel, who, surprised, asked me how I escaped.

I answer'd: 'All that we saw was owing to your metaphysics; for when you ran away, I found myself on a bank by moonlight hearing a harper. But now we have seen my eternal lot, shall I show you yours?' He laugh'd at my proposal; but I, by force, suddenly caught him in my arms, and flew westerly thro' the night, till we were elevated above the earth's shadow; then I flung myself with him directly into the body of the sun. Here I clothed myself in white, and taking in

my hand Swedenborg's volumes, sunk from the glorious clime, and passed all the planets till we came to Saturn. Here I stay'd to rest, and then leap'd into the void between Saturn and the fixed stars.

'Here,' said I, 'is your lot, in this space--if space it may be call'd.' Soon we saw the stable and the church, and I took him to the altar and open'd the Bible, and lo! it was a deep pit, into which I descended, driving the Angel before me. Soon we saw seven houses of brick. One we enter'd; in it were a number of monkeys, baboons, and all of that species, chain'd by the middle, grinning and snatching at one another, but withheld by the shortness of their chains. However, I saw that they sometimes grew numerous, and then the weak were caught by the strong, and with a grinning aspect, first coupled with, and then devour'd, by plucking off first one limb and then another, till the body was left a helpless trunk. This, after grinning and kissing it with seeming fondness, they devour'd too; and here and there I saw one savourily picking the flesh off of his own tail. As the stench terribly annoy'd us both, we went into the mill, and I in my hand brought the skeleton of a body, which in the mill was Aristotle's Analytics.

So the Angel said: 'Thy phantasy has imposed upon me, and thou oughtest to be ashamed.'

I answer'd: 'We impose on one another, and it is but lost time to converse with you whose works are only Analytics.'

I have always found that Angels have the vanity to speak of themselves as the Only Wise. This they do with a confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning.

Thus Swedenborg boasts that what he writes is new; tho' it is only the Contents or Index of already publish'd books.

A man carried a monkey about for a show, and because he was a little wiser than the monkey, grew vain, and conceiv'd himself as much wiser than seven men. It is so with Swedenborg: he shows the folly of churches, and exposes hypocrites, till he imagines that all are religious, and himself the single one on earth that ever broke a net.

Now hear a plain fact: Swedenborg has not written one new truth. Now hear another: he has written all the old falsehoods.

And now hear the reason. He conversed with Angels who are all religious, and conversed not with Devils who all hate religion, for he was incapable thro' his conceited notions.

Thus Swedenborg's writings are a recapitulation of all superficial opinions, and an analysis of the more sublime--but no further.

Have now another plain fact. Any man of mechanical talents may, from the writings of Paracelsus or Jacob Behmen, produce ten thousand volumes of equal value with Swedenborg's, and from those of Dante or Shakespear an infinite number.

But when he has done this, let him not say that he knows better than his master, for he only holds a candle in sunshine.

A Memorable Fancy

Once I saw a Devil in a flame of fire, who arose before an Angel that sat on a cloud, and the Devil utter'd these words:--

'The worship of God is: Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best: those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God.'

The Angel hearing this became almost blue; but mastering himself he grew yellow, and at last white, pink, and smiling, and then replied:--

'Thou Idolater! is not God One? and is not he visible in Jesus Christ? and has not Jesus Christ given his sanction to the law of ten commandments? and are not all other men fools, sinners, and nothings?'

The Devil answer'd: 'Bray a fool in a mortar with wheat, yet shall not his folly be beaten out of him. If Jesus Christ is the greatest man, you ought to love Him in the greatest degree. Now hear how He has given His sanction to the law of ten commandments. Did He not mock at the sabbath, and so mock the sabbath's God; murder those who were murder'd because of Him; turn away the law from the woman taken in adultery; steal the labour of others to support Him; bear false witness when he omitted making a defence before Pilate; covet when he pray'd for his disciples, and when He bid them shake off the dust of their feet against such as refused to lodge them? I tell you, no virtue can exist without breaking these ten commandments. Jesus was all virtue, and acted from impulse, not from rules.'

When he had so spoken, I beheld the Angel, who stretched out his arms, embracing the flame of fire, and he was consumed, and arose as Elijah.

Note.-- This Angel, who is now become a Devil, is my particular friend. We often read the Bible together in its infernal or diabolical sense, which the world shall have if they behave well.

I have also the Bible of Hell, which the world shall have whether they will or no.

One Law for the Lion and Ox is Oppression.

VISIONS OF THE DAUGHTERS OF ALBION

Engraved 1793

The Argument

I lovèd Theotormon,
And I was not ashamèd;
I trembled in my virgin fears
And I hid in Leutha's vale!

I pluckèd Leutha's flower,
And I rose up from the vale;
But the terrible thunders tore
My virgin mantle in twain.

Visions

Enslav'd, the Daughters of Albion weep; a trembling lamentation
Upon their mountains; in their valleys, sighs toward America.

For the soft soul of America, Oothoon, wander'd in woe
Along the vales of Leutha, seeking flowers to comfort her;
And thus she spoke to the bright Marigold of Leutha's vale:-

Art thou a flower? art thou a nymph? I see thee now a flower,
Now a nymph! I dare not pluck thee from thy dewy bed!

The Golden nymph replied: `Pluck thou my flower, Oothoon the mild!
Another flower shall spring, because the soul of sweet delight
Can never pass away.' She ceas'd, and clos'd her golden shrine.

Then Oothoon pluck'd the flower, saying: `I pluck thee from thy bed,
Sweet flower, and put thee here to glow between my breasts;
And thus I turn my face to where my whole soul seeks.'

Over the waves she went in wing'd exulting swift delight,
And over Theotormon's reign took her impetuous course.

Bromion rent her with his thunders; on his stormy bed
Lay the faint maid, and soon her woes appall'd his thunders hoarse.

Bromion spoke: `Behold this harlot here on Bromion's bed,
And let the jealous dolphins sport around the lovely maid!
Thy soft American plains are mine, and mine thy north and south:

Stamp'd with my signet are the swarthy children of the sun;
 They are obedient, they resist not, they obey the scourge;
 Their daughters worship terrors and obey the violent.
 Now thou may'st marry Bromion's harlot, and protect the child
 Of Bromion's rage, that Oothoon shall put forth in nine moons' time.'

Then storms rent Theotormon's limbs: he roll'd his waves around,
 And folded his black jealous waters round the adulterate pair.
 Bound back to back in Bromion's caves, terror and meekness dwell:

At entrance Theotormon sits, wearing the threshold hard
 With secret tears; beneath him sound like waves on a desert shore
 The voice of slaves beneath the sun, and children bought with money,
 That shiver in religious caves beneath the burning fires
 Of lust, that belch incessant from the summits of the earth.

Oothoon weeps not; she cannot weep, her tears are lockèd up;
 But she can howl incessant, writhing her soft snowy limbs,
 And calling Theotormon's Eagles to prey upon her flesh.

'I call with holy voice! Kings of the sounding air,
 Rend away this defilèd bosom that I may reflect
 The image of Theotormon on my pure transparent breast.'

The Eagles at her call descend and rend their bleeding prey:
 Theotormon severely smiles; her soul reflects the smile,
 As the clear spring, muddied with feet of beasts, grows pure and smiles.

The Daughters of Albion hear her woes, and echo back her sighs.

'Why does my Theotormon sit weeping upon the threshold,
 And Oothoon hovers by his side, persuading him in vain?
 I cry: Arise, O Theotormon! for the village dog
 Barks at the breaking day; the nightingale has done lamenting;

The lark does rustle in the ripe corn, and the eagle returns
 From nightly prey, and lifts his golden beak to the pure east,
 Shaking the dust from his immortal pinions to awake
 The sun that sleeps too long. Arise, my Theotormon! I am pure,
 Because the night is gone that clos'd me in its deadly black.
 They told me that the night and day were all that I could see;
 They told me that I had five senses to enclose me up;
 And they enclos'd my infinite brain into a narrow circle,
 And sunk my heart into the Abyss, a red, round globe, hot burning,
 Till all from life I was obliterated and erasèd.
 Instead of morn arises a bright shadow, like an eye

In the eastern cloud; instead of night a sickly charnel-house,
That Theotormon hears me not. To him the night and morn
Are both alike; a night of sighs, a morning of fresh tears;
And none but Bromion can hear my lamentations.

`With what sense is it that the chicken shuns the ravenous hawk?
With what sense does the tame pigeon measure out the expanse?
With what sense does the bee form cells? Have not the mouse and frog
Eyes and ears and sense of touch? Yet are their habitations
And their pursuits as different as their forms and as their joys.
Ask the wild ass why he refuses burdens, and the meek camel
Why he loves man. Is it because of eye, ear, mouth, or skin,
Or breathing nostrils? No! for these the wolf and tiger have.
Ask the blind worm the secrets of the grave, and why her spires
Love to curl round the bones of death; and ask the rav'nous snake
Where she gets poison, and the wing'd eagle why he loves the sun;
And then tell me the thoughts of man, that have been hid of old.

`Silent I hover all the night, and all day could be silent,
If Theotormon once would turn his lovèd eyes upon me.
How can I be defil'd when I reflect thy image pure?
Sweetest the fruit that the worm feeds on, and the soul prey'd on by woe,
The new-wash'd lamb ting'd with the village smoke, and the bright swan
By the red earth of our immortal river. I bathe my wings,
And I am white and pure to hover round Theotormon's breast.'

Then Theotormon broke his silence, and he answerèd:-- `Tell me what is the night
or day to one o'erflow'd with woe?

Tell me what is a thought, and of what substance is it made?
Tell me what is a joy, and in what gardens do joys grow?
And in what rivers swim the sorrows? And upon what mountains
Wave shadows of discontent? And in what houses dwell the wretched,
Drunken with woe, forgotten, and shut up from cold despair?

`Tell me where dwell the thoughts, forgotten till thou call them forth?
Tell me where dwell the joys of old, and where the ancient loves,
And when will they renew again, and the night of oblivion past,
That I might traverse times and spaces far remote, and bring
Comforts into a present sorrow and a night of pain?
Where goest thou, O thought? to what remote land is thy flight?
If thou returnest to the present moment of affliction,
Wilt thou bring comforts on thy wings, and dews and honey and balm,
Or poison from the desert wilds, from the eyes of the envier?'

Then Bromion said, and shook the cavern with his lamentation:--

`Thou knowest that the ancient trees seen by thine eyes have fruit;
 But knowest thou that trees and fruits flourish upon the earth
 To gratify senses unknown -- trees, beasts, and birds unknown;
 Unknown, not unperceiv'd, spread in the infinite microscope,
 In places yet unvisited by the voyager, and in worlds
 Over another kind of seas, and in atmospheres unknown?
 Ah! are there other wars, beside the wars of sword and fire?
 And are there other sorrows beside the sorrows of poverty?
 And are there other joys beside the joys of riches and ease?
 And is there not one law for both the lion and the ox?
 And is there not eternal fire, and eternal chains
 To bind the phantoms of existence from eternal life?'

Then Oothoon waited silent all the day and all the night;
 But when the morn arose, her lamentation renew'd;
 The Daughters of Albion hear her woes, and echo back her sighs.

`O Urizen! Creator of men! mistaken Demon of heaven!
 Thy joys are tears, thy labour vain to form men to thine image.
 How can one joy absorb another? Are not different joys
 Holy, eternal, infinite? and each joy is a Love.

`Does not the great mouth laugh at a gift, and the narrow eyelids mock
 At the labour that is above payment? And wilt thou take the ape
 For thy counsellor, or the dog for a schoolmaster to thy children?
 Does he who contemns poverty, and he who turns with abhorrence
 From usury feel the same passion, or are they movèd alike?
 How can the giver of gifts experience the delights of the merchant?
 How the industrious citizen the pains of the husbandman?
 How different far the fat fed hireling with hollow drum,
 Who buys whole corn-fields into wastes, and sings upon the heath!
 How different their eye and ear! How different the world to them!
 With what sense does the parson claim the labour of the farmer?
 What are his nets and gins and traps; and how does he surround him
 With cold floods of abstraction, and with forests of solitude,
 To build him castles and high spires, where kings and priests may dwell;
 Till she who burns with youth, and knows no fixèd lot, is bound
 In spells of law to one she loathes? And must she drag the chain
 Of life in weary lust? Must chilling, murderous thoughts obscure
 The clear heaven of her eternal spring; to bear the wintry rage
 Of a harsh terror, driv'n to madness, bound to hold a rod
 Over her shrinking shoulders all the day, and all the night
 To turn the wheel of false desire, and longings that wake her womb
 To the abhorrèd birth of cherubs in the human form,
 That live a pestilence and die a meteor, and are no more;
 Till the child dwell with one he hates, and do the deed he loathes,

And the impure scourge force his seed into its unripe birth,
Ere yet his eyelids can behold the arrows of the day?

Does the whale worship at thy footsteps as the hungry dog;
Or does he scent the mountain prey because his nostrils wide
Draw in the ocean? Does his eye discern the flying cloud
As the raven's eye; or does he measure the expanse like the vulture?
Does the still spider view the cliffs where eagles hide their young;
Or does the fly rejoice because the harvest is brought in?
Does not the eagle scorn the earth, and despise the treasures beneath?
But the mole knoweth what is there, and the worm shall tell it thee.
Does not the worm erect a pillar in the mouldering churchyard
And a palace of eternity in the jaws of the hungry grave?
Over his porch these words are written: "Take thy bliss, O Man!
And sweet shall be thy taste, and sweet thy infant joys renew!"

Infancy! fearless, lustful, happy, nestling for delight
In laps of pleasure: Innocence! honest, open, seeking
The vigorous joys of morning light, open to virgin bliss,
Who taught thee modesty, subtil modesty, child of night and sleep?
When thou awakest wilt thou dissemble all thy secret joys,
Or wert thou not awake when all this mystery was disclos'd?
Then com'st thou forth a modest virgin knowing to dissemble,
With nets found under thy night pillow, to catch virgin joy
And brand it with the name of whore, and sell it in the night
In silence, ev'n without a whisper, and in seeming sleep.
Religious dreams and holy vespers light thy smoky fires:
Once were thy fires lighted by the eyes of honest morn.
And does my Theotormon seek this hypocrite modesty,
This knowing, artful, secret, fearful, cautious, trembling hypocrite?
Then is Oothoon a whore indeed! and all the virgin joys
Of life are harlots; and Theotormon is a sick man's dream;
And Oothoon is the crafty slave of selfish holiness.

But Oothoon is not so, a virgin fill'd with virgin fancies,
Open to joy and to delight wherever beauty appears:
If in the morning sun I find it, there my eyes are fix'd
In happy copulation; if in evening mild, wearied with work,
Sit on a bank and draw the pleasures of this free-born joy.

The moment of desire! the moment of desire! The virgin
That pines for man shall awaken her womb to enormous joys
In the secret shadows of her chamber: the youth shut up from
The lustful joy shall forget to generate, and create an amorous image
In the shadows of his curtains and in the folds of his silent pillow
Are not these the places of religion, the rewards of continence,

The self-enjoyings of self-denial? Why dost thou seek religion?
 Is it because acts are not lovely that thou seekest solitude,
 Where the horrible darkness is impressèd with reflections of desire?

`Father of Jealousy, be thou accursèd from the earth!
 Why hast thou taught my Theotormon this accursèd thing,
 Till beauty fades from off my shoulders, darken'd and cast out,
 A solitary shadow wailing on the margin of nonentity?

`I cry: Love! Love! Love! happy happy Love! free as the mountain wind!

Can that be Love, that drinks another as a sponge drinks water,
 That clouds with jealousy his nights, with weepings all the day,
 To spin a web of age around him, grey and hoary, dark;
 Till his eyes sicken at the fruit that hangs before his sight?
 Such is self-love that envies all, a creeping skeleton,
 With lamplike eyes watching around the frozen marriage bed!

`But silken nets and traps of adamant will Oothoon spread,
 And catch for thee girls of mild silver, or of furious gold.
 I'll lie beside thee on a bank, and view their wanton play
 In lovely copulation, bliss on bliss, with Theotormon:
 Red as the rosy morning, lustful as the first-born beam,
 Oothoon shall view his dear delight; nor e'er with jealous cloud
 Come in the heaven of generous love, nor selfish blightings bring.

`Does the sun walk, in glorious raiment, on the secret floor
 Where the cold miser spreads his gold; or does the bright cloud drop
 On his stone threshold? Does his eye behold the beam that brings
 Expansion to the eye of pity; or will he bind himself
 Beside the ox to thy hard furrow? Does not that mild beam blot
 The bat, the owl, the glowing tiger, and the king of night?
 The sea-fowl takes the wintry blast for a cov'ring to her limbs,
 And the wild snake the pestilence to adorn him with gems and gold;
 And trees, and birds, and beasts, and men behold their eternal joy.
 Arise, you little glancing wings, and sing your infant joy!
 Arise, and drink your bliss, for everything that lives is holy!

Thus every morning wails Oothoon; but Theotormon sits
 Upon the margin'd ocean conversing with shadows dire.

The Daughters of Albion hear her woes, and echo back her sighs.

AMERICA: A PROPHECY

Engraved 1793

Preludium

The shadowy Daughter of Urthona stood before red Orc,
 When fourteen suns had faintly journey'd o'er his dark abode:
 His food she brought in iron baskets, his drink in cups of iron.
 Crown'd with a helmet and dark hair the nameless Female stood;
 A quiver with its burning stores, a bow like that of night,
 When pestilence is shot from heaven -- no other arms she need!
 Invulnerable tho' naked, save where clouds roll round her loins
 Their awful folds in the dark air: silent she stood as night;
 For never from her iron tongue could voice or sound arise,
 But dumb till that dread day when Orc assay'd his fierce embrace.

`Dark Virgin,' said the hairy Youth, `thy father stern, abhorr'd,
 Rivets my tenfold chains, while still on high my spirit soars;
 Sometimes an eagle screaming in the sky, sometimes a lion
 Stalking upon the mountains, and sometimes a whale, I lash
 The raging fathomless abyss; anon a serpent folding
 Around the pillars of Urthona, and round thy dark limbs
 On the Canadian wilds I fold; feeble my spirit folds;
 For chain'd beneath I rend these caverns: when thou bringest food
 I howl my joy, and my red eyes seek to behold thy face --
 In vain! these clouds roll to and fro, and hide thee from my sight.

Silent as despairing love, and strong as jealousy,
 The hairy shoulders rend the links; free are the wrists of fire;
 Round the terrific loins he seiz'd the panting, struggling womb;
 It joy'd: she put aside her clouds and smilèd her first-born smile,
 As when a black cloud shows its lightnings to the silent deep.

Soon as she saw the Terrible Boy, then burst the virgin cry:--

`I know thee, I have found thee, and I will not let thee go:
 Thou art the image of God who dwells in darkness of Africa,
 And thou art fall'n to give me life in regions of dark death.

On my American plains I feel the struggling afflictions
 Endur'd by roots that writhe their arms into the nether deep.
 I see a Serpent in Canada who courts me to his love,
 In Mexico an Eagle, and a Lion in Peru;
 I see a Whale in the South Sea, drinking my soul away.
 O what limb-rending pains I feel! thy fire and my frost

Mingle in howling pains, in furrows by thy lightnings rent.
This is Eternal Death, and this the torment long foretold!

A Prophecy

The Guardian Prince of Albion burns in his nightly tent:
Sullen fires across the Atlantic glow to America's shore,
Piercing the souls of warlike men who rise in silent night.
Washington, Franklin, Paine, and Warren, Gates, Hancock, and Green
Meet on the coast glowing with blood from Albion's fiery Prince.

Washington spoke: `Friends of America! look over the Atlantic sea;
A bended bow is lifted in Heaven, and a heavy iron chain
Descends, link by link, from Albion's cliffs across the sea, to bind
Brothers and sons of America; till our faces pale and yellow,
Heads depress'd, voices weak, eyes downcast, hands work-bruis'd,
Feet bleeding on the sultry sands, and the furrows of the whip
Descend to generations, that in future times forget.'

The strong voice ceas'd; for a terrible blast swept over the heaving sea:
The eastern cloud rent: on his cliffs stood Albion's wrathful Prince,
A dragon form, clashing his scales: at midnight he arose,
And flam'd red meteors round the land of Albion beneath;
His voice, his locks, his awful shoulders, and his glowing eyes
Appear to the Americans upon the cloudy night.

Solemn heave the Atlantic waves between the gloomy nations,
Swelling, belching from its deeps red clouds and raging fires.
Albion is sick! America faints! Enrag'd the Zenith grew.
As human blood shooting its veins all round the orb'd heaven,
Red rose the clouds from the Atlantic in vast wheels of blood,
And in the red clouds rose a Wonder o'er the Atlantic sea --
Intense! naked! a Human fire, fierce glowing, as the wedge
Of iron heated in the furnace; his terrible limbs were fire,
With myriads of cloudy terrors, banners dark, and towers
Surrounded: heat but not light went thro' the murky atmosphere.

The King of England looking westward trembles at the vision.

Albion's Angel stood beside the Stone of Night, and saw
The Terror like a comet, or more like the planet red,
That once enclos'd the terrible wandering comets in its sphere.
Then, Mars, thou wast our centre, and the planets three flew round
Thy crimson disk; so, ere the Sun was rent from thy red sphere,
The Spectre glow'd, his horrid length staining the temple long
With beams of blood; and thus a voice came forth, and shook the temple:--

`The morning comes, the night decays, the watchmen leave their stations;
 The grave is burst, the spices shed, the linen wrapped up;
 The bones of death, the cov'ring clay, the sinews shrunk and dry'd
 Reviving shake, inspiring move, breathing, awakening,
 Spring like redeemèd captives, when their bonds and bars are burst
 Let the slave grinding at the mill run out into the field,
 Let him look up into the heavens and laugh in the bright air;
 Let the enchainèd soul, shut up in darkness and in sighing,
 Whose face has never seen a smile in thirty weary years,
 Rise and look out; his chains are loose, his dungeon doors are open;
 And let his wife and children return from the oppressor's scourge.
 They look behind at every step, and believe it is a dream,
 Singing: "The Sun has left his blackness, and has found a fresher morning,
 And the fair Moon rejoices in the clear and cloudless night;
 For Empire is no more, and now the Lion and Wolf shall cease." '

In thunders ends the voice. Then Albion's Angel wrathful burnt
 Beside the Stone of Night; and, like the Eternal Lion's howl
 In famine and war, reply'd: `Art thou not Orc, who serpent-form'd
 Stands at the gate of Enitharmon to devour her children?
 Blasphemous Demon, Antichrist, hater of Dignities,
 Lover of wild rebellion, and transgressor of God's Law,
 Why dost thou come to Angel's eyes in this terrific form?'

The Terror answer'd: `I am Orc, wreath'd round the accursèd tree:
 The times are ended; shadows pass, the morning 'gins to break;
 The fiery joy, that Urizen perverted to ten commands,
 What night he led the starry hosts thro' the wide wilderness,
 That stony Law I stamp to dust; and scatter Religion abroad
 To the four winds as a torn book, and none shall gather the leaves;
 But they shall rot on desert sands, and consume in bottomless deeps,
 To make the deserts blossom, and the deeps shrink to their fountains,
 And to renew the fiery joy, and burst the stony roof;
 That pale religious lechery, seeking Virginity,
 May find it in a harlot, and in coarse-clad honesty
 The undefil'd, tho' ravish'd in her cradle night and morn;
 For everything that lives is holy, life delights in life;
 Because the soul of sweet delight can never be defil'd.
 Fires enwrap the earthly globe, yet Man is not consum'd;
 Amidst the lustful fires he walks; his feet become like brass,
 His knees and thighs like silver, and his breast and head like gold.

`Sound! sound! my loud war-trumpets, and alarm my Thirteen Angels!
 Loud howls the Eternal Wolf! the Eternal Lion lashes his tail!
 America is dark'ned; and my punishing Demons, terrifièd,
 Crouch howling before their caverns deep, like skins dry'd in the wind.

They cannot smite the wheat, nor quench the fatness of the earth;
 They cannot smite with sorrows, nor subdue the plough and spade;
 They cannot wall the city, nor moat round the castle of princes;
 They cannot bring the stubbèd oak to overgrow the hills;
 For terrible men stand on the shores, and in their robes I see
 Children take shelter from the lightnings: there stands Washington,
 And Paine, and Warren, with their foreheads rear'd toward the East--
 But clouds obscure my agèd sight. A vision from afar!
 Sound! sound! my loud war-trumpets, and alarm my Thirteen Angels!
 Ah, vision from afar! Ah, rebel form that rent the ancient
 Heavens! Eternal Viper self-renew'd, rolling in clouds,
 I see thee in thick clouds and darkness on America's shore,
 Writhing in pangs of abhorrèd birth; red flames the crest rebellious
 And eyes of death; the harlot womb, oft openèd in vain,
 Heaves in enormous circles: now the times are return'd upon thee,
 Devourer of thy parent, now thy unutterable torment renews.
 Sound! sound! my loud war-trumpets, and alarm my Thirteen Angels!
 Ah, terrible birth! a young one bursting! Where is the weeping mouth,
 And where the mother's milk? Instead, those ever-hissing jaws
 And parchèd lips drop with fresh gore: now roll thou in the clouds;
 Thy mother lays her length outstretch'd upon the shore beneath.
 Sound! sound! my loud war-trumpets, and alarm my Thirteen Angels!
 Loud howls the Eternal Wolf! the Eternal Lion lashes his tail!

Thus wept the Angel voice, and as he wept the terrible blasts
 Of trumpets blew a loud alarm across the Atlantic deep.
 No trumpets answer; no reply of clarions or of fifes:
 Silent the Colonies remain and refuse the loud alarm.

On those vast shady hills between America and Albion's shore,
 Now barr'd out by the Atlantic sea, call'd Atlantean hills,
 Because from their bright summits you may pass to the Golden World,
 An ancient palace, archetype of mighty Emperies,
 Rears its immortal pinnacles, built in the forest of God
 By Ariston, the King of Beauty, for his stolen bride.

Here on their magic seats the Thirteen Angels sat perturb'd,
 For clouds from the Atlantic hover o'er the solemn roof.

Fiery the Angels rose, and as they rose deep thunder roll'd
 Around their shores, indignant burning with the fires of Orc;
 And Boston's Angel cried aloud as they flew thro' the dark night.

He cried: `Why trembles honesty; and, like a murderer,
 Why seeks he refuge from the frowns of his immortal station?
 Must the generous tremble, and leave his joy to the idle, to the pestilence

That mock him? Who commanded this? What God? What Angel?
 To keep the gen'rous from experience till the ungenerous
 Are unrestrain'd performers of the energies of nature;
 Till pity is become a trade, and generosity a science
 That men get rich by; and the sandy desert is giv'n to the strong?
 What God is he writes laws of peace, and clothes him in a tempest?
 What pitying Angel lusts for tears, and fans himself with sighs?
 What crawling villain preaches abstinence and wraps himself
 In fat of lambs? No more I follow, no more obedience pay!

So cried he, rending off his robe and throwing down his sceptre
 In sight of Albion's Guardian; and all the Thirteen Angels
 Rent off their robes to the hungry wind, and threw their golden sceptres
 Down on the land of America; indignant they descended

Headlong from out their heav'nly heights, descending swift as fires
 Over the land; naked and flaming are their lineaments seen
 In the deep gloom; by Washington and Paine and Warren they stood;
 And the flame folded, roaring fierce within the pitchy night,
 Before the Demon red, who burnt towards America,
 In black smoke, thunders, and loud winds, rejoicing in its terror,
 Breaking in smoky wreaths from the wild deep, and gath'ring thick
 In flames as of a furnace on the land from North to South,
 What time the Thirteen Governors, that England sent, convene
 In Bernard's house. The flames cover'd the land; they rouse; they cry;
 Shaking their mental chains, they rush in fury to the sea
 To quench their anguish; at the feet of Washington down fall'n
 They grovel on the sand and writhing lie, while all
 The British soldiers thro' the Thirteen States sent up a howl
 Of anguish, threw their swords and muskets to the earth, and run
 From their encampments and dark castles, seeking where to hide
 From the grim flames, and from the visions of Orc, in sight
 Of Albion's Angel; who, enrag'd, his secret clouds open'd
 From North to South, and burnt outstretch'd on wings of wrath, cov'ring
 The eastern sky, spreading his awful wings across the heavens.
 Beneath him roll'd his num'rous hosts, all Albion's Angels camp'd
 Darken'd the Atlantic mountains; and their trumpets shook the valleys,
 Arm'd with diseases of the earth to cast upon the Abyss --
 Their numbers forty millions, must'ring in the eastern sky.

In the flames stood and view'd the armies drawn out in the sky,
 Washington, Franklin, Paine, and Warren, Allen, Gates, and Lee,
 And heard the voice of Albion's Angel give the thunderous command;
 His plagues, obedient to his voice, flew forth out of their clouds,
 Falling upon America, as a storm to cut them off,
 As a blight cuts the tender corn when it begins to appear.

Dark is the heaven above, and cold and hard the earth beneath:
 And, as a plague-wind, fill'd with insects, cuts off man and beast,
 And, as a sea o'erwhelms a land in the day of an earthquake,
 Fury, rage, madness, in a wind swept through America;
 And the red flames of Orc, that folded roaring, fierce, around
 The angry shores; and the fierce rushing of th' inhabitants together!
 The citizens of New York close their books and lock their chests;
 The mariners of Boston drop their anchors and unlade;
 The scribe of Pennsylvania casts his pen upon the earth;

The builder of Virginia throws his hammer down in fear.

Then had America been lost, o'erwhelm'd by the Atlantic,
 And Earth had lost another portion of the Infinite;
 But all rush together in the night in wrath and raging fire.
 The red fires rag'd! The plagues recoil'd! Then roll'd they back with fury
 On Albion's Angels: then the Pestilence began in streaks of red
 Across the limbs of Albion's Guardian; the spotted plague smote Bristol's,
 And the Leprosy London's Spirit, sickening all their bands:
 The millions sent up a howl of anguish and threw off their hammer'd mail,
 And cast their swords and spears to earth, and stood, a naked multitude:
 Albion's Guardian writhèd in torment on the eastern sky,
 Pale, quiv'ring toward the brain his glimmering eyes, teeth chattering,
 Howling and shuddering, his legs quivering, convuls'd each muscle and sinew:
 Sick'ning lay London's Guardian, and the ancient mitred York,
 Their heads on snowy hills, their ensigns sick'ning in the sky.

The plagues creep on the burning winds, driven by flames of Orc,
 And by the fierce Americans rushing together in the night,
 Driven o'er the Guardians of Ireland, and Scotland and Wales.
 They, spotted with plagues, forsook the frontiers; and their banners, sear'd
 With fires of hell, deform their ancient Heavens with shame and woe.
 Hid in his caves the Bard of Albion felt the enormous plagues,
 And a cowl of flesh grew o'er his head, and scales on his back and ribs;
 And, rough with black scales, all his Angels fright their ancient heavens.
 The doors of marriage are open, and the Priests, in rustling scales,
 Rush into reptile coverts, hiding from the fires of Orc,
 That play around the golden roofs in wreaths of fierce desire,
 Leaving the Females naked and glowing with the lusts of youth.

For the Female Spirits of the dead, pining in bonds of religion,
 Run from their fetters; reddening, and in long-drawn arches sitting,
 They feel the nerves of youth renew, and desires of ancient times
 Over their pale limbs, as a vine when the tender grape appears.

Over the hills, the vales, the cities rage the red flames fierce:
The Heavens melted from North to South; and Urizen, who sat
Above all heavens, in thunders wrapp'd, emerg'd his leprous head
From out his holy shrine, his tears in deluge piteous

Falling into the deep sublime; flagg'd with grey-brow'd snows
And thunderous visages, his jealous wings wav'd over the deep;
Weeping in dismal howling woe, he dark descended, howling
Around the smitten bands, clothèd in tears and trembling, shudd'ring, cold.
His storèd snows he pourèd forth, and his icy magazine,
He open'd on the deep, and on the Atlantic sea, white, shiv'ring;
Leprous his limbs, all over white, and hoary was his visage;
Weeping in dismal howlings before the stern Americans,
Hiding the Demon red with clouds and cold mists from the earth;
Till Angels and weak men twelve years should govern o'er the strong;
And then their end should come, when France receiv'd the Demon's light.

Stiff shudderings shook the heav'nly thrones! France, Spain, and Italy
In terror view'd the bands of Albion, and the ancient Guardians,
Fainting upon the elements, smitten with their own plagues!
They slow advance to shut the five gates of their law-built Heaven,
Fillèd with blasting fancies and with mildews of despair,
With fierce disease and lust, unable to stem the fires of Orc,
But the five gates were consum'd, and their bolts and hinges melted;
And the fierce flames burnt round the heavens, and round the abodes of men.

EUROPE: A PROPHECY

Engraved 1794

`Five windows light the cavern'd Man: thro' one he breathes the air;
Thro' one hears music of the spheres; thro' one the Eternal Vine
Flourishes, that he may receive the grapes; thro' one can look
And see small portions of the Eternal World that ever groweth;
Thro' one himself pass out what time he please, but he will not;
For stolen joys are sweet, and bread eaten in secret pleasant.'

So sang a Fairy, mocking, as he sat on a streak'd tulip,
Thinking none saw him: when he ceas'd I started from the trees,
And caught him in my hat, as boys knock down a butterfly.
`How know you this,' said I, `small Sir? where did you learn this song?'
Seeing himself in my possession, thus he answer'd me:
`My Master, I am yours! command me, for I must obey.'

`Then tell me, what is the Material World, and is it dead?'
He, laughing, answer'd: `I will write a book on leaves of flowers,
If you will feed me on love-thoughts, and give me now and then
A cup of sparkling poetic fancies; so, when I am tipsy,
I'll sing to you to this soft lute, and show you all alive
The World, when every particle of dust breathes forth its joy.'

I took him home in my warm bosom: as we went along
Wild flowers I gather'd; and he show'd me each Eternal Flower:
He laugh'd aloud to see them whimper because they were pluck'd.
They hover'd round me like a cloud of incense. When I came
Into my parlour and sat down, and took my pen to write,
My Fairy sat upon the table, and dictated EUROPE.

Preludium

The nameless Shadowy Female rose from out the breast of Orc,
Her snaky hair brandishing in the winds of Enitharmon;
And thus her voice arose:--

`O mother Enitharmon, wilt thou bring forth other sons,
To cause my name to vanish, that my place may not be found?
For I am faint with travel,
Like the dark cloud disburden'd in the day of dismal thunder.

`My roots are brandish'd in the heavens, my fruits in earth beneath
Surge, foam, and labour into life, first born and first consum'd!

Consumèd and consuming!
Then why shouldst thou, Accursèd Mother, bring me into life?

`I wrap my turban of thick clouds around my lab'ring head,
And fold the sheety waters as a mantle round my limbs;
Yet the red sun and moon
And all the overflowing stars rain down prolific pains.

`Unwilling I look up to heaven, unwilling count the stars:
Sitting in fathomless abyss of my immortal shrine
I seize their burning power,
And bring forth howling terrors, all-devouring fiery kings,

`Devouring and devourèd, roaming on dark and desolate mountains,
In forests of Eternal Death, shrieking in hollow trees.
Ah, mother Enitharmon!
Stamp not with solid form this vig'rous progeny of fires.

`I bring forth from my teeming bosom myriads of flames,
And thou dost stamp them with a signet; then they roam abroad,
And leave me void as death.
Ah! I am drown'd in shady woe and visionary joy.

`And who shall bind the Infinite with an eternal band
To compass it with swaddling bands? and who shall cherish it
With milk and honey?
I see it smile, and I roll inward, and my voice is past.'

She ceas'd, and roll'd her shady clouds
Into the secret place.

A Prophecy

The deep of winter came,
What time the Secret Child
Descended through the orient gates of the Eternal day:
War ceas'd, and all the troops like shadows fled to their abodes.

Then Enitharmon saw her sons and daughters rise around;
Like pearly clouds they meet together in the crystal house;
And Los, possessor of the Moon, joy'd in the peaceful night,
Thus speaking, while his num'rous sons shook their bright fiery wings:--

`Again the night is come,
That strong Urthona takes his rest;
And Urizen, unloos'd from chains,

Glows like a meteor in the distant North.
Stretch forth your hands and strike the elemental strings!
Awake the thunders of the deep!

`The shrill winds wake,
Till all the sons of Urizen look out and envy Los.
Seize all the spirits of life, and bind
Their warbling joys to our loud strings!
Bind all the nourishing sweets of earth
To give us bliss, that we may drink the sparkling wine of Los!
And let us laugh at war,
Despising toil and care,
Because the days and nights of joy in lucky hours renew.

`Arise, O Orc, from thy deep den!
First-born of Enitharmon, rise!
And we will crown thy head with garlands of the ruddy vine;
For now thou art bound,
And I may see thee in the hour of bliss, my eldest-born.'

The horrent Demon rose, surrounded with red stars of fire,
Whirling about in furious circles round the Immortal Fiend.

Then Enitharmon down descended into his red light,
And thus her voice rose to her children: the distant heavens reply:--

`Now comes the night of Enitharmon's joy!
Who shall I call? Who shall I send,
That Woman, lovely Woman, may have dominion?
Arise, O Rintrah! thee I call, and Palamabron, thee!
Go! tell the Human race that Woman's love is Sin;
That an Eternal life awaits the worms of sixty winters,
In an allegorical abode, where existence hath never come.
Forbid all Joy; and, from her childhood, shall the little Female
Spread nets in every secret path.

`My weary eyelids draw towards the evening; my bliss is yet but new.

`Arise! O Rintrah, eldest-born, second to none but Orc!
O lion Rintrah, raise thy fury from thy forests black!
Bring Palamabron, hornèd priest, skipping upon the mountains,
And silent Elynittria, the silver-bowèd queen.
Rintrah, where hast thou hid thy bride?
Weeps she in desert shades?
Alas! my Rintrah, bring the lovely jealous Ocalythron.

`Arise, my son! bring all thy brethren, O thou King of Fire!
 Prince of the Sun! I see thee with thy innumerable race,
 Thick as the summer stars;
 But each, ramping, his golden mane shakes,
 And thine eyes rejoice because of strength, O Rintrah, furious King!"

Enitharmon slept
 Eighteen hundred years. Man was a dream,
 The night of Nature and their harps unstrung!
 She slept in middle of her nightly song
 Eighteen hundred years, a Female dream.

Shadows of men in fleeting bands upon the winds
 Divide the heavens of Europe;
 Till Albion's Angel, smitten with his own plagues, fled with his bands.
 The cloud bears hard on Albion's shore,
 Fill'd with immortal Demons of futurity:
 In council gather the smitten Angels of Albion;
 The cloud bears hard upon the council-house, down rushing
 On the heads of Albion's Angels.

One hour they lay buried beneath the ruins of that hall;
 But as the stars rise from the Salt Lake, they arise in pain,
 In troubled mists, o'erclouded by the terrors of struggling times.

In thoughts perturb'd they rose from the bright ruins, silent following
 The fiery King, who sought his ancient temple, serpent-form'd,
 That stretches out its shady length along the Island white.
 Round him roll'd his clouds of war; silent the Angel went
 Along the infinite shores of Thames to golden Verulam.
 There stand the venerable porches, that high-towering rear
 Their oak-surrounded pillars, form'd of massy stones, uncut
 With tool, stones precious! -- such eternal in the heavens,
 Of colours twelve (few known on earth) give light in the opaque,
 Plac'd in the order of the stars; when the five senses whelm'd
 In deluge o'er the earth-born man, then turn'd the fluxile eyes
 Into two stationary orbs, concentrating all things:
 The ever-varying spiral ascents to the Heavens of Heavens
 Were bended downward, and the nostrils' golden gates shut,
 Turn'd outward, barr'd, and petrify'd against the Infinite.

Thought chang'd the Infinite to a Serpent, that which pitieth
 To a devouring flame; and Man fled from its face and hid
 In forests of night: then all the eternal forests were divided
 Into earths, rolling in circles of Space, that like an ocean rush'd
 And overwhelmed all except this finite wall of flesh.

Then was the Serpent temple form'd, image of Infinite,
 Shut up in finite revolutions, and Man became an Angel,
 Heaven a mighty circle turning, God a tyrant crown'd.

Now arriv'd the ancient Guardian at the southern porch,
 That planted thick with trees of blackest leaf, and in a vale
 Obscure enclos'd the Stone of Night; oblique it stood, o'erhung
 With purple flowers and berries red, image of that sweet South,
 Once open to the heavens, and elevated on the human neck,
 Now overgrown with hair, and cover'd with a story roof
 Downward 'tis sunk beneath th' attractive North, that round the feet,
 A raging whirlpool, draws the dizzy enquirer to his grave.

Albion's Angel rose upon the Stone of Night.
 He saw Urizen on the Atlantic;
 And his brazen Book,
 That Kings and Priests had copièd on Earth,
 Expanded from North to South.

And the clouds and fires pale roll'd round in the night of Enitharmon,
 Round Albion's cliffs and London's walls: still Enitharmon slept.
 Rolling volumes of grey mist involve Churches, Palaces, Towers;
 For Urizen unclasp'd his Book, feeding his soul with pity.
 The youth of England, hid in gloom, curse the pain'd heavens, compell'd
 Into the deadly night to see the form of Albion's Angel.
 Their parents brought them forth, and Agèd Ignorance preaches, canting,
 On a vast rock, perceiv'd by those senses that are clos'd from thought--
 Bleak, dark, abrupt it stands, and overshadows London city.
 They saw his bony feet on the rock, the flesh consum'd in flames;
 They saw the Serpent temple lifted above, shadowing the Island white;
 They heard the voice of Albion's Angel, howling in flames of Orc,
 Seeking the trump of the Last Doom.

Above the rest the howl was heard from Westminster, louder and louder:
 The Guardian of the secret codes forsook his ancient mansion,
 Driven out by the flames of Orc; his furr'd robes and false locks
 Adherèd and grew one with his flesh and nerves, and veins shot thro' them.
 With dismal torment sick, hanging upon the wind, he fled
 Grovelling, along Great George Street, thro' the Park gate: all the soldiers
 Fled from his sight: he dragg'd his torments to the wilderness.

Thus was the howl thro' Europe!
 For Orc rejoic'd to hear the howling shadows;
 But Palamabron shot his lightnings, trenching down his wide back;
 And Rintrah hung with all his legions in the nether deep.

Enitharmon laugh'd in her sleep to see (O woman's triumph!)
 Every house a den, every man bound: the shadows are fill'd
 With spectres, and the windows wove over with curses of iron:
 Over the doors `Thou shalt not', and over the chimneys `Fear' is written:
 With bands of iron round their necks fasten'd into the walls
 The citizens, in leaden gyves the inhabitants of suburbs
 Walk heavy; soft and bent are the bones of villagers.

Between the clouds of Urizen the flames of Orc roll heavy
 Around the limbs of Albion's Guardian, his flesh consuming:
 Howlings and hissings, shrieks and groans, and voices of despair
 Arise around him in the cloudy heavens of Albion. Furious,
 The red-limb'd Angel seiz'd in horror and torment
 The trump of the Last Doom; but he could not blow the iron tube!
 Thrice he assay'd presumptuous to awake the dead to Judgment.
 A mighty Spirit leap'd from the land of Albion,
 Nam'd Newton: he seiz'd the trump, and blow'd the enormous blast!
 Yellow as leaves of autumn, the myriads of Angelic hosts
 Fell thro' the wintry skies, seeking their graves,
 Rattling their hollow bones in howling and lamentation.

Then Enitharmon woke, nor knew that she had slept;
 And eighteen hundred years were fled
 As if they had not been.
 She call'd her sons and daughters
 To the sports of night
 Within her crystal house,
 And thus her song proceeds:--

`Arise, Ethinthus! tho' the earth-worm call,
 Let him call in vain,
 Till the night of holy shadows
 And human solitude is past!

`Ethinthus, Queen of Waters, how thou shinest in the sky!
 My daughter, how do I rejoice! for thy children flock around,
 Like the gay fishes on the wave, when the cold moon drinks the dew.
 Ethinthus! thou art sweet as comforts to my fainting soul,
 For now thy waters warble round the feet of Enitharmon.

`Manatha-Varcyon! I behold thee flaming in my halls.
 Light of thy mother's soul! I see thy lovely eagles round;
 Thy golden wings are my delight, and thy flames of soft delusion.

`Where is my luring bird of Eden? Leutha, silent love!
 Leutha, the many-colour'd bow delights upon thy wings!

Soft soul of flowers, Leutha!
 Sweet smiling Pestilence! I see thy blushing light;
 Thy daughters, many changing,
 Revolve like sweet perfumes ascending, O Leutha, Silken Queen!

`Where is the youthful Antamon, Prince of the Pearly Dew?
 O Antamon! why wilt thou leave thy mother Enitharmon?
 Alone I see thee, crystal form,
 Floating upon the bosom'd air,
 With lineaments of gratified desire.
 My Antamon! the seven churches of Leutha seek thy love.

`I hear the soft Oothoon in Enitharmon's tents;
 Why wilt thou give up woman's secrecy, my melancholy child?
 Between two moments Bliss is ripe.
 O Theotormon! robb'd of joy, I see thy salt tears flow
 Down the steps of my crystal house.

`Sotha and Thiralatha! secret dwellers of dreamful caves,
 Arise and please the horrent Fiend with your melodious songs;
 Still all your thunders, golden-hoof'd, and bind your horses black.
 Orc! smile upon my children,
 Smile, son of my afflictions!
 Arise, O Orc, and give our mountains joy of thy red light!

She ceas'd; for all were forth at sport beneath the solemn moon
 Waking the stars of Urizen with their immortal songs;
 That Nature felt thro' all her pores the enormous revelry,
 Till Morning opened the eastern gate;
 Then every one fled to his station, and Enitharmon wept.

But terrible Orc, when he beheld the morning in the East,
 Shot from the heights of Enitharmon,
 And in the vineyards of red France appear'd the light of his fury.

The Sun glow'd fiery red!
 The furious Terrors flew around
 On golden chariots, raging with red wheels, dropping with blood
 The Lions lash their wrathful tails!
 The Tigers couch upon the prey and suck the ruddy tide;
 And Enitharmon groans and cries in anguish and dismay.

Then Los arose: his head he rear'd, in snaky thunders clad;
 And with a cry that shook all Nature to the utmost pole,
 Call'd all his sons to the strife of blood.

THE BOOK OF URIZEN

Engraved 1794

THE FIRST BOOK OF URIZEN

Preludium to the First Book of Urizen

Of the primeval Priest's assum'd power,
When Eternals spurn'd back his Religion,
And gave him a place in the North,
Obscure, shadowy, void, solitary.

Eternals! I hear your call gladly.
Dictate swift wingèd words, and fear not
To unfold your dark visions of torment.

CHAPTER I

1. Lo, a Shadow of horror is risen
In Eternity! unknown, unprolific,
Self-clos'd, all-repelling. What Demon
Hath form'd this abominable Void,
This soul-shudd'ring Vacuum? Some said
It is Urizen. But unknown, abstracted,
Brooding, secret, the dark Power hid.

2. Times on times he divided, and measur'd
Space by space in his ninefold darkness,
Unseen, unknown; changes appear'd
Like desolate mountains, rifted furious
By the black winds of perturbation.

3. For he strove in battles dire,
In unseen conflictions with Shapes,
Bred from his forsaken wilderness,
Of beast, bird, fish, serpent, and element,
Combustion, blast, vapour, and cloud.

4. Dark, revolving in silent activity,
Unseen in tormenting passions,
An Activity unknown and horrible,
A self-contemplating Shadow,
In enormous labours occupièd.

5. But Eternals beheld his vast forests;
 Ages on ages he lay, clos'd, unknown,
 Brooding, shut in the deep; all avoid
 The petrific, abominable Chaos.

6. His cold horrors, silent, dark Urizen
 Prepar'd; his ten thousands of thunders,
 Rang'd in gloom'd array, stretch out across
 The dread world; and the rolling of wheels,
 As of swelling seas, sound in his clouds,

In his hills of stor'd snows, in his mountains
 Of hail and ice; voices of terror
 Are heard, like thunders of autumn,
 When the cloud blazes over the harvests.

CHAPTER II

1. Earth was not, nor globes of attraction;
 The will of the Immortal expanded
 Or contracted his all-flexible senses;
 Death was not, but Eternal life sprung.

2. The sound of a trumpet the heavens
 Awoke, and vast clouds of blood roll'd
 Round the dim rocks of Urizen, so nam'd
 That solitary one in Immensity.

3. Shrill the trumpet! and myriads of Eternity
 Muster around the bleak deserts,
 Now fill'd with clouds, darkness, and waters,
 That roll'd perplex'd, lab'ring; and utter'd
 Words articulate, bursting in thunders,
 That roll'd on the tops of his mountains:--

4. `From the depths of dark solitude, from
 The Eternal abode in my Holiness,
 Hidden, set apart, in my stern counsels,
 Reserv'd for the days of futurity,
 I have sought for a joy without pain,
 For a solid without fluctuation.
 Why will you die, O Eternals?
 Why live in unquenchable burnings?

5. `First I fought with the fire, consum'd
 Inwards into a deep world within,

A Void immense, wild, dark and deep,
 Where nothing was--Nature's wide womb;
 And self-balanc'd, stretch'd o'er the void,
 I alone, even I! the winds merciless
 Bound; but condensing in torrents
 They fall and fall; strong I repell'd
 The vast waves, and arose on the waters
 A wide World of solid obstruction.

6. `Here alone I, in books form'd of metals,
 Have written the secrets of Wisdom,
 The secrets of dark Contemplation,
 By fightings and conflicts dire
 With terrible monsters sin-bred,
 Which the bosoms of all inhabit--
 Seven deadly Sins of the Soul.

7. `Lo! I unfold my darkness, and on
 This rock place, with strong hand, the Book
 Of Eternal brass, written in my solitude:

8. `Laws of peace, of love, of unity,
 Of pity, compassion, forgiveness;
 Let each choose one habitation,
 His ancient infinite mansion,
 One command, one joy, one desire,
 One curse, one weight, one measure,
 One King, one God, one Law.'

CHAPTER III

1. The voice ended: they saw his pale visage
 Emerge from the darkness, his hand
 On the rock of Eternity unclasping
 The Book of brass. Rage seiz'd the strong--

2. Rage, fury, intense indignation,
 In cataracts of fire, blood, and gall,
 In whirlwinds of sulphurous smoke,
 And enormous forms of energy,
 In living creations appear'd,
 In the flames of eternal fury.

3. Sund'ring, dark'ning, thund'ring,
 Rent away with a terrible crash,
 Eternity roll'd wide apart,

Wide asunder rolling;
 Mountainous, all around
 Departing, departing, departing,
 Leaving ruinous fragments of life,
 Hanging, frowning cliffs, and, all between,
 An Ocean of voidness unfathomable.

4. The roaring fires ran o'er the heav'ns
 In whirlwinds and cataracts of blood,
 And o'er the dark deserts of Urizen
 Fires pour thro' the void, on all sides,
 On Urizen's self-begotten armies.

5. But no light from the fires! all was darkness
 In the flames of Eternal fury.

6. In fierce anguish and quenchless flames
 To the deserts and rocks he ran raging,
 To hide; but he could not. Combining,
 He dug mountains and hills in vast strength,
 He pilèd them in incessant labour,
 In howlings and pangs and fierce madness,
 Long periods in burning fires labouring;
 Till hoary, and age-broke, and agèd,
 In despair and the shadows of death

7. And a roof vast, petrific, around
 On all sides he fram'd, like a womb,
 Where thousands of rivers, in veins
 Of blood, pour down the mountains to cool
 The eternal fires, beating without
 From Eternals; and like a black Globe,
 View'd by sons of Eternity, standing
 On the shore of the infinite ocean,
 Like a human heart, struggling and beating,
 The vast world of Urizen appear'd.

8. And Los, round the dark globe of Urizen,
 Kept watch for Eternals to confine
 The obscure separation alone;
 For Eternity stood wide apart,
 As the stars are apart from the earth,

9. Los wept, howling around the dark Demon,
 And cursing his lot; for in anguish
 Urizen was rent from his side,

And a fathomless Void for his feet,
And intense fires for his dwelling.

10. But Urizen, laid in a stony sleep,
Unorganiz'd, rent from Eternity.

11. The Eternals said: `What is this? Death?
Urizen is a clod of clay!'

12. Los howl'd in a dismal stupor,
Groaning, gnashing, groaning,
Till the wrenching apart was healèd.

13. But the wrenching of Urizen heal'd not.
Cold, featureless, flesh or clay,
Rifted with direful changes,
He lay in a dreamless night,

14. Till Los rous'd his fires, affrighted
At the formless, unmeasurable Death.

CHAPTER IV

1. Los, smitten with astonishment,
Frighten'd at the hurtling bones

2. And at the surging, sulphureous,
Perturbèd, immortal, mad raging

3. In whirlwinds, and pitch, and nitre
Round the furious limbs of Los.

4. And Los formèd nets and gins,
And threw the nets round about.

5. He watch'd in shudd'ring fear
The dark changes, and bound every change
With rivets of iron and brass.

6. And these were the changes of Urizen:--

CHAPTER IV A

1. Ages on ages roll'd over him;
In stony sleep ages roll'd over him,
Like a dark waste stretching, changeable,

By earthquakes riv'n, belching sullen fires:
 On ages roll'd ages in ghastly
 Sick torment; around him in whirlwinds
 Of darkness the Eternal Prophet howl'd,
 Beating still on his rivets of iron,
 Pouring solder of iron; dividing
 The horrible night into watches.

2. And Urizen (so his eternal name)
 His prolific delight obscur'd more and more,
 In dark secrecy hiding in surging
 Sulphureous fluid his phantasies.
 The Eternal Prophet heav'd the dark bellows,
 And turn'd restless the tongs, and the hammer
 Incessant beat, forging chains new and new,
 Numb'ring with links hours, days, and years.

3. The Eternal mind, bounded, began to roll
 Eddies of wrath, ceaseless, round and round,
 And the sulphureous foam, surging thick,
 Settled, a lake, bright and shining clear,
 White as the snow on the mountains cold.

4. Forgetfulness, dumbness, necessity,
 In chains of the mind lockèd up,
 Like fetters of ice shrinking together,
 Disorganiz'd, rent from Eternity,
 Los beat on his fetters of iron;
 And heated his furnaces, and pour'd
 Iron solder and solder of brass.

5. Restless turn'd the Immortal, enchain'd,
 Heaving dolorous, anguish'd, unbearable;
 Till a roof, shaggy, wild, enclos'd
 In an orb his fountain of thought.

6. In a horrible, dreamful slumber,
 Like the linkèd infernal chain,
 A vast Spine writh'd in torment
 Upon the winds, shooting pain'd
 Ribs, like a bending cavern;
 And bones of solidness froze
 Over all his nerves of joy--
 And a first Age passèd over,
 And a state of dismal woe.

7. From the caverns of his jointed Spine
Down sunk with fright a red
Round Globe, hot, burning, deep,
Deep down into the Abyss;
Panting, conglobing, trembling,
Shooting out ten thousand branches
Around his solid bones--
And a second Age passèd over,
And a state of dismal woe.

8. In harrowing fear rolling round,
His nervous Brain shot branches
Round the branches of his Heart,
On high, into two little orbs,
And fixèd in two little caves,
Hiding carefully from the wind,
His Eyes beheld the deep--
And a third Age passèd over,
And a state of dismal woe.

9. The pangs of hope began.
In heavy pain, striving, struggling,
Two Ears, in close volutions,
From beneath his orbs of vision
Shot spiring out, and petrified
As they grew--And a fourth Age passèd,
And a state of dismal woe.

10. In ghastly torment sick,
Hanging upon the wind,
Two Nostrils bent down to the deep--
And a fifth Age passèd over,
And a state of dismal woe.

11. In ghastly torment sick,
Within his ribs bloated round
A craving, hungry Cavern;
Thence arose his channell'd Throat,
And, like a red flame, a Tongue
Of thirst and of hunger appear'd--
And a sixth Age passèd over,
And a state of dismal woe.

12. Enragèd and stifled with torment,
He threw his right Arm to the North,
His left Arm to the South,

Shooting out in anguish deep,
 And his Feet stamp'd the nether Abyss
 In trembling and howling and dismay--
 And a seventh Age passèd over,
 And a state of dismal woe.

CHAPTER V

1. In terrors Los shrunk from his task:
 His great hammer fell from his hand;
 His fires beheld, and sickening
 Hid their strong limbs in smoke;
 For with noises, ruinous, loud,
 With hurlings and clashings and groans,
 The Immortal endur'd his chains,
 Tho' bound in a deadly sleep.

2. All the myriads of Eternity,
 All the wisdom and joy of life
 Roll like a sea around him;
 Except what his little orbs
 Of sight by degrees unfold.

3. And now his Eternal life,
 Like a dream, was obliterated.

4. Shudd'ring, the Eternal Prophet smote
 With a stroke from his North to South region.
 The bellows and hammer are silent now;
 A nerveless silence his prophetic voice
 Seiz'd; a cold Solitude and dark Void
 The Eternal Prophet and Urizen clos'd.

5. Ages on ages roll'd over them,
 Cut off from life and light, frozen
 Into horrible forms of deformity.
 Los suffer'd his fires to decay;
 Then he look'd back with anxious desire,
 But the Space, undivided by existence,
 Struck horror into his soul.

6. Los wept, obscur'd with mourning,
 His bosom earthquak'd with sighs;
 He saw Urizen, deadly, black,
 In his chains bound; and Pity began,

7. In anguish dividing and dividing--
 For Pity divides the soul--
 In pangs, Eternity on Eternity,
 Life in cataracts pour'd down his cliffs.
 The Void shrunk the lymph into Nerves,
 Wand'ring wide on the bosom of night,
 And left a round globe of blood
 Trembling upon the Void.
 Thus the Eternal Prophet was divided
 Before the death image of Urizen;
 For in changeable clouds and darkness,
 In a winterly night beneath,
 The Abyss of Los stretch'd immense;
 And now seen, now obscur'd, to the eyes
 Of Eternals the visions remote
 Of the dark separation appear'd:
 As glasses discover Worlds
 In the endless Abyss of space,
 So the expanding eyes of Immortals
 Beheld the dark visions of Los,
 And the globe of life-blood trembling.

8. The globe of life-blood trembled,
 Branching out into roots,
 Fibrous, writhing upon the winds,
 Fibres of blood, milk, and tears,
 In pangs, Eternity on Eternity.
 At length in tears and cries embodièd,
 A Female form, trembling and pale,
 Waves before his deathly face.

9. All Eternity shudder'd at sight
 Of the first Female, now separate,
 Pale as a cloud of snow,
 Waving before the face of Los.

10. Wonder, awe, fear, astonishment
 Petrify the Eternal myriads
 At the first Female form now separate.
 They call'd her Pity, and fled.

11. `Spread a Tent with strong curtains around them!
 Let cords and stakes bind in the Void,
 That Eternals may no more behold them.'

12. They began to weave curtains of darkness,
 They erected large pillars round the Void,
 With golden hooks fasten'd in the pillars;
 With infinite labour the Eternals
 A woof wove, and callèd it Science.

CHAPTER VI

1. But Los saw the Female, and pitièd;
 He embrac'd her; she wept, she refus'd;
 In perverse and cruel delight
 She fled from his arms, yet he follow'd.

2. Eternity shudder'd when they saw
 Man begetting his likeness
 On his own Divided Image!

3. A time passèd over: the Eternals
 Began to erect the tent,
 When Enitharmon, sick,
 Felt a Worm within her womb.

4. Yet helpless it lay, like a Worm
 In the trembling womb,
 To be moulded into existence.

5. All day the Worm lay on her bosom;
 All night within her womb
 The Worm lay till it grew to a Serpent,
 With dolorous hissings and poisons
 Round Enitharmon's loins folding.

6. Coil'd within Enitharmon's womb
 The Serpent grew, casting its scales;
 With sharp pangs the hissings began

To change to a grating cry --
 Many sorrows and dismal throes,
 Many forms of fish, bird, and beast
 Brought forth an Infant form
 Where was a Worm before.

7. The Eternals their tent finishèd,
 Alarm'd with these gloomy visions,
 When Enitharmon, groaning,
 Produc'd a Man-Child to the light.

8. A shriek ran thro' Eternity,
And a paralytic stroke,
At the birth of the Human Shadow.

9. Delving earth in his resistless way,
Howling, the Child with fierce flames
Issu'd from Enitharmon.

10. The Eternals closèd the tent;
They beat down the stakes, the cords
Stretch'd for a work of Eternity --
No more Los beheld Eternity!

11. In his hands he seiz'd the Infant,
He bathèd him in springs of sorrow,
He gave him to Enitharmon.

CHAPTER VII

1. They namèd the child Orc; he grew,
Fed with milk of Enitharmon.

2. Los awoke her. O sorrow and pain!
A tight'ning girdle grew
Around his bosom. In sobbings
He burst the girdle in twain;
But still another girdle
Oppress'd his bosom. In sobbings

Again he burst it. Again
Another girdle succeeds.
The girdle was form'd by day;
By night was burst in twain.

3. These falling down on the Rock
Into an iron Chain,
In each other link by link lock'd.

4. They took Orc to the top of a mountain.
O how Enitharmon wept!
They chain'd his young limbs to the Rock
With the Chain of Jealousy,
Beneath Urizen's deathful Shadow.

5. The Dead heard the voice of the Child,
And began to awake from sleep;

All things heard the voice of the Child,
And began to awake to life.

6. And Urizen, craving with hunger,
Stung with the odours of Nature,
Explor'd his dens around.

7. He form'd a line and a plummet
To divide the Abyss beneath;
He form'd a dividing rule;

8. He formèd scales to weigh,
He formèd massy weights;
He formèd a brazen quadrant;
He formèd golden compasses,
And began to explore the Abyss;
And he planted a garden of fruits.

9. But Los encircled Enitharmon
With fires of Prophecy
From the sight of Urizen and Orc.

10. And she bore an enormous race.

CHAPTER VIII

1. Urizen explor'd his dens,
Mountain, moor, and wilderness,
With a globe of fire lighting his journey --
A fearful journey, annoy'd
By cruel enormities, forms
Of life on his forsaken mountains.

2. And his World teem'd vast enormities,
Fright'ning, faithless, fawning,
Portions of life, similitudes
Of a foot, or a hand, or a head,
Or a heart, or an eye; they swam mischievous,
Dread terrors, delighting in blood!

3. Most Urizen sicken'd to see
His eternal creations appear,
Sons and daughters of sorrow, on mountains,
Weeping, wailing. First Thiriël appear'd,
Astonish'd at his own existence,
Like a man from a cloud born; and Utha,

From the waters emerging, laments;
Grodna rent the deep earth, howling,
Amaz'd; his heavens immense crack
Like the ground parch'd with heat; then Fuzon
Flam'd out, first begotten, last born;
All his Eternal sons in like manner;
His daughters, from green herbs and cattle,
From monsters and worms of the pit.

4. He in darkness clos'd view'd all his race,
And his soul sicken'd! He curs'd
Both sons and daughters; for he saw
That no flesh nor spirit could keep
His iron laws one moment.

5. For he saw that Life liv'd upon Death:
The Ox in the slaughter-house moans;
The Dog at the wintry door;
And he wept, and he callèd it Pity,
And his tears flowèd down on the winds.

6. Cold he wander'd on high, over their Cities,
In weeping and pain and woe;
And wherever he wander'd, in sorrows
Upon the agèd Heavens,
A cold Shadow follow'd behind him
Like a spider's web, moist, cold, and dim,
Drawing out from his sorrowing soul,
The dungeon-like heaven dividing,
Wherever the footsteps of Urizen
Walkèd over the cities in sorrow;

7. Till a Web, dark and cold, throughout all
The tormented element stretch'd
From the sorrows of Urizen's soul.
And the Web is a Female in embryo;
None could break the Web, no wings of fire,

8. So twisted the cords, and so knotted
The meshes, twisted like to the human brain.

9. And all call'd it the Net of Religion.

CHAPTER IX

1. Then the Inhabitants of those Cities
Felt their Nerves change into Marrow,
And hardening Bones began
In swift diseases and torments,
In throbbings and shootings and grindings,
Thro' all the coasts; till weaken'd
The Senses inward rush'd, shrinking
Beneath the dark Net of infection;
2. Till the shrunken eyes, clouded over,
Discern'd not the woven Hypocrisy;
But the streaky slime in their heavens,
Brought together by narrowing perceptions,
Appear'd transparent air; for their eyes
Grew small like the eyes of a man,
And, in reptile forms shrinking together,
Of seven feet stature they remain'd.
3. Six days they shrunk up from existence,
And on the seventh day they rested,
And they bless'd the seventh day, in sick hope,
And forgot their Eternal life.
4. And their Thirty Cities divided
In form of a Human Heart.
No more could they rise at will
In the infinite Void, but bound down
To earth by their narrowing perceptions,
They livèd a period of years;
Then left a noisome body
To the jaws of devouring darkness.
5. And their children wept, and built
Tombs in the desolate places,
And form'd Laws of Prudence, and call'd them
The Eternal Laws of God.
6. And the Thirty Cities remain'd,
Surrounded by salt floods, now call'd
Africa: its name was then Egypt.
7. The remaining sons of Urizen
Beheld their brethren shrink together
Beneath the Net of Urizen.

Persuasion was in vain;
For the ears of the inhabitants
Were wither'd and deafen'd and cold,
And their eyes could not discern
Their brethren of other cities.

8. So Fuzon call'd all together
The remaining children of Urizen,
And they left the pendulous earth.
They callèd it Egypt, and left it.

9. And the salt Ocean rollèd englob'd.

THE SONG OF LOS

Engraved 1795

Africa

*I Will sing you a song of Los, the Eternal Prophet:
He sung it to four harps, at the tables of Eternity,
In heart-formèd Africa.
Urizen faded! Ariston shudder'd!
And thus the Song began;--*

Adam stood in the garden of Eden,
And Noah on the mountains of Ararat;
They saw Urizen give his Laws to the Nations
By the hands of the children of Los.

Adam shudder'd! Noah faded! Black grew the sunny African
When Rintrah gave Abstract Philosophy to Brahma in the East.
(Night spoke to the Cloud:
'Lo! these Human-form'd spirits, in smiling hypocrisy, war
Against one another; so let them war on, slaves to the eternal elements.)
Noah shrunk beneath the waters,
Abram fled in fires from Chaldaea;
Moses beheld upon Mount Sinai forms of dark delusion.

To Trismegistus, Palamabron gave an abstract Law;
To Pythagoras, Socrates, and Plato.

Times rollèd on o'er all the sons of Har: time after time
Orc on Mount Atlas howl'd, chain'd down with the Chain of Jealousy;
Then Oothoon hover'd over Judah and Jerusalem,
And Jesus heard her voice -- a Man of Sorrows! -- He receiv'd
A Gospel from wretched Theotormon.

The human race began to wither; for the healthy built
Secluded places, fearing the joys of Love,

And the diseasèd only propagated.
So Antamon call'd up Leutha from her valleys of delight,
And to Mahomet a loose Bible gave;
But in the North, to Odin, Sotha gave a Code of War,
Because of Diralada, thinking to reclaim his joy.

These were the Churches, Hospitals, Castles, Palaces,
Like nets and gins and traps, to catch the joys of Eternity,

And all the rest a desert;
Till, like a dream, Eternity was obliterated and erased,

Since that dread day when Har and Heva fled,
Because their brethren and sisters liv'd in War and Lust;
And, as they fled, they shrunk
Into two narrow doleful forms,
Creeping in reptile flesh upon
The bosom of the ground;
And all the vast of Nature shrunk
Before their shrunken eyes.

Thus the terrible race of Los and Enitharmon gave
Laws and Religions to the sons of Har, binding them more
And more to Earth, closing and restraining;
Till a Philosophy of Five Senses was complete:
Urizen wept, and gave it into the hands of Newton and Locke.

Clouds roll heavy upon the Alps round Rousseau and Voltaire,
And on the mountains of Lebanon round the deceased Gods
Of Asia, and on the deserts of Africa round the Fallen Angels.
The Guardian Prince of Albion burns in his nightly tent.

Asia

The Kings of Asia heard
The howl rise up from Europe,
And each ran out from his Web,
From his ancient woven Den;
For the darkness of Asia was startled
At the thick-flaming, thought-creating fires of Orc.

And the Kings of Asia stood
And crièd in bitterness of soul:--

`Shall not the King call for Famine from the heath,
Nor the Priest for Pestilence from the fen,
To restrain, to dismay, to thin
The inhabitants of mountain and plain,
In the day of full-feeding prosperity
And the night of delicious songs?

Shall not the Counsellor throw his curb
Of Poverty on the laborious,
To fix the price of labour,
To invent allegoric riches?

And the privy admonishers of men
 Call for Fires in the City,
 For heaps of smoking ruins,
 In the night of prosperity and wantonness,

To turn man from his path,
 To restrain the child from the womb,
 To cut off the bread from the city;
 That the remnant may learn to obey,

That the pride of the heart may fail,
 That the lust of the eyes may be quench'd,
 That the delicate ear in its infancy
 May be dull'd, and the nostrils clos'd up,
 To teach Mortal Worms the path
 That leads from the gates of the Grave?'

Urizen heard them cry,
 And his shudd'ring, waving wings
 Went enormous above the red flames,
 Drawing clouds of despair thro' the Heavens
 Of Europe as he went.
 And his Books of brass, iron, and gold
 Melted over the land as he flew,
 Heavy-waving, howling, weeping.

And he stood over Judaea,
 And stay'd in his ancient place,
 And stretch'd his clouds over Jerusalem;

For Adam, a mouldering skeleton,
 Lay bleach'd on the garden of Eden;
 And Noah, as white as snow,
 On the mountains of Ararat.

Then the thunders of Urizen bellow'd aloud
 From his woven darkness above.

Orc, raging in European darkness,
 Arose like a pillar of fire above the Alps,
 Like a serpent of fiery flame!
 The sullen Earth
 Shrunk!

Forth from the dead dust, rattling bones to bones
 Join. Shaking, convuls'd, the shiv'ring Clay breathes,

And all Flesh naked stands: Fathers and Friends,
Mothers and Infants, Kings and Warriors.

The Grave shrieks with delight, and shakes
Her hollow womb, and clasps the solid stem:
Her bosom swells with wild desire;
And milk and blood and glandous wine
In rivers rush, and shout and dance,
On mountain, dale, and plain.

The Song of Los is ended
Urizen Wept.

SELECTIONS FROM THE FOUR ZOAS

sometimes called 'Vala'
Manuscript *circa* 1797-1804

Introduction to Night the First

The song of the Agèd Mother, which shook the heavens with wrath,
Hearing the march of long-resounding, strong, heroic Verse,
Marshall'd in order for the day of Intellectual Battle.

Four Mighty Ones are in every Man: a perfect Unity
Cannot exist but from the Universal Brotherhood of Eden,
The Universal Man, to Whom be glory evermore. Amen.
What are the Natures of those Living Creatures the Heavenly Father only
Knoweth: no Individual knoweth, nor can know in all Eternity.

The Wanderer

Enion brooded o'er the rocks: the rough rocks groaning vegetate --
Such power was given to the solitary Wanderer --
The barkèd Oak, the long-limb'd Beech, the Chestnut-tree, the Pine,
The Pear-tree mild, the frowning Walnut, the sharp Crab, and Apple sweet
The rough bark opens, twittering peep forth little beaks and wings,
The Nightingale, the Goldfinch, Robin, Lark, Linnet and Thrush;
The Goat leap'd from the craggy cliff, the Sheep awoke from the mould;
Upon its green stalk rose the Corn, waving innumerable,
Enfolding the bright infants from the desolating winds.

A Vision of Eternity

Eternity appear'd above them as One Man, enfolded
In Luvah's robes of blood, and bearing all his afflictions:
As the sun shines down on the misty earth, such was the Vision.
But purple Night, and crimson Morning, and golden Day, descending

Thro' the clear changing atmosphere, display'd green fields among
The varying clouds, like Paradises stretch'd in the expanse,
With towns, and villages, and temples, tents, sheep-folds and pastures,
Where dwell the children of the Elemental worlds in harmony.

The Song sung at the Feast of Los and Enitharmon

The Mountain callèd out to the Mountain: `Awake, O Brother Mountain!
 Let us refuse the Plough and Spade, the heavy Roller and spikèd
 Harrow; burn all these corn-fields; throw down all these fences!

Fatten'd on human blood, and drunk with wine of life is better far
 Than all these labours of the harvest and the vintage. See the river,
 Red with the blood of Men, swells lustful round my rocky knees:
 My clouds are not the clouds of verdant fields and groves of fruit,
 But Clouds of Human Souls: my nostrils drink the Lives of Men.

`The Villages lament, they faint, outstretch'd upon the plain:
 Wailing runs round the Valleys from the mill and from the barn:
 But most the polish'd Palaces, dark, silent, bow with dread,
 Hiding their books and pictures underneath the dens of Earth.

`The Cities send to one another saying: "My sons are mad
 With wine of cruelty! Let us plait a scourge, O Sister City!
 Children are nourish'd for the slaughter. Once the child was fed
 With milk; but wherefore now are children fed with blood?"

The Song of Enitharmon over Los

I seize the sphery harp, strike the strings!

At the first sound the golden Sun arises from the deep,
 And shakes his awful hair;
 The Echo wakes the moon to unbind her silver locks:
 The golden Sun bears on my song,
 And nine bright Spheres of harmony rise round the fiery king.

The joy of Woman is the death of her most best-belovèd,
 Who dies for love of her
 In torments of fierce jealousy and pangs of adoration:
 The Lovers' night bears on my song,
 And the nine Spheres rejoice beneath my powerful control.

They sing unceasing to the notes of my immortal hand.
 The solemn, silent Moon
 Reverberates the living harmony upon my limbs;
 The birds and beasts rejoice and play,
 And every one seeks for his mate to prove his inmost joy.

Furious and terrible they sport and rend the nether Deep;
 The Deep lifts up his rugged head,
 And, lost in infinite humming wings, vanishes with a cry.

The fading cry is ever dying:
The living voice is ever living in its inmost joy.

Arise, you little glancing wings and sing your infant joy!
Arise and drink your bliss!
For everything that lives in holy; for the Source of Life
Descends to be a Weeping Babe;
For the Earthworm renews the moisture of the sandy plain.

Now my left hand I stretch to Earth beneath,
And strike the terrible string.
I wake sweet joy in dens of sorrow, and I plant a smile
In forests of affliction,
And wake the bubbling springs of life in regions of dark death.

O, I am weary! Lay thine hand upon me, or I faint.
I faint beneath these beams of thine;
For thou hast touchèd my five Senses, and they answer'd thee.
Now I am nothing, and I sink,
And on the bed of silence sleep, till thou awakest me.

The Wail of Enion

I am made to sow the thistle for wheat, the nettle for a nourishing dainty:
I have planted a false oath in the earth, it has brought forth a Poison Tree:
I have chosen the serpent for a counsellor, and the dog
For a schoolmaster to my children:
I have blotted out from light and living the dove and nightingale,
And I have causèd the earthworm to beg from door to door:
I have taught the thief a secret path into the house of the just:
I have taught pale Artifice to spread his nets upon the morning
My heavens are brass, my earth is iron, my moon a clod of clay,
My sun a pestilence burning at noon, and a vapour of death in night.

What is the price of Experience? Do men buy it for a song,
Or Wisdom for a dance in the street? No! it is bought with the price
Of all that a man hath -- his house, his wife, his children.
Wisdom is sold in the desolate market where none come to buy,
And in the wither'd field where the farmer ploughs for bread in vain.

It is an easy thing to triumph in the summer's sun,
And in the vintage, and to sing on the waggon loaded with corn:
It is an easy thing to talk of patience to the afflicted,
To speak the laws of prudence to the houseless wanderer,
To listen to the hungry raven's cry in wintry season,
When the red blood is fill'd with wine and with the marrow of lambs:

It is an easy thing to laugh at wrathful elements;
 To hear the dog howl at the wintry door, the ox in the slaughter-house moan;
 To see a God on every wind and a blessing on every blast;
 To hear sounds of Love in the thunderstorm that destroys our enemy's house;
 To rejoice in the blight that covers his field, and the sickness that cuts off his children,
 While our olive and vine sing and laugh round our door, and our children bring fruits and flowers.

Then the groan and the dolour are quite forgotten, and the slave grinding at the mill,

And the captive in chains, and the poor in the prison, and the soldier in the field
 When the shatter'd bone hath laid him groaning among the happier dead:
 It is an easy thing to rejoice in the tents of prosperity --
 Thus would I sing and thus rejoice; but it is not so with me.

Winter

Still the faint harps and silver voices calm the weary couch;
 But from the caves of deepest Night, ascending in clouds of mist,
 The Winter spread his wide black wings across from pole to pole;
 Grim Frost beneath and terrible Snow, link'd in a marriage chain,
 Began a dismal dance. The Winds around on pointed rocks
 Settled like bats innumerable, ready to fly abroad.

The Woes of Urizen in the Dens of Urthona

Ah! how shall Urizen the King submit to this dark mansion?
 Ah! how is this? Once on the heights I stretch'd my throne sublime.
 The mountains of Urizen, once of silver, where the sons of wisdom dwelt,
 And on whose tops the virgins sang, are rocks of Desolation.

My fountains, once the haunt of swans, now breed the scaly tortoise,
 The houses of my harpers are become a haunt of crows,
 The gardens of Wisdom are become a field of horrid graves,
 And on the bones I drop my tears, and water them in vain.

Once how I walkèd from my Palace in gardens of delight!
 The sons of wisdom stood around, the harpers follow'd with harps,
 Nine virgins, cloth'd in light, compos'd the song to their immortal voices,
 And at my banquets of new wine my head was crown'd with joy.

Then in my ivory pavilions I slumber'd in the noon,
 And walkèd in the silent night among sweet-smelling flowers,

Till on my silver bed I slept, and sweet dreams round me hover'd;
But now my land is darken'd and my wise men are departed.

My songs are turnèd to cries of lamentation
Heard on my mountains, and deep sighs under my palace roof;
Because the steeds of Urizen, once swifter than the light,
Were kept back from my Lord and from his chariot of mercies.

O! did I keep the horses of the Day in silver pastures!
O! I refus'd the Lord of Day the horses of his Prince!
O! did I close my treasuries with roofs of solid stone,
And darken all my palace walls with envyings and hate!

O fool! to think that I could hide from his all-piercing eyes
The gold and silver and costly stones, his holy workmanship.
O fool! could I forget the light that fillèd my bright spheres
Was a reflection of his face who call'd me from the deep!

I well remember, for I heard the mild and holy voice
Saying: `O Light, spring up and shine,' and I sprang up from the deep.
He gave to me a silver sceptre, and crown'd me with a golden crown,
And said: `Go forth and guide my Son who wanders on the ocean.'

I went not forth: I hid myself in black clouds of my wrath:
I call'd the stars around my feet in the night of councils dark;
The stars threw down their spears, and fled naked away.
We fell: I seiz'd thee, dark Urthona, in my left hand, falling,

I seiz'd thee, beauteous Luvah; thou art faded like a flower,
And like a lily thy wife Vala, wither'd by winds.
When thou didst bear the golden cup at the immortal tables,
Thy children smote their fiery wings, crown'd with the gold of Heaven.

Thy pure feet stept on the steps divine, too pure for other feet,
And thy fair locks shadow'd thine eyes from the divine effulgence.
Then thou didst keep with strong Urthona the living gates of Heaven;
But now thou art bow'd down with him, even to the gates of Hell.

Because thou gavest Urizen the wine of the Almighty
For steeds of Light, that they might run in thy golden chariot of pride,
I gave to thee the steeds. I pour'd the stolen wine,
And, drunken with the immortal draught, fell from my throne sublime.

I will arise, explore these dens, and find that deep pulsation
That shakes my caverns with strong shudders. Perhaps this is the Night

Of Prophecy, and Luvah hath burst his way from Enitharmon.
When Thought is clos'd in Caves, then Love shall show its root in deepest Hell.

Los in his Wrath

Los rear'd his mighty stature: on Earth stood his feet; above
The Moon his furious forehead, cricled with black bursting thunders;
His naked limbs glitt'ring upon the dark blue sky, his knees
Bathèd in bloody clouds; his loins in fires of War, where spears
And swords rage, where the Eagles cry and Vultures laugh, saying:

`Now comes the night of carnage, now the flesh of Kings and Princes
Pamper'd in palaces for our food, the blood of Captains nurtur'd
With lust and murder for our drink. The drunken Raven shall wander
All night among the slain, and mock the wounded that groan in the field.'

The War-Song of Orc

Loud sounds the war-song round red Orc in his fury,
And round the nameless Shadowy Female in her howling terror,
When all the Elemental Gods join'd in the wondrous song: --
`Sound the war-trumpet terrific, souls clad in attractive steel!
Sound the shrill fife, Serpents of War! I hear the northern drum
Awake! I hear the flappings of the folding banners!
The Dragons of the North put on their armour;
Upon the eastern sea direct they take their course;
The glitt'ring of their horses' trappings stains the vault of night.

`Stop we the rising of the glorious King! spur, spur your clouds
Of death! O northern drum, awake! O hand of iron, sound
The northern drum! Now give the charge! bravely obscur'd

With darts of wintry hail! Again the black bow draw;
Again the elemental strings to your right breasts draw;
eAnd let the thund'ring drum speed on the arrows black!

Vala's Going Forth

And she went forth and saw the forms of Life and of Delight
Walking on mountains, or flying in the open expanse of heaven.
She heard sweet voices in the winds, and in the voices of birds
That rose from waters; for the waters were as the voice of Luvah,
Not seen to her like waters, or like this dark world of death;
Tho' all those fair perfections, which men known only by name.
In beautiful substantial forms appear'd, and servèd her
As food or drink or ornament, or in delightful works

To build her bowers. For the elements brought forth abundantly
 The living Soul in glorious forms; and every one came forth,
 Walking before her Shadowy face and bowing at her feet.
 But, in vain, delights were pourèd forth on the howling Melancholy!
 For her delight the Horse his proud neck bow'd, and his white mane;
 And the strong Lion deign'd in his mouth to wear the golden bit;
 While the far-beaming Peacock waited on the fragrant wind
 To bring her fruits of sweet delight from trees of richest wonders;
 And the strong-pinion'd Eagle bore the fire of Heaven in the night-season.

Urizen's Words of Wisdom

And Urizen read in his Book of Brass in sounding tones: --
 `Listen, O Daughters, to my voice! listen to the words of wisdom!
 Compel the Poor to live upon a crust of bread by soft mild arts:
 So shall you govern over all. Let Moral Duty tune your tongue,
 But be your hearts harder than the nether millstone;
 To bring the Shadow of Enitharmon beneath our wondrous Tree,
 That Los may evaporate like smoke, and be no more.
 Draw down Enitharmon to the Spectre of Urthona,
 And let him have dominion over Los, the terrible Shade.
 Smile when they frown, frown when they smile; and when a man looks pale
 With labour and abstinence, say he looks healthy and happy;

And when his children sicken, let them die: there are enough
 Born, even too many, and our earth will soon be overrun
 Without these arts. If you would make the Poor live with temper,
 With pomp give every crust of bread you give; with gracious cunning
 Magnify small gifts; reduce the man to want a gift, and then give with pomp.
 Say he smiles, if you hear him sigh; if pale, say he is ruddy
 Preach temperance: say he is overgorg'd, and drowns his wit
 In strong drink, tho' you know that bread and water are all
 He can afford. Flatter his wife, pity his children, till we can
 Reduce all to our will, as spaniels are taught with art.'

The Shade of Enitharmon

Her Shadow went forth and return'd. Now she was pale as snow,
 When the mountains and hills are cover'd over, and the paths of men shut up;
 But, when her Spirit return'd, as ruddy as a morning when
 The ripe fruit blushes into joy in Heaven's eternal halls.

The Serpent Orc

He saw Orc, a Serpent form, augmenting times on times
 In the fierce battle; and he saw the Lamb of God, and the world of Los

Surrounded by his dark machines; for Orc augmented swift
 In fury, a Serpent wondrous, among the constellations of Urizen.
 A crest of fire rose on his forehead, red as the carbuncle;
 Beneath, down to his eyelids, scales of pearl; then gold and silver,
 Immingled with the ruby, overspread his visage; down
 His furious neck, writhing contortive in dire budding pains,
 The scaly armour shot out. Stubborn, down his back and bosom,
 The emerald, onyx, sapphire, jasper, beryl, amethyst,
 Strove in terrific emulation which should gain a place
 Upon the mighty fiend -- the fruit of the Mysterious. Tree
 Kneaded in Uvith's kneading-trough.

The Last Judgment

Terrified at Non-Existence--

For such they deem'd the death of the body -- Los his vegetable hands
 Outstretch'd; his right hand, branching out in fibrous strength,
 Seiz'd the Sun; his left hand, like dark roots, cover'd the Moon,
 And tore them down, cracking the heavens across from immense to immense.
 Then fell the fires of Eternity, with loud and shrill
 Sound of loud Trumpet, thundering along from heaven to heaven,
 A mighty sound articulate: `Awake! ye Dead, and come
 To Judgment from the four winds! awake, and come away!'
 Folding like scrolls of the enormous volume of Heaven and Earth,
 With thunderous noise and dreadful shakings, rocking to and fro,
 The Heavens are shaken, and the Earth removèd from its place;
 The foundations of the eternal hills discover'd.
 The thrones of Kings are shaken, they have lost their robes and crowns;
 The Poor smite their oppressors, they awake up to the harvest;
 The naked warriors rush together down to the seashore,
 Trembling before the multitudes of slaves now set at liberty:
 They are become like wintry flocks, like forests stripp'd of leaves.
 The Oppressèd pursue like the wind; there is no room for escape. . . .
 The Books of Urizen unroll with dreadful noise! The folding Serpent
 Of Orc began to consume in fierce raving fire; his fierce flames
 Issu'd on all sides, gathering strength in animating volumes,
 Roaring abroad on all the winds, raging intense, reddening
 Into resistless pillars of fire, rolling round and round, gathering
 Strength from the earths consum'd, and heavens, and all hidden abysses,
 Where'er the Eagle has explor'd, or Lion or Tiger trod,
 Or where the comets of the night, or stars of day
 Have shot their arrows or long-beamèd spears in wrath and fury.

And all the while the Trumpet sounds.
 From the clotted gore, and from the hollow den

Start forth the trembling millions into flames of mental fire,
Bathing their limbs in the bright visions of Eternity.

Then, like the doves from pillars of smoke, the trembling families
Of women and children throughout every nation under heaven
Cling round the men in bands of twenties and of fifties, pale

As snow that falls round a leafless tree upon the green.
Their oppressors are fall'n; they have stricken them; they awake to life.
Yet, pale, the Just man stands erect, and looking up to Heav'n.
Trembling and stricken by the universal stroke, the trees unroot;
The rocks groan horrible and run about; the mountains and
Their rivers cry with a dismal cry; the cattle gather together,
Lowing they kneel before the heavens; the wild beasts of the forests
Tremble. The Lion, shuddering, asks the Leopard: 'Feelest thou
The dread I feel, unknown before? My voice refuses to roar,
And in weak moans I speak to thee. This night,
Before the morning's dawn, the Eagle call'd the Vulture,
The Raven call'd the Hawk. I heard them from my forests,
Saying: "Let us go up far, for soon I smell upon the wind
A terror coming from the South." The Eagle and Hawk fled away
At dawn, and ere the sun arose, the Raven and Vulture follow'd.
Let us flee also to the North.' They fled. The Sons of Men
Saw them depart in dismal droves. The trumpets sounded loud,
And all the Sons of Eternity descended into Beulah.

The Lament of Albion

O weakness and O weariness! O war within my members!
My sons, exilèd from my breast, pass to and fro before me.
My birds are silent in my hills; flocks die beneath my branches;
My tents are fallen; my trumpets and the sweet sounds of my harp
Is silent on my clouded hills that belch forth storms and fires;
My milk of cows, and honey of bees, and fruit of golden harvest
Are gather'd in the scorching heat and in the driving rain.
My robe is turnèd to confusion, and my bright gold to stone.
Where once I sat, I weary walk in misery and pain;
For from within my wither'd breast, grown narrow with my woes,
The corn is turn'd to thistles, and the apples into poison;
The birds of song to murderous crows, my joys to bitter groans;
The voices of children in my tents to cries of helpless infants.
And all exilèd from the face of light and shine of morning,
In this dark World, a narrow house! I wander up and down:
I hear Mystery howling in these flames of Consummation.
When shall the Man of future times become as in days of old?
O weary life! why sit I here and give up all my powers

To indolence, to the night of death, when indolence and mourning
 Sit hovering over my dark threshold? Tho' I arise, look out
 And scorn the war within my members, yet my heart is weak
 And my head faint. -- Yet will I look again into the morning!
 Whence is this sound of rage of men drinking each other's blood,
 Drunk with the smoking gore, and red, but not with nourishing wine.

Accuser and Accused

They see him whom they have pierc'd; they wail because of him;
 They magnify themselves no more against Jerusalem, nor
 Against her little ones. The Innocent, accusèd before the judges,
 Shines with immortal glory: trembling, the Judge springs from his throne,
 Hiding his face in the dust beneath the prisoner's feet, and saying:
 `Brother of Jesus, what have I done? Entreat thy Lord for me!
 Perhaps I may be forgiven.'

The Tillage of Urizen

Then seiz'd the sons of Urizen the plough: they polish'd it
 From rust of ages: all its ornament of gold and silver and ivory
 Re-shone across the field immense, where all the nations
 Darken'd like mould in the divided fallows, where the weed
 Triumphs in its own destruction. They took down the harness
 From the blue walls of Heaven, starry, jingling, ornamented
 With beautiful art, the study of Angels, the workmanship of Demons,
 When Heaven and Hell in emulation strove in sports of glory.
 The noise of rural work resounded thro' the heavens of heavens:
 The horses neigh from the battle, the wild bulls from the sultry waste,
 The tigers from the forests, and the lions from the sandy deserts.
 They sing; they seize the instruments of harmony; they throw away
 The spear, the bow, the gun, the mortar; they level the fortifications;
 They beat the iron engines of destruction into wedges;
 They give them to Urthona's sons. Ringing, the hammers sound
 In dens of death, to forge the spade, the mattock, and the axe,
 The heavy roller to break the clods, to pass over the nations.

Song of the Sinless Soul

`Come forth, O Vala! from the grass and from the silent dew;
 Rise from the dews of death, for the Eternal Man is risen!'

She rises among flowers and looks toward the eastern clearness;
 She walks, yea runs -- her feet are wing'd -- on the tops of the bending grass;
 Her garments rejoice in the vocal wind, and her hair glistens with dew.

She answer'd thus: `Whose voice is this in the voice of the nourishing air,
 In the spirit of the morning, awaking the Soul from its grassy bed?
 Where dost thou dwell? for it is thee I seek, and but for thee
 I must have slept eternally, nor have felt the dew of thy morning.
 Look how the opening dawn advances with vocal harmony!
 Look how the beams foreshow the rising of some glorious power!
 The Sun is thine; he goeth forth in his majestic brightness.
 O thou creating voice that callest! and who shall answer thee?

`Where dost thou flee, O Fair One! where dost thou seek thy happy place?
 To yonder brightness? There I haste, for sure I came from thence;
 Or I must have slept eternally, nor have felt the dew of morning.'

`Eternally thou must have slept, nor have felt the morning dew,
 But for yon nourishing Sun: 'tis that by which thou art arisen.
 The birds adore the Sun; the beasts rise up and play in his beams,
 And every flower and every leaf rejoices in his light.
 Then, O thou Fair One, sit thee down, for thou art as the grass,
 Thou risest in the dew of morning, and at night art folded up.'

`Alas! am I but as a flower? Then will I sit me down;
 Then will I weep; then I'll complain, and sigh for immortality,
 And chide my maker, thee O Sun, that raisedst me to fall.'

So saying she sat down and wept beneath the apple-trees.

`O! be thou blotted out, thou Sun, that raisedst me to trouble,
 That gavest me a heart to crave, and raisedst me, thy phantom,
 To feel thy heart, and see thy light, and wander here alone,
 Hopeless, if I am like the grass, and so shall pass away.'

`Rise, sluggish Soul! Why sitt'st thou here? why dost thou sit and weep?
 Yon Sun shall wax old and decay, but thou shalt ever flourish.
 The fruit shall ripen and fall down, and the flowers consume away,
 But thou shalt still survive. Arise! O dry thy dewy tears!'

`Ha! shall I still survive? Whence came that sweet and comforting voice,
 And whence that voice of sorrow? O Sun! thou art nothing now to me:
 Go on thy course rejoicing, and let us both rejoice together!
 I walk among His flocks and hear the bleating of His lambs.
 O! that I could behold His face and follow His pure feet!
 I walk by the footsteps of His flocks. Come hither, tender flocks!
 Can you converse with a pure Soul that seeketh for her Maker?
 You answer not: then am I set your mistress in this garden.
 I'll watch you and attend your footsteps. You are not like the birds
 That sing and fly in the bright air; but you do lick my feet,

And let me touch your wooly backs: follow me as I sing;
For in my bosom a new Song arises to my Lord:

‘Rise up, O Sun! most glorious minister and light of day!
Flow on, ye gentle airs, and bear the voice of my rejoicing!
Wave freshly, clear waters, flowing around the tender grass;
And thou, sweet-smelling ground, put forth thy life in fruit and flowers!
Follow me, O my flocks, and hear me sing my rapturous song!
I will cause my voice to be heard on the clouds that glitter in the sun.
I will call, and who shall answer me? I shall sing; who shall reply?
For, from my pleasant hills, behold the living, living springs,
Running among my green pastures, delighting among my trees!
I am not here alone: my flocks, you are my brethren;
And you birds, that sing and adorn the sky, you are my sisters.
I sing, and you reply to my song; I rejoice, and you are glad.
Follow me, O my flocks! we will now descend into the valley.
O, how delicious are the grapes, flourishing in the sun!
How clear the spring of the rock, running among the golden sand!
How cool the breezes of the valley! And the arms of the branching trees
Cover us from the sun: come and let us sit in the shade.
My Luvah here hath plac'd me in a sweet and pleasant land,
And given me fruits and pleasant waters, and warm hills and cool valleys.
Here will I build myself a house, and here I'll call on His name;
Here I'll return, when I am weary, and take my pleasant rest.'

Vala in Lower Paradise

So saying, she arose and walkèd round her beautiful house;
And then from her white door she look'd to see her bleating lambs,
But her flocks were gone up from beneath the trees into the hills.

‘I see the hand that leadeth me doth also lead my flocks.'
She went up to her flocks, and turnèd oft to see her shining house.
She stopp'd to drink of the clear spring, and eat the grapes and apples;
She bore the fruits in her lap; she gather'd flowers for her bosom.
She callèd to her flocks, saying: ‘Follow me, O my flocks!'

They follow'd her to the silent valley beneath the spreading trees,
And on the river's margin she ungirded her golden girdle;
She stood in the river and view'd herself within the wat'ry glass,
And her bright hair was wet with the waters. She rose up from the river,
And as she rose her eyes were open'd to the world of waters;
She saw Tharmas sitting upon the rocks beside the wavy sea.

SELECTIONS FROM MILTON

Engraved 1804-1809

Preface

The stolen and perverted writings of Homer and Ovid, of Plato and Cicero, which all men ought to condemn, are set up by artifice against the Sublime of the Bible; but when the New Age is at leisure to pronounce, all will be set right, and those grand works of the more ancient, and consciously and professedly Inspired men will hold their proper rank, and the Daughters of Memory shall become the Daughters of Inspiration. Shakespeare and Milton were both curb'd by the general malady and infection from the silly Greek and Latin slaves of the sword.

Rouse up, O Young Men of the New Age! Set your foreheads against the ignorant hirelings! For we have hirelings in the Camp, the Court, and the University, who would, if they could, for ever depress mental, and prolong corporeal war. Painters! on you I call. Sculptors! Architects! suffer not the fashionable fools to depress your powers by the prices they pretend to give for contemptible works, or the expensive advertising boasts that they make of such works: believe Christ and His Apostles that there is a class of men whose whole delight is in destroying. We do not want either Greek or Roman models if we are but just and true to our own Imaginations, those Worlds of Eternity in which we shall live for ever, in Jesus our Lord.

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?

And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among these dark Satanic Mills?

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

Would to God that all the Lord's people were Prophets

Numbers xi: 29

The Invocation

Daughters of Beulah! Muses who inspire the Poet's Song,
 Record the journey of immortal Milton thro' your realms
 Of terror and mild moony lustre, in soft Sexual delusions
 Of varièd beauty, to delight the wanderer, and repose
 His burning thirst and freezing hunger! Come into my hand,
 By your mild power descending down the nerves of my right arm
 From out the portals of my Brain, where by your ministry
 The Eternal Great Humanity Divine planted His Paradise,
 And in it caus'd the Spectres of the Dead to take sweet form
 In likeness of Himself. Tell also of the False Tongue, vegetated
 Beneath your land of Shadows, of its sacrifices and
 Its offerings; even till Jesus, the image of the Invisible God,
 Became its prey; a curse, an offering, and an atonement
 For Death Eternal, in the Heavens of Albion, and before the Gates
 Of Jerusalem his Emanation, in the Heavens beneath Beulah!

The Mills of Satan

And the Mills of Satan were separated into a moony Space
 Among the rocks of Albion's Temples, and Satan's Druid Sons
 Offer the Human Victims throughout all the Earth; and Albion's
 Dread Tomb, immortal on his Rock, overshadow'd the whole Earth,
 Where Satan, making to himself Laws from his own identity,
 Compell'd others to serve him in moral gratitude and submission,
 Being call'd God, setting himself above all that is callèd God.
 And all the Spectres of the Dead, calling themselves Sons of God,
 In his Synagogues worship Satan under the Unutterable Name.

The Sin of Leutha

The Sin was begun in Eternity, and will not rest to Eternity,
 Till two Eternities meet together. Ah! lost! lost! lost for ever!

Milton's Journey to Eternal Death

Then Milton rose up from the Heavens of Albion ardent:
 The whole Assembly wept prophetic, seeing in Milton's face
 And in his lineaments divine the shades of Death and Ulro;
 He took off the robe of the Promise, and ungirded himself from the oath of God.

And Milton said: `I go to Eternal Death! The Nations still
 Follow after the detestable Gods of Priam, in pomp
 Of warlike Selfhood, contradicting and blaspheming.
 When will the Resurrection come to deliver the sleeping body

From corruptibility? O when, Lord Jesus! wilt Thou come?
 Tarry no longer, for my soul lies at the gates of death.
 I will arise and look forth for the morning of the grave;
 I will go down to the sepulchre to see if morning breaks;
 I will go down to self-annihilation and Eternal Death;
 Lest the Last Judgement come and find me unannihilate,
 And I be seiz'd and giv'n into the hands of my own Selfhood.
 The Lamb of God is seen thro' mists and shadows, hov'ring
 Over the sepulchres, in clouds of Jehovah and winds of Elohim,
 A disk of blood, distant; and Heav'ns and Earths roll dark between.
 What do I here before the Judgement without my Emanation,
 With the Daughters of Memory, and not with the Daughters of Inspiration?
 I, in my Selfhood, am that Satan! I am that Evil One!
 He is my Spectre! In my obedience to loose him from my Hells,
 To claim the Hells, my Furnaces, I go to Eternal Death.'

And Milton said: 'I go to Eternal Death!' Eternity shudder'd;
 For he took the outside course, among the graves of the dead,
 A mournful Shade. Eternity shudder'd at the image of Eternal Death.

Then on the verge of Beulah he beheld his own Shadow,
 A mournful form, double, hermaphroditic, male and female
 In one wonderful body, and he enter'd into it
 In direful pain; for the dread Shadow, twenty-seven-fold,
 Reach'd to the depths of direst Hell, and thence to Albion's land,
 Which is this Earth of Vegetation on which now I write.

The Nature of Infinity

The nature of Infinity is this: That every thing has its
 Own Vortex; and when once a traveller thro' Eternity
 Has pass'd that Vortex, he perceives it roll backward behind
 His path, into a Globe itself enfolding, like a sun,
 Or like a moon, or like a universe of starry majesty,
 While he keeps onwards in his wondrous journey on the Earth,
 Or like a human form, a friend with whom he liv'd benevolent.
 As the eye of man views both the East and West, encompassing
 Its vortex, and the North and South with all their starry host,
 Also the rising sun and setting moon he views, surrounding
 His corn-fields and his valleys of five hundred acres square.
 Thus is the Earth one infinite plane, and not as apparent
 To the weak traveller confin'd beneath the moony shade.
 Thus is the Heaven a Vortex pass'd already, and the Earth
 A Vortex not yet pass'd by the traveller thro' Eternity.

The Sea of Time and Space

First Milton saw Albion upon the Rock of Ages,
 Deadly pale, outstretch'd, and snowy cold, storm-cover'd --
 A Giant form of perfect beauty, outstretch'd on the Rock
 In solemn death: the Sea of Time and Space thunder'd aloud
 Against the Rock, which was enwrappèd with the weeds of Death.
 Hovering over the cold bosom in its vortex, Milton bent down
 To the bosom of Death: what was underneath soon seem'd above,
 A cloudy heaven mingled with stormy seas in loudest ruin;
 But as a wintry globe descends precipitant, thro' Beulah bursting,
 With thunders loud and terrible, so Milton's Shadow fell
 Precipitant, loud thund'ring, into the Sea of Time and Space.

The Mundane Shell

The Mundane Shell is a vast Concave Earth, an immense
 Harden'd Shadow of all things upon our Vegetated Earth,
 Enlarg'd into Dimension and deform'd into indefinite Space,
 In Twenty-seven Heavens and all their Hells, with Chaos
 And Ancient Night and Purgatory. It is a cavernous Earth
 Of labyrinthine intricacy, twenty-seven folds of Opaqueness,
 And finishes where the lark mounts.

A River in Eden

There is in Eden a sweet River of milk and liquid pearl
 Nam'd Ololon, on whose mild banks dwelt those who Milton drove
 Down into Ulro; and they wept in long-resounding song
 For seven days of Eternity, and the River's living banks,
 The mountains wail'd, and every plant that grew, in solemn sighs, lamented.

Los

I am that Shadowy Prophet, who, six thousand years ago,
 Fell from my station in the Eternal bosom. Six thousand years
 Are finish'd. I return! Both Time and Space obey my will.
 I in six thousand years walk up and down; for not one moment
 Of Time is lost, nor one event of Space unpermanent;
 But all remain; every fabric of six thousand years
 Remains permanent: tho' on the Earth, where Satan
 Fell and was cut off, all things vanish and are seen no more,
 They vanish not from me and mine; we guard them first and last.
 The Generations of Men run on in the tide of Time,
 But leave their destin'd lineaments permanent for ever and ever.

Swedenborg

O Swedenborg! strongest of men, the Samson shorn by the Churches;
 Showing the Transgressors in Hell, the proud Warriors in Heaven,
 Heaven as a Punisher, and Hell as One under Punishment;
 With Laws from Plato and his Greeks to renew the Trojan Gods
 In Albion, and to deny the value of the Saviour's blood.

Whitefield and Wesley

He sent his two Servants, Whitefield and Wesley: were they Prophets,
 Or were they Idiots or Madmen? -- Show us Miracles!
 Can you have greater Miracles than these? Men who devote
 Their life's whole comfort to entire scorn and injury and death?
 Awake! thou sleeper on the Rock of Eternity, Albion, awake!
 The trumpet of Judgement hath twice sounded: all Nations are awake,
 But thou art still heavy and dull. Awake, Albion, awake!

The Forge of Los

In Bowlahoola Los's Anvils stand and his Furnaces rage;
 Thundering the Hammers beat, and the Bellows blow loud,
 Living, self-moving, mourning, lamenting, and howling incessantly
 Bowlahoola thro' all its porches feels, tho' too fast founded,
 Its pillars and porticoes to tremble at the force
 Of mortal or immortal arm; and softly lilling flutes,
 Accordant with the horrid labours, make sweet melody
 The Bellows are the Animal Lungs, the Hammers the Animal Heart,
 The Furnaces the Stomach for digestion; terrible their fury!
 Thousands and thousands labour, thousands play on instruments,
 Stringèd or fluted, to ameliorate the sorrows of slavery.
 Loud sport the dancers in the Dance of Death, rejoicing in carnage.
 The hard dentant Hammers are lull'd by the flutes' lula lula,
 The bellowing Furnaces' blare by the long-sounding clarion,
 The double drum drowns howls and groans, the shrill fife shrieks and cries,
 The crooked horn mellows the hoarse raving serpent -- terrible but harmonious.

The Wine-Press of Los

But the Wine-press of Los is eastward of Golgonooza, before the Seat
 Of Satan: Luvah laid the foundation, and Urizen finish'd it in howling woe.
 How red the Sons and Daughters of Luvah! here they tread the grapes,
 Laughing and shouting, drunk with odours; many fall, o'erwearièd;
 Drown'd in the wine is many a youth and maiden: those around
 Lay them on skins of tigers and of the spotted leopard and the wild ass,
 Till they revive; or bury them in cool grots, making lamentation.

This Wine-press is call'd War on Earth: it is the Printing-Press
Of Los; and here he lays his words in order above the mortal brain,
As cogs are form'd in a wheel to turn the cogs of the adverse wheel.

Timbrels and violins sport round the Wine-presses; the little Seed,
The sportive Root, the Earth-worm, the Gold-beetle, the wise Emmet
Dance round the Wine-presses of Luvah; the Centipede is there,
The Ground-spider with many eyes, the Mole clothèd in velvet,
The ambitious Spider in his sullen web, the lucky Golden-spinner,
The Earwig arm'd, the tender Maggot, emblem of immortality,
The Flea, Louse, Bug, the Tape-worm; all the Armies of Disease,
Visible or invisible to the slothful, Vegetating Man;
The slow Slug, the Grasshopper, that sings and laughs and drinks --
Winter comes: he folds his slender bones without a murmur.

The cruel Scorpion is there, the Gnat, Wasp, Hornet, and the Honey-bee,
The Toad and venomous Newt, the Serpent cloth'd in gems and gold:
They throw off their gorgeous raiment: they rejoice with loud jubilee,
Around the Wine-presses of Luvah, naked and drunk with wine.

There is the Nettle that stings with soft down, and there
The indignant Thistle, whose bitterness is bred in his milk,
Who feeds on contempt of his neighbour; there all the idle Weeds,
That creep around the obscure places, show their various limbs
Naked in all their beauty, dancing round the Wine-presses.

But in the Wine-presses the Human grapes sing not nor dance!
They howl and writhe in shoals of torment, in fierce flames consuming,
In chains of iron and in dungeons, circled with ceaseless fires,

In pits and dens and shades of death, in shapes of torment and woe --
The plates, and screws, and racks, and saws, and cords, and fires and cisterns,
The cruel joys of Luvah's Daughters, lacerating with knives
And whips their Victims, and the deadly sport of Luvah's Sons.

They dance around the dying, and they drink the howl and groan;
They catch the shrieks in cups of gold, they hand them to one another:
These are the sports of love, and these the sweet delights of amorous play,
Tears of the grape, the death-sweat of the cluster, the last sigh
Of the mild youth who listens to the luring songs of Luvah.

The Building of Time

But others of the Sons of Los build Moments and Minutes and Hours,
And Days and Months and Years, and Ages and Periods: wondrous buildings!
And every Moment has a Couch of gold for soft repose --

A Moment equals a pulsation of the artery --
 And between every two Moments stands a Daughter of Beulah,
 To feed the Sleepers on their Couches with maternal care.
 And every Minute has an azure Tent with silken Veils;
 And every Hour has a bright golden Gate carved with skill;
 And every Day and Night has Walls of brass and Gates of adamant,
 Shining like precious stones, and ornamented with appropriate signs;
 And every Month a silver-paved Terrace, builded high;
 And every Year invulnerable Barriers with high Towers;
 And every Age is moated deep with Bridges of silver and gold;
 And every Seven Ages is encircled with a Flaming Fire.
 Now Seven Ages is amounting to Two Hundred Years:
 Each has its Guard, each Moment, Minute, Hour, Day, Month and Year;
 All are the work of Fairy hands of the Four Elements:
 The Guard are Angels of Providence on duty evermore.
 Every Time less than a pulsation of the artery
 Is equal in its period and value to Six Thousand Years;
 For in this Period the Poet's Work is done; and all the great
 Events of Time start forth and are conceiv'd in such a Period,
 Within a Moment, a Pulsation of the Artery.

The Birds and the Flowers

Thou hearest the Nightingale begin the Song of Spring:
 The Lark, sitting upon his earthy bed, just as the morn
 Appears, listens silent; then, springing from the waving corn-field, loud
 He leads the Choir of Day -- trill! trill! trill! trill!
 Mounting upon the wings of light into the great Expanse,
 Re-echoing against the lovely blue and shining heavenly Shell;
 His little throat labours with inspiration; every feather
 On throat and breast and wings vibrates with the effluence Divine
 All Nature listens silent to him, and the awful Sun
 Stands still upon the mountain looking on this little Bird
 With eyes of soft humility and wonder, love and awe.
 Then loud from their green covert all the Birds begin their song:
 The Thrush, the Linnet and the Goldfinch, Robin and the Wren
 Awake the Sun from his sweet revery upon the mountain:
 The Nightingale again assays his song, and thro' the day
 And thro' the night warbles luxuriant; every Bird of song
 Attending his loud harmony with admiration and love.
 This is a Vision of the lamentation of Beulah over Ololon.

Thou perceivest the Flowers put forth their precious Odours;
 And none can tell how from so small a centre comes such sweet,
 Forgetting that within that centre Eternity expands
 Its ever-during doors, that Og and Anak fiercely guard.

First, ere the morning breaks, joy opens in the flowery bosoms,
 Joy even to tears, which the Sun rising dries: first the Wild Thyme
 And Meadow-sweet, downy and soft, waving among the reeds,
 Light springing on the air, lead the sweet dance; they wake
 The Honeysuckle sleeping on the oak; the flaunting beauty
 Revels along upon the wind; the White-thorn, lovely May,
 Opens her many lovely eyes; listening the Rose still sleeps --
 None dare to wake her; soon she bursts her crimson-curtain'd bed
 And comes forth in the majesty of beauty. Every Flower,
 The Pink, the Jessamine, the Wallflower, the Carnation.
 The Jonquil, the mild Lily opes her heavens; every Tree
 And Flower and Herb soon fill the air with an innumerable dance,
 Yet all in order sweet and lovely. Men are sick with love!
 Such is a Vision of the lamentation of Beulah over Ololon.

Love and Jealousy

And the Divine Voice was heard in the Songs of Beulah, saying:
 `When I first married you, I gave you all my whole soul;
 I thought that you would love my loves and joy in my delights,
 Seeking for pleasures in my pleasures, O Daughter of Babylon!
 Then thou wast lovely, mild, and gentle; now thou art terrible
 In Jealousy and unlovely in my sight, because thou hast cruelly
 Cut off my loves in fury, till I have no Love left for thee.
 Thy Love depends on him thou lovest, and on his dear loves
 Depend thy pleasures, which thou hast cut off by Jealousy:
 Therefore I show my Jealousy, and set before you Death.
 Behold Milton, descended to redeem the Female Shade
 From Death Eternal! such your lot to be continually redeem'd
 By Death and misery of those you love, and by Annihilation.
 When the Sixfold Female perceives that Milton annihilates
 Himself, that seeing all his loves by her cut off, he leaves
 Her also, entirely abstracting himself from Female loves,
 She shall relent in fear of death; she shall begin to give
 Her maidens to her husband, delighting in his delight.
 And then, and then alone, begins the happy Female joy,
 As it is done in Beulah; and thou, O Virgin Babylon! Mother of Whoredoms,
 Shalt bring Jerusalem in thine arms in the night watches; and
 No longer turning her a wandering Harlot in the streets,
 Shalt give her into the arms of God, your Lord and Husband.'
 Such are the Songs of Beulah, in the Lamentations of Ololon.

Reason and Imagination

The Negation is the Spectre, the Reasoning Power in Man:
 This is a false Body, an Incrustation over my Immortal

Spirit, a Selfhood which must be put off and annihilated away.
 To cleanse the Face of my Spirit by self-examination,
 To bathe in the waters of Life, to wash off the Not Human,
 I come in Self-annihilation and the grandeur of Inspiration;
 To cast off Rational Demonstration by Faith in the Saviour,
 To cast off the rotten rags of Memory by Inspiration,
 To cast off Bacon, Locke, and Newton from Albion's covering,
 To take off his filthy garments and clothe him with Imagination;
 To cast aside from Poetry all that is not Inspiration,
 That it no longer shall dare to mock with the aspersion of Madness
 Cast on the Inspirèd by the tame high finisher of paltry Blots
 Indefinite or paltry Rhymes, or paltry Harmonies,
 Who creeps into State Government like a caterpillar to destroy;
 To cast off the idiot Questioner, who is always questioning,
 But never capable of answering; who sits with a sly grin
 Silent plotting when to question, like a thief in a cave;
 Who publishes Doubt and calls it Knowledge; whose Science is Despair,
 Whose pretence to knowledge is Envy, whose whole Science is
 To destroy the wisdom of ages, to gratify ravenous Envy
 That rages round him like a Wolf, day and night, without rest.
 He smiles with condescension; he talks of Benevolence and Virtue,
 And those who act with Benevolence and Virtue they murder time on time.
 These are the destroyers of Jerusalem! these are the murderers
 Of Jesus! who deny the Faith and mock at Eternal Life,
 Who pretend to Poetry that they may destroy Imagination
 By imitation of Nature's Images drawn from Remembrance.
 These are the Sexual Garments, the Abomination of Desolation,
 Hiding the Human Lineaments, as with an Ark and Curtains
 Which Jesus rent, and now shall wholly purge away with Fire,
 Till Generation is swallow'd up in Regeneration.

The Song of the Shadowy Female

My Garments shall be woven of sighs and heart-broken lamentations:
 The misery of unhappy Families shall be drawn out into its border,
 Wrought with the needle, with dire sufferings, poverty, pain, and woe,
 Along the rocky Island and thence throughout the whole Earth.
 There shall be the sick Father and his starving Family; there
 The Prisoner in the stone Dungeon, and the Slave at the Mill.
 I will have writings written all over it in Human words,
 That every Infant that is born upon the Earth shall read
 And get by rote, as a hard task of a life of sixty years.
 I will have Kings inwoven upon it, and Counsellors and Mighty Men:
 The Famine shall clasp it together with buckles and clasps,
 And the Pestilence shall be its fringe, and the War its girdle;
 To divide into Rahab and Tirzah, that Milton may come to our tents.

For I will put on the Human Form, and take the Image of God,
Even Pity and Humanity; but my clothing shall be Cruelty.
And I will put on Holiness as a breastplate and as a helmet.
And all my ornaments shall be of the gold of broken hearts,
And the precious stones of anxiety and care, and desperation and death,
And repentance for sin, and sorrow, and punishment and fear;
To defend me from thy terrors, O Orc! my only belovèd!

SELECTIONS FROM JERUSALEM

Engraved 1804-(?)1820

SHEEP

To the Public

GOATS

After my three years' slumber on the banks of the Ocean, I again display my Giant forms to the Public. My former Giants and Fairies having receiv'd the highest reward possible, the . . . and . . . of those with whom to be connected is to be . . ., I cannot doubt that this more consolidated and extended Work will be as kindly received. The Enthusiasm of the following Poem, the Author hopes . . . I also hope the Reader will be with me wholly one in Jesus our Lord, Who is the God . . . and Lord . . . to Whom the Ancients look'd, and saw His day afar off, with trembling and amazement.

The Spirit of Jesus is continual Forgiveness of Sin: he who waits to be righteous before he enters into the Saviour's Kingdom, the Divine Body, will never enter there. I am perhaps the most sinful of men: I pretend not to holiness; yet I pretend to love, to see, to converse with daily, as man with man, and the more to have an interest in the Friend of Sinners. Therefore . . . Reader . . . what you do not approve, and . . . me for this energetic exertion of my talent.

Reader! . . . of books . . . of Heaven,
 And of that God from whom . . .
 Who in mysterious Sinai's awful cave
 To Man the wondrous art of writing gave;
 Again He speaks in thunder and in fire,
 Thunder of Thought and flames of fierce Desire.
 Even from the depths of Hell His voice I hear
 Within the unfathom'd caverns of my Ear.
 Therefore I print: nor vain my types shall be.
 Heaven, Earth, and Hell, henceforth shall live in harmony

*Of the Measure in which
 the following Poem is written.*

We who dwell on Earth can do nothing of ourselves; everything, is conducted by Spirits, no less than Digestion or Sleep. . .

When this Verse was first dictated to me, I consider'd a monotonous cadence like that used by Milton and Shakspeare, and all writers of English Blank Verse, derived from the modern bondage of Riming, to be a necessary and indispensable part of Verse. But I soon found that in the mouth of a true Orator such monotony was not only awkward, but as much a bondage as rime itself. I therefore have produced a variety in every line, both of cadences and number of

syllables. Every word and every letter is studied and put into its fit place; the terrific numbers are reserved for the terrific parts, the mild and gentle for the mild and gentle parts, and the prosaic for inferior parts; all are necessary to each other. Poetry fetter'd fetters the Human Race. Nations are destroy'd or flourish, in proportion as their Poetry, Painting, and Music are destroy'd or flourish. The Primeval State of Man was Wisdom, Art, and Science.

Introduction

This theme calls me in sleep night after night, and ev'ry morn
Awakes me at sunrise; then I see the Saviour over me
Spreading His beams of love, and dictating the words of this mild song:
'Awake! Awake! O sleeper of the Land of Shadows, wake! expand!
I am in you, and you in Me, mutual in Love Divine,
Fibres of love from man to man thro' Albion's pleasant land.'

The Reasoning Power

And this is the manner of the Sons of Albion in their strength:
They take the Two Contraries which are call'd Qualities, with which
Every Substance is clothèd; they name them Good and Evil.
From them they make an Abstract, which is a Negation
Not only of the Substance from which it is derivèd,
A murderer of its own Body, but also a murderer
Of every Divine Member. It is the Reasoning Power,
An Abstract objecting power, that negatives everything.
This is the Spectre of Man, the Holy Reasoning Power,
And in its Holiness is closèd the Abomination of Desolation!

The Words of Los

I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Man's;
I will not Reason and Compare: my business is to Create.

The Builders of Golgonooza

What are those Golden Builders doing? Where was the burying-place
Of soft Ethinthus? near Tyburn's fatal Tree? Is that
Mild Zion's hill's most ancient promontory, near mournful
Ever-weeping Paddington? Is that Calvary and Golgotha
Becoming a building of Pity and Compassion? Lo!
The stones are Pity, and the bricks well-wrought Affections
Enamell'd with Love and Kindness; and the tiles engraven gold,
Labour of merciful hands; the beams and rafters are Forgiveness,
The mortar and cement of the work, tears of Honesty, the nails
And the screws and iron braces are well-wrought Blandishments
And well-contrivèd words, firm fixing, never forgotten,

Always comforting the remembrance; the floors Humility,
 The ceilings Devotion, the hearths Thanksgiving.
 Prepare the furniture, O Lambeth, in thy pitying looms!
 The curtains, woven tears and sighs, wrought into lovely forms
 For Comfort; there the secret furniture of Jerusalem's chamber
 Is wrought. Lambeth! the Bride, the Lamb's Wife loveth thee;
 Thou art one with her, and knowest not of Self in thy supreme joy.
 Go on, Builders in hope! tho' Jerusalem wanders far away
 Without the Gate of Los, among the dark Satanic wheels.

A Vision of Albion

I see the Fourfold Man; the Humanity in deadly sleep,
 And its fallen Emanation, the Spectre and its cruel Shadow.
 I see the Past, Present, and Future existing all at once
 Before me. O Divine Spirit! sustain me on thy wings,
 That I may awake Albion from his long and cold repose;
 For Bacon and Newton, sheath'd in dismal steel, their terrors hang
 Like iron scourges over Albion. Reasonings like vast Serpents
 Enfold around my limbs, bruising my minute articulations.

I turn my eyes to the Schools and Universities of Europe,
 And there behold the Loom of Locke, whose Woof rages dire,
 Wash'd by the Water-wheels of Newton: black the cloth
 In heavy wreaths folds over every Nation: cruel Works
 Of many Wheels I view, wheel without wheel, with cogs tyrannic,
 Moving by compulsion each other; not as those in Eden, which,
 Wheel within wheel, in freedom revolve, in harmony and peace.

Punishment and Forgiveness

Why should Punishment weave the veil with Iron Wheels of War,
 When Forgiveness might it weave with Wings of Cherubim?

The Lament of Albion

O what is Life and what is Man? O what is Death? Wherefore
 Are you, my Children, natives in the Grave to where I go?
 Or are you born to feed the hungry ravenings of Destruction,
 To be the sport of Accident, to waste in Wrath and Love a weary
 Life, in brooding cares and anxious labours, that prove but chaff?
 O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! I have forsaken thy courts,
 Thy pillars of ivory and gold, thy curtains of silk and fine
 Linen, thy pavements of precious stones, thy walls of pearl
 And gold, thy gates of Thanksgiving, thy windows of Praise,
 Thy clouds of Blessing, thy Cherubims of Tender Mercy,

Stretching their Wings sublime over the Little Ones of Albion.
 O Human Imagination! O Divine Body, I have crucifièd!
 I have turnèd my back upon thee into the Wastes of Moral Law:
 There Babylon is builed in the Waste, founded in Human desolation.
 O Babylon! thy Watchman stands over thee in the night;
 Thy severe Judge all the day long proves thee, O Babylon,
 With provings of Destruction, with giving thee thy heart's desire.
 But Albion is cast forth to the Potter, his Children to the Builders
 To build Babylon, because they have forsaken Jerusalem.
 The walls of Babylon are Souls of Men; her gates the Groans
 Of Nations; her towers are the Miseries of once happy Families;
 Her streets are pavèd with Destruction; her houses built with Death;
 Her Palaces with Hell and the Grave; her Synagogues with Torments
 Of ever-hardening Despair, squar'd and polish'd with cruel skill.

Jerusalem

Such Visions have appear'd to me,
 As I my order'd course have run:
 Jerusalem is nam'd Liberty
 Among the Sons of Albion.

TO THE JEWS

Jerusalem, the Emanation of the Giant Albion! Can it be? Is it a truth that the learned have explored? Was Britain the primitive seat of the Patriarchal Religion? If it is true, my title page is also true, that Jerusalem was, and is, the Emanation of the Giant Albion. It is true, and cannot be controverted. Ye are united, O ye inhabitants of Earth, in One Religion -- the Religion of Jesus, the most ancient, the Eternal, and the Everlasting Gospel. The Wicked will turn it to Wickedness, the Righteous to Righteousness. Amen! Huzza! Selah!

`All things begin and end in Albion's ancient Druid rocky shore.'

Your Ancestors derived their origin from Abraham, Heber, Shem, and Noah, who were Druids, as the Druid Temples (which are the patriarchal pillars and oak groves) over the whole Earth witness to this day.

You have a tradition that Man anciently contain'd in his mighty limbs all things in Heaven and Earth: this you received from the Druids.

`But now the starry Heavens are fled from the mighty limbs of Albion.'

Albion was the Parent of the Druids, and, in his Chaotic State of Sleep, Satan and Adam and the whole World was created by the Elohim.

The fields from Islington to Marybone,
To Primrose Hill and Saint John's Wood,
Were builded over with pillars of gold;
And there Jerusalem's pillars stood.

Her Little Ones ran on the fields,
The Lamb of God among them seen,
And fair Jerusalem, His Bride,
Among the little meadows green.

Pancras and Kentish Town repose
Among her golden pillars high,
Among her golden arches which
Shine upon the starry sky.

The Jew's-harp House and the Green Man,
The Ponds where boys to bathe delight,
The fields of cows by William's farm,
Shine in Jerusalem's pleasant sight.

She walks upon our meadows green;
The Lamb of God walks by her side;
And every English child is seen,
Children of Jesus and His Bride;

Forgiving trespasses and sins,
Lest Babylon, with cruel Og,
With Moral and Self-righteous Law,
Should crucify in Satan's Synagogue.

What are those Golden Builders doing
Near mournful ever-weeping Paddington,
Standing above that mighty ruin,
Where Satan the first victory won;

Where Albion slept beneath the fatal Tree,
And the Druid's golden knife
Rioted in human gore,
In offerings of Human Life?

They groan'd aloud on London Stone,
They groan'd aloud on tyburn's Brook:
Albion gave his deadly groan,
And all the Atlantic mountains shook.

Albion's Spectre, from his loins,
Tore forth in all the pomp of War;
Satan his name; in flames of fire
He stretch'd his Druid pillars far.

Jerusalem fell from Lambeth's vale,
Down thro' Poplar and Old Bow,
Thro' Malden, and across the sea,
In war and howling, death and woe.

The Rhine was red with human blood;
The Danube roll'd a purple tide;
On the Euphrates Satan stood,
And over Asia stretch'd his pride.

He wither'd up sweet Zion's hill
From every nation of the Earth;
He wither'd up Jerusalem's Gates,
And in a dark land gave her birth.

He wither'd up the Human Form
By laws of sacrifice for Sin,
Till it became a Mortal Worm,
But O! translucent all within.

The Divine Vision still was seen,
Still was the Human Form Divine;
Weeping, in weak and mortal clay,
O Jesus! still the Form was Thine!

And Thine the Human Face; and Thine
The Human Hands, and Feet, and Breath,
Entering thro' the Gates of Birth,
And passing thro' the Gates of Death.

And O Thou Lamb of God! whom I
Slew in my dark self-righteous pride,
Art Thou return'd to Albion's land,
And is Jerusalem Thy Bride?

Come to my arms, and nevermore
Depart; but dwell for ever here;
Create my spirit to Thy love;
Subdue my Spectre to Thy fear.

Spectre of Albion! warlike Fiend!
 In clouds of blood and ruin roll'd,
 I here reclaim thee as my own,
 My Selfhood -- Satan arm'd in gold!

Is this thy soft Family-love,
 Thy cruel patriarchal pride;
 Planting thy Family alone,
 Destroying all the World beside?

A man's worst Enemies are those
 Of his own House and Family;
 And he who makes his Law a curse,
 By his own Law shall surely die!

In my Exchanges every land
 Shall walk; and mine in every land,
 Mutual shall build Jerusalem,
 Both heart in heart and hand in hand.

If Humility is Christianity, you, O Jews! are the true Christians. If your tradition that Man contained in his limbs all animals is true, and they were separated from him by cruel sacrifices, and when compulsory cruel sacrifices had brought Humanity into a Feminine Tabernacle in the loins of Abraham and David, the Lamb of God, the Saviour, became apparent on Earth as the Prophets had foretold! The return of Israel is a return to mental sacrifice and war. Take up the Cross, O Israel! and follow Jesus.

A Female Will

What may Man be? who can tell? But what may Woman be,
 To have power over Man from Cradle to corruptible Grave?
 There is a Throne in every Man: it is the Throne of God.
 This, Woman has claim'd as her own; and Man is no more:
 Albion is the Tabernacle of Vala and her Temple,
 And not the Tabernacle and Temple of the Most High.
 O Albion! why wilt thou create a Female Will,
 To hide the most evident God in a hidden covert, even
 In the shadows of a Woman and a secluded Holy Place,
 That we may pry after him as after a stolen treasure,
 Hidden among the Dead and murèd up from the paths of Life?

The Universal Family

Our Wars are wars of life, and wounds of love,
 With intellectual spears, and long wingèd arrows of thought.
 Mutual in one another's love and wrath all renewing,

We live as One Man: for, contracting our Infinite senses,
 We behold multitude; or, expanding, we behold as One,
 As One Man all the Universal Family; and that One Man
 We call Jesus the Christ. And He in us, and we in Him,
 Live in perfect harmony in Eden, the land of Life,
 Giving, receiving, and forgiving each other's trespasses.
 He is the Good Shepherd, He is the Lord and Master;
 He is the Shepherd of Albion, He is all in all,
 In Eden, in the garden of God, and in heavenly Jerusalem.
 If we have offended, forgive us! take not vengeance against us!

Man's Spectre

Each Man is in his Spectre's power
 Until the arrival of that hour,
 When his Humanity awake,
 And cast his Spectre into the Lake.

Pretences

A pretence of Art to destroy Art; a pretence of Liberty
 To destroy Liberty; a pretence of Religion to destroy Religion.

Fourfold and Twofold Vision

The Visions of Eternity, by reason of narrowèd perceptions,
 Are become weak Visions of Time and Space, fix'd into furrows of Death;
 Till deep dissimulation is the only defence an honest man has left.

The Remembrance of Sin

Come, O thou Lamb of God, and take away the remembrance of Sin!
 To sin, and to hide the Sin in sweet deceit, is lovely:
 To sin in the open face of day is cruel and pitiless; but
 To record the Sin for a reproach, to let the Sun go down
 In a remembrance of the Sin, is a woe and a horror,
 A brooder of an Evil Day, and a Sun rising in blood.
 Come then, O Lamb of God, and take away the remembrance of Sin!

Rahab is an Eternal State.

TO THE DEISTS

*The Spiritual States of
 the Soul are all Eternal.*

*Distinguish between the
Man and his present State.*

He never can be a friend to the Human Race who is the preacher of Natural Morality or Natural Religion; he is a flatterer who means to betray, to perpetuate tyrant Pride and the Laws of that Babylon which, he foresees, shall shortly be destroyed with the Spiritual and not the Natural Sword. He is in the State named Rahab; which State must be put off before he can be the Friend of Man.

You, O Deists! profess yourselves the enemies of Christianity, and you are so: you are also the enemies of the Human Race and of Universal Nature. Man is born a Spectre, or Satan, and is altogether an Evil, and requires a new Selfhood continually, and must continually be changed into his direct Contrary. But your Greek Philosophy, which is a remnant of Druidism, teaches that Man is righteous in his Vegetated Spectre -- an opinion of fatal and accursed consequence to Man, as the Ancients saw plainly by Revelation, to the entire abrogation of Experimental Theory; and many believed what they saw, and prophesied of Jesus.

Man must and will have some religion; if he has not the religion of Jesus, he will have the religion of Satan, and will erect the synagogue of Satan, calling the Prince of this World 'God', and destroying all who do not worship Satan under the name of God. Will any one say: 'Where are those who worship Satan under the name of God?' Where are they? Listen! Every religion that preaches Vengeance for Sin is the religion of the Enemy and Avenger, and not of the Forgiver of Sin, and their God is Satan, named by the Divine Name. Your Religion, O Deists! Deism is the worship of the God of this World by the means of what you call Natural Religion and Natural Philosophy, and of Natural Morality or Self-Righteousness, the selfish virtues of the Natural Heart. This was the religion of the Pharisees who murdered Jesus. Deism is the same, and ends in the same.

Voltaire, Rousseau, Gibbon, Hume charge the spiritually Religious with hypocrisy; but how a Monk, or a Methodist either, can be a hypocrite, I cannot conceive. We are Men of like passions with others, and pretend not to be holier than others; therefore, when a Religious Man falls into sin, he ought not to be call'd a hypocrite: this title is more properly to be given to a player who falls into sin, whose profession is virtue and morality, and the making men self-righteous. Foote, in calling Whitefield hypocrite, was himself one; for Whitefield pretended not to be holier than others, but confessed his sins before all the world. Voltaire! Rousseau! you cannot escape my charge that you are Pharisees and hypocrites; for you are constantly talking of the virtues of the human heart, and particularly of your own; that you may accuse others, and especially the Religious, whose errors you, by this display of pretended virtue, chiefly design to expose. Rousseau thought Men good by nature: he found them evil, and found no friend. Friendship cannot exist without Forgiveness of Sins continually. The book written by Rousseau, call'd his Confessions, is an apology and cloak for his sin, and not a confession.

But you also charge the poor Monks and Religious with being the causes of war, while you acquit and flatter the Alexanders and Caesars, the Louises and Fredericks, who alone are its causes and its actors. But the Religion of Jesus, Forgiveness of Sin, can never be the cause of a war, nor of a single martyrdom.

Those who martyr others, or who cause war, are Deists, but never can be Forgivers of Sin. The glory of Christianity is to conquer by Forgiveness. All the destruction, therefore, in Christian Europe has arisen from Deism, which is Natural Religion.

I saw a Monk of Charlemaine
 Arise before my sight:
 I talk'd with the Grey Monk as we stood
 In beams of infernal light.

Gibbon arose with a lash of steel,
 And Voltaire with a racking wheel;
 The Schools, in clouds of learning roll'd,
 Arose with War in iron and gold.

`Thou lazy Monk!' they sound afar,
 `In vain condemning glorious War;
 And in your cell you shall ever dwell:
 Rise, War, and bind him in his cell!

The blood red ran from the Grey Monk's side,
 His hands and feet were wounded wide,
 His body bent, his arms and knees
 Like to the roots of ancient trees.

When Satan first the black bow bent
 And the Moral Law from the Gospel rent,
 He forg'd the Law into a sword,
 And spill'd the blood of Mercy's Lord.

Titus! Constantine! Charlemaine!
 O Voltaire! Rousseau! Gibbon! Vain
 Your Grecian mocks and Roman sword
 Against this image of his Lord;

For a Tear is an Intellectual thing;
 And a Sigh is the sword of an angel king;
 And the bitter groan of a Martyr's woe
 Is an arrow from the Almighty's bow.

Albion's Spectre

But the Spectre, like a hoar-frost and a mildew, rose over Albion,
 Saying: `I am God, O Sons of Men! I am your Rational Power!
 Am I not Bacon and Newton and Locke, who teach Humility to Man,
 Who teach Doubt and Experiment? and my two wings, Voltaire, Rousseau?
 Where is that Friend of Sinners, that Rebel against my Laws,

Who teaches Belief to the Nations and an unknown Eternal Life?
 Come hither into the desert and turn these stones to bread!
 Vain, foolish Man! wilt thou believe without Experiment,
 And build a World of Phantasy upon my great Abyss,
 A World of Shapes in craving lust and devouring appetite?'

The Holiness of Minute Particulars

And many conversèd on these things as they labour'd at the furrow,
 Saying `It is better to prevent misery than to release from misery;
 It is better to prevent error than to forgive the criminal.
 Labour well the Minute Particulars: attend to the Little Ones,
 And those who are in misery cannot remain so long,
 If we do but our duty: labour well the teeming Earth. . .
 He who would do good to another must do it in Minute Particulars.
 General Good is the plea of the scoundrel, hypocrite, and flatterer;
 For Art and Science cannot exist but in minutely organized Particulars,
 And not in generalizing Demonstrations of the Rational Power:
 The Infinite alone resides in Definite and Determinate Identity.
 Establishment of Truth depends on destruction of Falsehood continually,
 On Circumcision, not on Virginity, O Reasoners of Albion!

A Vision of Joseph and Mary

Behold! in the Visions of Elohim Jehovah, behold Joseph and Mary!
 And be comforted, O Jerusalem! in the Visions of Jehovah Elohim.

She lookèd and saw Joseph the Carpenter in Nazareth, and Mary,
 His espousèd Wife. And Mary said: `If thou put me away from thee
 Dost thou not murder me?' Joseph spoke in anger and fury: `Should I
 Marry a harlot and an adulteress?' Mary answer'd: `Art thou more pure
 Than thy Maker, Who forgiveth Sins and calls again her that is lost?
 Tho' she hates, He calls her again in love. I love my dear Joseph,
 But he driveth me away from his presence; yet I hear the voice of God
 In the voice of my husband: tho' he is angry for a moment he will not
 Utterly cast me away: if I were pure, never could I taste the sweets
 Of the Forgiveness of Sins; if I were holy, I never could behold the tears
 Of love, of him who loves me in the midst of his anger in furnace of fire.'
 `Ah, my Mary,' said Joseph, weeping over and embracing her closely in
 His arms, `doth He forgive Jerusalem and not exact Purity from her who is
 Polluted? I heard His voice in my sleep and His Angel in my dream,
 Saying: "Doth Jehovah forgive a Debt only on condition that it shall

Be payèd? Doth He forgive Pollution only on conditions of Purity?
 That Debt is not forgiven! That Pollution is not forgiven!
 Such is the Forgiveness of the Gods, the Moral Virtues of the

Heathen, whose tender Mercies are Cruelty. But Jehovah's Salvation
Is without Money and without Price, in the Continual Forgiveness of Sins,
In the Perpetual Mutual Sacrifice in Great Eternity. For behold!
There is none that liveth and sinneth not! And this is the Covenant
Of Jehovah: 'If you forgive one another, so shall Jehovah forgive you;
That He Himself may dwell among you.' Fear not then to take
To thee Mary, thy Wife, for she is with Child by the Holy Ghost."

Then Mary burst forth into a song! she flowèd like a river of
Many streams in the arms of Joseph, and gave forth her tears of joy
Like many waters, and emanating into gardens and palaces upon
Euphrates, and to forests and floods and animals, wild and tame, from
Gihon to Hiddekel, and to corn-fields and villages, and inhabitants
Upon Pison and Arnon and Jordan. And I heard the voice among
The Reapers, saying: 'Am I Jerusalem, the lost Adulteress? or am I
Babylon come up to Jerusalem?' And another voice answer'd, saying:
'Does the voice of my Lord call me again? am I pure thro' his Mercy
And Pity? Am I become lovely as a Virgin in his sight, who am
Indeed a Harlot drunken with the Sacrifice of Idols? Does He
Call her pure, as he did in the days of her Infancy, when she
Was cast out to the loathing of her person? The Chaldean took
Me from my cradle; the Amalekite stole me away upon his camels
Before I had ever beheld with love the face of Jehovah, or known
That there was a God of Mercy. O Mercy! O Divine Humanity!
O Forgiveness and Pity and Compassion! If I were pure I should never
Have known Thee: if I were unpolluted I should never have
Glorifièd Thy Holiness, or rejoicèd in thy great Salvation.'
Mary leanèd her side against Jerusalem: Jerusalem receivèd
The Infant into her hands in the Visions of Jehovah. Times passèd on.
Jerusalem fainted over the Cross and Sepulchre. She heard the voice:--
'Wilt thou make Rome thy Patriarch Druid, and the Kings of Europe his
Horsemen? Man in the Resurrection changes his Sexual Garments at will:
Every Harlot was once a Virgin, every Criminal an infant Love.'

Tirzah

'O thou poor Human Form!' said she. 'O thou poor child of woe!
Why wilt thou wander away from Tirzah, why me compel to bind thee?
If thou dost go away from me, I shall consume upon these Rocks.
These fibres of thine eyes, that usèd to beam in distant heavens
Away from me, I have bound down with a hot iron:
These nostrils, that expanded with delight in morning skies,
I have bent downward with lead, melted in my roaring furnaces
Of affliction, of love, of sweet despair, of torment unendurable.
My soul is seven furnaces, incessant roars the bellows
Upon my terribly flaming heart; the molten metal runs

In channels thro' my fiery limbs -- O love! O pity! O fear!
O pain! O the pangs, the bitter pangs of love forsaken!

The Warrior and the Daughter of Albion

Look! the beautiful Daughter of Albion sits naked upon the Stone,
Her panting Victim beside her; her heart is drunk with blood,
Tho' her brain is not drunk with wine; she goes forth from Albion
In pride of beauty, in cruelty of holiness, in the brightness
Of her tabernacle, and her ark and secret place. The beautiful Daughter
Of Albion delights the eyes of the Kings; their hearts and the
Hearts of their Warriors glow hot before Thor and Friga. O Moloch!
O Chemosh! O Bacchus! O Venus! O Double God of Generation!
The Heavens are cut like a mantle around from the Cliffs of Albion,
Across Europe, across Africa, in howlings and deadly War.
A sheet and veil and curtain of blood is let down from Heaven
Across the hills of Ephraim, and down Mount Olivet to
The Valley of the Jebusite . . .
O beautiful Daughter of Albion, cruelty is thy delight!
O Virgin of terrible eyes, who dwellest by Valleys of springs
Beneath the Mountains of Lebanon, in the City of Rehob in Hamath,
Taught to touch the harp, to dance in the circle of Warriors
Before the Kings of Canaan, to cut the flesh from the Victim,
To roast the flesh in fire, to examine the Infant's limbs
In cruelties of holiness, to refuse the joys of love, to bring
The Spies from Egypt to raise jealousy in the bosoms of the twelve

Kings of Cannan; then to let the Spies depart to Meribah Kadesh,
To the place of the Amalekite. I am drunk with unsatiated love;
I must rush again to War, for the Virgin has frown'd and refus'd.
Sometimes I curse, and sometimes bless thy fascinating beauty.
Once Man was occupièd in intellectual pleasures and energies;
But now my Soul is harrow'd with grief and fear, and love and desire,
And now I hate, and now I love, and Intellect is no more:
There is no time for anything but the torments of love and desire:
The Feminine and Masculine Shadows, soft, mild, and ever varying
In beauty, are Shadows now no more, but Rocks in Horeb.

Men and States

As the Pilgrim passes while the Country permanent remains,
So Men pass on, but States remain permanent for ever.

TO THE CHRISTIANS

*Devils are False Religions.
Saul! Saul! why persecutest thou me?*

I give you the end of a golden string;
Only wind it into a ball,
It will lead you in at Heaven's gate,
Built in Jerusalem's wall.

We are told to abstain from fleshly desires that we may lose no time from the Work of the Lord. Every moment lost is a moment that cannot be redeemed: every pleasure that intermingles with the duty of our station is a folly unredeemable, and is planted like the seed of a wild flower among our wheat. All the tortures of repentance are tortures of self-reproach on account of our leaving the Divine Harvest to the Enemy, the struggles of entanglement with incoherent roots. I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty both of body and mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination -- Imagination, the real and Eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow, and in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative Bodies, when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more. The Apostles knew of no other Gospel. What were all their spiritual gifts? What is the Divine Spirit? Is the Holy Ghost any other than an Intellectual Fountain? What is the harvest of the Gospel and its labours? What is that talent which it is a curse to hide? What are the treasures of Heaven which we are to lay up for ourselves? Are they any other than mental studies and performances? What are all the gifts of the Gospel? Are they not all mental gifts? Is God a Spirit who must be worshipped in spirit and in truth? And are not the gifts of the Spirit everything to Man? O ye Religious, discountenance every one among you who shall pretend to despise Art and Science! I call upon you in the name of Jesus! What is the life of Man but Art and Science? Is it meat and drink? Is not the Body more than raiment? What is Mortality but the things relating to the Body, which dies? What is Immortality but the things relating to the Spirit, which lives eternally? What is the Joy of Heaven but improvement in the things of the Spirit? What are the Pains of Hell but Ignorance, Bodily Lust, Idleness, and devastation of the things of the Spirit? Answer this to yourselves, and expel from among you those who pretend to despise the labours of Art and Science, which alone are the labours of the Gospel. Is not this plain and manifest to the thought? Can you think at all, and not pronounce heartily: that to labour in knowledge is to build up Jerusalem; and to despise knowledge is to despise Jerusalem and her Builders. And remember: He who despises and mocks a mental gift in another, calling it pride and selfishness and sin, mocks Jesus, the giver of every mental gift, which always appear to the ignorance-loving hypocrite as sins; but that which is a sin in the sight of cruel Man, is not so in the sight of our kind God. Let every Christian, as much as in him lies, engage himself openly and publicly, before all the World, in some mental pursuit for the Building up of Jerusalem.

I stood among my valleys of the south,
And saw a flame of fire, even as a Wheel
Of fire surrounding all the heavens: it went
From west to east against the current of
Creation, and devour'd all things in its loud
Fury and thundering course round Heaven and Earth
By it the Sun was roll'd into an orb;

By it the Moon faded into a globe,
 Travelling thro' the night; for from its dire
 And restless fury Man himself shrunk up
 Into a little root a fathom long.
 And I askèd a Watcher and a Holy One
 Its name. He answer'd: `It is the Wheel of Religion.'

I wept and said: `Is this the law of Jesus,
 This terrible devouring sword turning every way?'
 He answer'd: `Jesus died because He strove
 Against the current of this Wheel: its name
 Is Caiaphas, the dark Preacher of Death,
 Of sin, of sorrow, and of punishment,
 Opposing Nature. It is Natural Religion.
 But Jesus is the bright Preacher of Life,
 Creating Nature from this fiery Law
 By self-denial and Forgiveness of Sin.
 Go, therefore, cast out devils in Christ's name,
 Heal thou the sick of spiritual disease,
 Pity the evil; for thou art not sent
 To smite with terror and with punishments
 Those that are sick, like to the Pharisees,
 Crucifying, and encompassing sea and land,
 For proselytes to tyranny and wrath.
 But to the Publicans and Harlots go:
 Teach them true happiness, but let no curse
 Go forth out of thy mouth to blight their peace.
 For Hell is open'd to Heaven; thine eyes beheld
 The dungeons burst, and the prisoners set free.'

England! awake! awake! awake!
 Jerusalem thy sister calls!
 Why wilt thou sleep the sleep of death,
 And close her from thy ancient walls?

Thy hills and valleys felt her feet
 Gently upon their bosoms move:
 Thy gates beheld sweet Zion's ways;
 Then was a time of joy and love.

And now the time returns again:
 Our souls exult, and London's towers
 Receive the Lamb of God to dwell
 In England's green and pleasant bowers.

A Vision of Jerusalem

I see thy Form, O lovely, mild Jerusalem! Wing'd with Six Wings
 In the opacous Bosom of the Sleeper, lovely, threefold
 In Head and Heart and Reins, three Universes of love and beauty.
 Thy forehead bright, Holiness to the Lord! with gates of pearl
 Reflects Eternity beneath thy azure wings of feathery down,
 Ribb'd, delicate, and cloth'd with feather'd gold and azure and purple,
 From thy white shoulders shadowing purity in holiness;
 Thence, feather'd with soft crimson of the ruby, bright as fire,
 Spreading into the azure wings which, like a canopy,
 Bends over thy immortal Head in which Eternity dwells,
 Albion! belovèd Land, I see thy mountains and thy hills
 And valleys, and thy pleasant Cities, Holiness to the Lord!
 I see the Spectres of thy Dead, O Emanation of Albion!

Thy Bosom white, translucent, cover'd with immortal gems,
 A sublime ornament not obscuring the outlines of beauty,
 Terrible to behold, for thy extreme beauty and perfection:
 Twelfefold here all the Tribes of Israel I behold
 Upon the Holy Land: I see the River of Life and Tree of Life
 I see the New Jerusalem descending out of Heaven
 Between thy Wings of gold and silver, feather'd immortal,
 Clear as the rainbow, as the cloud of the Sun's tabernacle.

Thy Reins cover'd with Wings translucent, sometimes covering
 And sometimes spread abroad, reveal the flames of holiness
 Which like a robe covers, and like a Veil of Seraphim
 In flaming fire unceasing burns from Eternity to Eternity.
 Twelfefold I there behold Israel in her Tents;
 A Pillar of a Cloud by day, a Pillar of Fire by night
 Guides them; there I behold Moab and Ammon and Amalek,
 There Bells of silver round thy knees, living, articulate
 Comforting sounds of love and harmony; and on thy feet
 Sandals of gold and pearl; and Egypt and Assyria before me,
 The Isles of Javan, Philistia, Tyre, and Lebanon.

The Worship of God

It is easier to forgive an Enemy than to forgive a Friend.
 The man who permits you to injure him deserves your vengeance;
 He also will receive it. Go, Spectre! obey my most secret desire,
 Which thou knowest without my speaking. Go to these Fiends of Righteousness,
 Tell them to obey their Humanities, and not pretend Holiness,
 When they are murderers. As far as my Hammer and Anvil permit,
 Go tell them that the Worship of God is honouring His gifts
 In other men, and loving the greatest men best, each according
 To his Genius, which is the Holy Ghost in Man: there is no other

God than that God who is the intellectual fountain of Humanity.
 He who envies or calumniates, which is murder and cruelty,
 Murders the Holy One. Go tell them this, and overthrow their cup,
 Their bread, their altar-table, their incense, and their oath,
 Their marriage and their baptism, their burial and consecration.
 I have tried to make friends by corporeal gifts, but have only
 Made enemies; I never made friends but by spiritual gifts,
 By severe contentions of friendship, and the burning fire of thought.
 He who would see the Divinity must see Him in His Children,
 One first in friendship and love, then a Divine Family, and in the midst
 Jesus will appear. So he who wishes to see a Vision, a perfect Whole,
 Must see it in its Minute Particulars, organized; and not as thou,
 O Fiend of Righteousness, pretendest! thine is a disorganized
 And snowy cloud, brooder of tempests and destructive War.
 You smile with pomp and rigour, you talk of benevolence and virtue;
 I act with benevolence and virtue, and get murder'd time after time;
 You accumulate Particulars, and murder by analysing, that you
 May take the aggregate, and you call the aggregate Moral Law;
 And you call that swell'd and bloated Form a Minute Particular.
 But General Forms have their vitality in Particulars; and every
 Particular is a Man, a Divine Member of the Divine Jesus.

The Cry of Los

I care not whether a man is Good or Evil; all that I care
 Is whether he is a Wise man or a Fool. Go! put off Holiness,
 And put on Intellect; or my thund'rous hammer shall drive thee
 To wrath, which thou condemnest, till thou obey my voice.

Albion upon the Rock

Albion cold lays on his Rock; storms and snows beat round him,
 Beneath the Furnaces and the Starry Wheels and the Immortal Tomb;
 Howling winds cover him; roaring seas dash furious against him;
 In the deep darkness broad lightnings glare, long thunders roll.
 The weeds of Death enwrap his hands and feet, blown incessant,
 And wash'd incessant by the for-ever restless sea-waves, foaming abroad
 Upon the white Rock. England, a Female Shadow, as deadly damps
 Of the Mines of Cornwall and Derbyshire, lays upon his bosom heavy,
 Movèd by the wind in volumes of thick cloud returning, folding round
 His loins and bosom, unremovable by swelling storms and loud rending
 Of enragèd thunders. Around them the Starry Wheels of their Giant Sons
 Revolve, and over them the Furnaces of Los and the Immortal Tomb, around,
 Erin sitting in the Tomb, to watch them unceasing night and day:
 And the Body of Albion was closèd apart from all Nations.
 Over them the famish'd Eagle screams on bony wings, and around

Them howls the Wolf of famine; deep heaves the Ocean, black, thundering
 Around the wormy Garments of Albion, then pausing in deathlike silence.
 Time was Finishèd!

The Wrath of God

The Breath Divine went forth over the morning hills. Albion rose
 In anger, the wrath of God, breaking bright, flaming on all sides around
 His awful limbs: into the Heavens he walkèd, clothèd in flames,
 Loud thund'ring, with broad flashes of flaming lightning and pillars
 Of fire, speaking the Words of Eternity in Human Forms, in direful
 Revolutions of Action and Passion, thro' the Four Elements on all sides
 Surrounding his awful Members. Thou seest the Sun in heavy clouds
 Struggling to rise above the Mountains; in his burning hand
 He takes his Bow, then chooses out his arrows of flaming gold;
 Murmuring, the Bowstring breathes with ardour; clouds roll round the
 Horns of the wide Bow; loud sounding winds sport on the mountain brows,
 Compelling Urizen to his Furrow, and Tharmas to his Sheepfold,
 And Luvah to his Loom.

The Divine Image

Jesus said: `Wouldest thou love one who never died
 For thee, or ever die for one who had not died for thee?
 And if God dieth not for Man, and giveth not Himself
 Eternally for Man, Man could not exist; for Man is Love,
 As God is Love: every kindness to another is a little Death
 In the Divine Image; nor can Man exist but by Brotherhood.'

The End of the Song of Jerusalem

All Human Forms identifìed, even Tree, Metal, Earth, and Stone; all
 Human Forms identifìed, living, going forth and returning wearied
 Into the Planetary lives of Years, Months, Days and Hours; reposing,
 And then awaking into His bosom in the Life of Immortality.
 And I heard the Name of their Emanations: they are namèd Jerusalem.

verses from 'the gates of paradise'

Circa 1810

Prologue

Mutual Forgiveness of each vice,
Such are the Gates of Paradise,
Against the Accuser's chief desire,
Who walk'd among the stones of fire.
Jehovah's Finger wrote the Law;
Then wept; then rose in zeal and awe,
And the dead corpse, from Sinai's heat,
Buried beneath His Mercy-seat.
O Christians! Christians! tell me why
You rear it on your altars high?

The Keys

The Caterpillar on the leaf
Reminds thee of thy Mother's grief

Of the Gates

1. My Eternal Man set in repose,
The Female from his darkness rose;
And she found me beneath a Tree,
A Mandrake, and in her Veil hid me.
Serpent Reasonings us entice
Of good and evil, virtue and vice,
2. Doubt self-jealous, Watery folly;
3. Struggling thro' Earth's melancholy;
4. Naked in Air, in shame and fear;
5. Blind in Fire, with shield and spear;
Two-horn'd Reasoning, cloven fiction,
In doubt, which is self-contradiction,
A dark Hermaphrodite we stood --

Rational truth, root of evil and good.
Round me flew the Flaming Sword;
Round her snowy Whirlwinds roar'd,
Freezing her Veil, the Mundane Shell.
6. I rent the Veil where the Dead dwell:
When weary Man enters his Cave,
He meets his Saviour in the grave.

Some find a Female Garment there,
 And some a Male, woven with care;
 Lest the Sexual Garments sweet
 Should grow a devouring Winding-sheet.
 7. One dies! Alas! the Living and Dead!
 One is slain! and One is fled!
 8. In Vain-glory hatcht and nurst,
 By double Spectres, self-accurst.
 My Son! my Son! thou treatest me
 But as I have instructed thee.
 9. On the shadows of the Moon,
 Climbing thro' Night's highest noon;
 10. In Time's Ocean falling, drown'd;
 11 In Aged Ignorance profound,
 Holy and cold, I clipp'd the wings
 Of all sublunary things,
 12. And in depths of my dungeons
 Closed the Father and the Sons.
 13. But when once I did descry
 The Immortal Man that cannot die,
 14. Thro' evening shades I haste away
 To close the labours of my day.
 15. The Door of Death I open found,
 And the Worm weaving in the ground:
 16. Thou'rt my Mother, from the womb;
 Wife, Sister, Daughter, to the tomb;
 Weaving to dreams the Sexual strife,
 And weeping over the Web of Life.

Epilogue

To the Accuser who is The God of this World

Truly, my Satan, thou art but a dunce,
 And dost not know the garment from the man;
 Every harlot was a virgin once,
 Nor canst thou ever change Kate into Nan.

Tho' thou art worship'd by the names divine
 Of Jesus and Jehovah, thou art still
 The Son of Morn in weary Night's decline,
 The lost traveller's dream under the hill.

THE GHOST OF ABEL

Engraved 1822

A REVELATION IN THE VISIONS OF JEHOVAH SEEN BY WILLIAM BLAKE

To Lord Byron in the Wilderness:

What doest thou here, Elijah? Can a Poet doubt the Visions of Jehovah? Nature has no Outline, But Imagination has. Nature has no Tune, but Imagination has. Nature has no Supernatural, and dissolves: Imagination is eternity.

SCENE -- *A rocky Country. EVE, fainted, over the dead body of ABEL, which lays near a Grave. ADAM kneels by her. JEHOVAH stands above.*

Jehovah. Adam!

Adam. I will not hear Thee more, Thou Spiritual Voice Is this Death?

Jehovah. Adam!

Adam. It is in vain: I will not hear Thee Henceforth. Is this Thy Promise, that the Woman's seed Should bruise the Serpent's head? Is this the Serpent? Ah! Seven times, O Eve! thou hast fainted over the Dead. Ah! Ah!

EVE revives.

Eve. Is this the Promise of Jehovah? O! it is all a vain delusion, This Death, and this Life, and this Jehovah!

Jehovah. Woman, lift thine eyes!

A Voice is heard coming on.

Voice. O Earth, cover not thou my blood! cover not thou my blood!

Enter the Ghost of ABEL.

Eve. Thou visionary Phantasm, thou art not the real Abel.

Abel. Among the Elohim, a Human Victim I wander: I am their House.

Prince of the Air, and our dimensions compass Zenith and Nadir.

Vain is Thy Covenant, O Jehovah! I am the Accuser and Avenger

Of Blood. O Earth! cover not thou the blood of Abel.

Jehovah. What Vengeance dost thou require?

Abel. Life for Life! Life for Life!

Jehovah. He who shall take Cain's life must also die, O Abel! And who is he? Adam, wilt thou, or Eve, thou do this?

Adam. It is all a vain delusion of the all-creative Imagination. Eve, come away, and let us not believe these vain delusions. Abel is dead, and Cain slew him. We shall also die a death, And then -- what then? be, as poor Abel, a Thought; or as This? O! what shall I call Thee, Form Divine, Father of Mercies,

That appearest to my Spiritual Vision? Eve, seest thou also?

Eve. I see Him plainly with my Mind's Eye. I see also Abel living, Tho' terribly afflicted, as we also are; yet Jehovah sees him Alive and not dead. Were it not better to believe Vision With all our might and strength, tho' we are fallen and lost?

Adam. Eve, thou hast spoken truly; let us kneel before His feet.

They kneel before JEHOVAH.

Abel. Are these the sacrifices of Eternity, O Jehovah -- a broken spirit

And a contrite heart? O! I cannot forgive: the Accuser hath Enter'd into me as into his house, and I loathe Thy Tabernacles.

As Thou hast said, so is it come to pass. My desire is unto Cain,

And he doth rule over me; therefore my soul in fumes of blood

Cries for Vengeance, Sacrifice on Sacrifice, Blood on Blood!

Jehovah. Lo! I have given you a Lamb for an Atonement, instead Of the transgressor, or no Flesh or Spirit could ever live.

Abel. Compellèd I cry, O Earth! cover not the blood of Abel.

ABEL. *sinks down into the Grave, from which arises SATAN, armed in glittering scales, with a Crown and a Spear.*

Satan. I will have Human blood, and not the blood of bulls or goats,

And no Atonement, O Jehovah! The Elohim live on Sacrifice Of Men: hence I am God of Men!
Thou human, O Jehovah!

By the rock and oak of the Druid, creeping mistletoe, and thorn,

Cain's city built with human blood, not blood of bulls and goats,

Thou shalt Thyself be sacrificed to Me, thy God! on Calvary.

Jehovah. Such is My Will -- (*Thunders*) -- that thou thyself go to Eternal Death.

In Self-Annihilation, even till Satan, self-subdu'd, put off Satan

Into the Bottomless Abyss, whose torment arises for ever and ever.

On each side a chorus of Angels, entering, sing the following:-

The Elohim of the Heathen swore Vengeance for Sin! Then Thou stood'st

Forth, O Elohim Jehovah! in the midst of the darkness of the Oath, all clothèd

In Thy Covenant of the Forgiveness of Sins. Death, O Holy! Is this Brotherhood?

The Elohim saw their Oath Eternal Fire: they rollèd apart, trembling, over the

Mercy-seat, each in his station fixt in the firmament by Peace Brotherhood, and Love.

The Curtain falls.