

Classic Poetry Series

**Helen Maria Williams**  
**- poems -**

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# Helen Maria Williams(1761 - 15 December 1827)

Helen Maria Williams was a British novelist, poet, and translator of French-language works. A religious dissenter, she was a supporter of abolitionism and of the ideals of the French Revolution; she was imprisoned in Paris during the Reign of Terror, but nonetheless spent much of the rest of her life in France.

A controversial figure in her own time, the young Williams was favorably portrayed in a 1787 poem by William Wordsworth, but (especially at the height of the French Revolution) she was portrayed by other writers as irresponsibly politically radical and even as sexually wanton.

<b>Life</b>

She was born to a Scottish mother, Helen Hay, and a Welsh army officer father, Charles Williams. Sources variously give her birth as 1761 or 1762. Her father died when she was eight; the remnant of the family moved to Berwick-upon-Tweed, where she had what she herself would describe in the preface to a 1786 book of poems as "a confined education" . In 1781 she moved to London and met Andrew Kippis, who would have great influence on her literary career and political views and brought her into contact with the leading London intellectuals of her time.

Her 1786 Poems touch on topics ranging from religion to a critique of Spanish colonial practices. She allied herself with the cult of feminine sensibility, deploying it politically in opposition to war ("Ode on the Peace", a 1786 poem about Peru) and slavery (the abolitionist "Poem on the Bill Lately Passed for Regulating the Slave Trade", 1788).

In the context of the Revolution Controversy, she came down on the side of the revolutionaries in her 1790 novel *Julia* and defied convention by traveling alone to revolutionary France, where she was hosted by Mme. Du Fossé, who had earlier, in London, given her lessons in French. Her letters from France marked a turn from being primarily a writer of poetry to one of prose. She enthusiastically attended the Fête de la Fédération on the anniversary of the storming of the Bastille and returning briefly to London in 1791 was a staunch, though not completely uncritical, defender of the Revolution. Returning to France in July 1791, she published a poem "A Farewell for two Years to England"; in fact she briefly visited England again in 1792, but only to persuade her mother and her sisters, Cecilia and Persis, to join her in France just as the country was moving toward the more violent phases of its revolution.

After the September Massacres of 1792, she allied herself with the Girondists; as a saloniere, she also hosted Mary Wollstonecraft, Francisco de Miranda and Thomas Paine. After the violent downfall of the Gironde and the rise of the Reign of Terror, she and her family were thrown into in the Luxembourg prison where she was allowed to continue working on translations of French-language works into English, including what would prove to be a popular translation of Bernardin St. Pierre's novel *Paul et Virginie*, to which she appended her own prison sonnets. Upon her release, she traveled with John Hurford Stone to Switzerland. She was harshly criticized for this since Stone, separated from an unfaithful wife, was still legally a married man; the subsequent history of Williams and Stone's relationship only tended to confirm the rumors. Nonetheless, her few poems from this period continue to express Dissenting piety and were published in volumes with those of other religiously like-minded poets. In 1798, she published *A Tour in Switzerland*, which included an account of her travels, political commentary, and the poem "A Hymn Written Amongst the Alps".

Williams' 1801 *Sketches of the State of Manners and Opinions in the French Republic* showed a continued attachment to the original ideals of the French Revolution but a growing disenchantment with the rise of Napoleon; as emperor, he would declare her ode "The Peace signed between the French and the English" (also known as the "Ode on the Peace of Amiens") to be treasonable to France. Nonetheless, he proved to be, in this respect, more lenient than the revolutionary government had been to this now-famous international literary figure: she spent a single day in prison and continued to live and write in Paris. After the Bourbon Restoration, she became a naturalized French citizen in 1818; nonetheless, in 1819 she moved to Amsterdam to live with a nephew she had helped raise. However, she was unhappy in Amsterdam and soon returned to Paris, where, until her death in 1827, she continued to be an important interpreter of French intellectual currents for the English-speaking world.

# A Hymn

While thee I seek, protecting Power!  
Be my vain wishes still'd;  
And may this consecrated hour  
With better hopes be fill'd.

Thy love the powers of thought bestow'd,  
To thee my thoughts would soar;  
Thy mercy o'er my life has flow'd-  
That mercy I adore.

In each event of life, how clear,  
Thy ruling hand I see;  
Each blessing to my soul more dear,  
Because conferr'd by thee.

In every joy that crowns my days,  
In every pain I bear,  
My heart shall find delight in praise,  
Or seek relief in prayer.

When gladness wings my favour'd hour,  
Thy love my thoughts shall fill:  
Resign'd, when storms of sorrow lower,  
My soul shall meet thy will.

My lifted eye without a tear  
The lowring storm shall see;  
My stedfast heart shall know no fear-  
That heart will rest on Thee!

Helen Maria Williams

# A Song

I.

No riches from his scanty store  
My lover could impart;  
He gave a meant his love.

III.

But now for me, in search of gain  
From shore to shore he flies:  
Why wander riches to obtain, boon I valued more—  
He gave me all his heart!

II.

His soul sincere, his gen'rous worth,  
Might well this bosom move;  
And when I ask'd for bliss on earth,  
I only  
When love is all I prize?

IV.

The frugal meal, the lowly cot  
If blest my love with thee!  
That simple fare, that humble lot,  
Were more than wealth to me.

V.

While he the dang'rous ocean braves,  
My tears but vainly flow:  
Is pity in the faithless waves  
To which I pour my woe?

VI.

The night is dark, the waters deep,  
Yet soft the billows roll;  
Alas! at every breeze I weep—  
The storm is in my soul.

Helen Maria Williams

# An Address To Poetry

I.

While envious crowds the summit view,  
Where Danger with Ambition strays;  
Or far, with anxious step, pursue  
Pale Av'rice, thro' his winding ways;  
The selfish passions in their train,  
Whose force the social ties unbind,  
And chill the love of human kind,  
And make fond Nature's best emotions vain;

II.

O, poesy! O nymph most dear,  
To whom I early gave my heart,--  
Whose voice is sweetest to my ear  
Of aught in nature or in art;  
Thou, who canst all my breast controul,  
Come, and thy harp of various cadence bring,  
And long with melting music swell the string  
That suits the present temper of my soul.

III.

O! ever gild my path of woe,  
And I the ills of life can bear;  
Let but thy lovely visions glow,  
And chase the forms of real care;  
O still, when tempted to repine  
At partial Fortune's frown severe,  
Wipe from my eyes the anxious tear,  
And whisper that thy soothing joys are mine!

IV.

When did my fancy ever frame

A dream of joy by thee unblest?  
When first my lips pronounc'd thy name,  
New pleasure warm'd my infant breast.  
I lov'd to form the jingling rhyme,  
The measur'd sounds, tho' rude, my ear could please,  
Could give the little pains of childhood ease,  
And long have sooth'd the keener pains of time.

V.

The idle crowd in fashion's train,  
Their trifling comment, pert reply,  
Who talk so much, yet talk in vain,  
How pleas'd for thee, O nymph, I fly!  
For thine is all the wealth of mind,  
Thine the unborrow'd gems of thought;  
The flash of light by souls refin'd,  
From heav'n's empyreal source exulting caught.

VI.

And ah! when destin'd to forego  
The social hour with those I love,--  
That charm which brightens all below,  
That joy all other joys above,  
And dearer to this breast of mine,  
O Muse! than aught thy magic power can give,--  
Then on the gloom of lonely sadness shine,  
And bid thy airy forms around me live.

VII.

Thy page, O SHAKESPEARE ! let me view,  
Thine! at whose name my bosom glows;  
Proud that my earliest breath I drew  
In that blest isle where SHAKESPEARE rose!  
Where shall my dazzled glances roll?  
Shall I pursue gay Ariel's flight?  
Or wander where those hags of night



With deeds unnam'd shall freeze my trembling soul?

VIII.

Plunge me, foul sisters! in the gloom  
Ye wrap around yon blasted heath:  
To hear the harrowing rite I come,  
That calls the angry shades from death!  
Away--my frightened bosom spare!  
Let true Cordelia pour her filial sigh,  
Let Desdemona lift her pleading eye,  
And poor Ophelia sing in wild despair!

IX.

When the bright noon of summer streams  
In one wide flash of lavish day,  
As soon shall mortal count the beams,  
As tell the powers of SHAKESPEARE'S lay!  
O, Nature's Poet! the untaught,  
The simple mind thy tale pursues,  
And wonders by what art it views  
The perfect image of each native thought.

X.

In those still moments, when the breast,  
Expanded, leaves its cares behind,  
Glow by some higher thought possest,  
And feels the energies of mind;  
Then, awful MILTON, raise the veil  
That hides from human eye the heav'nly throng!  
Immortal sons of light! I hear your song,  
I hear your high-tun'd harps creation hail!

XI

Well might creation claim your care,

And well the string of rapture move,  
When all was perfect, good, and fair,  
When all was music, joy, and love!  
Ere Evil's inauspicious birth  
Chang'd Nature's harmony to strife;  
And wild Remorse, abhorring life,  
And deep Affliction, spread their shade on earth.

XII

Blest Poesy! O, sent to calm  
The human pains which all must feel,  
Still shed on life thy precious balm,  
And every wound of nature heal!  
Is there a heart of human frame  
Along the burning track of torrid light,  
Or 'mid the fearful waste of polar night,  
That never glow'd at thy inspiring name?

XIII.

Ye Southern Isles,\* emerg'd so late  
Where the Pacific billow rolls,  
Witness, though rude your simple state,  
How heav'n-taught verse can melt your souls!  
Say, when you hear the wand'ring bard,  
How thrill'd ye listen to his lay,  
By what kind arts ye court his stay,--  
All savage life affords his sure reward.

XIV.

So, when great HOMER 'S chiefs prepare,  
Awhile from War's rude toils releas'd,  
The pious hecatomb, and share  
The flowing bowl, and genial feast:  
Some heav'nly minstrel sweeps the lyre,  
While all applaud the poet's native art;  
For him they heap the viand's choicest part,

And copious goblets crown the Muse's fire.

XV.

Ev'n here , in scenes of pride and gain,  
Where faint each genuine feeling glows;  
Here , Nature asks, in want and pain,  
The dear illusions verse bestows;  
The poor, from hunger, and from cold,  
Spare one small coin, the ballad's price,  
Admire their poet's quaint device,  
And marvel much at all his rhymes unfold.

XVI.

Ye children, lost in forests drear,  
Still o'er your wrongs each bosom grieves,  
And long the red-breast shall be dear,  
Who strew'd each little corpse with leaves;  
For you my earliest tears were shed,  
For you the gaudy doll I pleas'd forsook,  
And heard, with hands uprais'd, and eager look,  
The cruel tale, and wish'd ye were not dead!

XVII.

And still on Scotia's northern shore,  
"At times, between the rushing blast,"  
Recording mem'ry loves to pour  
The mournful song of ages past;  
Come, lonely Bard "of other years!"  
While dim the half-seen moon of varying skies,  
While sad the wind along the grey moss sighs,  
And give my pensive heart "the joy of tears!"

XVIII.

The various tropes that splendour dart

Around the modern poet's line,  
Where, borrow'd from the sphere of art,  
Unnumber'd gay allusions shine,  
Have not a charm my breast to please  
Like the blue mist, the meteor's beam,  
The dark-brow'd rock, the mountain stream,  
And the light thistle waving in the breeze.

XIX.

Wild Poesy, in haunts sublime,  
Delights her lofty note to pour;  
She loves the hanging rock to climb,  
And hear the sweeping torrent roar!  
The little scene of cultur'd grace  
But faintly her expanded bosom warms;  
She seeks the daring stroke, the awful charms,  
Which Nature's pencil throws on Nature's face.

XX.

O, Nature! thou whose works divine  
Such rapture in this breast inspire,  
As makes me dream one spark is mine  
Of Poesy's celestial fire;  
When doom'd, "in cities pent," to leave  
The kindling morn's unfolding view,  
Which ever wears some aspect new,  
And all the shadowy forms of soothing eve;

XXI.

Then, THOMSON , then be ever near,  
And paint whatever season reigns;  
Still let me see the varying year,  
And worship Nature in thy strains;  
Now, when the wint'ry tempests roll,  
Unfold their dark and desolating form,  
Rush in the savage madness of the storm,

And spread those horrors that exalt my soul!

XXII.

And, POPE the music of thy verse  
Shall winter's dreary gloom dispel,  
And fond remembrance oft rehearse  
The moral song she knows so well;  
The sportive sylphs shall flutter here,--  
There Eloise, in anguish pale,  
"Kiss with cold lips the sacred veil,  
"And drop with every bead too soft a tear!"

XXIII.

When disappointment's sick'ning pain  
With chilling sadness numbs my breast,  
That feels its dearest hope was vain,  
And bids its fruitless struggles rest;  
When those for whom I wish to live,  
With cold suspicion wrong my aching heart;  
Or, doom'd from those for ever lov'd to part,  
And feel a sharper pang than death can give;

XXIV.

Then with the mournful Bard I go,  
Whom "melancholy mark'd her own,"  
While tolls the curfew, solemn, slow,  
And wander amid graves unknown;  
With yon pale orb, lov'd poet, come!  
While from those elms long shadows spread,  
And where the lines of light are shed,  
Read the fond record of the rustic tomb!

XXV.

Or let me o'er old Conway's flood

Hang on the frowning rock, and trace  
The characters that, wove in blood,  
Stamp'd the dire fate of EDWARD'S race;  
Proud tyrant! tear thy laurell'd plume;  
How poor thy vain pretence to deathless fame!  
The injur'd Muse records thy lasting shame,  
And she has power to "ratify thy doom."

XXVI.

Nature, when first she smiling came,  
To wake within the human breast  
The sacred Muse's hallow'd flame,  
And earth, with heav'n's rich spirit blest!  
Nature in that auspicious hour,  
With awful mandate, bade the Bard  
The register of glory guard,  
And gave him o'er all mortal honours power.

XXVII.

Can Fame on Painting's aid rely?  
Or lean on Sculpture's trophy'd bust?--  
The faithless colours bloom to die,  
The crumbling pillar mocks its trust;  
But thou, O Muse, immortal maid!  
Canst paint the godlike deeds that praise inspire,  
Or worth, that lives but in the mind's desire,  
In tints that only shall with Nature fade!

XXVIII.

O tell me, partial nymph! what rite,  
What incense sweet, what homage true,  
Draws from thy fount of purest light  
The flame it lends a chosen few?  
Alas! these lips can never frame  
The mystic vow that moves thy breast;  
Yet by thy joys my life is blest,

And my fond soul shall consecrate thy name.

Helen Maria Williams

# An American Tale

"Ah! pity all the pangs I feel,  
If pity e'er ye knew;--  
An aged father's wounds to heal,  
Through scenes of death I flew.

"Perhaps my hast'ning steps are vain,  
Perhaps the warrior dies!--  
Yet let me soothe each parting pain--  
Yet lead me where he lies."

Thus to the list'ning band she calls,  
Nor fruitless her desire,  
They lead her, panting, to the walls  
That hold her captive sire.

"And is a daughter come to bless  
These aged eyes once more?  
Thy father's pains will now be less--  
His pains will now be o'er!"

"My father! by this waning lamp  
Thy form I faintly trace:--  
Yet sure thy brow is cold and damp,  
And pale thy honour'd face!

"In vain thy wretched child is come,  
She comes too late to save!  
And only now can share thy doom,  
And share thy peaceful grave!"

Soft, as amid the lunar beams  
The falling shadows bend,  
Upon the bosom of the streams,  
So soft her tears descend.

"Those tears a father ill can bear,  
He lives, my child, for thee!  
A gentle youth, with pitying care,  
Has lent his aid to me.



"Born in the western world, his hand  
Maintains its hostile cause,  
And fierce against Britannia's band  
His erring sword he draws;

"Yet feels the captive Briton's woe;  
For his ennobled mind  
Forgets the name of Britain's foe,  
In love of human kind!

"Yet know, my child, a dearer tie  
Has link'd his heart to mine:  
He mourns with Friendship's holy sigh,  
The youth belov'd of thine!

"But hark! his welcome feet are near--  
Thy rising grief suppress:  
By darkness veil'd, he hastens here  
To comfort and to bless."

"Stranger! for that dear father's sake,"  
She cried, in accents mild,  
"Who lives by thy kind pity, take  
The blessings of his child!

"O, if in heaven, my EDWARD'S breast  
This deed of mercy knew,  
That gives my tortur'd bosom rest,  
He sure would bless thee too!

"Ah, tell me where my lover fell?  
The fatal scene recall;  
His last, dear accents, stranger, tell,  
O, haste and tell me all!

"Say, if he gave to love the sigh,  
That set his spirit free?  
Say, did he raise his closing eye,  
As if it sought for me?"

"Ask not," her father cried, "to know

What, known, were added pain;  
Nor think, my child, the tale of woe  
Thy softness can sustain."

"Though every joy with EDWARD fled,  
When EDWARD'S friend is near  
It soothes my breaking heart," she said,  
"To tell those joys were dear.

"The western ocean roll'd in vain  
Its parting waves between,  
My EDWARD brav'd the dang'rous main,  
And bless'd our native scene.

"Soft Isis heard his artless tale,  
Ah, stream for ever dear!  
Whose waters, as they pass'd the vale,  
Receiv'd a lover's tear.

"How could a heart that virtue lov'd,  
(And sure that heart is mine)  
Lamented youth! behold unmov'd,  
The virtues that were thine?

"Calm, as the surface of the lake,  
When all the winds are still;  
Mild, as the beams of morning break,  
When first they light the hill;

"So calm was his unruffled soul,  
Where no rude passion strove;  
So mild his soothing accents stole,  
Upon the ear of love.

"Where are the dear illusions fled  
Which sooth'd my former hours?  
Where is the path that fancy spread,  
Ah, vainly spread with flowers?

"I heard the battle's fearful sounds,  
They seem'd my lover's knell--  
I heard that, pierc'd with ghastly wounds,

My vent'rous lover fell!--

"My sorrows shall with life endure,  
For he I lov'd is gone;  
But something tells my heart, that sure  
My life will not be long."

"My panting soul can bear no more,"  
The youth impatient cried;  
" 'Tis EDWARD bids thy griefs be o'er,  
My love! my destin'd bride!

"The life which Heav'n preserv'd, how blest,  
How fondly priz'd by me!  
Since dear to my AMELIA'S breast,  
Since valued still by thee!

"My father saw my constant pain  
When thee I left behind,  
Nor longer will his power restrain  
The ties my soul would bind.

"And soon thy honor'd sire shall cease  
The captive's lot to bear;  
And we, my love, will soothe to peace  
His griefs, with filial care.

"Then come for ever to my soul!  
AMELIA come, and prove  
How calm our blissful years will roll  
Along, a life of love!"

Helen Maria Williams

# An Epistle To Dr. Moore

Whether dispensing hope, and ease  
To the pale victim of disease,  
Or in the social crowd you sit,  
And charm the group with sense and wit,  
Moore's partial ear will not disdain  
Attention to my artless strain.

An Epistle To Dr. Moore, Author Of A View Of Society And Manners In France,  
Switzerland And Germany

I mean no giddy heights to climb,  
And vainly toil to be sublime;  
While every line with labour wrought,  
Is swell'd with tropes for want of thought:  
Nor shall I call the Muse to shed  
Castalian drops upon my head;  
Or send me from Parnassian bowers  
A chaplet wove of fancy's flowers.  
At present all such aid I slight—  
My heart instructs me how to write.

That softer glide my hours along,  
That still my griefs are sooth'd by song,  
That still my careless numbers flow  
To your successful skill I owe;  
You, who when sickness o'er me hung,  
And languor had my lyre unstrung,  
With treasures of the healing art,  
With friendship's ardor at your heart,  
From sickness snatch'd her early prey  
And bade fair health—the goddess gay,  
With sprightly air, and winning grace,  
With laughing eye, and rosy face,  
Accustom'd when you call to hear,  
On her light pinion hasten near,  
And swift restore with influence kind,  
My weaken'd frame, my drooping mind.

With like benignity, and zeal,  
The mental malady to heal,

To stop the fruitless, hopeless tear,  
The life you lengthen'd, render dear,  
To charm by fancy's powerful vein,  
'The written troubles of the brain,'  
From gayer scenes, compassion led  
Your frequent footsteps to my shed:  
And knowing that the Muses' art  
Has power to ease an aching heart,  
You sooth'd that heart with partial praise,  
And I before too fond of lays,  
While others pant for solid gain,  
Grasp at a laurel sprig—in vain—  
You could not chill with frown severe  
The madness to my soul so dear;  
For when Apollo came to store  
Your mind with salutary lore,  
The god I ween, was pleas'd to dart  
A ray from Pindus on your heart;  
Your willing bosom caught the fire,  
And still is partial to the lyre.

But now from you at distance plac'd  
Where Epping spreads a woody waste;  
Tho' unrestrain'd my fancy flies,  
And views in air her fabrics rise,  
And paints with brighter bloom the flowers,  
Bids Dryads people all the bowers,  
And Echoes speak from every hill,  
And Naiads pour each little rill,  
And bands of Sylphs with pride unfold  
Their azure plumage mix'd with gold,  
My heart remembers with a sigh  
That you are now no longer nigh.  
The magic scenes no more engage,  
I quit them for your various page;  
Where, with delight I traverse o'er  
The foreign paths you trod before:  
Ah not in vain those paths you trac'd,  
With heart to feel, with powers to taste!

Amid the ever-jocund train  
Who sport upon the banks of Seine,

In your light Frenchman pleas'd I see  
His nation's gay epitome;  
Whose careless hours glide smooth along,  
Who charms MISFORTUNE with a song.  
She comes not as on Albion's plain,  
With death, and madness in her train;  
For here, her keenest sharpest dart  
May raze, but cannot pierce the heart.  
Yet he whose spirit light as air  
Calls life a jest, and laughs at care,  
Feels the strong force of pity's voice,  
And bids afflicted love rejoice;  
Love, such as fills the poet's page  
Love, such as form'd the golden age—  
FANCHON, thy grateful look I see—  
I share thy joys—I weep with thee—  
What eye has read without a tear  
A tale to nature's heart so dear!

There, dress'd in each sublimer grace  
Geneva's happy scene I trace;  
Her lake, from whose broad bosom thrown  
Rushes the loud impetuous Rhone,  
And bears his waves with mazy sweep  
In rapid torrents to the deep—  
Oh for a Muse less weak of wing,  
High on yon Alpine steeps to spring,  
And tell in verse what they disclose  
As well as you have told in prose;  
How wrapt in snows and icy showers,  
Eternal winter, horrid lowers  
Upon the mountain's awful brow,  
While purple summer blooms below;  
How icy structures rear their forms  
Pale products of ten thousand storms;  
Where the full sun-beam powerless falls  
On crystal arches, columns, walls,  
Yet paints the proud fantastic height  
With all the various hues of light.  
Why is no poet call'd to birth  
In such a favour'd spot of earth?  
How high his vent'rous Muse might rise,

And proudly scorn to ask supplies  
From the Parnassian hill, the fire  
Of verse, Mont Blanc might well inspire.  
O SWITZERLAND! how oft these eyes  
Desire to view thy mountains rise;  
How fancy loves thy steeps to climb,  
So wild, so solemn, so sublime;  
And o'er thy happy vales to roam,  
Where freedom rears her humble home.  
Ah, how unlike each social grace  
Which binds in love thy manly race,  
The HOLLANDERS phlegmatic ease  
Too cold to love, too dull to please;  
Who feel no sympathetic woe,  
Nor sympathetic joy bestow,  
But fancy words are only made  
To serve the purposes of trade,  
And when they neither buy, nor sell,  
Think silence answers quite as well.

Now in his happiest light is seen  
VOLTAIRE, when evening chas'd his spleen,  
And plac'd at supper with his friends,  
The playful flash of wit descends—  
Of names renown'd you clearly shew  
The finer traits we wish to know—  
To Prussia's martial clime I stray  
And see how FREDERIC spends the day;  
Behold him rise at dawning light  
To form his troops for future fight;  
Thro' the firm ranks his glances pierce,  
Where discipline, with aspect fierce,  
And unrelenting breast, is seen  
Degrading man to a machine;  
My female heart delights to turn  
Where GREATNESS seems not quite so stern:  
Mild on th' IMPERIAL BROW she glows,  
And lives to soften human woes.

But lo! on ocean's stormy breast  
I see majestic VENICE rest;  
While round her spires the billows rave,

Inverted splendours gild the wave.  
Fair liberty has rear'd with toil,  
Her fabric on this marshy soil.  
She fled those banks with scornful pride,  
Where classic Po devolves her tide:  
Yet here her unrelenting laws  
Are deaf to nature's, freedom's cause.  
Unjust! they seal'd FOSCARI'S doom,  
An exile in his early bloom.  
And he, who bore the rack unmov'd,  
Divided far from those he lov'd,  
From all the social hour can give,  
From all that make it bliss to live,  
These worst of ills refus'd to bear,  
And died, the victim of despair.

An eye of wonder let me raise,  
While on imperial ROME I gaze.  
But oh! no more in glory bright  
She fills with awe th' astonish'd sight:  
Her mould'ring fanes in ruin trac'd,  
Lie scatter'd on Campania's waste.  
Nor only these—alas! we find  
The wreck involves the human mind:  
The lords of earth now drag a chain  
Beneath a pontiff's feeble reign;  
The soil that gave a Cato birth  
No longer yields heroic worth,  
Whose image lives but on the bust,  
Or consecrates the medal's rust:  
Yet if no heart of modern frame  
Glow with the antient hero's flame,  
The dire Arena's horrid stage  
Is banish'd from this milder age;  
Those savage virtues too are fled  
At which the human feelings bled.

While now at Virgil's tomb you bend,  
O let me on your steps attend!  
Kneel on the turf that blossoms round,  
And kiss, with lips devout, the ground.  
I feel how oft his magic powers



Shed pleasure on my lonely hours.  
Tho' hid from me the classic tongue,  
In which his heav'nly strain was sung,  
In Dryden's tuneful lines, I pierce  
The shaded beauties of his verse.

Bright be the rip'ning beam, that shines  
Fair FLORENCE, on thy purple vines!  
And ever pure the fanning gale  
That pants in Arno's myrtle vale!  
Here, when the barb'rous northern race,  
Dire foes to every muse, and grace,  
Had doom'd the banish'd arts to roam  
The lovely wand'ers found a home;  
And shed round Leo's triple crown  
Unfading rays of bright renown.  
Who e'er has felt his bosom glow  
With knowledge, or the wish to know;  
Has e'er from books with transport caught  
The rich accession of a thought;  
Perceiv'd with conscious pride, he feels  
The sentiment which taste reveals;  
Let all who joys like these possess,  
Thy vale, enchanting FLORENCE bless—  
O had the arts benignant light  
No more reviv'd from Gothic night,  
Earth had been one vast scene of strife,  
Or one drear void had sadden'd life;  
Lost had been all the sage has taught,  
The painter's sketch, the poet's thought,  
The force of sense, the charm of wit,  
Nor ever had your page been writ;  
That soothing page, which care beguiles,  
And dresses truth in fancy's smiles:  
For not with hostile step you prest  
Each foreign soil, a thankless guest!  
While travellers who want the skill  
To mark the shapes of good and ill,  
With vacant stare thro' Europe range,  
And deem all bad, because 'tis strange;  
Thro' varying modes of life, you trace  
The finer trait, the latent grace,

And where thro' every vain disguise  
You view the human follies rise,  
The stroke of irony you dart  
With force to mend, not wound the heart.  
While intellectual objects share  
Your mind's extensive view, you bear,  
Quite free from spleen's incumb'ring load,  
The little evils on the road—  
So, while the path of life I tread,  
A path to me with briars spread;  
Let me its tangled mazes spy  
Like you, with gay, good-humour'd eye;  
Nor at those thorny tracts repine,  
The treasure of your friendship, mine.

Helen Maria Williams

# An Ode On The Piece

I.

As wand'ring late on Albion's shore  
That chains the rude tempestuous deep,  
I heard the hollow surges roar  
And vainly beat her guardian steep;  
I heard the rising sounds of woe  
Loud on the storm's wild pinion flow;  
And still they vibrate on the mournful lyre,  
That tunes to grief its sympathetic wire.

II.

From shores the wide Atlantic laves,  
The spirit of the ocean bears  
In moans, along his western waves,  
Afflicted nature's hopeless cares:  
Enchanting scenes of young delight,  
How chang'd since first ye rose to sight;  
Since first ye rose in infant glories drest  
Fresh from the wave, and rear'd your ample breast.

III.

Her crested serpents, discord throws  
O'er scenes which love with roses grac'd;  
The flow'ry chain his hands compose,  
She wildly scatters o'er the waste:  
Her glance his playful smile deforms,  
Her frantic voice awakes the storms,  
From land to land, her torches spread their fires,  
While love's pure flame in streams of blood expires.

IV.

Now burns the savage soul of war,  
While terror flashes from his eyes,  
Lo! waving o'er his fiery car  
Aloft his bloody banner flies:  
The battle wakes—with awful sound  
He thunders o'er the echoing ground,  
He grasps his reeking blade, while streams of blood  
Tinge the vast plain, and swell the purple flood.

V.

But softer sounds of sorrow flow;  
On drooping wing the murm'ring gales  
Have borne the deep complaints of woe  
That rose along the lonely vales—  
Those breezes waft the orphan's cries,  
They tremble to parental sighs,  
And drink a tear for keener anguish shed,  
The tear of faithful love when hope is fled.

VI.

The object of her anxious fear  
Lies pale on earth, expiring, cold,  
Ere, wing'd by happy love, one year  
Too rapid in its course, has roll'd;  
In vain the dying hand she grasps,  
Hangs on the quiv'ring lip, and clasps  
The fainting form, that slowly sinks in death,  
To catch the parting glance, the fleeting breath.

VII.

Pale as the livid corse her cheek,  
Her tresses torn, her glances wild,—  
How fearful was her frantic shriek!  
She wept—and then in horrors smil'd:  
She gazes now with wild affright,  
Lo! bleeding phantoms rush in sight—  
Hark! on yon mangled form the mourner calls,  
Then on the earth a senseless weight she falls.

VIII.

And see! o'er gentle Andre's tomb,  
The victim of his own despair,  
Who fell in life's exulting bloom,  
Nor deem'd that life deserv'd a care;  
O'er the cold earth his relicks prest,  
Lo! Britain's drooping legions rest;  
For him the swords they sternly grasp, appear  
Dim with a sigh, and sullied with a tear.

IX.

While Seward sweeps her plaintive strings,  
While pensive round his sable shrine,  
A radiant zone she graceful flings,  
Where full emblaz'd his virtues shine;  
The mournful loves that tremble nigh  
Shall catch her warm melodious sigh;  
The mournful loves shall drink the tears that flow  
From Pity's hov'ring soul, dissolv'd in woe.

X.

And hark, in Albion's flow'ry vale  
A parent's deep complaint I hear!  
A sister calls the western gale  
To waft her soul-expressive tear;  
'Tis Asgill claims that piercing sigh,  
That dropp which dims the beauteous eye,  
While on the rack of Doubt Affection proves  
How strong the force which binds the ties she loves.

XI.

How oft in every dawning grace  
That blossom'd in his early hours,  
Her soul some comfort lov'd to trace,  
And deck'd futurity in flowers!  
But lo! in Fancy's troubled sight  
The dear illusions sink in night;  
She views the murder'd form—the quiv'ring breath,  
The rising virtues chill'd in shades of death.

XII.

Cease, cease ye throbs of hopeless woe;  
He lives the future hours to bless,  
He lives, the purest joy to know,  
Parental transports fond excess;  
His sight a father's eye shall cheer,  
A sister's drooping charms endear:—  
The private pang was Albion's gen'rous care,  
For him she breath'd a warm accepted prayer.

XIII.

And lo! a radiant stream of light  
Defending, gilds the murky cloud,

Where Desolation's gloomy night  
Retiring, folds her sable shroud;  
It flashes o'er the bright'ning deep,  
It softens Britain's frowning steep—  
'Tis mild benignant Peace, enchanting form!  
That gilds the black abyss, that lulls the storm.

XIV.

So thro' the dark, impending sky,  
Where clouds, and fallen vapours roll'd,  
Their curling wreaths dissolving fly  
As the faint hues of light unfold—  
The air with spreading azure streams,  
The sun now darts his orient beams—  
And now the mountains glow—the woods are bright—  
While nature hails the season of delight.

XV.

Mild Peace! from Albion's fairest bowers  
Pure spirit! cull with snowy hands,  
The buds that drink the morning showers,  
And bind the realms in flow'ry bands:  
Thy smiles the angry passions chase,  
Thy glance is pleasure's native grace;  
Around thy form th' exulting virtues move,  
And thy soft call awakes the strain of love.

XVI.

Bless, all ye powers! the patriot name  
That courts fair Peace, thy gentle stay;  
Ah! gild with glory's light, his fame,  
And glad his life with pleasure's ray!  
While, like th' affrighted dove, thy form  
Still shrinks, and fears some latent storm,  
His cares shall sooth thy panting soul to rest,  
And spread thy vernal couch on Albion's breast.

XVII.

Ye, who have mourn'd the parting hour,  
Which love in darker horrors drew,  
Ye, who have vainly tried to pour  
With falt'ring voice the last adieu!

When the pale cheek, the bursting sigh,  
The soul that hov'ring in the eye,  
Express'd the pains it felt, the pains it fear'd—  
Ah! paint the youth's return, by grief endear'd.

XVIII.

Yon hoary form, with aspect mild,  
Deserted knees by anguish prest,  
And seeks from Heav'n his long-lost child,  
To smooth the path that leads to rest!—  
He comes!—to close the sinking eye,  
To catch the faint, expiring sigh;  
A moment's transport stays the fleeting breath,  
And soothes the soul on the pale verge of death.

XIX.

No more the sanguine wreath shall twine  
On the lost hero's early tomb,  
But hung around thy simple shrine  
Fair Peace! shall milder glories bloom.  
Lo! commerce lifts her drooping head  
Triumphal, Thames! from thy deep bed;  
And bears to Albion, on her sail sublime,  
The riches Nature gives each happier clime.

XX.

She fearless prints the polar snows,  
Mid' horrors that reject the day;  
Along the burning line she glows,  
Nor shrinks beneath the torrid ray:  
She opens India's glitt'ring mine,  
Where streams of light reflected shine;  
Wafts the bright gems to Britain's temp'rate vale,  
And breathes her odours on the northern gale.

XXI.

While from the far-divided shore  
Where liberty unconquer'd roves,  
Her ardent glance shall oft' explore  
The parent isle her spirit loves;  
Shall spread upon the western main  
—Harmonious concord's golden chain,

While stern on Gallia's ever hostile strand  
From Albion's cliff she pours her daring band.

XXII.

Yet hide the sabre's hideous glare  
Whose edge is bath'd in streams of blood,  
The lance that quivers high in air,  
And falling drinks a purple flood;  
For Britain! fear shall seize thy foes,  
While freedom in thy senate glows,  
While peace shall smile upon thy cultur'd plain,  
With grace and beauty her attendant train.

XXIII.

Enchanting visions sooth my sight—  
The finer arts no more oppress'd,  
Benignant source of pure delight!  
On her soft bosom love to rest.  
While each discordant sound expires,  
Strike harmony! strike all thy wires;  
The fine vibrations of the spirit move  
And touch the springs of rapture and of love.

XXIV.

Bright painting's living forms shall rise;  
And wrapt in Ugolino's woe,  
Shall Reynolds wake unbidden sighs;  
And Romney's graceful pencil flow,  
That Nature's look benign pourtrays,  
When to her infant Shakspeare's gaze  
The partial nymph 'unveil'd her awful face,'  
And bade his 'colours clear' her features trace.

XXV.

And poesy! thy deep-ton'd shell  
The heart shall sooth, the spirit fire,  
And all the passion sink, or swell,  
In true accordance to the lyre.  
Oh! ever wake its heav'nly sound,  
Oh! call thy lovely visions round;  
Strew the soft path of peace with fancy's flowers,  
With raptures bless the soul that feels thy powers.



XXVI.

While Hayley wakes thy magic string,  
His shades shall no rude sound profane,  
But stillness on her folded wing,  
Enamour'd catch his soothing strain:  
Tho' genius breathe its purest flame  
—Around his lyre's enchanting frame;  
Tho' music there in every period roll,  
More warm his friendship, and more pure his soul.

XXVII.

While taste refines a polish'd age,  
While her own Hurd shall bid us trace  
The lustre of the finish'd page  
Where symmetry sheds perfect grace;  
With sober and collected ray  
To fancy, judgment shall display  
The faultless model, where accomplish'd art  
From nature draws a charm that leads the heart.

XXVIII.

Th' historic Muse illumines the maze  
For ages veil'd in gloomy night,  
Where empire with meridian blaze  
Once trod ambition's giddy height:  
Tho' headlong from the dang'rous steep  
Its pageants roll'd with wasteful sweep,  
Her tablet still records the deeds of fame  
And wakes the patriot's, and the hero's flame.

XXIX.

While meek philosophy explores  
Creation's vast stupendous round;  
Sublime her piercing vision soars,  
And bursts the system's distant bound.  
Lo! mid' the dark deep void of space  
A rushing world her eye can trace!—  
It moves majestic in its ample sphere,  
Sheds its long light, and rolls its ling'ring year.

XXX.

Ah! still diffuse thy genial ray,  
Fair Science, on my Albion's plain!  
And still thy grateful homage pay  
Where Montagu has rear'd her fane;  
Where eloquence and wit entwine  
Their attic wreath around her shrine;  
And still, while Learning shall unfold her store,  
With their bright signet stamp the classic ore.

XXXI.

Enlight'ning Peace! for thine the hours  
That wisdom decks in moral grace,  
And thine invention's fairy powers,  
The charm improv'd of nature's face;  
Propitious come! in silence laid  
Beneath thy olive's grateful shade,  
Pour the mild bliss that soothes the tuneful mind,  
And in thy zone the hostile spirit bind.

XXXII.

While Albion on her parent deep  
Shall rest, may glory light her shore,  
May honour there his vigils keep  
Till time shall wing its course no more;  
Till angels wrap the spheres in fire,  
Till earth and yon fair orbs expire,  
While chaos mounted on the wasting flame,  
Shall spread eternal shade o'er nature's frame.

Helen Maria Williams

# Dulce Domum

AN OLD LATIN ODE.

SUNG ANNUALLY BY THE WINCHESTER BOYS UPON  
LEAVING COLLEGE AT THE VACATION. [Translated at the Request of DR. JOSEPH  
WARTON.]

LOV'D Companions, let us sing!  
Wake the dear according string-  
Come, with gladness fill the dome,  
Pour the happy song of Home.

CHORUS.

Now, sweet Home! our steps are free;  
Now, sweet Home! we fly to thee!  
Let the vaulted roofs resound  
Sacred Home, with blessings crown'd!

Learning, thorny are thy ways,  
Thought is weary of the maze;  
Let us seek awhile the goal  
Where affection rests her soul!

CHORUS.-Now, sweet Home, &c.

Now, O toiling Muse, repose;  
Muse! the classic volume close:-  
Bid the cares of study cease,  
Give the vacant hours to peace!

CHORUS.-Now, sweet Home, &c.

Joyful with the smiling year,  
We will smile, for Home is near!-  
Strangers will our song repeat-  
Strangers feel that Home is sweet!

CHORUS.-Now, sweet Home, &c.

Bring, O bring th' impatient steed,  
Let us to the threshold speed,  
Where we shed the tear of bliss,  
Where we meet a mother's kiss!

CHORUS.-Now, sweet Home, &c.

Home of childhood! swell the strain,  
While we hail thy gates again!  
Why, Aurora, thus delay?  
Slothful goddess, give the day!

CHORUS.-Now, sweet Home, &c.

Helen Maria Williams

# Duncan, An Ode

## I.

Abash'd the rebel squadrons yield--  
MACBETH , the victor of the field,  
Exulting, past the blasted wild;  
And where his dark o'erhanging towers  
Frown on the heath, with pleasures mild  
Now DUNCAN hastes to wing the hours--  
Sweet are the rosy beams that chase  
The angry tempest from the sky;  
When winds have shook the mountain's base,  
Sweet is the zephyr's balmy sigh;  
But sweeter to the breast the social charms  
Whose grateful rapture soothes the toil of arms.

## II.

'Twas not the season when the storm  
Of winter wears its savage form;  
Black'ning all, the frozen North  
Wildly spreads its awful wings,  
From yon bare summit rushes forth,  
And on that barren desert, flings  
All the rapid torrents might,  
When with turbulence they sweep,  
Mingling, with the winds of might,  
Sounds majestically deep--  
When nature form'd the hideous waste, she frown'd,  
And gave to horror its deserted bound.

## III.

'Twas not the hour when magic spells  
Rock the heath's untrodden cells;  
When slow the wither'd forms arise  
From caves, which night with lasting sway,  
Ever shrouds from mortal eyes,

Nor divides one hour with day--  
Sounds unmeet for mortal ear  
Chill with dread the human frame,  
Then unreal shapes appear  
By the blue unhallow'd flame--  
Discordance strange disturbs the gentle air,  
And pois'nous taints the thick'ning breezes bear.

IV.

The western sun's departing ray  
Bright on the lofty turrets lay,  
That threw the shadow's length'ning line  
At solemn distance far below;  
And where the gather'd clouds recline  
On yon dark cliff's terrific brow,  
There stood a venerable seer,  
Whose prophetic soul could trace  
Distant ages hast'ning near,  
And all that fill'd the unborn space--  
The prophet gaz'd, with sudden frenzy fir'd,  
Saw deeds undone, and spoke with lips inspir'd:

V.

"Hail, Scotia's Monarch! greatly brave,  
Skill'd to conquer, charm'd to save!  
Whose pitying hand inverts the lance,  
And meekly drops the slacken'd bow;  
Whose gracious eye with mercy's glance  
Has ever gaz'd on human woe!--  
MACBETH , the castle gate unbar,  
MACBETH , prepare the social board--  
Haste, from rugged toils of war,  
Haste, and hail thy sov'reign lord!  
With music be the genial banquet crown'd,  
And bid thy vaulted roofs with joy rebound.

VI.

"Ha!--dread visions hang in air!--  
I see a bloody dagger glare!--  
Deeds that ask the gloom of night  
Are imag'd in yon troubl'd sky--  
Now a gleam of fatal light  
Flashes on my aching eye!  
DUNCAN , shun that conscious tower--  
Fiends the social banquet pile!--  
Murder waits the midnight hour,  
Murder lurks in beauty's smile!  
Vain my prophetic voice!--he hies away  
Where, scowling o'er the couch, death calls his prey.

VII.

"Sacred victim! bath'd in gore,  
Haunt the hideous scene no more--  
Rest, unquiet spirit, rest!  
Great revenge the heavens prepare;  
View thy murd'rer's tortur'd breast,  
And pity all that labours there!  
See the look, and hear the groan,  
Mark a bleeding soul in pain!  
Reason trembles on her throne,  
Furies seize the burning brain--  
Unpitied, and accurst shall be his doom,  
While rising honours flourish round thy tomb.

VIII.

"Thy mem'ry shall for ever last,  
And fame, untir'd, repeat the past--  
Deep in the mystic clouds of time  
I see a poet call'd to birth--  
I hear a lyre, whose source sublime  
With wonder thrills the list'ning earth!  
The mighty bard, with 'potent art,'  
Shall nature's perfect semblance give,  
Unlock the springs that move the heart,

And bid the human passions live--  
Still in his heav'n-taught page shall DUNCAN bleed,  
And future ages tremble as they read!"

Helen Maria Williams



# Edwin And Eltrada, A Legendary Tale

Where the pure Derwent's waters glide  
Along their mossy bed,  
Close by the river's verdant side,  
A castle rear'd its head.

The antient pile by time is raz'd,  
Where gothic trophies frown'd,  
Where once the gilded armour blaz'd,  
And banners wav'd around.

There liv'd a chief well known to fame,  
A bold adven'trous knight,  
Renown'd for victory, his name  
In glory's annals bright.

Yet milder virtues he possest,  
And gentler passions felt,  
For in his calm and yielding breast  
The soft affections dwelt.

No rugged toils the heart could steel,  
By nature form'd to prove  
Whate'er the tender mind can feel  
In friendship or in love.

He lost the partner of his breast,  
Who sooth'd each rising care,  
And ever charm'd the pains to rest  
She ever lov'd to share.

From solitude he hop'd relief  
And this lone mansion sought,  
To cherish there his faithful grief,  
To nurse the tender thought.

There, to his bosom fondly dear,  
A blooming daughter smil'd,  
And oft' the mourner's falling tear  
Bedew'd his EMMA'S child.

As drest in charms the lonely flower  
Smiles in the distant vale,  
With beauty gilds the morning hour,  
And scents the evening gale;

So liv'd in solitude, unseen,  
This lovely, peerless maid;  
So grac'd the wild sequester'd scene,  
And blossom'd in the shade.

Yet love could pierce the lone recess,  
For there he likes to dwell,  
To leave the noisy crowd, and bless  
With happiness the cell.

To wing his sure resistless dart  
Where all its power is known,  
And rule the undivided heart  
Despotic and alone.

Young EDWIN charm'd her gentle breast,  
Though scanty all his store,  
No hoarded treasure he possest,  
Yet he could boast of more:

For he could boast the lib'ral heart,  
And honour, sense, and truth,  
Unwarp'd by vanity or art,  
Adorn'd the gen'rous youth.

The maxims of a servile age,  
The mean, the selfish care,  
The sordid views that now engage  
The mercenary fair,

Whom riches can unite or part,  
To them were all unknown,  
For then each sympathetic breast  
Was join'd by love alone.

They little knew that wealth had power

To make the constant rove;  
They little knew the weighty dower  
Could add one bliss to love.

ELTRADA o'er the distant mead  
Would haste at closing day,  
And to the bleating mother lead  
The lamb that chanc'd to stray.

For the bruis'd insect on the waste  
A sigh would heave her breast;  
And oft her careful hand replac'd  
The linnet's fallen nest.

To her sensations calm as these  
Could sweet delight impart,  
Those simple pleasures most can please  
The uncorrupted heart.

And oft with eager step she flies  
To cheer the roofless cot,  
Where the lone widow breathes her sighs,  
And wails her desp'rate lot.

Their weeping mother's trembling knees  
Her lisping infants clasp,  
Their meek imploring look she sees,  
She feels their tender grasp.

On her pale cheek, where hung the tear  
Of agonizing woe,  
ELTRADA bids a smile appear,  
A tear of rapture flow.

Thus on soft wing the moments flew,  
(Tho' love would court their stay,)  
While some new virtue rose to view,  
And mark'd each fleeting day.

The youthful poet's soothing dream  
Of golden ages past,  
The muse's fond ideal theme

Seem'd realiz'd at last.

But here, how weak to hope that bliss  
Unchanging will endure;  
Ah, in a world so vain as this,  
What heart can rest secure!

For now arose the fatal day  
For civil discord fam'd,  
When YORK from LANCASTER'S proud sway  
The regal sceptre claim'd.

Each moment now the horrors brought  
Of desolating rage,  
The fam'd achievements now were wrought  
That swell th' historic page.

The good old ALBERT pants again  
To dare the hostile field,  
The cause of HENRY to maintain,  
For him the lance to wield.

But O, a thousand gen'rous ties  
That bind the hero's soul,  
A thousand sacred claims arise,  
And EDWIN'S breast controul.

Though passion pleads in HENRY'S cause,  
And EDWIN'S heart would sway,  
Yet honour's stern, imperious laws,  
The brave will still obey.

Oppress'd with many an anxious care,  
Full oft ELTRADA sigh'd,  
Complaining that relentless war  
Should those she lov'd divide.

At length the parting morn arose,  
For her in sadness drest,  
While boding thoughts of future woes  
With terror heav'd her breast.

A thousand pangs her father feels,  
A thousand tender fears,  
While clinging at his feet she kneels,  
And bathes them with her tears.

One pitying tear bedew'd his cheek--  
From his lov'd child he flew,  
O'erwhelmed, the father could not speak,  
He could not say--"adieu!"--

Arm'd for the field her lover came,  
He saw her pallid look,  
And trembling seize her drooping frame,  
While, falt'ring, thus he spoke:

"This cruel tenderness but wounds  
The heart it means to bless,  
Those falling tears, those mournful sounds  
Increase the vain distress!"--

"If fate," she answer'd, "has decreed  
That on the hostile plain  
My EDWIN'S faithful heart must bleed,  
And swell the heap of slain:

"Trust me, I never will complain,  
I'll shed no fruitless tear,  
Not one weak drop my cheek shall stain,  
Or tell what passes here!

"O, let thy fate of others claim  
A tear, a mournful sigh;  
I'll only murmur thy dear name,  
I'll call on thee--and die!"--

But ah, how vain for words to tell  
The pang their bosoms prov'd,  
They only will conceive it well,  
They only, who have lov'd.

The timid muse forbears to say  
What laurels EDWIN gain'd;

How ALBERT , long renown'd, that day  
His ancient fame maintain'd.

The bard, who feels congenial fire,  
May sing of martial strife,  
And with heroic sounds inspire  
The gen'rous scorn of life.

But ill the theme would suit her reed,  
Who, wand'ring through the grove,  
Forgets the conqu'ring hero's meed,  
And gives a tear to love!

Though long the closing day was fled,  
The fight they still maintain,  
While night a deeper horror shed  
Along the darken'd plain.

To ALBERT'S breast an arrow flew,  
He felt a mortal wound--  
The drops that warm'd his heart bedew  
The cold and flinty ground.

The foe who aim'd the fatal dart  
Now heard his dying sighs;  
Compassion touch'd his yielding heart,  
To ALBERT'S aid he flies.

While round the chief his arms he cast,  
While oft he deeply sigh'd,  
And seem'd as if he mourn'd the past,  
Old ALBERT faintly cried:

"Though nature heaves these parting groans,  
Without complaint I die;  
Yet one dear care my heart still owns,  
Still feels one tender tie.

"For YORK , a warrior known to fame,  
Uplifts the hostile spear,  
EDWIN the blooming hero's name,  
To ALBERT'S bosom dear.

"O tell him my expiring sigh,  
Say my last words implor'd  
To my despairing child to fly,  
To her he once ador'd!"

He spoke! but O, what mournful strain,  
Whose force the soul can melt,  
What moving numbers shall explain  
The pang that EDWIN felt?

The pang that EDWIN now reveal'd--  
For he the warrior prest  
(Whom the dark shades of night conceal'd)  
Close to his throbbing breast.

"Fly, fly," he cried, "my touch profane--  
O, how the rest impart!  
Rever'd old man! could EDWIN stain  
With ALBERT'S blood the dart?"

His languid eyes lie weakly rais'd,  
Which seem'd for ever clos'd,  
On the pale youth with pity gaz'd,  
And then in death repos'd.

"I'll go," the hapless EDWIN said,  
"And breathe a last adieu!  
And with the drops despair will shed,  
My mournful love bedew.

"I'll go to her for ever dear,  
To catch her trembling sigh,  
To wipe from her pale cheek the tear,  
And at her feet to die!"

And as to her for ever dear  
The frantic mourner flew,  
To wipe from her pale cheek the tear,  
And breathe a last adieu;

Appall'd his troubled fancy sees

That tear of anguish flow,  
And hears in every passing breeze  
The plaintive sound of woe.

Meanwhile the anxious maid, whose tears  
In vain would heav'n implore,  
Of ALBERT'S fate despairing hears,  
But yet had heard no more.

"What woes," she cried, "this breast must prove,  
Its dearest ties are broke;--  
O, say what ruthless arm, my love,  
Could aim the fatal stroke?"

"Could not thy hand, my EDWIN , thine  
Have warded off the blow?  
For O, he was not only mine,  
He was thy father too!--

"Why does thy bosom throb with pain?--  
O speak, my EDWIN , speak!  
Or sure, unable to sustain  
This grief, my heart will break."

"Yes, it will break,"--he falt'ring cried,  
"For we will life resign--  
Then trembling know, thy father died--  
And know, the guilt was mine!

"It is enough!" with short quick breath,  
Exclaim'd the fainting maid;  
She spoke no more, but seem'd from death  
To look for instant aid.

In plaintive accents EDWIN cries,  
"And have I murder'd thee?  
To other worlds thy spirit flies,  
And mine this stroke shall free!"--

His hand the lifted weapon grasp'd,  
The steel he firmly prest,  
When wildly she arose, and clasp'd



Her lover to her breast.

"Methought," she cried, with panting breath,  
"My EDWIN talk'd of peace;  
I knew 'twas only found in death,  
And fear'd that sad release.

"I clasp him still! 'twas but a dream--  
Help yon wide wound to close,  
From which a father's spirits stream,  
A father's life-blood flows.

"But see!--from thee he shrinks, nor would  
Be blasted by thy touch!--  
Ah, though my EDWIN spilt thy blood,  
Yet once he lov'd thee much.

"My father, yet in pity stay!--  
I see his white beard wave--  
A spirit beckons him away,  
And points to yonder grave.

"Alas, my love, I trembling hear  
A father's last adieu;  
I see, I see the falling tear  
His wrinkled cheek bedew.

"He's gone, and here his ashes sleep--  
I do not heave a sigh,  
His child a father does not weep--  
For ah, my brain is dry!

"But come, together let us rove,  
At the pale hour of night,  
When the moon wand'ring through the grove,  
Shall pour her faintest light.

"We'll gather from the rosy bower  
The fairest wreaths that bloom,  
We'll cull, my love, each op'ning flower  
To deck his hallow'd tomb;

"We'll thither from the distant dale  
A weeping willow bear;  
And plant a lily of the vale,  
A drooping lily, there.

"We'll shun the face of glaring day,  
Eternal silence keep;  
Through the dark wood together stray,  
And only live to weep.

"But hark, 'tis come--the fatal time,  
When, EDWIN , we must part:  
Some angel tells me 'tis a crime  
To hold thee to my heart.

"Yet, EDWIN , if th' offence be thine,  
Too soon I can forgive;  
But O, the guilt would all be mine,  
Could I endure to live.

"Farewell, my love, for O, I faint,  
Of pale despair I die;  
And see! that hoary, murder'd saint  
Descends from yon blue sky.

"Poor weak old man! he comes, my love,  
To lead to heav'n the way;  
He knows not heav'n will joyless prove,  
If EDWIN here must stay!"

"O, who can bear this pang?" he cried,  
Then to his bosom prest  
The dying maid, who piteous sigh'd,  
And sunk to endless rest.

He saw her eyes for ever close,  
He heard her latest sigh,  
And yet no tear of anguish flows  
From his distracted eye.

He feels within his shiv'ring veins  
A mortal chillness rise!

Her pallid corse he feebly strains,  
And on her bosom dies.

No longer may their hapless lot  
The mournful muse engage,  
She wipes away the tears that blot  
The melancholy page.

For heav'n in love dissolves the ties  
That chain the spirit here,  
And distant, and for ever flies  
The blessing held most dear;

To bid the suff'ring soul aspire  
A higher bliss to prove,  
To wake the pure, refin'd desire,  
The hope that rests above!

Helen Maria Williams

# Elegy On A Young Thrush

WHICH ESCAPED FROM THE WRITER'S HAND, AND FALLING DOWN THE AREA OF A HOUSE, COULD NOT BE FOUND.

MISTAKEN Bird, ah whither hast thou stray'd?

My friendly grasp why eager to elude?

This hand was on thy pinion lightly laid,

And fear'd to hurt thee by a touch too rude.

Is there no foresight in a Thrush's breast,

That thou down yonder gulph from me wouldst go?

That gloomy area lurking cats infest,

And there the dog may rove, alike thy foe.

I would with lavish crumbs my bird have fed,

And brought a crystal cup to wet thy bill;

I would have made of down and moss thy bed,

Soft, though not fashion'd with a Thrush's skill.

Soon as thy strengthen'd wing could mount the sky,

My willing hand had set my captive free;

Ah, not for her who loves the Muse, to buy

A selfish pleasure, bought with pain to thee!

The vital air, and liberty, and light

Had all been thine; and love, and rapt'rous song,

And sweet parental joys, in rapid flight,

Had led the circle of thy life along.

Securely to my window hadst thou flown,

And ever thy accustom'd morsel found;

Nor should thy trusting breast the wants have known

Which other Thrushes knew when winter frown'd.

Fram'd with the wisdom nature lent to thee,

Thy house of straw had brav'd the tempest's rage,

And thou through many a Spring hadst liv'd to see

The utmost limit of a Thrush's age.

Ill-fated bird!-and does the Thrush's race,

Like Man's, mistake the path that leads to bliss?  
Or, when his eye that tranquil path can trace,  
The good he well discerns through folly miss?

Helen Maria Williams

# Euphelia

As roam'd a pilgrim o'er the mountain drear,  
On whose lone verge the foaming billows roar,  
The wail of hopeless sorrow pierc'd his ear,  
And swell'd at distance on the sounding shore.

The mourner breath'd her deep complaint to night,  
Her moan she mingled with the rapid blast,  
That bar'd her bosom in its wasting flight,  
And o'er the earth her scatter'd tresses cast,

"Ye winds," she cried, "still heave the lab'ring deep,  
The mountain shake, the howling forest rend;  
Still dash the shiv'ring fragments from the steep,  
Nor for a wretch like me the storm suspend.

"Ah, wherefore wish the rising storm to spare?  
Ah, why implore the raging winds to save?  
What refuge can the breast, where lives despair,  
Desire but death?--what shelter but the grave?

"To me congenial is the gloom of night,  
The savage howlings that infest the air;  
I unappall'd can view the fatal light  
That issues from the pointed lightning's glare.

"And yet erewhile, if night her shadows threw  
O'er the known woodlands of my native vale,  
Fancy in visions wild the landscape drew,  
And swell'd with boding sounds the whisp'ring gale.

"But deep despair has arm'd my timid soul,  
And agony has numb'd the throb of fear;  
Taught a weak heart its terrors to controul,  
And more to court than shun the danger near.

"Yet could I welcome the return of light,  
Its glimm'ring beam might guide my searching eye;  
The sacred spot might then emerge from night  
On which a lover's bleeding relics lie.

"For sure 'twas here, as late a shepherd stray'd,  
Bewilder'd, o'er the mountain's dreary bound,  
Close to the pointed cliff he saw him laid,  
Where heav'd the waters of the deep around.

"Alas, no longer could his heart endure  
The woes that heart was doom'd for me to prove;  
He sought for death--for death the only cure  
That fate has not refus'd to hopeless love!

"My sire, unjust while passion swell'd his breast,  
From the lov'd ALFRED his EUPHELIA tore;  
Mock'd the keen sorrows that my soul opprest,  
And bade me--vainly bade me, love no more.

"He told me love was like yon troubled deep,  
Whose restless billows never know repose,  
Are wildly dash'd upon the rocky steep,  
And tremble to the slightest breeze that blows!

"From those rude scenes remote her gentle balm,  
Dear to the suff'ring spirit, peace applies;  
Peace! 'tis th' oblivious lake's detested calm,  
Whose dull, slow waters never fall or rise.

"Ah, what avails a parent's stern command,  
The force of conqu'ring passion to subdue?  
Ah, wherefore seek to rend with cruel hand  
The ties enchanted love so fondly drew?

"Yet I could see my ALFRED'S fix'd despair,  
And, aw'd by filial fear, conceal my woes!  
My coward heart could separation bear,  
And check the struggling anguish as it rose!

"'Twas guilt the barb'rous mandate to obey,  
Which bade no parting sigh my bosom move!  
Victim of duty's unrelenting sway,  
I seem'd a traitor, while a slave to love!

"Let her who seal'd a lover's fate, endure

The sharpest pressure of deserv'd distress;  
'Twere added perfidy to seek a cure,  
And, stain'd with falsehood, wish to suffer less.

"For wretches doom'd in other griefs to pine,  
Oft will benignant hope her ray impart;  
And pity oft from her celestial shrine  
Drop a warm tear upon the fainting heart:

"But o'er the lasting gloom of love's despair,  
Can hope's bright ray its cheering visions shed?  
Can pity sooth the woes that breast must bear  
Which vainly loves, and vainly mourns the dead?

"No! ling'ring still, and still prolong'd, the moan  
Shall never pause 'till heaves my latest breath;  
Till memory's distracting pang is flown,  
And all my sorrows shall be hush'd in death.

And death is pitying come, whose hand shall tear  
From this afflicted heart the sense of pain;  
My fainting limbs refuse their load to bear,  
And life no longer will my form sustain.

"Yet once did health's enliv'ning glow adorn,  
And pleasure shed for me her loveliest ray,  
Pure as the gentle star that gilds the morn,  
And constant as the equal light of day.

"Now, those lost pleasures trac'd by mem'ry, seem  
Like yon illusive meteor's glancing light,  
That o'er the darkness threw its instant gleam,  
Then sunk, and vanish'd in the depth of night.

"My native vale, and thou, delightful bower!  
Scenes to my hopeless love for ever dear!  
Sweet vale, for whom the morning wak'd her flower,  
Fresh bower, for whom the evening pour'd her tear:

"I ask no more to see your beauties rise;  
Ye rocks and mountains, on whose rugged breast  
My ALFRED , murder'd by EUPHELIA , lies,



In your deep solitudes, I come to rest!

"And sure the dawning ray that lights the steep,  
And slowly wanders o'er the purple wave,  
Will shew me where his sacred relics sleep,  
Will lead his mourner to her destin'd grave!"--

O'er the high precipice unmov'd she bent,  
A fearful path the beams of morning shew;  
The pilgrim reach'd with toil the rude ascent,  
And saw her brooding o'er the deep below.

"EUPHELIA , stay!" he cried, "thy ALFRED calls--  
O, stay--in desperation yet more dear!--  
I come!"--in vain the tender accent falls,  
Alas, it reach'd not her distracted ear.

"Ah what avails," she said, "that morning rose,  
With fruitless pain I seek his mould'ring clay;  
Vain search! to fill the measure of my woes,  
The foaming surge has wash'd his corse away.

"This cruel agony why longer bear?  
Death, death alone, can all my pangs remove--  
Kind death will banish from my heart despair,  
And when I live again--I live to love."

She said, and plung'd into the awful deep!  
He saw her meet the fury of the wave,  
He frantic saw! and, darting to the steep,  
With desp'rate anguish, sought her wat'ry grave.

He clasp'd her dying form, he shar'd her sighs,  
He check'd the billow rushing on her breast;  
She felt his dear embrace!--her closing eyes  
Were fix'd on ALFRED, and her death was blest!

Helen Maria Williams

# Hymn Written Among The Alps

CREATION'S GOD ! with thought elate,  
Thy hand divine I see  
Impressed on scenes, where all is great,  
Where all is full of thee!

Where stern the Alpine mountains raise  
Their heads of massive snow;  
When on the rolling storm I gaze,  
That hangs-how far below!

Where on some bold, stupendous height,  
The Eagle sits alone;  
Or soaring wings his sullen flight  
To haunts still more his own:

Where the sharp rock the Chamois treads,  
Or, slippery summit scales;  
Or where the whitening Snow-bird spreads  
Her plumes to icy gales:

Where the rude cliff's steep column glows  
With morning's tint of blue;  
Or evening on the glacier throws  
The rose's blushing hue:

Or where by twilight's softer light,  
The mountain's shadow bends;  
And sudden casts a partial night,  
As black its form descends:

Where the full ray of noon alone  
Down the deep valley falls:  
Or where the sunbeam never shone  
Between its rifted walls:

Where cloudless regions calm the soul,  
Bid mortal cares be still,  
Can passion's wayward wish controul,  
And rectify the will:

Where midst some vast expanse the mind,  
Which swelling virtue fires,  
Forgets that earth it leaves behind,  
And to it's heaven aspires:

Where far along the desert air  
Is heard no creature's call:  
And undisturbing mortal ear  
The avalanches fall:

Where rushing from their snowy source,  
The daring torrents urge  
Their loud-toned waters headlong course,  
And lift their feathered surge:

Where swift the lines of light and shade  
Flit o'er the lucid lake:  
Or the shrill winds its breast invade,  
And its green billows wake:

Where on the slope, with speckled dye  
The pigmy herds I scan;  
Or soothed, the scattered Chalets spy,  
The last abode of man:

Or where the flocks refuse to pass,  
And the lone peasant mows,  
Fixed on his knees, the pendent grass,  
Which down the steep he throws:

Where high the dangerous pathway leads  
Above the gulph profound,  
From whence the shrinking eye recedes,  
Nor finds repose around:

Where red the mountain-ash reclines  
Along the clifted rock;  
Where firm the dark unbending pines  
The howling tempests mock:

Where, level with the ice-ribb'd bound

The yellow harvests glow;  
Or vales with purple vines are crown'd  
Beneath impending snow:

Where the rich min'rals catch the ray,  
With varying lustre bright,  
And glittering fragments strew the way  
With sparks of liquid light:

Or where the moss forbears to creep  
Where loftier summits rear  
Their untrod snow, and frozen sleep  
Locks all the uncolour'd year:

In every scene, where every hour  
Sheds some terrific grace,  
In Nature's vast o'erwhelming power,  
THEE , THEE , my GOD , I trace!

Helen Maria Williams

# Hymn, Imitated From The French

I.

CALM all the tumults that invade  
Our souls, and lend Thy pow'rful aid.  
O Source of Mercy! soothe our pains,  
And break, O break our cruel chains!  
To Thee the captive pours his cry,  
To Thee the mourner loves to fly;  
The incense of our tears receive,  
'Tis all the incense we can give.

II.

Eternal Power, our cause defend,  
O God! of innocence the friend!  
Near Thee for ever she resides,  
In Thee for ever she confides;  
Thou know'st the secrets of the breast,  
Thou know'st th' oppressor and th' opprest;  
Do Thou our wrongs with pity see,  
Avert a doom offending Thee!

III.

But should the murd'rer's arm prevail,  
Should tyranny our lives assail,  
Unmov'd, triumphant, scorning death,  
We'll bless Thee with our latest breath!-  
The hour, the glorious hour will come,  
That consecrates the patriot's tomb;  
And, with the pang our mem'ry claims,  
Our country will avenge our names.

Helen Maria Williams

# Imitation Of Lines

ADDRESSED BY M. D--, A YOUNG MAN OF TWENTY-FOUR YEARS OF AGE, THE NIGHT BEFORE HIS EXECUTION, TO A YOUNG LADY TO WHOM HE WAS ENGAGED.-1794.

I.

THE hour that calls to death is near,  
It brings to me no throb of fear;  
The breast that honour arms, can brave  
The murd'rer's steel, th' untimely grave;  
But thou, to whom I gave my heart,  
From thee for ever must I part?  
Wilt thou not hear my latest sigh?-  
Ah, 'tis a cruel task to die!

II.

To-morrow, my clos'd eyes no more  
Shall gaze on beauty I adore;  
To-morrow, sadd'ning every grace,  
Unceasing tears shall bathe thy face;  
To-morrow, chill'd by death's cold grasp,  
This hand no longer thine shall clasp;  
For thou-no more wilt thou be nigh-  
Ah, 'tis a cruel task to die!

Helen Maria Williams

# Imitation Of Lines Written By Roucher

BELOW HIS PICTURE, WHICH  
A FELLOW-PRISONER HAD DRAWN, AND WHICH  
HE SENT TO HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN THE  
DAY BEFORE HIS EXECUTION.-1794.

Lov'd objects! cease to wonder when ye trace  
The melancholy air that clouds my face;  
Ah! while the Painter's skill this image drew,  
They rear'd the Scaffold, and I thought of you!

Helen Maria Williams

## Lines Addressed To A.C.

I.

DEAR Babe, soft object of my care,  
Unseen, for whom I pour my pray'r;  
Unknown, yet priz'd all else above,  
The heir of my maternal love;  
Ah, let me hail, in simplest lay,  
Thy earliest New-Year's Day!

II.

Nor past, nor future cloud thy brow,  
Thy range of thought confin'd to now;  
Calm on a mother's breast you lie,  
And heed not if, with tearful eye,  
For thee her wishes fondly stray  
O'er many a New-Year's Day.

III.

Yet soon the years in rapid flight  
Shall wake thy heart to new delight;  
Soon shall exulting youth draw near,  
With charms so fresh, and hopes so dear;  
And lovely as the bloom of May  
Shall seem each New-Year's Day.

IV.

But ah, since Time at length will bring  
No rapture on his weary wing,  
Then, o'er thy path, no longer bright,  
May Virtue shed a line of light,  
That cheers the pilgrim, when his way  
Leads to no New-Year's Day!





# Lines On The Tomb Of A Favorite Dog

HERE rests the image of a friend,-  
Thine, cherish'd BIBI , thine!  
Oft to this spot our steps we'll bend,  
And call it Friendship's shrine.

Through length'ning years' successive flight  
Thy fondness still had power  
To shed its narrow line of light  
On life's domestic hour;

And while for pleasures sought amiss  
Abroad we vainly roam,  
How far more dear the slightest bliss  
That adds one charm to home!

Let those who coldly scorn the tear  
That soothes the grief we prove,  
Say, if fidelity be dear,  
If love has claims to love;

Say, on what hallow'd spot there lives  
A heart unknown to range,  
That to one chosen object gives  
A love no power can change?

Tell, in what tender breast to find  
Affection half so true?-  
Ah, BIBI, who of human kind  
Has learnt to love like you!

Helen Maria Williams

# Lines To Helen

A NEW-BORN INFANT, 1821.

She lives-that first pulsation of the heart  
Is life!-receive, dear babe, thy destin'd part;  
Yet frail thy being as the op'ning rose  
    When chill the rude wind blows.

But ah, be like the blossom of the vale,  
Lov'd infant, shelter'd from the mountain gale;  
On whose meek head descend no ruffling showers,  
    Who lives the span of flowers.

And far from thee may sorrow's tempest bend,  
Nor ever wasting pangs the bosom rend;  
Calm be thy day of life, and o'er its bloom  
    May evening mildly come!

Helen Maria Williams

# Lines Written In An Album

OF THE BARONESS

D' H---, TO HER TWO DAUGHTERS.

BRIGHT nymphs, of NEWA'S banks the pride,  
Receive, before we part,  
For you, and your maternal guide,  
The wishes of my heart!

Be every future good your lot!-  
But what can fate do more?  
Has nature any boon forgot  
For you in all her store?

While, midst the wreathes the arts have twin'd  
Around your brows, we trace  
That tender modesty of mind  
That decorates the face;

Grac'd with such forms as RAPHAEL drew  
Beneath his happiest star,  
What is there left to ask for you,  
But wish you-what you are?

Helen Maria Williams

# Lines Written On The Pillar Erecting To The Memory Of Mr. Barlow

Minister of the United States at Paris, WHO DIED AT NAROWITCH IN POLAND,  
ON HIS RETURN  
FROM WILNA, DEC. 26, 1812.

WHERE o'er the Polish desert's trackless way  
Relentless Winter rules with savage sway,-  
Where the shrill Polar winds, as wild they blow,  
Seem to repeat some plaint of mortal woe,-  
Far o'er the cheerless waste, the traveller's eye  
Shall this recording pillar long descry,  
And give the sod a tear where BARLOW lies-  
He who was simply great and nobly wise.  
Here, led by patriot zeal, he met his doom,  
And found, amid the frozen wastes, a tomb;

Far from his native soil the patriot fell,  
Far from that Western World he sung so well!  
Nor she, so long belov'd! nor she was nigh,  
To catch the dying look, the parting sigh!  
She who, the hopeless anguish to beguile,  
In fond memorial rears the fun'ral pile!  
Whose widow'd bosom on Columbia's shore  
Shall mourn the moments that return no more;  
While, bending o'er the broad Atlantic wave,  
Sad fancy hovers on the distant grave.

Helen Maria Williams

# Ode To Peace

I.

She comes, benign enchantress, heav'n born PEACE!  
With mercy beaming in her radiant eye;  
She bids the horrid din of battle cease,  
And at her glance the savage passions die.  
'Tis Nature's festival, let earth rejoice,  
And pour to Liberty exulting songs,  
In distant regions, with according voice,  
Let Man the vict'ry bless, its prize to Man belongs.

II.

Resistless Freedom! when she nerves the arm,  
No vulgar triumph crowns the hero's might;  
She, she alone can spread a moral charm  
O'er war's fell deeds, and sanctify the fight.  
O, GALLIA ! in this bright immortal hour,  
How proud a trophy binds thy laurel'd brow!  
Republic, hail! whose independent power  
All earth contested once, all earth confesses now.

III.

Protecting spirits of the glorious dead!  
Ah, not in vain the hero's noble toil,  
Ah, not in vain the patriot's blood is shed,  
That blood shall consecrate his native soil.  
Illustrious names! to hist'ry's record dear,  
And breath'd when some high impulse fires the bard,  
For you shall virtue pour the glowing tear,  
And your remember'd deeds shall still your country guard.

IV.

And thou, lov'd BRITAIN , my parental Isle!

Secure, encircled by thy subject waves,  
Thou, land august, where Freedom rear'd her pile,  
While gothic night obscur'd a world of slaves;  
Thy genius, that indignant heard the shock  
Of frantic combat, strife unmeet for thee,  
Now views triumphant, from his sea-girt rock,  
Thee unsubdued alone, for thou alone wert free!

V.

O, happy thy misguided efforts fail'd,  
My Country! when with tyrant-hosts combin'd--  
O, hideous conquest, had thy sword prevail'd,  
And crown'd the impious league against mankind!  
Thou nurse of great design, of lofty thought,  
What homicide, had thy insensate rage  
Effac'd the sacred lesson thou hast taught,  
And with thy purest blood inscrib'd on glory's page.

VI.

Ah, rather haste to Concord's holy shrine,  
Ye rival nations, haste with joy elate;  
Your blending garlands round her altar twine,  
And bind the wounds of no immortal hate:  
Go--breathe responsive rituals o'er the sod  
Where Freedom martyrs press an early grave;  
Go--vow that never shall their turf be trod  
By the polluting step of tyrant or of slave.

VII.

And from your shores the abject vices chase,  
That low Ambition generous souls disdain,  
Corruption blasting every moral grace,  
Servility that kneels to bless his chain;  
O, Liberty, those demons far remove,  
Come, nymph severely good, sublimely great!  
Nor to the raptur'd hope of mortals prove

Like those illusive dreams that pass the iv'ry gate.

VII.

New Age! that roll'st o'er man thy dawning year,  
Ah, sure all happy omens hail thy birth,  
Sure whiter annals in thy train appear,  
And purer glory cheers the gladden'd earth:  
Like the young eagle, when his stedfast glance  
Meets the full sun-beam in his upward flight,  
So thou shalt with majestic step advance,  
And fix thy dauntless eye on Liberty and Light.

Helen Maria Williams



# On The Bill Which Was Passed In England For Regulating The Slave-Trade

The hollow winds of night no more  
In wild, unequal cadence pour,  
On musing fancy's wakeful ear,  
The groan of agony severe  
From yon dark vessel, which contains  
The wretch new bound in hopeless chains!  
Whose soul with keener anguish bleeds,  
As AFRIC'S less'ning shore recedes--

No more where Ocean's unseen bound  
Leaves a drear world of waters round,  
Between the howling gust, shall rise  
The stifled captive's latest sighs!--  
No more shall suffocating death  
Seize the pent victim's sinking breath;  
The pang of that convulsive hour,  
Reproaching man's insatiate power;  
Man! who to AFRIC'S shore has past,  
Relentless, as the annual blast  
That sweeps the Western Isles, and flings  
Destruction from its furious wings!--  
And woman, she, too weak to bear  
The galling chain, the tainted air,--  
Of mind too feeble to sustain  
The vast, accumulated pain,--  
No more, in desperation wild,  
Shall madly strain her gasping child;  
With all the mother at her soul,  
With eyes where tears have ceas'd to roll,  
Shall catch the livid infant's breath,  
Then sink in agonizing death!  
BRITAIN! the noble, blest decree  
That soothes despair, is fram'd by thee!  
Thy powerful arm has interpos'd,  
And one dire scene for ever clos'd;  
Its horror shall no more belong  
To that foul drama, deep with wrong.

O, first of EUROPE'S polish'd lands  
To ease the captive's iron bands;  
Long, as thy glorious annals shine,  
This proud distinction shall be thine!  
Not first alone when valour leads  
To rush on danger's noblest deeds;  
When mercy calls thee to explore  
A gloomy path, untrod before,  
Thy ardent spirit springs to heal,  
And, greatly gen'rous, dares to feel!--  
Valour is like the meteor's light,  
Whose partial flash leaves deeper night;  
While Mercy, like the lunar ray,  
Gilds the thick shade with softer day.  
Blest deed! that met consenting minds  
In all but those whom av'rice binds,--  
Who creep in interest's crooked ways,  
Nor ever pass her narrow maze;  
Or those whom hard indiff'rence steels  
To every pang another feels.  
For them has fortune round their bowers  
Twin'd, partial nymph! her lavish flowers;  
For them , from unsunn'd caves, she brings  
Her summer ice; for them she springs  
To climes where hotter suns produce  
The richer fruit's delicious juice;  
While they , whom wasted blessings tire,  
Nor leave one want to feed desire,  
With cool, insulting ease demand  
Why, for yon hopeless, captive band,  
Is ask'd, to mitigate despair,  
The mercy of the common air?

The boon of larger space to breathe,  
While coop'd that hollow deck beneath?  
A lengthen'd plank, on which to throw  
Their shackled limbs, while fiercely glow  
The beams direct, that on each head  
The fury of contagion shed?--  
And dare presumptuous, guilty man,  
Load with offence his fleeting span?  
Deform creation with the gloom

Of crimes that blot its cheerful bloom?  
Darken a work so perfect made,  
And cast the universe in shade?--  
Alas! to AFRIC'S fetter'd race  
Creation wears no form of grace!  
To them earth's pleasant vales are found  
A blasted waste, a sterile bound;  
Where the poor wand'rer must sustain  
The load of unremitted pain;  
A region in whose ample scope  
His eye discerns no gleam of hope;  
Where thought no kind asylum knows  
On which its anguish may repose;  
But death, that to the ravag'd breast  
Comes not in shapes of terror drest;  
Points to green hills where freedom roves,  
And minds renew their former loves;  
Or, hov'ring in the troubled air,  
Hangs the fierce spectre of Despair;  
Whose soul abhors the gift of life,  
Who stedfast grasps the reeking knife,  
Bids the charg'd heart in torrents bleed,  
And smiles in frenzy at the deed!  
Ye noble minds! who o'er a sky  
Where clouds are roll'd, and tempests fly,  
Have bid the lambent lustre play  
Of one pure, lovely, azure ray;  
O, far diffuse its op'ning bloom,  
And the wide Hemisphere illumine!  
Ye, who one bitter drop have drain'd  
From slav'ry's cup, with horror stain'd,  
O, let no fatal dregs be found,  
But dash her chalice on the ground,  
While still she links her impious chain,  
And calculates the price of pain;  
Weighs agony in sordid scales,  
And marks if death or life prevails;  
Decides how near the mangling scourge  
May to the grave its victim urge,--  
Yet for awhile, with prudent care,  
The half-worn wretch, if useful, spare;  
And speculates, with skill refin'd,

How deep a wound will stab the mind;  
How far the spirit can endure  
Calamity, that hopes no cure!--  
Ye! who can selfish cares forego,  
To pity those which others know,--  
As light that from its centre strays  
To glad all nature with its rays,--  
O, ease the pangs ye stoop to share,  
And rescue millions from despair!--  
For you, while morn in graces gay  
Wakes the fresh bloom of op'ning day,  
Gilds with her purple light your dome,  
Renewing all the joys of home,--  
Of that dear shed which first ye knew,  
Where first the sweet affections grew;  
Whose charm alike the heart can draw,  
If form'd of marble or of straw;  
Whether the voice of pleasure calls,  
And gladness echoes through its walls,  
Or to its hallow'd roof we fly  
With those we love to pour the sigh;  
The load of mingled pain to bear,  
And soften every pang we share!--  
Ah, think how desolate his state,  
How he the cheerful light must hate,  
Whom, sever'd from his native soil,  
The morning wakes to fruitless toil  
To labours hope shall never cheer,  
Or fond domestic joy endear!

Poor wretch! on whose despairing eyes  
His cherish'd home shall never rise!  
Condemn'd, severe extreme, to live  
When all is fled that life can give:--  
And ah, the blessings valued most  
By human minds, are blessings lost!  
Unlike the objects of the eye,  
Enlarging as we bring them nigh;  
Our joys at distance strike the breast,  
And seem diminish'd when possess.  
Who from his far-divided shore  
The half-expiring captive bore?

Those whom the traffic of their race  
Has robb'd of every human grace;  
Whose harden'd souls no more retain  
Impressions nature stamp'd in vain:  
As streams that once the landscape gave  
Reflected on the trembling wave,  
Their substance change when lock'd in frost,  
And rest in dead contraction lost;  
Who view, unmoved, the look that tells  
The pang that in the bosom dwells;  
Heed not the nerves that terror shakes,  
The heart convulsive anguish breaks;  
The shriek that would their crimes upbraid,  
But deem despair a part of trade.  
Such only for detested gain  
The barb'rous commerce would maintain;  
The gen'rous sailor, he who dares  
All forms of danger, while he bears  
The British flag o'er sultry seas,  
And spreads it on the Polar breeze;  
He to whose guardian arm we owe  
Each blessing that the happy know;  
Whatever charms the soften'd heart,  
Each cultur'd grace, each finer art,  
E'en thine, most lovely of the train!  
Sweet Poetry, thy heav'n-taught strain,  
His breast, where nobler passions burn,  
In honest poverty, would spurn  
The wealth oppression can bestow,  
And scorn to wound a fetter'd foe!  
True courage in the unconquered soul  
Yields to Compassion's mild control;  
As, the resisting frame of steel  
The magnet's secret force can feel.  
When borne at length to Western lands,  
Chain'd on the beach the captive stands,  
Where Man, dire merchandize! is sold,  
And barter'd life is paid for gold!  
In mute affliction, see him try  
To read his new possessor's eye;  
If one blest glance of mercy there,  
One half-form'd tear may check despair!

Ah, if that eye with sorrow sees  
His languid look, his quiv'ring knees,  
Those limbs which scarce their load sustain,  
That form consum'd in wasting pain,  
Such sorrow fills his ruthless eye  
Who sees the lamb he doom'd to die;  
In pining sickness yield his life,  
And thus elude the sharpen'd knife.  
Or if where savage habit steels  
The vulgar mind, one bosom feels  
The sacred claim of helpless woe--  
If pity in that soil can grow!  
Yet why on one poor chance must rest  
The int'rest of a kindred breast?  
Why yield to passion's wayward laws  
Humanity's devoted cause?--  
Ah ye, who one fix'd purpose own,  
Whose untir'd aim is self alone;  
Who think in gold the essence lies  
From which extracted bliss shall rise;  
Does fleeting life proportion bear  
To all the wealth ye heap with care?  
When soon your days in rapid flight  
Shall sink in death's terrific night,  
Then seize the moments in your power,  
To Mercy consecrate the hour!  
Risk something in her cause at last,  
And thus atone for all the past.  
Does avarice, your god, delight  
With agony to feast his sight?

Does he require that victims slain,  
And human blood his altars stain?--  
Ah, not alone of power possess  
To check each virtue of the breast:  
As when the numbing frosts arise  
The charm of vegetation dies;  
His sway the harden'd bosom leads  
To cruelty's remorseless deeds;  
Like the blue lightning, when it springs  
With fury on its livid wings,  
Darts to its goal with baleful force,

Nor heeds that ruin marks its course!  
O, Eloquence! prevailing art!  
Whose force can chain the list'ning heart;  
The throb of sympathy inspire,  
And kindle every great desire;  
With magic energy control,  
And reign the sov'reign of the soul!  
That dreams, while all its passions swell,  
It shares the power it feels so well:  
As visual objects seem possess  
Of those clear hues by light imprest.  
O, skill'd in every grace to charm,  
To soften, to appal, to warm,--  
Fill with thy noblest rage the breast,  
Bid on those lips thy spirit rest,  
That shall, in Britain's Senate, trace  
The wrongs of AFRIC'S captive race!--  
But Fancy o'er the tale of woe  
In vain one heighten'd tint would throw;  
For ah, the truth is all we guess  
Of anguish in its last excess!  
Fancy may dress in deeper shade  
The storm that hangs along the glade;  
Spreads o'er the ruffled stream its wing,  
And chills awhile the flowers of spring;  
But where the wint'ry tempests sweep  
In madness o'er the darken'd deep,--  
Where the wild surge, the raging wave,  
Point to the hopeless wretch a grave;  
And death surrounds the threat'ning shore--  
Can fancy add one horror more?--  
Lov'd BRITAIN ! whose protecting hand,  
Stretch'd o'er the globe, on AFRIC'S strand  
The honour'd base of freedom lays,  
Soon, soon the finish'd fabric raise!  
And when surrounding realms would frame,  
Touch'd with a spark of gen'rous flame,  
Some pure, ennobling, great design,  
Some lofty act, almost divine,  
Which earth may hail with rapture high,  
And heav'n may view with fav'ring eye,--  
Teach them to make all nature free,

And shine by emulating thee!

Helen Maria Williams



# Paraphrases From Scripture

The day is thine, the night also is thine; thou hast prepared the light and the sun.

Thou hast set all the borders of the earth; thou hast made summer and winter.

PSALM lxxiv. 16, 17.

My God! all nature owns thy sway,  
Thou giv'st the night, and thou the day!  
When all thy lov'd creation wakes,  
When morning, rich in lustre breaks,  
And bathes in dew the op'ning flower,  
To thee we owe her fragrant hour;  
And when she pours her choral song,  
Her melodies to thee belong!

Or when, in paler tints array'd,  
The evening slowly spreads her shade;  
That soothing shade, that grateful gloom,  
Can more than day's enliv'ning bloom  
Still every fond, and vain desire,  
And calmer, purer, thoughts inspire;  
From earth the pensive spirit free,  
And lead the soften'd heart to Thee.

In every scene thy hands have drest,  
In every form by thee imprest,  
Upon the mountain's awful head,  
Or where the shelt'ring woods are spread;  
In every note that swells the gale,  
Or tuneful stream that cheers the vale,  
The cavern's depth, or echoing grove,  
A voice is heard of praise, and love.

As o'er thy work the seasons roll,  
And sooth with change of bliss, the soul,  
Oh never may their smiling train  
Pass o'er the human scene in vain!

But oft as on the charm we gaze,  
Attune the wond'ring soul to praise;  
And be the joys that most we prize,  
The joys that from thy favour rise!

Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should  
not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea,  
they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.

ISAIAH xlix. 15.

Heaven speaks! Oh Nature listen and rejoice!  
Oh spread from pole to pole this gracious voice!  
'Say every breast of human frame, that proves  
'The boundless force with which a parent loves;  
'Say, can a mother from her yearning heart  
'Bid the soft image of her child depart?  
'She! whom strong instinct arms with strength to bear  
'All forms of ill, to shield that dearest care;  
'She! who with anguish stung, with madness wild,  
'Will rush on death to save her threaten'd child;  
'All selfish feelings banish'd from her breast,  
'Her life one aim to make another's blest.  
'When her vex'd infant to her bosom clings,  
'When round her neck his eager arms he flings;  
'Breathes to her list'ning soul his melting sigh,  
'And lifts suffus'd with tears his asking eye!  
'Will she for all ambition can attain,  
'The charms of pleasure, or the lures of gain,  
'Betray strong Nature's feelings, will she prove  
'Cold to the claims of duty, and of love?  
'But should the mother from her yearning heart  
'Bid the soft image of her child depart;  
'When the vex'd infant to her bosom clings  
'When round her neck his eager arms he flings;  
'Should she unpitying hear his melting sigh,  
'And view unmov'd the tear that fills his eye;  
'Should she for all ambition can attain,

'The charms of pleasure, or the lures of gain,  
'Betray strong Nature's feelings—should she prove  
'Cold to the claims of duty, and of love!  
'Yet never will the God, whose word gave birth  
'To yon illumin'd orbs, and this fair earth;  
'Who thro' the boundless depths of trackless space  
'Bade new-wak'd beauty spread each perfect grace;  
'Yet when he form'd the vast stupendous whole,  
'Shed his best bounties on the human soul;  
'Which reason's light illumes, which friendship warms,  
'Which pity softens, and which virtue charms;  
'Which feels the pure affections gen'rous glow,  
'Shares others joy, and bleeds for others woe—  
'Oh never will the gen'ral Father prove  
'Of man forgetful, man the child of love!'  
When all those planets in their ample spheres  
Have wing'd their course, and roll'd their destin'd years;  
When the vast sun shall veil his golden light  
Deep in the gloom of everlasting night;  
When wild, destructive flames shall wrap the skies,  
When Chaos triumphs, and when Nature dies;  
Man shall alone the wreck of worlds survive,  
Midst falling spheres, immortal man shall live!  
The voice which bade the last dread thunders roll,  
Shall whisper to the good, and cheer their soul.  
God shall himself his favour'd creature guide  
Where living waters pour their blissful tide,  
Where the enlarg'd, exulting, wond'ring mind  
Shall soar, from weakness and from guilt refin'd;  
Where perfect knowledge, bright with cloudless rays,  
Shall gild eternity's unmeasur'd days;  
Where friendship, unembitter'd by distrust,  
Shall in immortal bands unite the just;  
Devotion rais'd to rapture breathe her strain,  
And love in his eternal triumph reign!

Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.

MATT. vii. 12.

Precept divine! to earth in mercy given,  
O sacred rule of action, worthy heaven!  
Whose pitying love ordain'd the bless'd command  
To bind our nature in a firmer band;  
Enforce each human suff'rer's strong appeal,  
And teach the selfish breast what others feel;  
Wert thou the guide of life, mankind might know  
A soft exemption from the worst of woe;  
No more the powerful would the weak oppress,  
But tyrants learn the luxury to bless;  
No more would slav'ry bind a hopeless train,  
Of human victims, in her galling chain;  
Mercy the hard, the cruel heart would move  
To soften mis'ry by the deeds of Jove;  
And av'rice from his hoarded treasures give  
Unask'd, the liberal boon, that want might live!  
The impious tongue of falshood then would cease  
To blast, with dark suggestions, virtue's peace;  
No more would spleen, or passion banish rest  
And plant a pang in fond affection's breast;  
By one harsh word, one alter'd look, destroy  
Her peace, and wither every op'ning joy;  
Scarce can her tongue the captious wrong explain,  
The slight offence which gives so deep a pain!  
Th' affected ease that slights her starting tear,  
The words whose coldness kills from lips so dear;  
The hand she loves, alone can point the dart,  
Whose hidden sting could wound no other heart—  
These, of all pains the sharpest we endure,  
The breast which now inflicts, would spring to cure.—  
No more deserted genius then, would fly  
To breathe in solitude his hopeless sigh;  
No more would Fortune's partial smile debase  
The spirit, rich in intellectual grace;  
Who views unmov'd from scenes where pleasures bloom,  
The flame of genius sunk in mis'ry's gloom;  
The soul heav'n form'd to soar, by want deprest,  
Nor heeds the wrongs that pierce a kindred breast.—  
Thou righteous Law! whose clear and useful light  
Sheds on the mind a ray divinely bright;  
Condensing in one rule whate'er the sage  
Has proudly taught, in many a labour'd page;

Bid every heart thy hallow'd voice revere,  
To justice sacred, and to nature dear!

That thine alms may be in secret,  
and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

Matt. VI. 4.

HEAR heav'n's pure dictates, ye presumptuous crowd,  
Be kind ye selfish, and abash'd ye proud!  
Nor think the ostentatious act, which draws  
The incense of ill judging man's applause,  
The boon obtruded on the gazer's sight,  
Outweighs in virtue's scale, the widow's mite;  
Claim not in His divine rewards, a part,  
Who knows the motive, and who views the heart;

Be yours to hear the empty accents roll  
Of praise, rejected by the conscious soul.  
But ye, who when to succour want ye fly,  
Have never paus'd to wish a witness nigh,  
Have mingled with your alms, the unseen tear,  
The secret sigh which heav'n alone could hear;  
Be yours, when life shall reach the closing scene,  
To read its record with a hope serene;  
And yours to listen, while a voice of love  
Proclaims your bright inheritance above.

Helen Maria Williams

# Part Of An Irregular Fragment

## I.

Rise, winds of night! relentless tempests, rise!  
Rush from the troubled clouds, and o'er me roll!  
In this chill pause a deeper horror lies,  
A wilder fear appals my shudd'ring soul!--  
'Twas on this day,\* this hour accurst,  
That Nature, starting from repose,  
Heard the dire shrieks of murder burst--  
From infant innocence they rose,--  
And shook these solemn towers!  
I shudd'ring pass that fatal room,  
For ages wrapt in central gloom!--  
I shudd'ring pass that iron door,  
Which fate perchance unlocks no more;  
Death, smear'd with blood, o'er the dark portal lowers!

## II.

How fearfully my step resounds  
Along these lonely bounds!--  
Spare, savage blast! the taper's quiv'ring fires;  
Deep in these gath'ring shades its flame expires.  
Ye host of heaven! the door recedes--  
It mocks my grasp--what unseen hands  
Have burst its iron bands?  
No mortal force this gate unbarr'd,  
Where danger lives, which terrors guard--  
Dread powers! its screaming hinges close  
On this dire scene of impious deeds--  
My feet are fix'd!--Dismay has bound  
My step on this polluted ground!  
But lo! the pitying moon a line of light  
Athwart the horrid darkness dimly throws,  
And from yon grated window chases night.

## III.

Ye visions that before me roll,  
That freeze my blood, that shake my soul!  
Are ye the phantoms of a dream?--  
Pale spectres! are ye what ye seem?--  
They glide more near!  
Their forms unfold!  
Fix'd are their eyes--on me they bend--  
Their glaring look is cold!  
And hark!--I hear  
Sounds that the throbbing pulse of life suspend:

#### IV.

"No wild illusion cheats thy sight  
With shapes that only live in night--  
Mark the native glories spread  
Around my bleeding brow!  
The crown of Albion wreath'd my head,  
When my father shook his spear,  
When his banner sought the skies,  
Her baffled host recoil'd with fear,  
Nor turn'd their shrinking eyes.  
Soon as the daring eagle springs,  
To bask in heav'n's empyreal light,  
The vultures ply their baleful wings,  
A cloud of deep'ning colour marks their flight,  
Staining the golden day:--  
But see! amid the rav'nous brood  
A bird of fiercer aspect soar--  
The spirits of a rival race\*  
Hang on the noxious blast, and trace  
With gloomy joy his destin'd prey;  
Inflame th' ambitious wish that thirsts for blood,  
And plunge his talons deep in kindred gore.

#### V.

"View the stern form that hovers nigh:  
Fierce rolls his dauntless eye,

In scorn of hideous death;  
Till starting at a brother's\* name,  
Horror shrinks his glowing frame;  
Locks the half-utter'd groan,  
And chills the parting breath:--  
Astonish'd Nature heav'd a moan!  
When her affrighted eye beheld the hands  
She form'd to cherish, rend her holy bands.

VI.

"Look where a royal infant+ kneels;  
Shrieking, and agoniz'd with fear,  
He sees the dagger pointed near  
A much-lov'd brother's+ breast,  
And tells an absent mother all he feels!  
His eager eye he casts around,--  
Where shall her guardian form be found,  
On which his eager eye would rest?  
On her he calls in accents wild,  
And wonders why her step is slow  
To save her suff'ring child!  
Rob'd in the regal garb, his brother stands  
In more majestic woe,  
And meets the impious stroke with bosom bare,  
Then fearless grasps the murd'rer's hands,  
And asks the minister of hell to spare  
The child, whose feeble arms sustain  
His bleeding form, from cruel death.  
In vain fraternal fondness pleads,  
For cold is now his livid cheek,  
And cold his last, expiring breath;  
And now, with aspect meek,  
The infant lifts its mournful eye,  
And asks, with trembling voice, to die,  
If death will cure his heaving heart of pain!  
His heaving heart now bleeds!--  
Foul tyrant! o'er the gilded hour  
That beams with all the blaze of power,  
Remorse shall spread her thickest shroud!  
The furies in thy tortur'd ear



Shall howl, with curses deep and loud,  
And wake distracting fear!  
I see the ghastly spectre rise,  
Whose blood is cold, whose hollow eyes  
Seem from his head to start!--  
With upright hair and shiv'ring heart,  
Dark o'er thy midnight couch he bends,  
And clasps thy shrinking frame, thy impious spirit rends."

VII.

Now his thrilling accents die--  
His shape eludes my searching eye.  
But who is he,\* convuls'd with pain,  
That writhes in every swelling vein?  
Yet in so deep, so wild a groan,  
A sharper anguish seems to live  
Than life's expiring pang can give!--  
He dies deserted, and alone.  
If pity can allay thy woes,  
Sad spirit, they shall find repose:  
Thy friend, thy long-lov'd friend is near;  
He comes to pour the parting tear,  
He comes to catch the parting breath.  
Ah, heaven! no melting look he wears,  
His alter'd eye with vengeance glares;  
Each frantic passion at his soul;  
'Tis he has dash'd that venom'd bowl  
With agony and death!

VIII.

But whence arose that solemn call?  
Yon bloody phantom waves his hand,  
And beckons me to deeper gloom!  
Rest, troubled form! I come--  
Some unknown power my step impels  
To horror's secret cells.  
"For thee I raise this sable pall,  
It shrouds a ghastly band:  
Stretch'd beneath, thy eye shall trace

A mangled regal race!  
A thousand suns have roll'd, since light  
Rush'd on their solid night!  
See, o'er that tender frame grim Famine hangs,  
And mocks a mother's pangs!  
The last, last drop which warm'd her veins  
That meagre infant drains,  
Then gnaws her fond, sustaining breast!  
Stretch'd on her feeble knees, behold  
Another victim sinks to lasting rest;  
Another yet her matron arms would fold,  
Who strives to reach her matron arms in vain--  
Too weak her wasted form to raise,  
On him she bends her eager gaze;  
She sees the soft imploring eye  
That asks her dear embrace, the cure of pain--  
She sees her child at distance die!  
But now her stedfast heart can bear,  
Unmov'd, the pressure of despair.  
When first the winds of winter urge their course  
O'er the pure stream, whose current smoothly glides,  
The heaving river swells its troubled tides;  
But when the bitter blast with keener force  
O'er the high wave an icy fetter throws,  
The harden'd wave is fix'd in dead repose."

IX.

"Say, who that hoary form? alone he stands,  
And meekly lifts his wither'd hands;  
His white beard streams with blood!  
I see him with a smile deride  
The wounds that pierce his shrivell'd side,  
Whence flows a purple flood;  
But sudden pangs his bosom tear--  
On one big drop, of deeper dye,  
I see him fix his haggard eye  
In dark, and wild despair!  
That sanguine drop which wakes his woe,  
Say, Spirit! whence its source?"  
"Ask no more its source to know--"

Ne'er shall mortal eye explore  
Whence flow'd that drop of human gore,  
Till the starting dead shall rise,  
Unchain'd from earth, and mount the skies,  
And Time shall end his fated course.  
Now th' unfathom'd depth behold:  
Look but once--a second glance  
Wraps a heart of human mould  
In death's eternal trance!

X.

"That shapeless phantom, sinking slow  
Deep down the vast abyss below,  
Darts thro' the mists that shroud his frame,  
A horror, nature hates to name!  
Mortal, could thine eyes behold  
All those sullen mists enfold,  
Thy sinews at the sight accurst  
Would wither, and thy heart-strings burst;  
Death would grasp with icy hand,  
And drag thee to our grizzly band!  
Away! the sable pall I spread,  
And give to rest th' unquiet dead;  
Haste! ere its horrid shroud enclose  
Thy form, benumb'd with wild affright,  
And plunge thee far through wastes of night,  
In yon black gulph's abhorr'd repose!"  
As, starting at each step, I fly,  
Why backward turns my frantic eye,  
That closing portal past?  
Two sullen shades, half-seen, advance!  
On me, a blasting look they cast,  
And fix my view with dang'rous spells,  
Where burning frenzy dwells!--  
Again! their vengeful look--and now a speechless--

Helen Maria Williams

## Peruvian Tales: Aciloe, Tale V

Character of ZAMOR , a bard--His passion for ACILOE , daughter of the Cazique who rules the valley--The Peruvian tribe prepare to defend themselves--A battle--The PERUVIANS are vanquished--ACILOE'S father is made a prisoner, and ZAMOR is supposed to have fallen in the engagement--ALPHONSO becomes enamoured of ACILOE --Offers to marry her--She rejects him--In revenge he puts her father to the torture--She appears to consent, in order to save him--Meets ZAMOR in a wood--LAS CASAS joins them--Leads the two lovers to ALPHONSO , and obtains their freedom--ZAMOR conducts ACILOE and her father to Chili--A reflection on the influence of Poetry over the human mind.

In this sweet scene, to all the virtues kind,  
Mild ZAMOR own'd the richest gifts of mind;  
For o'er his tuneful breast the heav'nly muse  
Shed from her sacred spring inspiring dews;  
She loves to breathe her hallow'd strain where art  
Has never veil'd the soul, or warp'd the heart;  
Where fancy glows with all her native fire,  
And passion lives on the exulting lyre.  
Nature, in terror rob'd or beauty drest,  
Could thrill with dear enchantment ZAMOR'S breast;  
He lov'd the languid sigh the zephyr pours,  
He lov'd the placid rill that feeds the flowers--  
But more the hollow sound the wild winds form,  
When black upon the billow hangs the storm;  
The torrent rolling from the mountain steep,  
Its white foam trembling on the darken'd deep--  
And oft on Andes' heights with earnest gaze  
He view'd the sinking sun's reflected rays  
Glow like unnumber'd stars, that seem to rest  
Sublime upon his ice-encircled breast.  
Oft his wild warblings charm'd the festal hour,  
Rose in the vale, and languish'd in the bower;  
The heart's reponsive tones he well could move,  
Whose song was nature, and whose theme was love.  
ACILOE'S beauties his fond soul confest,  
Yet more ACILOE'S virtues warm'd his breast.

Ah stay, ye tender hours of young delight,

Suspend, ye moments, your impatient flight;  
Prolong the charm when passion's pure controul  
Unfolds the first affections of the soul!  
This gentle tribe ACILOE'S sire obey'd,  
Who still in wisdom and in mercy sway'd.  
From him the dear illusions long had fled  
That o'er the morn of life enchantment shed;  
But virtue's calm remembrance cheer'd his breast,  
And life was joy serene, and death was rest:  
Bright is the blushing Summer's glowing ray,  
Yet not unlovely Autumn's temper'd day.  
Now stern IBERIA'S ruthless sons advance,  
Roll the fierce eye, and shake the pointed lance.  
PERUVIA'S tribe behold the hostile throng  
With desolating fury pour along;  
The hoary chief to the dire conflict leads  
His death-devoted train--the battle bleeds.  
ACILOE'S searching eye can now no more  
The form of ZAMOR or her sire explore;  
While destin'd all the bitterness to prove  
Of anxious duty and of mourning love,  
Each name that's dearest wakes her bursting sigh,  
Throbs at her soul, and trembles in her eye.  
Now pierc'd by wounds, and breathless from the fight,  
Her friend, the valiant OMAR , struck her sight:--  
"OMAR ," she cried, "you bleed, unhappy youth!  
And sure that look unfolds some fatal truth;  
Speak, pitying speak, my frantic fears forgive,  
Say, does my father, does my ZAMOR live?"--  
"All, all is lost!" the dying OMAR said,  
"And endless griefs are thine, dear, wretched maid;  
I saw thy aged sire a captive bound,  
I saw thy ZAMOR press the crimson ground!"--  
He could no more, he yields his fleeting breath,  
While all in vain she seeks repose in death.  
But O, how far each other pang above  
Throbs the wild agony of hopeless love!  
That woe, for which in vain would comfort shed  
Her healing balm, or time in pity spread  
The veil that throws a shade o'er other care,  
For here, and here alone, profound despair  
Casts o'er the suff'ring soul a lasting gloom,

And slowly leads her victim to the tomb.  
Now rude tumultuous sounds assail her ear,  
And soon ALPHONSO'S victor train appear;  
Then, as with ling'ring step he mov'd along,  
She saw her father 'mid the captive throng;  
She saw with dire dismay, she wildly flew,  
Her snowy arms around his form she threw;--  
"He bleeds!" she cries; "I hear his moan of pain!  
My father will not bear the galling chain!  
Cruel ALPHONSO , let not helpless age  
Feel thy hard yoke, and meet thy barb'rous rage;  
Or, O, if ever mercy mov'd thy soul,  
If ever thou hast felt her blest controul,  
Grant my sad heart's desire, and let me share  
The fetters which a father ill can bear."  
While the young warrior, as she falt'ring spoke,  
With fix'd attention and with ardent look  
Hung on her tender glance, that love inspires,  
The rage of conquest yields to milder fires.  
Yet as he gaz'd enraptur'd on her form,  
Her virtues awe the heart her beauties warm;  
And while impassion'd tones his love reveal,  
He asks with holy rites his vows to seal.  
"Hops't thou," she cried, "those sacred ties shall join  
This bleeding heart, this trembling hand to thine?  
To thine, whose ruthless heart has caus'd my pains,  
Whose barb'rous hand the blood of ZAMOR stains!  
Canst thou, the murd'rer of my peace, controul  
The grief that swells, the pang that rends my soul?--  
That pang shall death, shall death alone remove,  
And cure the anguish of despairing love."  
At length, to madness stung by fixed disdain,  
ALPHONSO now to fury gives the rein;  
And with relentless mandate dooms her sire,  
Stretch'd on the bed of torture to expire;  
But O, what form of language can impart  
The frantic grief that wrung ACILOE'S heart!

When to the height of hopeless sorrow wrought,  
The fainting spirit feels a pang of thought,  
Which, never painted in the hues of speech,  
Lives at the soul, and mocks expression's reach!

At length she falt'ring cried, "the conflict's o'er,  
 My heart, my breaking heart can bear no more!  
 Yet spare his feeble age--my vows receive,  
 And O, in mercy bid my father live!"  
 "Wilt thou be mine?" th' enamour'd chief replies--  
 "Yes, cruel!--see, he dies! my father dies!--  
 Save, save my father!"--"Dear, unhappy maid,"  
 The charm'd ALPHONSO cried, "be swift obey'd--  
 Unbind his chains--Ah, calm each anxious pain,  
 ACILOE'S voice no more shall plead in vain;  
 Plac'd near his child, thy aged sire shall share  
 Our joys, still cherished by thy tender care."--  
 "No more," she cried, "will fate that bliss allow;  
 Before my lips shall breathe the impartial vow,  
 Some faithful guide shall lead his aged feet  
 To distant scenes that yield a safe retreat;  
 Where some soft heart, some gentle hand will shed  
 The drops of comfort on his hoary head.  
 My ZAMOR , if thy spirit hovers near,  
 Forgive!"--she ceas'd, and shed no more a tear.  
 Now night descends, and steeps each weary breast,  
 Save sad ACILOE'S , in the balm of rest.  
 Her aged father's beauteous dwelling stood  
 Near the cool shelter of a waving wood;  
 But now the gales that bend its foliage die,  
 Soft on the silver turf its shadows lie;  
 While slowly wand'ring o'er the vale below,  
 The gazing moon look'd pale as silent woe.  
 The sacred shade, amid whose fragrant bowers  
 ZAMOR oft sooth'd with song the evening hours,  
 Pour'd to the lunar orb his magic lay,  
 More mild, more pensive than her musing ray,  
 That shade with trembling step the mourner sought,  
 And thus she breath'd her tender, plaintive thought:--  
 "Ah where, dear object of these piercing pains,  
 Where rests thy murder'd form, thy Lov'd remains?  
  
 On what sad spot, my ZAMOR , flow'd the wound  
 That purpled with thy streaming blood the ground?  
 O, had ACILOE in that hour been nigh,  
 Hadst thou but fix'd on me thy closing eye,--  
 Told with faint voice, 'twas death's worst pang to part,

And dropp'd thy last cold tear upon my heart!  
A pang less bitter than would waste this breast,  
That in the grave alone shall seek its rest.  
Soon as some friendly hand in mercy leads  
My aged father safe to Chili's meads,  
Death shall for ever seal the nuptial tie,  
The heart belov'd by thee is fix'd to die."--  
She ceas'd, when dimly thro' her flowing tears  
She sees her ZAMOR'S form, his voice she hears.  
" 'Tis he!" she cries, "he moves upon the gale!  
My ZAMOR'S sigh is deep---his look is pale--  
I faint--" his arms receive her sinking frame,--  
He calls his love by every tender name;  
He stays her fleeting spirit--life anew  
Warms her cold cheek--his tears her cheek bedew.

"Thy ZAMOR lives," he cried: "as on the ground  
I senseless lay, some child of pity bound  
My bleeding wounds, and bore me from the plain,--  
But thou art lost, and I have liv'd in vain!"  
"Forgive," she cried, in accents of despair,  
ZAMOR , forgive thy wrongs, and O forbear,  
The mild reproach that fills thy mournful eye,  
The tear that wets thy cheek--I mean to die.  
Could I behold my aged sire endure  
The pains his wretched child had power to cure?  
Still, still my father, stretch'd in death, I see,  
His grey locks trembling while he gaz'd on me;  
My ZAMOR , soft, breathe not so loud a sigh,  
Some list'ning foe may pityless deny  
This parting hour--hark, sure some step I hear,  
ZAMOR again is lost--for now 'tis near."--  
She paus'd, when sudden from the shelt'ring wood  
A venerable form before them stood:  
"Fear not, soft maid," he cried, "nor think I come  
To seal with deeper miseries thy doom;  
To bruise the broken heart that sorrow rends,  
Ah, not for this LAS CASAS hither bends--  
He comes to bid those rising sorrows cease,  
To pour upon thy wounds the balm of peace.  
I rov'd with dire ALMAGRO'S ruthless train,  
Through scenes of death, to Chili's verdant plain;



Their wish to bathe that verdant plain in gore,  
 Then from its bosom drag the golden ore:  
 But mine to check the stream of human blood,  
 Or mingle drops of pity with the flood;  
 When from those fair, unconquered vales they fled  
 This languid frame was stretch'd upon the bed  
 Of pale disease; when, helpless and alone,  
 The Chilese 'spied their friend, the murd'ers gone,  
 With eager fondness round my couch they drew,  
 And my cold hand with gushing tears bedew;  
 By day they soothe my pains with sweet delight,  
 And give to watchings the dull hours of night;  
 For me their gen'rous bosoms joy to prove  
 The cares of pity, and the toils of love--  
 At length for me the pathless wild they trac'd,  
 And softly bore me o'er its dreary waste;  
 Then parting, at my feet they bend, and clasp  
 These aged knees--my soul yet feels their grasp!  
 Now o'er the vale with painful step I stray'd,  
 And reach this shelt'ring grove; here, hapless maid,  
 My list'ning ear has caught thy piercing wail,  
 My heart has trembled to thy moving tale."--  
 "And art thou he?" the mournful pair exclaim,  
 "'How dear to mis'ry's soul LAS CASAS ' name!  
 Spirit benign, who every grief can share,  
 Whose pity stoops to make the wretch its care,  
 Weep not for us--in vain thy tears shall flow  
 For cureless evils, and for hopeless woe!"--  
 "Come," he replied, "mild suff'ers, to the fane  
 Where rests ALPHONSO with his martial train;  
 My voice shall urge his soul to gen'rous deeds,  
 And bid him hear when truth and nature pleads."  
 While in meek tones LAS CASAS thus exprest  
 His pious purpose, o'er ACILOE'S breast  
 A dawning ray of cheering comfort streams,  
 But faint the hope that on her spirit beams;  
 Faint as when ebbing life must soon depart,  
 The pulse that trembles while it warms the heart.  
 Before ALPHONSO now the lovers stand,  
 The aged suff'rer joined the mournful band;  
 While, with the look that guardian seraphs wear,  
 When sent to calm the throbs of mortal care,

The story of their woes LAS CASAS told,  
 Then cried, "the wretched ZAMOR here behold--  
 Hop'st thou, fond man, a passion to controul  
 Fix'd in the breast, and woven in the soul?  
 Ah, know, mistaken youth, thy power in vain  
 Would bind thy victim in the nuptial chain;  
 That faithful heart will rend the galling tie,  
 That heart will break, that tender frame will die!  
 Then, by each sacred name to nature dear,  
 By faithful passion's agonizing tear,  
 By all the wasting pangs that tear her breast,  
 By the deep groan that gives the suff'rer rest,  
 Let mercy's pleading voice thy bosom move,  
 And fear to burst the bonds of plighted love!"  
 He paus'd--now ZAMOR'S moan ALPHONSO hears;  
 Now sees the cheek of age bedew'd with tears.  
 Pallid and motionless ACILOE stands,  
 Fix'd was her lifted eye, and clasp'd her hands;  
 Her heart was chill'd--her fainting heart--for there  
 Hope slowly sinks in cold and dark despair.  
 ALPHONSO'S soul was mov'd--"No more," he cried,  
 "My hapless flame shall hearts like yours divide.  
 Live, tender spirit, soft ACILOE live,  
 And all the wrongs of madd'ning rage forgive!  
 Go from this desolated region far,  
 These plains, where av'rice spreads the waste of war;  
 Go where pure pleasures gild the peaceful scene,  
 Go where mild virtue sheds her ray serene!"  
 In vain th' enraptur'd lovers would impart  
 The rising joy that swells, that pains the heart;  
 LAS CASAS ' feet in tears ACILOE steeps,  
 Looks on her sire and smiles, then turns and weeps;  
 Then smiles again, while her flush'd cheek reveals  
 The mingled tumult of delight she feels;--  
 So fall the crystal showers of fragrant Spring,  
 And o'er the pure, clear sky, soft-shadows fling;  
 Then paint the drooping clouds from which they flow  
 With the warm colours of the lucid bow.  
 Now o'er the barren desert ZAMOR leads  
 ACILOE and her sire to Chili's meads;  
 There many a wand'ring wretch, condemn'd to roam  
 By hard oppression, found a shelt'ring home:

ZAMOR to pity tun'd the vocal shell,  
Bright'ning the tear of anguish as it fell.  
Did e'er the human bosom throb with pain  
The heav'nly muse has sought to soothe in vain?  
She, who can still with harmony its sighs,  
And wake the sound at which affection dies!

Helen Maria Williams

# Peruvian Tales: Alzira, Tale I

Description of Peru, and of its Productions--Virtues of the People;  
and of their Monarch, ATALIBA --His love for ALZIRA --Their Nup-  
tials celebrated--Character of ZORAI , her Father--Descent of the  
Genius of Peru--Prediction of the Fall of that Empire.

Where the Pacific deep in silence laves  
The western shore, with slow, and languid waves,  
There, lost PERUVIA ! bloom'd thy cultur'd bowers,  
Thy vallies fragrant with perennial flowers;  
There, far above, the Pine unbending rose,  
Along the pathway of thy mountain snows;  
The Palms fling high in air their feather'd heads,  
While each broad leaf an ample shadow spreads;  
The Orange, and the rich Ananas bloom,  
And humid Balsams ever shed perfume;  
The Bark, reviving shrub! Ah, not in vain  
Thy rosy blossoms tinge PERUVIA'S plain;  
Ye fost'ring gales around those blossoms blow,  
Ye balmy dew-drops o'er the tendrils flow!  
Lo, as the health-diffusing plant aspires,  
Disease relents, and hov'ring death retires;  
Affection sees new lustre light the eye,  
And feels her vanish'd peace again is nigh.  
The Pacas,\* and Vicunnas+ sport around,  
And the meek Lamas+ , burden'd, press the ground.  
The Mocking-bird his varying note essays,  
And charms the grove with imitative lays;  
The plaintive Humming-bird unfolds his wing  
Of vivid plumage to the ray of spring;  
Then sinks, soft burthen, on the humid flower,  
His food, the dewdrops of the morning hour.

Nor less, PERUVIA , for thy favour'd clime,  
The Virtues rose unsullied and sublime;  
There melting Charity, with ardour warm,  
Spreads her wide mantle o'er the shiv'ring form;  
Cheer'd with the festal song her rural toils,  
While in the lap of age she pour'd the spoils;\*

There the mild Inca, ATALIBA sway'd,  
His high behest the willing heart obey'd;  
Descendant of a scepter'd, sacred race,  
Whose origin from glowing suns they trace.  
Love's soft emotions now his soul possest,  
And fix'd ALZIRA'S image in his breast.  
In that blest clime affection never knew  
A selfish purpose, or a thought untrue;  
Not as on Europe's shore, where wealth and pride,  
From mourning love the venal breast divide;  
Yet Love, if there from sordid shackles free,  
One faithful bosom yet belongs to thee;  
On that fond heart the purest bliss bestow,  
Or give, for thou canst give, a charm to woe;  
Ah, never may that heart in vain deplore  
The pang that tortures when belov'd no more.  
And from that agony the spirit save,  
When unrelenting yawns th' untimely grave;  
When death dissolves the ties for ever dear,  
When frantic passion pours her parting tear;  
With all the wasting pains she only feels,  
Hangs on the quiv'ring lip that silence seals;  
Views fondness struggling in the closing eye,  
And marks it mingling in the falt'ring sigh;  
As the lov'd form, while folded to her breast,  
Breathes the last moan that gives its struggles rest;  
Leaves her to pine in grief that none can share,  
And find the world a desert to despair.  
Bright was the lustre of the orient ray  
That joyful wak'd ALZIRA'S nuptial day;  
Her auburn hair spread loosely on the wind,  
The virgin train with rosy chaplets bind;  
While the fresh flowers that form her bridal wreath  
Seem deeper hues and richer scents to breathe.  
The gentle tribe now sought the hallow'd fane,  
Where warbling vestals pour'd the choral strain;  
There aged ZORAI his ALZIRA prest,  
With love parental, to his anxious breast;  
Priest of the Sun! within the sacred shrine  
His fervent spirit breath'd the strain divine;  
With careful hand the guiltless off'ring spread,  
With pious zeal the clear libation shed.

Nor vain the incense of erroneous praise  
When meek devotion's soul the tribute pays;  
On wings of purity behold it rise,  
While bending mercy wafts it to the skies!  
PERUVIA ! O delightful land in vain  
The virtues flourish'd on thy beauteous plain;  
For soon shall burst the unrelenting storm  
O'er thy mild head, and crush thy prostrate form!  
Recording Fame shall mark thy desp'rate fate,  
And distant ages weep for ills so great!

Now o'er the deep dull Night her mantle flung,  
Dim on the wave the moon's faint crescent hung;  
PERUVIA'S Genius sought the liquid plain,  
Sooth'd by the languid murmurs of the main;  
When sudden clamour the illusion broke,  
Wild on the surface of the deep it spoke;  
A rising breeze expands her flowing veil,  
Aghast with fear, she spies a flying sail--  
The lofty mast impends, the banner waves,  
The ruffled surge th' incumbent vessel laves;  
With eager eye she views her destin'd foe  
Lead to her peaceful shores th' advent'rous prow;  
Trembling she knelt, with wild, disorder'd air,  
And pour'd with frantic energy her prayer:  
"O, ye avenging spirits of the deep!  
Mount the blue lightning's wing, o'er ocean sweep;  
Loud from your central caves the shell resound,  
That summons death to your abyss profound;  
Call the pale spectre from his dark abode,  
To print the billow, swell the black'ning flood,  
Rush o'er the waves, the rough'ning deep deform,  
Howl in the blast, and animate the storm--  
Relentless powers! for not one quiv'ring breeze  
Has ruffled yet the surface of the seas--  
Swift from your rocky steeps ye Condors\* stray,  
Wave your black plumes, and cleave th' aerial way;  
Proud in terrific force your wings expand,  
Press the firm earth, and darken all the strand;  
Bid the stern foe retire with wild affright,  
And shun the region veil'd in partial night.  
Vain hope, devoted land! I read thy doom,

My sad prophetic soul can pierce the gloom;  
I see, I see my lov'd, my favour'd clime  
Consum'd, and wasted in its early prime.  
But not in vain this beauteous land shall bleed,  
Too late shall Europe's race deplore the deed.  
Region abhorr'd! be gold the tempting bane,  
The curse that desolates thy hostile plain;  
May pleasure tinge with venom'd drops the bowl,  
And luxury unnerve the sick'ning soul."  
Ah, not in vain she pour'd th' impassion'd tear;  
Ah, not in vain she call'd the powers to hear!  
When borne from lost PERUVIA'S bleeding land,  
The guilty treasures beam'd on Europe's strand;  
Each sweet affection fled the tainted shore,  
And virtue wander'd, to return no more.

Helen Maria Williams

## Peruvian Tales: Alzira, Tale II

PIZARRO lands with the Forces--His meeting with ATALIBA --Its unhappy consequences--ZORAI dies--ATALIBA imprisoned, and strangled --Despair of ALZIRA .

Flush'd with impatient hope, the martial band,  
By stern PIZARRO led, approach the land;  
No terrors arm his hostile brow, for guile  
Seeks to betray with candour's open smile.  
Too artless for distrust, the Monarch springs  
To meet his latent foe on friendship's wings.  
On as he moves, with dazzling splendour crown'd,  
His feather'd chiefs the golden throne surround;  
The waving canopy its plume displays,  
Whose waving hues reflect the morning rays;  
With native grace he hails the warrior train,  
Who stood majestic on PERUVIA'S plain,  
In all the savage pomp of armour drest,  
The frowning helmet, and the nodding crest.  
Yet themes of joy PIZARRO'S lips impart,  
And charm with eloquence the simple heart;  
Unfolding to the monarch's wond'ring thought  
All that inventive arts the rude have taught.  
And now he bids the musing spirit rise  
Above the circle of surrounding skies;  
Presents the page that sheds Religion's light  
O'er the dark mist of intellectual night:  
While, thrill'd with awe, the monarch trembling stands,  
He dropp'd the hallow'd volume from his hands.  
Sudden,\* while frantic zeal each breast inspires,  
And shudd'ring demons fan the rising fires,  
The bloody signal waves, the banners play,  
The naked sabres flash their streaming ray;  
The trumpet rolls its animating sound,  
And the loud cannon rend the vault around;  
While fierce in sanguine rage, the sons of Spain  
Rush on Peru's unarm'd, defenceless train!  
The fiends of slaughter urg'd their dire career,  
And virtue's guardian spirits dropped a tear!



Mild ZORAI fell, deploring human strife,  
And clos'd with prayer his consecrated life!--  
In vain PERUVIA'S chiefs undaunted stood,  
Shield their lov'd Prince, and bathe his robes in blood;--  
Touch'd with heroic ardour, cling around,  
And high of soul, receive each fatal wound;  
Dragg'd from his throne, and hurried o'er the plain,  
The wretched Monarch swells the captive train;  
With iron grasp the frantic Prince they bear,  
And feel their triumph in his wild despair.--  
Deep in the gloomy dungeon's lone domain,  
Lost ATALIBA wore the galling chain;  
The earth's cold bed refus'd oblivious rest,  
While throb'd the woes of thousands at his breast;  
ALZIRA'S desolating moan he hears,  
And with the monarch's blends the lover's tears.  
Soon had ALZIRA felt affliction's dart  
Pierce her soft soul, and rend her bleeding heart;  
Its quick pulsations paus'd, and chill'd with dread,  
A livid hue her fading cheek o'erspread;  
No tear the mourner shed, she breath'd no sigh,  
Her lips were mute, and clos'd her languid eye;  
Fainter, and slower heav'd her shiv'ring breast,  
And her calm'd passions seem'd in death to rest.--  
At length reviv'd, 'mid rising heaps of slain,  
She prest with hurried step the crimson plain;  
The dungeon's gloomy depth she fearless sought,  
For love with scorn of danger arm'd her thought:  
She reach'd the cell where ATALIBA lay,  
Where human vultures haste to seize their prey.--  
In vain her treasur'd wealth PERUVIA gave,  
This dearer treasure from their grasp to save;  
ALZIRA ! lo, the ruthless murd'ers come,  
This moment seals thy ATALIBA'S doom.  
Ah, what avails the shriek that anguish pours?  
The look that mercy's lenient aid implores?  
Torn from thy clinging arms, thy throbbing breast,  
The fatal cord his agony supprest!--  
In vain the livid corpse she firmly clasps,  
And pours her sorrows o'er the form she grasps,  
The murd'ers soon their struggling victim tear  
From the lost object of her soul's despair!

The swelling pang unable to sustain,  
Distraction throbb'd in every beating vein;  
Its sudden tumults seize her yielding soul,  
And in her eye distemper'd glances roll--  
"They come!" the mourner cried with panting breath,  
"To give the lost ALZIRA rest in death!  
One moment more, ye bloody forms, bestow,  
One moment more for ever cares my woe--  
Lo! where the purple evening sheds her light  
On blest remains! O! hide them, pitying night!  
Slow in the breeze I see the verdure wave,  
That shrouds with tufted grass my lover's grave;  
Hark! on its wand'ring wing in mildness blows  
The murm'ring gale, nor wakes his deep repose--  
And see, yon hoary form still lingers there!  
Dishevell'd by rude winds his silver hair;  
O'er his chill'd bosom falls the winter rain,  
I feel the big drops on my wither'd brain.  
Not for himself that tear his bosom steeps,  
For his lost child it flows--for me he weeps!  
No more the dagger's point shall pierce thy breast,  
For calm and lovely is thy silent rest;  
Yet still in dust these eyes shall see thee roll,  
Still the sad thought shall waste ALZIRA'S soul--  
What bleeding phantom moves along the storm?  
It is my ATALIBA'S well-known form!  
Approach! ALZIRA'S breast no terrors move,  
Her fears are all for ever lost in love.  
Safe on the hanging cliff I now can rest,  
And press its pointed pillow to my breast--  
He weeps! in heaven he weeps!--I feel his tear--  
It chills my trembling heart, yet still 'tis dear.  
To him all joyless are the realms above,  
That pale look speaks of pity and of love!  
Ah come, descend in yonder bending cloud,  
And wrap ALZIRA in thy misty shroud!"  
As roll'd her wand'ring glances wild around,  
She snatch'd a reeking sabre from the ground;  
Firmly her lifted hand the weapon prest,  
And deep she plung'd it in her panting breast!  
" 'Tis but a few short moments that divide "--  
She falt'ring said--then sunk on earth and died!

Helen Maria Williams

## Peruvian Tales: Cora, Tale Iv

ALMAGRO'S expedition to Chili--His troops suffer great hardships from cold, in crossing the Andes--They reach Chili--The Chilians make a brave resistance--The revolt of the Peruvians in Cuzco---They are led on by MANCO CAPAC , the successor of ATALIBA --Parting with CORA , his wife--The Peruvians regain half their city--ALMAGRO leaves Chili--To avoid the Andes, he crosses a vast desert--His troops can find no water--They divide into two bands--ALPHONSO leads the second band, which soon reaches a fertile valley--The Spaniards observe that the natives are employed in searching the streams for gold--They resolve to attack them.

Now the stern partner of PIZARRO'S toils,  
ALMAGRO , lur'd by hope of golden spoils,  
To distant Chili's ever-verdant meads,  
Through paths untrod, a band of warriors leads;  
O'er the high Andes' frozen steeps they go,  
And wander 'mid eternal hills of snow:  
In vain the vivifying orb of day  
Darts on th' impervious ice his fervent ray;  
Cold, keen as chains the oceans of the pole,  
Numbs the shrunk frame, and chills the vig'rous soul;  
At length they reach luxuriant Chili's plain,  
Where ends the dreary bound of winter's reign.  
When first the brave Chilese, with eager glance,  
Beheld the hostile sons of Spain advance,  
Their threat'ning sabres red with purple streams,  
Their lances quiv'ring in the solar beams,  
With pale surprise they saw th' impending storm,  
Where low'ring danger wore an unknown form;  
But soon their spirits, stung with gen'rous shame,  
Renounce each terror, and for vengeance flame;  
Pant high with sacred freedom's ardent glow,  
And meet intrepid the superior foe.  
Long unsubdued by stern ALMAGRO'S train,  
Their valiant tribes unequal fight maintain;  
Long vict'ry hover'd doubtful o'er the field,  
And oft she forc'd IBERIA'S band to yield;  
Oft love from Spain's proud head her laurel bough,  
And bade it blossom on PERUVIA'S brow;

When sudden tidings reach'd ALMAGRO'S ear,  
That shook the warrior's soul with doubt and fear.  
Of murder'd ATALIBA'S royal race  
There yet remain'd a youth of blooming grace,  
Who pin'd, the captive of relentless Spain,  
And long in Cuzco dragg'd her galling chain;  
CAPAC , whose lofty soul indignant bears  
The rankling fetters, and revenge prepares.  
But since his daring spirit must forego  
The hope to rush upon the tyrant foe,  
Led by his parent orb, that gives the day,  
And fierce as darts the keen meridian ray,  
He vows to bend unseen his hostile course,  
Then on the victors rise with latent force,  
As sudden from its cloud, the brooding storm,  
Bursts in the thunder's voice, the light'ning's form.  
For this, from stern PIZARRO he obtains  
The boon, enlarg'd, to seek the neighb'ring plains,  
For one bless'd day, and with his friend's unite,  
To crown with solemn pomp an antient rite;  
Share the dear pleasures of the social hour,  
And 'mid their fetters twine one festal flower.  
So spoke the Prince--far other thoughts possest,  
Far other purpose animates his breast:  
For now PERUVIA'S Nobles he commands  
To lead, with silent step, her martial bands  
Forth to the destin'd spot, prepared to dare  
The fiercest shock of dire, unequal war;  
While every sacred human interest pleads,  
And urges the firm soul to lofty deeds.  
Now CAPAC hail'd th' eventful morning's light,  
Rose with its dawn, and panted for the fight;  
But first with fondness to his heart he prest  
The tender CORA , partner of his breast,  
Who with her lord had sought the dungeon's gloom,  
And wasted there in grief her early bloom.  
"No more," he cried, "no more my love shall feel  
The mingled agonies I fly to heal;--  
I go, but soon exulting shall return,  
And bid my faithful CORA cease to mourn;  
For O, amid each pang my bosom knows,  
What wastes, what wounds it most are CORA'S woes!

Sweet was the love that crown'd our happier hours,  
And shed new fragrance o'er a path of flowers:  
But sure divided sorrow more endears  
The tie that passion seals with mutual tears!  
He paus'd. Fast-flowing drops bedew'd her eyes,  
While thus in mournful accents she replies:--  
"Still let me feel the pressure of thy chain,  
Still share the fetters which my love detain;  
The piercing iron to my soul is dear,  
Nor will its sharpness wound while thou art near.  
Look on our helpless babe, in mis'ry nurs'd--  
My child! my child, thy mother's heart will burst!  
O, wherefore bid the raging battle rise,  
Nor hear this harmless suff'rer's feeble cries?  
Look on those blades that pour a crimson flood,  
And plunge their cruel edge in infant blood!"

She could no more--he sees with tender pain  
Her grief, and leads her to a shelt'ring fane.  
Now high in air his feather'd standard waves,  
And soon from shrouding woods and hollow caves  
To Cuzco's gate advance increasing throngs,  
And, such their ardour, rous'd by sense of wrongs,  
That vainly would PIZARRO'S vet'ran force  
Arrest the torrent in its raging course;  
Danger and death PERUVIA'S sons disdain,  
And half their captive city soon regain.  
When stern ALMAGRO heard the voice of fame  
The triumphs of PERUVIA loud proclaim,  
Unconquer'd Chili's vale he swift forsakes,  
And his bold course to distant Cuzco takes.  
But now he shuns the Andes' frozen snows,  
The arrowy gale that on their summit blows;  
A burning desert undismay'd he past,  
And meets the ardors of the fiery blast.  
As o'er the sultry waste they slowly move,  
The keenest pang of raging thirst they prove;  
No cooling fruit its grateful juice distils,  
Nor flows one balmy drop from crystal rills;  
For nature sickens in the parching beam  
That shrinks the vernal bud and dries the stream;  
While horror, as his giant stature grows,

O'er the drear void his spreading shadow throws.  
ALMAGRO'S band now pale and fainting stray,  
While death oft barr'd the sinking warrior's way;  
At length the chief divides his martial force,  
And bids ALPHONSO by a sep'rate course  
Lead o'er the hideous desert half his train--  
"And search," he cried, "this vast, untrodden plain,  
Perchance some fruitage, with'ring in the breeze,  
The pains of lessen'd numbers may appease;  
Or heaven in pity from some genial shower  
On the parch'd lip one precious drop may pour."  
Not far the troops of young ALPHONSO went,  
When sudden from a rising hill's ascent  
They view a valley fed by fertile springs,  
Which Andes from his snowy summit flings;  
Where summer's flowers humected odours shed,  
And wildly bloom, a waste by beauty spread.  
And now ALPHONSO and his martial band  
On the rich border of the valley stand;  
They quaff the limpid stream with eager haste,  
And the pure juice that swells the fruitage taste;  
Then give to balmy rest the night's still hours,  
Fann'd by the cooling gale that shuts the flowers.  
Soon as the purple beam of morning glows,  
Refresh'd from all their toils, the warriors rose;  
And saw the gentle natives of the mead  
Search the clear currents for the golden seed,  
Which from the mountain's height with headlong sweep  
The torrents bear in many a shining heap;  
IBERIA'S sons beheld with anxious brow  
The tempting lure, then breathe th' unpitying vow  
O'er those fair lawns to pour a sanguine flood,  
And dye those lucid streams with guiltless blood.  
Thus while the humming-bird, in beauty drest,  
Enchanting offspring of the ardent west,  
Attunes his tender song to notes of love,  
Mild as the murmurs of the morning dove,  
While his rich plumage glows with brighter hues,  
And with soft bill he sips the scented dews,  
The savage condor on terrific wings,  
From Andes' frozen steeps relentless springs;  
And, quiv'ring in his fangs, his helpless prey

Drops his weak wing, and sighs his soul away.

Helen Maria Williams



## Peruvian Tales: Cora, Tale Vi

The troops of ALMAGRO and ALPHONSO meet on the plain of CUZCO --. MANCO - CAPAC attacks them by nights--His army is defeated, and he is forced to fly with its scattered remains--CORA goes in search of him-- Her infant in her arms-- Overcome with fatigue, she rests at the foot of a mountain--An earthquake--A band of Indians fly to the mountain for shelter--CORA discovers her husband-- Their interview--Her death --He escapes with his infant--ALMAGRO claims a share of the spoils of Cuzco--His contention with PIZARRO --The Spaniards destroy each other--ALMAGRO is taken prisoner, and put to death--His soldiers, in revenge, assassinate PIZARRO in his palace--LAS CASAS dies--The annual festival of the PERUVIANS --Their victories over the Spaniards in Chili--A wish for the restoration of their liberty--Conclusion.

At length ALMAGRO and ALPHONSO'S train,  
Each peril past, unite on Cuzco's plain;  
CAPAC resolves beneath the shroud of night  
To pierce the hostile camp, and brave the fight;  
Though weak the wrong'd PERUVIANS ' arrowy showers  
To the dire weapons stern IBERIA pours,  
Fierce was th' unequal contest, for the soul,  
When rais'd by some high passion's strong controul,  
New strings the nerves, and o'er the glowing frame  
Breathes the warm spirit of heroic flame.  
But from the scene where raging slaughter burns,  
The timid muse with silent horror turns;  
The blended sounds of grief she panting hears,  
Where anguish dims a mother's eye with tears;  
Or where the maid, who gave to love's soft power  
Her faithful spirit, weeps the parting hour;  
And O, till death shall ease the tender woe,  
That soul must languish, and those tears must flow;  
For never with the thrill that rapture proves,  
Her voice again shall hail the youth she loves!  
Her earnest eye no more his form shall view,  
Her quiv'ring lip has breath'd the last adieu!  
Now night, that pour'd upon the hollow gale  
The din of battle, dropp'd her mournful veil.  
The sun rose lovely from the sleeping flood,  
And morning glitter'd o'er the field of blood;

Where, bath'd in gore, PERUVIA'S vanquish'd train  
Lay cold and senseless on the sanguine plain.  
The gen'rous CAPAC saw his warriors yield,  
And fled indignant from the conquer'd field.  
A wretched throng from Cuzco now repair,  
Who tread 'mid slaughter'd heaps in mute despair;  
O'er some lov'd corse the shroud of earth to spread,  
And breathe some ritual that may soothe the dead.  
No moan was heard, for agony suppress  
The fond complaints which ease the swelling breast;  
Each hope for ever lost, they only crave  
The deep repose that wraps the shelt'ring grave:--  
So the meek lama, lur'd by some decoy  
Of man, from all his unembitter'd joy,  
Erewhile as free as roves the wand'ring breeze,  
Meets the hard burden on his bending knees;  
O'er rocks and mountains, dark and waste he goes,  
Nor shuns the path where no fresh herbage grows;  
Till, worn with toil, on earth he prostrate lies,  
Heeds not the barb'rous lash, and scornful dies.  
Swift o'er the field of death sad CORA flew,  
Her infant to his mother's bosom grew;  
She seeks her wretched lord, who fled the plain  
With the last remnant of his vanquish'd train:  
Thro' the long glen, or forest's gloomy shade,  
A dreary solitude, the mourner stray'd;  
Her timid heart can now each danger dare,  
Her drooping soul is arm'd by deep despair--  
Long, long she wander'd, till oppress'd with toil,  
Her trembling footsteps track with blood the soil.  
Where o'er an ample vale a mountain rose,  
Low at its base her fainting form she throws:  
"And here, my child," she cried, with panting breath,  
"Here let us wait the hour of ling'ring death;  
This famish'd bosom can no more supply  
The streams that nourish life--my babe must die!  
In vain I strive to cherish, for thy sake,  
My failing strength; but when my heart-strings break,  
When my cold bosom can no longer warm,  
My stiff'ning arms no more enfold thy form,  
Soft on this bed of leaves my child shall sleep--  
Close to his mother's corse, he will not weep!

O! weep not then, my tender babe--tho' near,  
I shall not hear thy moan, nor see thy tear;  
Hope not to move me by thy mournful cry,  
Nor seek with earnest look my answering eye."  
As thus the dying CORA'S plaints arose,  
O'er the fair valley sudden darkness throws  
A hideous horror; thro' the wounded air  
Howl'd the shrill voice of nature in despair;  
The birds dart screaming thro' the fluid sky,  
And, dash'd upon the cliff's hard surface, die;  
High o'er their rocky bounds the billows swell,  
Then to their deep abyss affrighted fell;  
Earth groaning heaves with dire convulsive throes,  
While yawning gulphs its central caves disclose.  
Now rush'd a frighted throng with trembling pace  
Along the vale, and sought the mountain's base;  
Purpos'd its perilous ascent to gain,  
And shun the ruin low'ring o'er the plain.  
They reach'd the spot where CORA clasp'd her child,  
And gaz'd on present death with aspect wild:  
They pitying pause--she lifts her mournful eye,  
And views her lord!--he hears his CORA'S sigh--  
He meets her looks--their melting souls unite,  
O'erwhelmed, and agoniz'd with wild delight.  
At length she faintly cried, "we yet must part!  
Short are these rising joys--I feel my heart,  
My suff'ring heart is cold, and mists arise,  
That shroud thy image from my closing eyes!  
O, save my child!--our helpless infant save,  
And shed a tear upon thy CORA'S grave."

The fluttering pulse of life now ceas'd to play,  
And in his arms a pallid corse she lay!  
O'er her dear form he hung in speechless pain,  
And still on CORA call'd--but call'd in vain;  
Scarce could his soul in one short moment bear  
The wild extremes of transport and despair.  
Now o'er the west in melting softness streams  
A lustre, milder than the morning beams;  
A purer dawn dispell'd the fearful night,  
And nature glow'd in all the blooms of light;  
Then first the mourner, waking from his trance,

Cast on his smiling babe an eager glance:  
Then rose the hollow voice on fancy's ear,  
The parting words he hears, or seems to hear!  
That sought with anxious tenderness to save  
That dear memorial from the closing grave;  
He clasps the object of his love's last care,  
And vows for him the load of life to bear.  
He journey'd o'er a dreary length of way,  
To plains where freedom shed her hallow'd ray;  
There, o'er the pathless wood, and mountain hoar,  
His faithful band the lifeless CORA bore:  
Ye who ne'er pin'd in sorrow's hopeless pain,  
Deem not the toil that soothes its anguish vain;  
Perchance the conscious spirit hovers near,  
And love's fond tribute to the dead is dear.  
Not long IBERIA'S sullied trophies wave,  
Her guilty warriors press th' untimely grave;  
For av'rice rising from the caves of earth,  
Wakes all her savage spirit into birth:  
Bids proud ALMAGRO feel her baleful flame,  
And Cuzco's treasures from PIZARRO claim.  
Now fierce in hostile rage each warlike train.  
Purple with kindred blood PERUVIA'S plain;  
While pensive on the hills, whose lofty brow  
O'erhung with waving woods the vale below,  
PERUVIA'S hapless tribes in scatter'd throngs,  
Behold the fiends of strife avenge their wrongs:  
Till, fetter'd in PIZARRO'S iron chain,  
ALMAGRO swells the victor's captive train.

In vain his pleading voice, his suppliant eye,  
Conjure his conqu'ror by the holy tie  
That seal'd their mutual league with sacred force,  
When first to climes unknown they bent their course;  
When danger's rising horrors low'r'd afar,  
The storms of ocean, and the toils of war,  
The sad remains of wasted life to spare,  
The shrivell'd bosom, and the silver'd hair--  
ALMAGRO dies--the victor's barb'rous pride  
To his pale corpse funereal rites denied;  
Chill'd by the heavy dews of night it lay,  
And wither'd in the sultry beam of day;

Till Indian bosoms, touch'd with gen'rous woe,  
 Paid the last duties to a prostrate foe.  
 With unrelenting hate the conqu'ror views  
 ALMAGRO'S band, and vengeance still pursues.  
 Condemns the victims of his power to stray  
 In drooping poverty's chill, thorny way;  
 To pine with famine's agony severe,  
 And all the ling'ring forms of death to fear;  
 Till, by despair impell'd, the rival train,  
 Rush to the haughty victor's splendid fane;  
 Swift on their foe with rage impetuous dart,  
 And plunge their daggers in his guilty heart.  
 How unavailing now the treasur'd ore  
 That made PERUVIA'S rifled bosom poor!  
 He falls--unpited, and would vainly buy  
 With ANDES ' mines, the tribute of a sigh.  
 Now faint with virtue's toil, LAS CASAS ' soul  
 Sought, with exulting hope, her heavenly goal:--  
 But whence descends, in streams of lambent light,  
 That lovely vision on the raptur'd sight?  
 'Tis Sensibility! she stands confest:  
 With trembling step she moves, and panting breast;  
 To yon deserted grave, lo, swift she flies,  
 Where her lov'd victim, mild LAS CASAS lies!  
 I see her deck the solitary haunt  
 With chaplets twin'd from every weeping plant:  
 Its odours soft the simple violet shed,  
 The shrinking lily hung its drooping head;  
 A moaning zephyr sigh'd within the bower,  
 And bent the frail stem of the pliant flower:  
 "Hither," she cried, her melting tone I hear,  
 It vibrates full on fancy's wakeful ear;  
 "Ye to whose yielding hearts my power endears,  
 The transport blended with delicious tears,  
 The bliss that swells to agony the breast,  
 The sympathy that robs the soul of rest;  
 Hither, with fond devotion, pensive come,  
 Kiss the pale shrine, and murmur o'er the tomb;  
 Bend on the hallow'd turf the tearful eye,  
 And breathe the precious incense of a sigh.  
 LAS CASAS ' tear has moisten'd misery's grave,  
 His sigh has moan'd the wretch he fail'd to save!

He, while conflicting pangs his bosom tear,  
 Has sought the lonely cavern of despair,  
 Where desolate she pin'd, and pour'd her thought  
 To the dread verge of wild distraction wrought.  
 While drops of mercy bath'd his hoary cheek,  
 He pour'd, by heav'n inspir'd, its accents meek;  
 In truth's clear mirror bade the mourner's view  
 Pierce the deep veil which error darkly drew,  
 And vanquish'd empire with a smile resign,  
 While brighter worlds in fair perspective shine."  
 She paus'd--yet still the sweet enthusiast bends  
 O'er the cold turf, and still her tear descends.  
 Ah, weak PERUVIA ! oft thy murmur'd sighs,  
 Thy stifled groans in fancy's ear arise;  
 She views, as slow the years of bondage roll,  
 On solemn days\* when sorrow mocks controul,  
 Thy captive sons their antique garb assume,  
 And wake remember'd images of gloom.  
 Lo! ATALIBA'S murder'd form appears,  
 The mournful object of eternal tears!  
 Wild o'er the scene indignant glances dart,  
 And pangs convulsive seize the throbbing heart--  
 Distraction soon each burning breast inflames,  
 And from the tyrant foe a victim claims!  
 But now, dispersing desolation's night,  
 A ray benignant cheers my gladden'd sight!  
 A blooming Chieftain of Peruvian race,  
 Whose soaring soul its high descent can trace,  
 The feather'd standard rears on Chili's\* plain,  
 And leads to glorious strife his gen'rous train.  
 And see, IBERIA bleeds! while Vict'ry twines  
 Her fairest garlands round PERUVIA'S shrines;  
 The gaping wounds of earth disclose no more  
 The lucid silver, and the blazing ore;  
 A brighter radiance gilds the passing hour,  
 While Freedom breaks the rod of lawless power;  
 On Andes' icy steep exulting glows,  
 And prints with rapid step th' eternal snows;  
 While, roll'd in dust her graceful feet beneath,  
 Fades the dark laurel of IBERIA'S wreath!--  
 PERU ! the timid muse who mourn'd thy woes,  
 Whom pity robb'd so long of dear repose,

The muse whose pensive soul with anguish wrung,  
Her early lyre for thee has trembling strung;  
Shed the vain tear, and breath'd the powerless sigh,  
Which in oblivion with her song must die;  
Pants with the wish thy deeds may rise to fame;  
Bright on some high-ton'd harp's immortal frame,  
While on the string of ecstasy it pours  
Thy future triumphs o'er unnumber'd shores.

Helen Maria Williams

## Peruvian Tales: Zilia, Tale Iii

PIZARRO takes possession of Cuzco--The fanaticism of VALVERDA , a Spanish priest--Its dreadful effects--A Peruvian priest put to the torture--His Daughter's distress--He is rescued by LAS CASAS , a Spanish ecclesiastic--And led to a place of safety, where he dies--His Daughter's narration of her sufferings--Her death.

Now stern PIZARRO seeks the distant plains,  
Where beauteous Cuzco lifts her golden fanes.  
The meek Peruvians gaz'd in wild dismay,  
Nor barr'd the dark Oppressor's sanguine way;  
And soon on Cuzco, where the dawning light  
Of glory shone, foretelling day more bright,  
Where the young arts had shed unfolding flowers,  
A scene of spreading desolation lowers!

While buried deep in everlasting shade,  
That lustre sickens, and those blossoms fade.  
And yet, devoted land, not gold alone,  
Or dire ambition wak'd thy rising groan;  
For lo! a fiercer fiend, with joy elate,  
Feasts on thy suff'rings, and impels thy fate:  
Fanatic Fury rears her sullen shrine,  
Where vultures prey, where venom'd adders twine;  
Her savage arm with purple torrents stains  
Thy rocking temples, and thy falling fanes;  
Her blazing torches flash the mounting fire,  
She grasps the sabre, and she lights the pyre;  
Her voice is thunder rending the still air,  
Her glance the baleful lightning's lurid glare;  
Her lips unhallow'd breathe their impious strain,  
And pure Religion's sacred voice profane;  
Whose precepts pity's mildest deeds approve,  
Whose law is mercy, and whose soul is love.  
And see, fanatic Fury wakes the storm--  
She wears the stern VALVERDA'S hideous form;  
His bosom never felt another's woes,  
No shriek of anguish breaks its dark repose.  
The temple nods--an aged form appears--



He beats his breast, he rends his silver hairs--  
 VALVERDA drags him from the blest abode,  
 Where his meek spirit humbly sought its God;  
 See, to his aid his child, soft ZILIA , springs,  
 And steeps in tears the robe to which she clings!  
 Now bursting from PERUVIA'S frightened throng,  
 Two warlike youths impetuous rush'd along;  
 One grasp'd his twanging bow with furious air,  
 While in his troubled eye sat fierce despair;  
 But all in vain his erring weapon flies,  
 Pierc'd by a thousand wounds, on earth he lies.  
 His drooping head the trembling ZILIA rais'd,  
 And on the youth in speechless anguish gaz'd;  
 While he who fondly shared his danger flew,  
 And from his bleeding breast a poignard drew.  
 "Deep in my faithful bosom let me hide  
 The fatal steel that would our souls divide,"--  
 He quick exclaims--the dying warrior cries  
 "Ah yet forbear!--by all the sacred ties  
 That bind our hearts, forbear!"--in vain he spoke,  
 Friendship with frantic zeal impels the stroke!  
 "Thyself for ever lost, thou hop'st in vain,"  
 The youth replied, "my spirit to detain;  
 From thee my soul, in childhood's earliest year,  
 Caught the light pleasure and the passing tear;  
 Thy friendship then my young affections blest  
 The first pure passion of my infant breast;  
 And still in death I feel its strong controul,  
 Its sacred impulse wings my fleeting soul,  
 That only lingers here till thou depart,  
 Whose image lives upon my fainting heart!"--  
 In vain the gen'rous youth, with panting breath,  
 Pour'd these last murmurs in the ear of death;  
 He reads the fatal truth in ZILIA'S eye,  
 And gives to friendship his expiring sigh.--  
 But now with rage VALVERDA'S glances roll,  
 And mark the vengeance rankling in his soul;  
 He bends his gloomy brow --his lips impart  
 The brooding purpose of his venom'd heart;  
 He bids the hoary priest in mutter'd strains  
 Abjure his faith, forsake his native fanes,  
 While yet the ling'ring pangs of torture wait,

While yet VALVERDA'S power suspends his fate.  
 "Vain man," the victim cried, "to hoary years  
 Know death is mild, and virtue feels no fears;  
 Cruel of spirit, come! let tortures prove  
 The power I serv'd in life in death I love."  
 He ceas'd--with rugged cords his limbs they bound,  
 And drag the aged suff'rer on the ground;  
 They grasp his feeble frame, his tresses tear;  
 His robe they rend, his shrivell'd bosom bare.  
 Ah, see his uncomplaining soul sustain  
 The sting of insult and the dart of pain!  
 His stedfast spirit feels one pang alone,  
 A child's despair awakes one bitter groan--  
 The mourner kneels to catch his parting breath,  
 To soothe the agony of ling'ring death:  
 No moan she breath'd, no tear had power to flow,  
 Still on her lip expir'd th' unutter'd woe;  
 Yet ah, her livid cheek, her stedfast look,  
 The desolated soul's deep anguish spoke--  
 Mild victim! close not yet thy languid eyes;  
 Pure spirit! claim not yet thy kindred skies;  
 A pitying angel comes to stay thy flight,  
 LAS CASAS \* bids thee view returning light;  
 Ah, let that sacred drop, to virtue dear,  
 Efface thy wrongs--receive his precious tear;  
 See his flush'd cheek with indignation glow,  
 While from his lips the tones of pity flow.--  
 "Oh, suff'ring Lord!" he cried, "whose streaming blood,  
 Was pour'd for man--earth drank the sacred flood,  
 Whose mercy in the mortal pang forgave  
 The murd'rous band, Thy love alone could save;  
 Forgive--thy goodness bursts each narrow bound  
 Which feeble thought, and human hope surround;  
 Forgive the guilty wretch, whose impious hand  
 From thy pure altar flings the flaming brand;  
 In human blood that hallow'd altar steeps,  
 Libation dire! while groaning nature weeps;  
 The limits of thy mercy dares to scan,  
 The object of thy love, his victim,--man.  
 While yet I linger, lo, the suff'rer dies,  
 I see his frame convuls'd,--I hear his sighs!  
 Whoe'er controuls the purpose of my heart,

First in this breast shall plunge his guilty dart."  
With hurried step he flew, with eager hands  
He broke the fetters, burst the cruel bands.  
As the fall'n angel heard with awful fear,  
The cherub's grave rebuke, in grace severe,  
And fled, while horror plum'd his impious crest,\*  
The form of virtue as she stood confest;  
So fierce VALVERDA sullen mov'd along,  
Abash'd, and follow'd by the hostile throng.

At length the hoary victim, freed from chains,  
LAS CASAS gently leads to safer plains;  
His searching eye explores a secret cave,  
Whose shaggy sides the languid billows lave;  
"There rest secure," he cried, "the Christian's God  
Will hover near, will guard the lone abode."  
Oft to the gloomy cell his steps repair,  
While night's chill breezes wave his silver'd hair;  
Oft in the tones of love, the words of peace,  
He bids the bitter tears of anguish cease;  
Bids drooping hope uplift her languid eyes,  
And points to bliss that dwells beyond the skies.  
Yet ah! in vain his pious cares would save  
The aged suff'rer from the op'ning grave;  
For deep the pangs of torture pierc'd his frame,  
And sunk his wasted life's expiring flame;  
To his cold lip LAS CASAS ' hand he prest,  
He faintly clasp'd his ZILIA to his breast;  
Then cried, "the God, whom now my vows adore,  
My heart through life obey'd, unknowing more;  
His mild forgiveness then my soul shall prove,  
His mercy share, LAS CASAS ' God is love."  
He spoke no more, his ZILIA'S hopeless moan  
Was heard responsive to his dying groan.  
"Victim of impious zeal," LAS CASAS cries,  
"Accept, departed shade, a Christian's sighs;  
And thou, soft mourner, tender, drooping form,  
What power shall guard thee from the fearful storm?"  
"Weep not for me," she cried, "for ZILIA'S breast  
Soon in the shelt'ring earth shall find its rest;  
Seek not the victim of despair to save,  
I ask but death--I only wish a grave.

Witness, thou mangled form, that earth retains,  
Witness a murder'd lover's cold remains;  
I liv'd my father's pangs to soothe, to share,  
I bore to live, though life was all despair.  
Ah! still my lover's dying moan I hear,  
In every pulse I feel his parting tear--  
I faint--an icy coldness chills each vein,  
No more these feeble limbs their load sustain;  
Spirit of pity! catch my fleeting breath,  
A moment stay--and close my eyes in death.  
LAS CASAS , thee thy God in mercy gave,  
To soothe my pangs, to find the wretch a grave."  
She ceas'd, her spirit fled to purer spheres,  
LAS CASAS bathes the pallid corse with tears;  
Fly, minister of good! nor ling'ring shed  
Those fruitless sorrows o'er th' unconscious dead;  
I view the sanguine flood, the wasting flame,  
I hear a suff'ring world LAS CASAS claim.

Helen Maria Williams

# Queen Mary's Complaint

I.

Pale moon! thy mild benignant light  
May glad some other captive's sight;  
Bright'ning the gloomy objects nigh,  
Thy beams a lenient thought supply:  
But, O, pale moon! what ray of thine  
Can soothe a misery like mine,  
Chase the sad image of the past,  
And woes for ever doom'd to last?

II.

Where are the years with pleasure gay?  
How bright their course! how short their stay!  
Where are the crowns, that round my head  
A double glory vainly spread?  
Where are the beauties wont to move,  
The grace, converting awe to love?  
Alas! had fate design'd to bless,  
Its equal hand had giv'n me less!

III.

Why did the regal garb array  
A breast that tender passions sway?  
A soul of unsuspecting frame,  
Which leans with faith on friendship's name?  
Ye vanish'd hopes! ye broken ties!  
By perfidy, in friendship's guise,  
This breast was injur'd, lost, betray'd--  
Where, where shall MARY look for aid?

IV.

How could I hope redress to find,

Stern rival! from thy envious mind?  
How could I e'er thy words believe?  
O ever practised to deceive!  
Thy wiles abhorr'd shall please alone  
Cold bosoms, selfish as thy own;  
While ages hence indignant hear  
The horrors of my fate severe.

V.

Have not thy unrelenting hands  
Torn nature's most endearing bands?  
Whate'er I hop'd from woman's name,  
The ties of blood, the stranger's claim!  
A sister-queen's despairing breast  
On thee securely lean'd for rest;  
On thee! from whom that breast has bled  
With sharper ills than those I fled.

VI.

O, skill'd in every baser art!  
Tyrant! to this unguarded heart  
No guilt so black as thine belongs,  
Which loads my length'ning years with wrongs.  
Strike, then, at once, insatiate foe,  
The long premeditated blow!  
So shall thy jealous terrors cease,  
And MARY'S harass'd soul have peace.

Helen Maria Williams

# Song

I.

Slow spreads the gloom my soul desires--  
The sun from India's shore retires--  
To EVAN'S banks with temp'rate ray,  
Home of my youth! he leads the day.  
O banks to me for ever dear!  
O stream, whose murmurs still I hear!  
All, all my hopes of bliss reside  
Where EVAN mingles with the CLYDE .

II.

And she in simple beauty drest,  
Whose image lives within my breast,  
Who trembling heard my parting sigh,  
And long pursued me with her eye!  
Does she, with heart unchang'd as mine,  
Oft in the vocal bowers recline?  
Or where yon grot o'erhangs the tide,  
Muse, while the EVAN meets the CLYDE ?

III.

Ye lofty banks that EVAN bound,  
Ye lavish woods that wave around,  
And o'er the stream your shadows throw,  
Which softly winds so far below--  
What secret charm to mem'ry brings  
All that on EVAN'S border springs?  
Sweet banks!--ye bloom by MARY'S side!  
Blest stream!--she views thee haste to CLYDE!

IV.

Can all the wealth of INDIA'S coast

Atone for years in absence lost?  
Return, ye moments of delight,  
With richer treasures bless my sight!  
Swift from this desert let me part,  
And fly to meet a kindred heart!  
Nor more may aught my steps divide  
From that dear stream which flows to CLYDE.

Helen Maria Williams



## Sonnet On Reading Burns' Mountain Daisy

While soon the "garden's flaunting flowers" decay,  
And, scatter'd on the earth, neglected lie,  
The "Mountain Daisy," cherish'd by the ray  
A poet drew from heav'n, shall never die.  
Ah! like that lovely flower the poet rose!  
'Mid penury's bare soil and bitter gale;  
He felt each storm that on the mountain blows,  
Nor ever knew the shelter of the vale.  
By Genius in her native vigour nurst,  
On Nature with impassion'd look he gazed,  
Then through the cloud of adverse fortune burst  
Indignant, and in light unborrow'd blaz'd.  
Shield from rude sorrow, SCOTIA! shield thy bard:--  
His heav'n-taught numbers Fame herself will guard.

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To Disappointment

PALE disappointment! at thy freezing name  
Chill fears in every shiv'ring vein I prove;  
My sinking pulse almost forgets to move,  
And life almost forsakes my languid frame.  
Yet thee, relentless nymph! no more I blame:  
Why do my thoughts 'midst vain illusions rove?  
Why gild the charms of friendship and of love  
With the warm glow of fancy's purple flame?  
When ruffling winds have some bright fane o'erthrown,  
Which shone on painted clouds, or seem'd to shine,  
Shall the fond gazer dream for him alone  
Those clouds were sable, and at fate repine?--  
I feel, alas! the fault is all my own,  
And ah, the cruel punishment is mine!

Helen Maria Williams

# Sonnet To Expression

Expression, child of soul! I fondly trace  
Thy strong enchantments, when the poet's lyre,  
The painter's pencil catch thy sacred fire,  
And beauty wakes for thee her touching grace-  
But from this frightened glance thy form avert  
When horrors check thy tear, thy struggling sigh,  
When frenzy rolls in thy impassion'd eye,  
Or guilt sits heavy on thy lab'ring heart-  
Nor ever let my shudd'ring fancy bear  
The wasting groan, or view the pallid look  
Of him[A] the Muses lov'd-when hope forsook  
His spirit, vainly to the Muses dear!  
For charm'd with heav'nly song, this bleeding breast,  
Mourns the blest power of verse could give despair no rest.-

Helen Maria Williams

# Sonnet To Hope

O, ever skilled to wear the form we love!  
To bid the shapes of fear and grief depart;  
Come, gentle Hope! with one gay smile remove  
The lasting sadness of an aching heart.  
Thy voice, benign Enchantress! let me hear;  
Say that for me some pleasures yet shall bloom,--  
That Fancy's radiance, Friendship's precious tear,  
Shall soften, or shall chase, misfortune's gloom.  
But come not glowing in the dazzling ray,  
Which once with dear illusions charm'd my eye,--  
O! strew no more, sweet flatterer! on my way  
The flowers I fondly thought too bright to die;  
Visions less fair will soothe my pensive breast,  
That asks not happiness, but longs for rest!

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To Love

AH , Love! ere yet I knew thy fatal power,  
Bright glow'd the colour of my youthful days,  
As on the sultry zone the torrid rays,  
That paint the broad-leav'd plantain's glossy bower:  
Calm was my bosom as this silent hour,  
When o'er the deep, scarce heard, the zephyr strays,  
'Midst the cool tamarinds indolently plays,  
Nor from the orange shakes its od'rous flower:--  
But ah! since Love has all my heart possest,  
That desolated heart what sorrows tear!  
Disturb'd, and wild as ocean's troubled breast,  
When the hoarse tempest of the night is there!  
Yet my complaining spirit asks no rest,  
This bleeding bosom cherishes despair.

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To Mrs. Bates

Oh, thou whose melody the heart obeys,  
Thou who can'st all its subject passions move,  
Whose notes to heav'n the list'ning soul can raise,  
Can thrill with pity, or can melt with love!  
Happy! whom nature lent this native charm;  
Whose melting tones can shed with magic power,  
A sweeter pleasure o'er the social hour,  
The breast to softness sooth, to virtue warm-But  
yet more happy! that thy life as clear  
From discord, as thy perfect cadence flows;  
That tun'd to sympathy, thy faithful tear,  
In mild accordance falls for others woes;  
That all the tender, pure affections bind  
In chains of harmony, thy willing mind!

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To Mrs. Siddons

Siddons! the Muse, for many a joy refin'd,  
Feelings which ever seem too swiftly fled-  
For those delicious tears she loves to shed,  
Around thy brow the wreath of praise would bind-  
But can her feeble notes thy praise unfold?  
Repeat the tones each changing passion gives,  
Or mark where nature in thy action lives,  
Where, in thy pause, she speaks a pang untold!  
When fierce ambition steels thy daring breast,  
When from thy frantic look our glance recedes;  
Or oh, divine enthusiast! when opprest  
By anxious love, that eye of softness pleads-  
The sun-beam all can feel, but who can trace  
The instant light, and catch the radiant grace!

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To Peace Of Mind

Sweet Peace! ah, lead me from the thorny dale,  
Where desolate my wand'ring steps have fled;  
Far from the sunny paths which others tread,  
While youth enlivens, and while joys prevail.  
Then I no more shall vanished hopes bewail,  
No more the fruitless tear shall love to shed,  
When pensive eve her cherish'd gloom has spread,  
And day's bright tints, like my short pleasures, fail!  
Yet lead me not where blooms the glowing rose,  
But lead me where the cypress branches wave;  
Thou hast a shelt'ring cell for cureless woes,  
A home of refuge, where no tempests rave;  
There would my weary heart in youth repose,  
Beneath the turf that shrouds an early grave.

Helen Maria Williams



## Sonnet To Simplicity

NYMPH of the desert! on this lonely shore,  
Simplicity, thy blessings still are mine,  
And all thou canst not give I pleas'd resign,  
For all beside can soothe my soul no more.  
I ask no lavish heaps to swell my store,  
And purchase pleasures far remote from thine:  
Ye joys, for which the race of Europe pine,  
Ah, not for me your studied grandeur pour;  
Let me where yon tall cliffs are rudely pil'd,  
Where towers the Palm amidst the mountain trees,  
Where pendant from the steep, with graces wild,  
The blue Liana floats upon the breeze,  
Still haunt those bold recesses, Nature's child,  
Where thy majestic charms my spirit seize!

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To The Calbassia-Tree

SUBLIME Calbassia! luxuriant tree,  
How soft the gloom thy bright-hued foliage throws!  
While from thy pulp a healing balsam flows,  
Whose power the suff'ring wretch from pain can free:  
My pensive footsteps ever turn to thee!  
Since oft, while musing on my lasting woes,  
Beneath thy flowery white-bells I repose,  
Symbol of Friendship dost thou seem to me;  
For thus has Friendship cast her soothing shade  
O'er my unshelter'd bosom's keen distress,  
Thus sought to heal the wounds which Love has made,  
And temper bleeding sorrow's sharp excess!  
Ah! not in vain she lends her balmy aid--  
The agonies she cannot cure are less!

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To The Curlew

SOOTH'D by the murmurs on the sea-beat shore,  
His dun-grey plumage floating to the gale,  
The Curlew blends his melancholy wail  
With those hoarse sounds the rushing waters pour.  
Like thee, congenial bird! my steps explore  
The bleak lone sea-beach, or the rocky dale,--  
And shun the orange bower, the myrtle vale,  
Whose gay luxuriance suits my soul no more.  
I love the ocean's broad expanse, when drest  
In limpid clearness, or when tempests blow:  
When the smooth currents on its placid breast  
Flow calm, as my past moments us'd to flow;  
Or when its troubled waves refuse to rest,  
And seem the symbol of my present woe.

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To The Moon

The glitt'ring colours of the day are fled;  
Come, melancholy orb! that dwell'st with night,  
Come! and o'er earth thy wand'ring lustre shed,  
Thy deepest shadow, and thy softest light;  
To me congenial is the gloomy grove,  
When with faint light the sloping uplands shine;  
That gloom, those pensive rays alike I love,  
Whose sadness seems in sympathy with mine!  
But most for this, pale orb! thy beams are dear,  
For this, benignant orb! I hail thee most:  
That while I pour the unavailing tear,  
And mourn that hope to me in youth is lost,  
Thy light can visionary thoughts impart,  
And lead the Muse to soothe a suff'ring heart.

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To The Strawberry

THE Strawberry blooms upon its lowly bed,  
Plant of my native soil!--the Lime may fling  
More potent fragrance on the zephyr's wing,  
The milky Cocoa richer juices shed,  
The white Guava lovelier blossoms spread--  
But not, like thee, to fond remembrance bring  
The vanished hours of life's enchanting spring;  
Short calendar of joys for ever fled!  
Thou bid'st the scenes of childhood rise to view,  
The wild wood-path which fancy loves to trace;  
Where, veil'd in leaves, thy fruit of rosy hue  
Lurk'd on its pliant stem with modest grace.  
But ah! when thought would later years renew,  
Alas, successive sorrows crowd the space!

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To The Torrid Zone

PATHWAY of light! o'er thy empurpled zone,  
With lavish charms, perennial summer strays;  
Soft 'midst thy spicy groves the zephyr plays,  
While far around the rich perfumes are thrown;  
The Amadavid-bird for thee alone  
Spreads his gay plumes, that catch thy vivid rays;  
For thee the gems with liquid lustre blaze,  
And Nature's various wealth is all thy own.  
But ah! not thine is Twilight's doubtful gloom,  
Those mild gradations, mingling day with night;  
Here instant darkness shrouds thy genial bloom,  
Nor leaves my pensive soul that ling'ring light,  
When musing Mem'ry would each trace resume  
Of fading pleasures in successive flight.

Helen Maria Williams

# Sonnet To The White-Bird Of The Tropic

BIRD of the Tropic! thou, who lov'st to stray  
Where thy long pinions sweep the sultry Line,  
Or mark'st the bounds which torrid beams confine  
By thy averted course, that shuns the ray  
Oblique, enamour'd of sublimer day:  
Oft on yon cliff thy folded plumes recline,  
And drop those snowy feathers Indians twine,  
To crown the warrior's brow with honours gay.  
O'er trackless oceans what impels thy wing?  
Does no soft instinct in thy soul prevail?  
No sweet affection to thy bosom cling,  
And bid thee oft thy absent nest bewail?--  
Yet thou again to that dear spot canst spring,  
But I no more my long-lost home shall hail!

Helen Maria Williams

## Sonnet To Twilight

Meek Twilight! soften the declining day,  
And bring the hour my pensive spirit loves;  
When o'er the mountain slow descends the ray  
That gives to silence and to night the groves.  
Ah, let the happy court the morning still,  
When, in her blooming loveliness arrayed,  
She bids fresh beauty light the vale or hill,  
And rapture warble in the vocal shade.  
Sweet is the odour of the morning's flower,  
And rich in melody her accents rise;  
Yet dearer to my soul the shadowy hour  
At which her blossoms close, her music dies:  
For then, while languid Nature droops her head,  
She wakes the tear 'tis luxury to shed.

Helen Maria Williams



# The Bastille: A Vision

I.

"Drear cell! along whose lonely bounds,  
Unvisited by light,  
Chill silence dwells with night,  
Save where the clanging fetter sounds!  
Abyss, where mercy never came,  
Nor hope the wretch can find;  
Where long inaction wastes the frame,  
And half annihilates the mind!

II.

"Stretch'd helpless in this living tomb,  
O haste, congenial death!  
Seize, seize this ling'ring breath,  
And shroud me in unconscious gloom.  
BRITAIN ! thy exil'd son no more  
Thy blissful vales shall see--  
Why did I leave thy hallow'd shore,  
Ah, land ador'd, where all are free?"

III.

BASTILLE ! within thy hideous pile,  
Which stains of blood defile,  
Thus rose the captive's sighs,  
Till slumber seal'd his weeping eyes.  
Terrific visions hover near!  
He sees an awful form appear!  
Who drags his step to deeper cells,  
Where stranger, wilder horror dwells!

IV.

"O! tear me from these haunted walls,

Or these fierce shapes controul!  
Lest madness seize my soul!  
That pond'rous mask of iron\* falls,  
I see--" "Rash mortal, ha! beware,  
Nor breathe that hidden name!  
Should those dire accents wound the air,  
Know death shall lock thy stiff'ning frame.

V.

"Hark! that loud bell which sullen tolls!  
It wakes a shriek of woe  
From yawning depths below;  
Shrill through this hollow vault it rolls!  
A deed was done in this black cell  
Unfit for mortal ear--  
A deed was done when toll'd that knell,  
No human heart could live and hear!

VI.

"Arouse thee from thy numbing glance,  
Near yon thick gloom, advance;  
The solid cloud has shook;  
Arm all thy soul with strength to look--  
Enough!--thy starting locks have rose--  
Thy limbs have fail'd--thy blood has froze!--  
On scenes so foul, with mad affright,  
I fix no more thy fasten'd sight.

VII.

"Those troubled phantoms melt away!  
I lose the sense of care--  
I feel the vital air--  
I see--I see the light of day!  
Visions of bliss!--eternal powers!  
What force has shook those hated walls?  
What arm has rent those threat'ning towers?

It falls--the guilty fabric falls!"

VIII.

"Now, favour'd mortal, now behold!  
To soothe thy captive state  
I ope the book of fate;  
Mark what its registers unfold:  
Where this dark pile in chaos lies,  
With nature's execrations hurl'd,  
Shall Freedom's sacred temple rise,  
And charm an emulating world!

IX.

" 'Tis her awak'ning voice commands  
Those firm, those patriot bands;  
Arm'd to avenge her cause,  
And guard her violated laws!--  
Did ever earth a scene display  
More glorious to the eye of day,  
Than millions with according mind,  
Who claim the rights of human kind?

IX.

"Does the fam'd Roman page sublime  
An hour more bright unroll,  
To animate the soul,  
Than this lov'd theme of future time?--  
Posterity, with rapture meet,  
The consecrated act shall hear;  
Age shall the glowing tale repeat,  
And youth shall drop the burning tear!

X.

"The peasant, while he fondly sees

His infants round the hearth  
Pursue their simple mirth,  
Or emulously climb his knees,  
No more bewails their future lot,  
By tyranny's stern rod opprest;  
While freedom cheers his straw-roof'd cot,  
And tells him all his toils are blest!

XI.

"Philosophy! O, share the meed  
Of freedom's noblest deed!  
'Tis thine each truth to scan,  
And dignify the rank of man!  
'Tis thine all human wrongs to heal,  
'Tis thine to love all nature's weal;  
To give our frail existence worth,  
And shed a ray from heaven on earth."

Helen Maria Williams

# The Charter;

ADDRESSED  
TO MY NEPHEW  
ATHANASE C. L. COQUEREL,  
ON HIS WEDDING DAY, 1819.

CHILD of my heart! while others hail  
This festive morn, when joys prevail,  
With careless wishes they may last,  
Spite of all annals of the past;  
As if for thee alone, secure,  
Their fleeting nature would endure,  
With roses strewing all thy way,  
And life were but a bridal day;--

For me, by pensive thoughts opprest,  
The future fills my anxious breast;  
And flowers that fade, and joys that flee,  
Are not the things I ask, for thee!--  
My heart for thee has learn'd to prove  
The throbbings of a mother's love,  
Since on thy cradle fell the tear  
That mourn'd a sister's early bier;  
And sure that angel's sainted prayer  
Has shed sweet influence o'er my care;  
To sorrow doomed in all the rest,  
And only in her children blest!--  
While now you sign, with hope elate,  
The civic register of fate;  
Or at the holy altar bow,  
To ratify the plighted vow,  
Which made aright, or breath'd amiss,  
Includes all future woe, or bliss;  
While kneeling youth, and weeping beauty,  
Hear the grave ritual of their duty,

And the stern rubrick well approve  
That charges to be true to love;  
This compact, that for ever binds

In holy links two kindred minds,  
Their happiness the mutual barter,  
This solemn league we'll call a CHARTER !  
Th' allusion never can be wrong,  
White omens to the name belong;  
Palladium that has all withstood,  
And harbinger of boundless good.  
And ever may its hallow'd law  
Your willing hearts together draw!  
Ah! may no ultra thirst of power  
Embitter life's domestic hour;  
No principles of feudal sway  
Teach without loving, to obey;  
The heart such joyless homage slights,  
And wedlock claims its Bill of Rights--  
May you, to Virtue nobly just,  
Disdain the whisper of mistrust;

Your truth her dark police may brave,  
Made for the tyrant, and the slave.--  
May Discord pass with sullen tread,  
Far from the threshold of your shed,  
With accents that on harshness border,  
And words that love would call to order;  
Or veto he would pine to hear,  
Protesting only by a tear.--  
Nor when true fondness, with submission  
Her right asserting of petition,  
Shall meekly hint at some abuse,  
Or some reform of gen'ral use,  
Unheeding all that she may say,  
Pass to the order of the day.--  
Nor, bidding every blessing fade,  
Let Jealousy your peace invade;  
Whose shadow clings to all that's dear,  
And adds the length'ning shapes of fear;  
Whose mind with sickly colours ting'd,  
Discerns in all, the code infring'd,

Reads violations in the eye,  
And marks the treason of a sigh;  
Or loads a tear with false aspersion,

Mistaking sorrow for aversion;  
Or construes into acts of guile  
The tender pleadings of a smile;  
Condemns unheard, with ultra fury,  
Nor suffers love to call a jury,  
Where innocence her head uprears,  
Safe, in a trial by her peers.--  
Thus, having ne'er from duty swerved,  
The faith of treaties well observ'd;  
When Time your destin'd lot shall fling  
Of sorrow from his loaded wing,  
For you, of other good bereft,  
Unchanging love will still be left;  
Not like the world he then will roam,  
But rest, the morning star of home.  
Not yours, their bitter fate, who know  
That agony of lonely woe,

An altered heart was bound to share,  
Nor find defence, nor charter there!  
For you, to every duty true,  
The Charter held in rev'ence due,  
Each tender clause shall habit seal,  
With no suggestion of repeal;  
Firm to the law of true election,  
And treating change with stern rejection,  
Though time the graceful form has worn  
To which fidelity was sworn:  
For not alone with blooming youth  
Is made that league of lasting truth;  
The compact sign'd with beauty now,  
Includes wan age, with wrinkled brow,  
With tresses grey, with visage pale,  
And eyes whose liquid lustre fail;  
For then the hand, that shrivell'd thing,  
Shall still display the nuptial ring,  
Pledge of your faith, and cherish'd token  
Of vows, through lengthen'd years unbroken;

When all that's left of passion's flame  
Is friendship, with a dearer name!  
Thus be the charter'd Code imprest,

With all its statutes, on your breast;  
No duty it enjoins forsook,  
Till Time at length shall close the book;  
And hope shall frame, for worlds to come,  
A treaty that survives the tomb.

Helen Maria Williams



# The Complaint Of The Goddess Of The Glaciers To Doctor Darwin

WHILE o'er the Alpine cliffs I musing stray'd,  
And gaz'd on nature, in her charms severe,  
The last soft beam of parting day display'd  
The Glacier-Goddess, on her crystal sphere.

Her sledgy car, with sparkling frost-work bright,  
O'er the pellucid ice her snow-birds drew,  
And on her fleecy robe's refracted light  
The full-blown rose's vermeil colours threw.

Slow as she graceful lifts her misty veil,  
Indignant griefs her mournful glance exprest,  
And thus, in falt'ring tones, the vestal pale  
Breath'd the deep sorrows of her beating breast:

'Native of that green isle, where DARWIN waves  
His magic wand o'er nature's vernal reign,  
Her airy essence and her central caves,  
Her fires electric, and her nereid train:

'Go, tell him, stranger, had his muse explor'd  
My realms, new marvels had enchain'd her eye;  
Go, tell him, in my sunless fanes are stor'd  
Treasures no vulgar glance shall e'er descry.

'Ye nymphs of fire! around your glowing brows  
What lavish wreaths your poet loves to twine;  
Know, partial bard! philosophy allows  
That one bright chaplet might belong to mine!

'Ah, why a vestal to a 'fiend' transform,  
Bid to my steeps thy glitt'ring bands repair,  
Direct with cruel aim their arrowy storm,  
And chain a goddess to the 'northern bear?'

'Stay thy rash steps! my potent hand impels  
The rushing avalanche to gulphs below!

I can transfix thee, numb'd, in icy cells,  
Or shroud thee in unfathom'd folds of snow!

'Come not in hostile garb!--with softer art,  
With dearer power, my yielding spirit seize;  
Wake thy rich lyre, and melt my gelid heart  
With incense sweeter than the western breeze.

'Thy muse shall mount my Lammer-Geyer's wing,  
Pass o'er my untrod heights, with daring course,  
While the cold genii of each new-born spring  
For thee unlock the rivers' viewless source.

'For thee my sylphs, with tender care, shall mark  
The pointless pathway of the secret rills,  
And light with lambent ray the caverns dark,  
Where chemic nature mystic wealth distils.

'For thee my sylphs in distant lands shall trace,  
Where, far diffus'd, my vivifying powers  
Awake, ungrateful bard, in blushing grace,  
To life and love, awake thy wedded flowers.

'For thee--but ah, my pensive form he flies  
For nymphs of golden locks and florid hue!  
No charms have snow-white tints, or azure eyes--'  
She wept, and, folded in a cloud, withdrew.

Helen Maria Williams

# The Linnet And The Cat

WHEN fading Autumn's latest hours  
Strip the brown wood, and chill the flowers,--  
When evening, wint'ry, short, and pale,  
Expires in many a hollow gale,--  
And only morn herself looks gay,  
When first she throws her quiv'ring ray  
Where the light frost congeals the dew,  
Flushing the turf with purple hue;  
Gay bloom, whose transient glow can shed  
A charm like Summer when 'tis fled!--  
A Linnet among leafless trees  
Sung, in the pauses of the breeze,

His farewell note, to fancy dear,  
That ends the music of the year.  
The short'ning day, the sadd'ning sky,  
With frost and famine low'ring nigh;  
The Summer's dirge he seem'd to sing,  
And droop'd his elegiac wing.  
Poor Bird! he read amiss his fate,  
Nor saw the horrors of his state:  
A prowling Cat, with jetty skin,--  
Dark emblem of the mind within,--  
Who feels no sympathetic pain,  
Who hears unmov'd the sweetest strain,--  
Fit but 'for stratagem and spoil,'  
Mischief his pleasure and his toil,  
Drew near--and shook the wither'd leaves;--  
The Linnet's flutt'ring bosom heaves--  
Alarm'd he hears the rustling sound;  
He starts--he pauses--looks around;  
Too late--more near the savage draws,  
And grasps the victim in his jaws!

The Linnet's muse, a tim'rous maid,  
Saw, and to Molly scream'd for aid;  
A tear then fill'd her earnest eye,  
Useless as dews on desarts lie;  
But Molly's pity fell like showers

That feed the plants, and wake the flowers;  
Heroic Molly dauntless flew,  
And, scorning all his claws could do,  
Snatch'd from Grimalkin's teeth his prey,  
And bore him in her breast away.  
His beating heart and wings declare  
How small his hope of safety there;  
Still the dire foe he seem'd to see,  
And scarce could fancy he was free.  
Awhile he cow'rd on Molly's breast,  
Then upward sprung, and sought his nest.  
Dear Molly! for thy tender speed,  
Thy fearless pity's gentle deed,

A ribbon-garland, 'rosy red,'  
My votive gift, shall deck thy head;  
That garland at the village fair  
Shalt thou, dear maid, in triumph wear;  
And may the blooming wreath obtain  
The youth thy heart desires to gain.  
And thou, sweet Bird, whom rapture fills,  
Who feel'st no sense of future ills,--  
That sense which human peace destroys,  
And murders all our present joys,--  
Still soothe with song th' autumnal hours;  
And when the wint'ry tempest lowers,  
When snow thy shiv'ring plumes shall fill,  
And icicles shall load thy bill,  
Come fearless to my friendly shed,  
This careful hand the crumbs shall spread,  
Then peck secure, these watchful eyes  
Shall guard my Linnet from surprise.

Helen Maria Williams

# The Morai

FAIR OTAHEITE , fondly blest  
By him who long was doom'd to brave  
The fury of the Polar wave,  
That fiercely mounts the frozen rock  
Where the harsh sea-bird rears her nest,  
And learns the raging surge to mock--  
There Night, that loves eternal storm,  
Deep and lengthened darkness throws,  
And untried danger's doubtful form  
Its half-seen horror shews!  
While Nature, with a look so wild,  
Leans on the cliffs, in chaos pil'd,  
That here the aw'd, astonish'd mind  
Forgets, in that o'erwhelming hour,  
When her rude hands the storms unbind  
In all the madness of her power,  
That she who spreads the savage gloom,  
That she can dress in melting grace,  
In sportive Summer's lavish bloom,  
The awful terrors of her face;  
And wear the sweet perennial smile  
That charms in OTAHEITE'S isle.  
Yet, amid her fragrant bowers,  
Where Spring, whose dewy fingers strew  
O'er other lands some fleeting flowers,  
Lives, in blossoms ever new;  
Whence arose that shriek of pain?  
Whence the tear that flows in vain?  
Death! thy unrelenting hand  
Bursts some transient, human band.  
What art thou, Death?--terrific shade,  
In unpierc'd gloom array'd!--  
Oft will daring Fancy stray  
Far in the central wastes, where night  
Divides no cheering hour with day,  
And unnam'd horrors meet her sight;  
There thy form she dimly sees,  
And round the shape unfinish'd throws  
All her frantic vision shews,

When numbing fears her spirit freeze.  
But can mortal voice declare,  
If Fancy paints thee as thou art?--  
Thy aspect may a terror wear  
Her pencil never shall impart;  
The eye that once on thee shall gaze  
No more its stiffen'd orb can raise;  
The lips that could thy power reveal,  
Shall lasting silence instant seal.  
In vain the icy hand we fold,  
In vain the breast with tears we steep,  
The heart that shar'd each pang is cold,  
The vacant eye no more can weep.  
Yet from the shore where Ganges rolls  
His waves beneath the torrid ray,  
To earth's chill verge, where o'er the poles  
Falls the last beam of ling'ring day,  
For ever sacred are the dead!  
Sweet Fancy comes in sorrow's aid,  
And bids the mourner lightly tread  
Where th' insensate clay is laid;  
Bids partial gloom the sod invest  
By the mould'ring relics prest;  
There lavish strews with sad delight,  
Whate'er her consecrating power  
Reveres, of herb or fruit, or flower,  
And fondly weaves the various rite.

See! o'er OTAHEITE'S plain  
Moves the long funereal train;  
Slow the pallid corse they bear,  
Oft they breathe the solemn prayer.  
Where the Ocean bathes the land,  
Thrice and thrice, with pious hand,  
The priest, where high the billow springs,  
From the wave unsullied, flings  
Waters pure, that sprinkled near,  
Sanctify the hallow'd bier;  
But never may one drop profane  
The relics with forbidden stain!  
Now around the fun'ral shrine,  
Led in mystic mazes, twine

Garlands, where the plantain weaves  
With the palm's luxuriant leaves,  
And o'er each sacred knot is spread  
The plant devoted to the dead.  
Five pale moons with trembling light  
Shall gaze upon the lengthen'd rite;  
Shall see distracted beauty tear  
The tresses of her flowing hair;  
Those graceful locks, no longer dear,  
She wildly scatters o'er the bier,  
And frantic gives the frequent wound  
That purples with her blood the ground!  
Where along the western sky  
Day's reflected colours die,  
And twilight rules the doubtful hour  
Ere slow-pac'd night resumes her power,  
Mark the cloud that lingers still  
Darkly on the hanging hill:  
There the disembodied mind  
Hears, upon the hollow wind,  
Low, in mournful cadence thrown,  
Sorrow's oft repeated moan--  
Still some human passions sway  
The spirit, late immers'd in clay;  
Still the hopeless sigh is dear,  
Still belov'd the fruitless tear!

Five waning moons with wand'ring light  
Have past the shadowy bound of night,  
And mingled their departing ray  
With the soft fires of early day;  
Let the last sad rites be paid,  
Grateful to the conscious shade.  
Let the priest with pious care  
Now the wasted relics bear,  
Where the MORAI'S awful gloom  
Shrouds the consecrated tomb.  
Let the plantain lift its head;  
Cherish'd emblem of the dead;  
Slow, and solemn, o'er the grave  
Let the twisted plumage wave,  
Symbol hallow'd and divine

Of the god who guards the shrine.  
Hark!--that shriek of strange despair  
Never shall disturb the air;  
Never, never shall it rise,  
But for Nature's broken ties!--  
Bright Crescent! that with lucid smile  
Gild'st the MORAI'S lofty pile;  
Whose broad lines of shadow throw  
A gloomy horror far below,  
Witness, O recording moon,  
All the rites are duly done;  
Be the faithful tribute o'er,  
The hov'ring spirit asks no more!  
Mortals, cease the pile to tread,  
Leave to silence, leave the dead.  
But where may she who loves to stray  
'Mid shadows of funereal gloom,  
And courts the sadness of the tomb,  
Where may she seek that proud MORAI ,  
Whose dear memorial points the place  
Where fell the friend of human race?  
Ye lonely Isles, on Ocean's bound,  
Ye bloom'd thro' Time's long flight unknown,  
Till Cook the untrack'd billow past!  
Till he along the surges cast  
Philanthropy's connecting zone,  
And spread her loveliest blessings round!--  
Not like that murd'rous band he came,  
Who stain'd with blood the new-found West;  
Nor as, with unrelenting breast,  
From BRITAIN'S free, enlightened land,  
Her sons now seek ANGOLA'S strand,\*  
The ties most sacred to unbind,--  
To load with chains a brother's frame,  
And plunge a dagger in the mind;  
Mock the sharp anguish bleeding there  
Of nature in her last despair!  
Great COOK ! Ambition's lofty flame,  
So oft directed to destroy,  
Led thee to circle with thy name  
The smile of love, and hope, and joy!  
Those fires that lend the dang'rous blaze



The devious comet trails afar,  
Might form the pure, benignant rays  
That gild the morning's gentle star.

Sure, where the hero's ashes rest,  
The nations late emerg'd from night  
Still haste--with love's unwearied care,  
That spot in lavish flowers is drest,  
And fancy's dear, inventive rite  
Still paid with fond observance there?--  
Ah, no! around his fatal grave  
No lavish flowers were ever strew'd,  
No votive gift was ever laid--  
His blood a savage shore bedew'd!  
His mangled limbs, one hasty prayer,  
One pious tear by friendship paid,  
Were cast upon the raging wave!  
Deep in the wild abyss he lies,  
Far from the cherish'd scene of home;  
Far, far from her whose faithful sighs  
A husband's trackless course pursue;  
Whose tender fancy loves to roam  
With him o'er lands and oceans new;  
And gilds with hope's deluding form  
The gloomy pathway of the storm!  
Yet, Cook! immortal wreathes are thine!  
While Albion's grateful toil shall raise  
The marble tomb, the trophied bust,  
For ages faithful to its trust;  
While, eager to record thy praise,  
She bids the muse of history twine  
The chaplet of undying fame,  
And tell each polish'd land thy worth,  
The ruder natives of the earth  
Shall oft repeat thy honour'd name,  
While infants catch the frequent sound,  
And learn to lisp the oral tale,  
Whose fond remembrance shall prevail  
Till Time has reach'd her destin'd bound!

Helen Maria Williams

# The Scotch Ballad

Ah, EVAN, by thy winding stream  
How once I lov'd to stray,  
And view the morning's redd'ning beam,  
Or charm of closing day!

To yon dear grot by EVAN'S side,  
How oft my steps were led;  
Where far beneath the waters glide,  
And thick the woods are spread!

But I no more a charm can see  
In EVAN'S lovely glades;  
And drear and desolate to me  
Are those enchanting shades.

While far--how far from EVAN'S bowers,  
My wand'ring lover flies;  
Where dark the angry tempest lowers,  
And high the billows rise!

And O, where'er the wand'rer goes,  
Is that poor mourner dear,  
Who gives, while soft the EVAN flows,  
Each passing wave a tear?

And does he now that grotto view?  
On those steep banks still gaze?  
In fancy does he still pursue  
The EVAN'S lovely maze?

O come! repass the stormy wave,  
O toil for gold no more!  
Our love a dearer pleasure gave  
On EVAN'S peaceful shore.

Leave not my breaking heart to mourn  
The joys so long denied;  
Ah, soon to those green banks return,  
Where EVAN meets the CLYDE.

Helen Maria Williams

# The Travellers In Haste;

ADDRESSED TO  
THOMAS CLARKSON, ESQ.  
IN 1814,  
WHEN MANY ENGLISH ARRIVED AT PARIS, BUT  
REMAINED A VERY SHORT TIME.

LOV'D ENGLAND ! now the narrow sea  
In vain would sep'rate France and thee:  
May fav'ring zephyrs swell the sail  
That wafts the crowd my wishes hail!  
Strangers to me, they hither roam,  
But English accents speak of home;  
And SCOTIA , still more dear to me  
Are those which lead me back to thee!

Accents that wake with magic powers  
The spirits of departed hours!--  
Ah, lost to me thy fir-clad hills,  
The music of thy mountain-rills,--  
Yet ever shall the mem'ry last,  
'Pleasant and mournful' of the past.  
But here, from scenes so new, so strange,  
Where meditation long might range,  
And taste might fix her ardent eye,  
How swift the rapid travellers fly!  
What haste to come, what haste to go,  
Unknowing half they wish to know;  
Delighted as they rush along,  
But not less eager to be gone.  
In vain the arts unfold their gates,  
For there no stranger ever waits;  
In vain unlock that wealth sublime  
Immortal genius wrests from time:--  
Ah, wherefore ope the classic book,  
For those who have no time to look?

Who 'midst the academic bowers,  
On BREGUET call to mark the hours;

Through the long gall'ry swift advance,  
And judge perfection with a glance!  
But to what class does he belong  
Who comes less eager to be gone,  
And yet inflexibly refuses  
To heed the Arts, or court the Muses?  
The groups that press to give th' 'Apollo'  
A parting glance, he scorns to follow;  
In vain the 'Venus' may expect  
One look, and wonder at neglect;  
For CLARKSON slights all forms of beauty,--  
Not that he thinks indiff'rence duty,  
But dearer pleasures fill the space  
Of classic charms, and attic grace:--  
He comes at this decisive hour  
In Pity's cause, to plead with power;  
His embassy is from the slave,  
His diplomatic skill to save!

He comes the fetter'd to unbind,  
To stipulate for half mankind;  
And when applause records his name,  
Sighs that philanthropy is fame.

Helen Maria Williams

## To A Friend,

WHO SENT ME FLOWERS, WHEN CONFINED BY  
ILLNESS.

WHILE sickness still my step detains  
From scenes where vernal pleasure reigns,  
Where Spring has bath'd with dewy tear  
The blossoms of the op'ning year;  
To soothe confinement's languid hours,  
You send a lavish gift of flowers,  
Midst whose soft odours mem'ry roves  
O'er all the images she loves.  
Not long their sweetness shall prevail,  
Their rosy tints shall soon be pale,

Yet fancy in their fading hues  
No emblem of our friendship views;  
Its firm fidelity shall last,  
When all the flowers of spring are past;  
And when life's summer shall be o'er,  
That summer which returns no more,  
Still friendship, with perennial bloom,  
Shall soften half the winter's gloom!

Helen Maria Williams

## To Dr. Moore,

IN ANSWER TO A POETICAL EPISTLE WRITTEN TO  
ME BY HIM IN WALES, SEPTEMBER 1791.

WHILE in long exile far from you I roam,  
To soothe my heart with images of home,  
For me, my friend, with rich poetic grace  
The landscapes of my native Isle you trace;  
Her cultur'd meadows, and her lavish shades,  
The rivers winding through her lovely glades;  
Far as where, frowning on the flood below,  
The rough Welsh mountain lifts its craggy brow.  
Meanwhile my steps have stray'd where Autumn yields  
A purple harvest on the sunny fields;

Where, bending with their luscious weight, recline  
The loaded branches of the clust'ring vine;  
There, on the Loire's sweet banks, a joyful band  
Cull'd the rich produce of the fruitful land;  
The youthful peasant, and the village maid,  
And age and childhood lent their feeble aid.  
The labours of the morning done, they haste  
Where in the field is spread the light repast;  
The vintage-baskets serve, revers'd, for chairs,  
And the gay meal is crown'd with tuneless airs.  
Delightful land! ah, now with gen'ral voice,  
Thy village sons and daughters may rejoice;  
Thy happy peasant, now no more a slave,  
Forbad to taste one good that nature gave,  
No longer views with unavailing pain  
The lavish harvest, ripe for him in vain.  
Oppression's cruel hand shall dare no more  
To seize its tribute from his scanty store;  
And from his famish'd infants wring the spoils,  
Too hard-earn'd produce of his useful toils;

For now on Gallia's plain the peasant knows  
Those equal rights impartial heav'n bestows;  
He now, by freedom's ray illumin'd, taught  
Some self-respect, some energy of thought,  
Discerns the blessings that to all belong,

And lives to guard his humble shed from wrong.  
Auspicious Liberty! in vain thy foes  
Deride thy ardour, and thy force oppose;  
In vain refuse to mark thy spreading light,  
While, like the mole, they hide their heads in night,  
Or hope their eloquence with taper-ray  
Can dim the blaze of philosophic day;  
Those reas'ners, who pretend that each abuse,  
Sanction'd by precedent, has some blest use!  
Does then a chemic power to time belong,  
Extracting by some process right from wrong?  
Must feudal governments for ever last,  
Those Gothic piles, the work of ages past?  
Nor may obtrusive reason dare to scan,  
Far less reform, the rude, mishapen plan?

The winding labyrinths, the hostile towers,  
Where danger threatens, and where horror lowers;  
The jealous drawbridge, and the mote profound,  
The lonely dungeon in the cavern'd ground;  
The sullen dome above those central caves,  
Where liv'd one despot and a host of slaves?--  
Ah, Freedom, on this renovated shore  
That fabric frights the moral world no more!  
Shook to its basis by thy powerful spell,  
Its triple walls in massy fragments fell;  
While, rising from the hideous wreck, appears  
The temple thy firm arm sublimely rears;  
Of fair proportions, and of simple grace,  
A mansion worthy of the human race.  
For me, the witness of those scenes, whose birth  
Forms a new era in the storied earth;  
Oft, while with glowing breast those scenes I view,  
They lead, ah friend belov'd, my thoughts to you!  
Still every fine emotion they impart  
With your idea mingles in my heart;

You, whom I oft have heard, with gen'rous zeal,  
With all that truth can urge, or pity feel,  
Refute the pompous argument, that tried  
The common cause of millions to deride;  
With reason's force the plausible sophist hit,



Or dart on folly the bright flash of wit;  
And warmly share, with philosophic mind,  
The great, the glorious triumph of mankind.

Helen Maria Williams

## To James Forbes, Esq.

WHEN sever'd from this hostile shore,  
A weary captive now no more,  
Home, cherish'd home, shall glad your sight  
In blessedness of fresh delight;  
While love shall weave new spells around  
That spot of consecrated ground,

Where sweet domestic joy imparts  
The charm that binds congenial hearts,  
And filial tenderness prepares  
A balm for all terrestrial cares:--  
Forget not,--ah, forget not those  
Who sought to soothe the captive's woes!  
Exult, be happy, and be free,  
But give one pensive thought to me!

Helen Maria Williams

## To John Forbes, Esq.

ON HIS BRINGING ME FLOWERS FROM VAUCLUSE, AND  
WHICH HE HAD PRESERVED BY MEANS OF  
AN INGENIOUS PROCESS IN THEIR  
ORIGINAL BEAUTY.

SWEET spoils of consecrated bowers,  
How dear to me these chosen flowers!  
I love the simplest bud that blows,  
I love the meanest weed that grows:  
Symbols of nature--every form  
That speaks of her this heart can warm;  
But ye, delicious flowers, assume  
In fancy's eye a brighter bloom;  
A dearer pleasure ye diffuse,  
Cull'd by the fountain of Vaucluse!

For ye were nurtur'd on the sod  
Where PETRARCH mourn'd, and LAURA trod;  
Ye grew on that inspiring ground  
Where love has shed enchantment round;  
Where still the tear of passion flows,  
Fond tribute to a poet's woes!  
Yet, cherish'd flowers, with love and fame  
This wreath entwines a milder name;  
Friendship, who better knows than they  
The spells that smooth our length'ning way,--  
Friendship the blooming off'ring brought;  
When FORBES the classic fountain sought,  
For me he cull'd the fresh-blown flowers,  
And fix'd their hues with potent powers;  
Their pliant forms with skilful care  
He seized, and stamp'd duration there;  
His gift shall ever glad the eye,--  
Nor, like my verse is born to die.

Helen Maria Williams

## To Mrs. K--,

WHAT crowding thoughts around me wake,  
What marvels in a Christmas-cake!  
Ah say, what strange enchantment dwells  
Enclos'd within its od'rous cells?  
Is there no small magician bound  
Encrusted in its snowy round?  
For magic surely lurks in this,  
A cake that tells of vanish'd bliss;  
A cake that conjures up to view  
The early scenes, when life was new;  
When mem'ry knew no sorrows past,  
And hope believ'd in joys that last!--

Mysterious cake, whose folds contain  
Life's calendar of bliss and pain;  
That speaks of friends for ever fled,  
And wakes the tears I love to shed.  
Oft shall I breathe her cherish'd name  
From whose fair hand the off'ring came:  
For she recalls the artless smile  
Of nymphs that deck my native Isle;  
Of beauty that we love to trace,  
Allied with tender, modest grace;  
Of those who, while abroad they roam,  
Retain each charm that gladdens home,  
And whose dear friendship can impart  
A Christmas banquet for the heart!

Helen Maria Williams

# To Sensibility

In SENSIBILITY'S lov'd praise  
I tune my trembling reed,  
And seek to deck her shrine with bays,  
On which my heart must bleed!

No cold exemption from her pain  
I ever wish to know;  
Cheer'd with her transport, I sustain  
Without complaint her woe.

Above whate'er content can give,  
Above the charm of ease,  
The restless hopes and fears, that live  
With her, have power to please.

Where, but for her, were Friendship's power  
To heal the wounded heart,  
To shorten sorrow's ling'ring hour,  
And bid its gloom depart?

'Tis she that lights the melting eye  
With looks to anguish dear;  
She knows the price of every sigh,  
The value of a tear.

She prompts the tender marks of love  
Which words can scarce express;  
The heart alone their force can prove,  
And feel how much they bless.

Of every finer bliss the source!  
'Tis she on love bestows  
The softer grace, the boundless force,  
Confiding passion knows;

When to another, the fond breast  
Each thought for ever gives;  
When on another leans for rest,  
And in another lives!

Quick, as the trembling metal flies  
When heat or cold impels,  
Her anxious heart to joy can rise,  
Or sink where anguish dwells!

Yet though her soul must griefs sustain  
Which she alone can know,  
And feel that keener sense of pain  
Which sharpens every woe;

Though she, the mourners' grief to calm,  
Still shares each pang they feel,  
And, like the tree distilling balm,  
Bleeds others' wounds to heal;

Though she, whose bosom, fondly true,  
Has never wish'd to range,  
One alter'd look will trembling view,  
And scarce can bear the change;

Though she, if death the bands should tear  
She vainly thought secure,  
Through life must languish in despair,  
That never hopes a cure;

Though wounded by some vulgar mind,  
Unconscious of the deed,  
Who never seeks those wounds to bind,  
But wonders why they bleed;--

She oft will heave a secret sigh,  
Will shed a lonely tear,  
O'er feelings nature wrought so high,  
And gave on terms so dear.

Yet who would hard INDIFFERENCE choose,  
Whose breast no tears can steep?  
Who, for her apathy, would lose  
The sacred power to weep?

Though in a thousand objects pain

And pleasure tremble nigh,  
Those objects strive to reach in vain  
The circle of her eye.

Cold as the fabled god appears  
To the poor suppliant's grief,  
Who bathes the marble form in tears,  
And vainly hopes relief.

Ah, GREVILLE ! why the gifts refuse  
To souls like thine allied?  
No more thy nature seem to lose,  
No more thy softness hide.

No more invoke the playful sprite  
To chill, with magic spell,  
The tender feelings of delight,  
And anguish sung so well;

That envied case thy heart would prove  
Were sure too dearly bought  
With friendship, sympathy, and love,  
And every finer thought.

Helen Maria Williams

# To The Baron De Humboldt,

ON HIS BRINGING ME SOME FLOWERS IN MARCH.

SOOTH'D I receive the flowers you bring,  
Whose charm anticipates the Spring;  
Whose tints in vernal freshness vie  
With plants beneath an austral sky,--  
Those glowing plants that, long unknown,  
Your travell'd science made our own:--  
Bright gift! in lavish grace array'd,  
Thy flowers have only bloom'd to fade,--  
Their transient being soon forgot:  
How far unlike the giver's lot!

Helen Maria Williams



# Verses Addressed To My Two Nephews

ON SAINT HELEN'S DAY, 1809.

DEAR Boys!--dismiss'd awhile from school,  
From sober learning's thorny rule,--  
The annual race of glory run,  
The prize bestow'd, the laurels won,--  
Ye leave the scientific dome,  
While noisy rapture hails your home:  
Home--cherish'd spot! whose magic power  
Can charm with hope the studious hour;  
And where the heart--however far--  
Points, like the needle to its star!

And now, with many a fond oration,  
Ye ask, to crown this dear vacation,  
Saturnian time of sport and play,  
A FÊTE!--to grace SAINT HELEN'S DAY !  
But will the Saint propitious see  
A Fête dear Boys! prepar'd for me?  
I!--who her altar never sought,  
An heretic! who idly thought  
She liv'd alone in pagan fame,  
And half forgot her sainted name!  
But--since that name, entwin'd with palms,  
The legend's deathless page embalms,  
And since historic truth must own  
Her crested votary fill'd a throne--  
We'll lay our offerings at her shrine,  
And call her, as she is, divine!  
Then haste, dear Boys! and deck the bowers,  
This chosen day, with festive flowers!  
The votive bouquet joyful bring;  
And bid your muse, on lofty wing,

The steep Parnassian summits climb,  
And weave the tributary rhyme.  
The soothing song which ye rehearse--  
Though form'd of perishable verse,

And, like the bouquet , born to die--  
Shall fill with tears affection's eye;  
Shall touch, with eloquence confest,  
The chords which vibrate in her breast!  
Then hither bring the early friend,  
With whom your bounding hearts unbend;  
Till then, in vain the Fête prepared--  
What Fête, unless by friendship shar'd?  
Together, happy band! advance;  
Together frame the sportive dance;  
Together tread the mimic stage,  
The TALMAS of another age;  
And then, to crown this favor'd night,  
Unquestion'd symbol of delight,  
The soaring rocket swift shall rise,  
And, sweeping, gild the midnight skies;

Bright wheels of fire shall rapid turn;  
And suns, that soon must set, shall burn;  
SAINT HELEN , with a smile, shall view  
Her rites all paid in order due.  
The Saint, become my patron now,  
To her and you I breathe my vow:  
Listen, dear Boys! nor take amiss  
A lesson, with a parting kiss--  
Your life has clos'd its baby span,  
And childhood ripens into man:  
On youth's gay threshold now ye tread;  
The path unfolds, with roses spread,  
That leads the unsuspecting guest  
Where Pleasure holds her Circean feast;  
With bosoms yet from evil free,  
Now promise to the Saint and me,  
Oft as the years, on circling wing,  
This fond returning day shall bring,  
While o'er the world ye lightly roam,  
Far from the long-lost scene of home,

This day in Pleasure's course to pause,  
This day let Reason plead her cause!  
When come the years--for come they must--  
When her ye love is laid in dust;

Her who for you has learn'd to prove  
A mother's care--a mother's love!  
From you all ill has sought to chase,  
And fill a mother's vacant place:  
Still on this day, to duty true,  
Remember that she liv'd for you!  
Ah! give her one recording sigh,  
Nor pass this day with tearless eye!  
Still may its chosen hours impart  
The throb of virtue to the heart,  
And be the talisman whose spell  
Shall Passion's wild delirium quell;  
Controul, with some good angel's power,  
Seduction in her smiling hour.  
This day, from all her wiles secure,  
With nobler hopes, with purpose pure,

Resolve to feel that best delight  
Reserv'd for those who live aright:  
And thus, dear Boys! your tribute pay;  
Thus consecrate SAINT HELEN'S DAY!

Helen Maria Williams