

Thirty Eight.

Addressed to Mrs H — y.

IN early youth's unclouded scene,
 The brilliant morning of eighteen,
 With health and sprightly joy elate,
 We gaz'd on Life's enchanting spring,
 Nor thought how quickly Time would bring
 The mournful period—Thirty eight.

Then the starch maid, or matron sage,
 Of days of that sober age,
 We view'd with mingled scorn and hate;
 Whose sharp words or sharper face,
 With thoughtless mirth we lov'd to trace
 The sad effects of Thirty eight.

Till sadd'ning, sick'ning at the view,
We learn'd to dread what Time might do ;
 And then preferr'd a prayer to Fate,
To end our days ere that arriv'd ;
When (pow'r and pleasure long surviv'd)
 We met neglect and—Thirty eight.

But Time, in spite of wishes, flies,
And Fate our simple prayer denies,
 And bids us Death's own hour await :
The auburn locks are mix'd with grey,
The transient roses fade away,
 But Reason comes at—Thirty eight.

Her voice the anguish contradicts
That dying Vanity inflicts ;
 Her hand new pleasures can create,
For us she opens to the view
Prospects less bright—but far more true,
 And bids us smile at—Thirty eight.

No more shall *Scandal's* breath destroy
The social converse we enjoy
 With bard or critic tête a tête ;
O'er Youth's bright blooms her blights shall pour,
But spare th' improving friendly hour
 That Science gives to—Thirty eight.

Stripp'd of their gaudy hues by Truth,
We view the glitt'ring toys of Youth,
 And blush to think how poor the bait,
For which to public scenes we ran,
And scorn'd of sober Sense the plan
 Which gives content at—Thirty eight.

Tho' Time's inexorable sway
Has torn the myrtle bands away,
 For other wreaths 'tis not too late,
The am'anth's purple glow survives,
And still Minerva's olive lives
 On the calm brow of—Thirty eight.

With

With eye more steady we engage
To contemplate approaching age,
 And life more justly estimate ;
With firmer souls, and stronger pow'rs,
With Reason, Faith and Friendship ours,
We'll not regret the stealing hours
 That lead from Thirty—e'en to Forty eight.
