

To C\*\*\* P\*\*\*\*, Esq;

FROM friendship's cradle up the verdant paths  
 Of youth, life's jolly spring; and now sublim'd  
 To its full manhood and meridian strength,  
 Her latest stage, (for friendship ever hale  
 Knows not old age, diseases, and decay,  
 But burning keeps her sacred fire, 'till death's  
 Cold hand extinguish) at this spot, this point,  
 Here P\*\*\*, we social meet, and gaze about,  
 And look back to the scenes our pastime trod  
 In nature's morning, when the gamesome hours  
 Had sliding feet, and laugh'd themselves away.  
 Luxurious season! vital prime! where Thames  
 Flows by Etona's walls, and cheerful sees  
 Her sons wide swarming; or where sedgy Cam  
 Bathes with slow pace his academic grove,  
 Pierian walks! — O never hope again,  
 (Impossible! untenable!) to grasp  
 Those joys again; to feel alike the pulse  
 Dancing, and fiery spirits boiling high:  
 Or see the pleasure that with careless wing  
 Swept on, and flow'ry garlands tofs'd around  
 Disporting! Try to call her back — as well  
 Bid yesterday return, arrest the flight  
 Of Time; or musing by a river's brink,  
 Say to the wave that huddles swiftly by  
 For ever, from thy fountain roll anew.

The merriment, the tale, and heartfelt laugh  
 That echo'd round the table, idle guests,



Must rise, and serious inmates take their place.  
 Reflection's daughters, sad and world-worn thoughts  
 Dislodging Fancy's empire—Yet who knows  
 Exact the balance of our loss and gain?  
 Who knows how far a rattle may outweigh  
 The mace or scepter? But as boys resign  
 The play-thing, bauble of their infancy,  
 So fares it with maturer years: they sage,  
 Imagination's airy regions quit,  
 And under Reason's banner take the field,  
 With resolution face the cloud or storm,  
 While all their former rainbows die away.  
 Some to the palace with regardful step,  
 And courtly blandishment resort, and there  
 Advance obsequious; in the sunshine bask  
 Of princely grace, catch the creating eye,  
 Parent of honours: — in the senate some  
 Harangue the full-bench'd auditory, and wield  
 Their list'ning passion (such the pow'r, the sway  
 Of Reason's eloquence!) — or at the bar,  
 Where Cowper, Talbot, Somers, Yorke before  
 Pleaded their way to glory's chair supreme,  
 And worthy fill'd it. Let not these great names  
 Damp, but incite: nor Murray's praise obscure  
 Thy younger merit. Know, these lights, ere yet  
 To noon-day lustre kindled, had their dawn.  
 Proceed familiar to the gate of Fame,  
 Nor think the task severe, the prize too high  
 Of toil and honour, for thy father's son.