

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 chargés 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 ;

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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 sight;
 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 swerv'd,
 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 reverence 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.

ADDRESS

DEAR B
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