

Each act by Charity and Mercy done,
 High o'er the wrecks of time, shall live alone,
 Immortal as the heavens, and beauteous bloom
 To other worlds, and realms beyond the tomb.

145

THE GRAVE OF HOWARD.

SPIRIT of Death ! whose outstretched pennons dread
 Wave o'er the world beneath their shadow spread ;
 Who darkly speedest on thy destined way,
 Midst shrieks and cries, and sounds of dire dismay ;
 Spirit ! behold thy victory ! Assume
 A form more terrible, an ampler plume ;
 For he, who wandered o'er the world alone,
 Listening to Misery's universal moan ;
 He who, sustained by Virtue's arm sublime,
 Tended the sick and poor from clime to clime,
 Low in the dust is laid, thy noblest spoil !
 And Mercy ceases from her awful toil !

10

'Twas where the pestilence at thy command
 Arose to desolate the sickening land,
 When many a mingled cry and dying prayer
 Resounded to the listening midnight air,
 When deep dismay heard not the frequent knell,
 And the wan carcase festered as it fell :

'Twas there, with holy Virtue's awful mien,
 Amid the sad sights of that fearful scene,
 Calm he was found : the dews of death he dried ;
 He spoke of comfort to the poor that cried ;
 He watched the fading eye, the flagging breath,
 Ere yet the languid sense was lost in death ;

20

And with that look protecting angels wear, 25
Hung o'er the dismal couch of pale Despair !
Friend of mankind ! thy righteous task is o'er ;
The heart that throbbed with pity beats no more.

Around the limits of this rolling sphere,
Where'er the just and good thy tale shall hear, 30
A tear shall fall : alone, amidst the gloom
Of the still dungeon, his long sorrow's tomb,
The captive, mourning, o'er his chain shall bend,
To think the cold earth holds his only friend !
He who with labour draws his wasting breath
On the forsaken silent bed of death,
Remembering thy last look and anxious eye,
Shall gaze around, unvisited, and die.

Friend of mankind, farewell ! These tears we shed—
So nature dictates—o'er thy earthly bed ; 40
Yet we forget not, it was His high will,
Who saw thee Virtue's arduous task fulfil,
Thy spirit from its toil at last should rest :—
So wills thy God, and what He wills is best !

Thou hast encountered dark Disease's train,
Thou hast conversed with Poverty and Pain,
Thou hast beheld the dreariest forms of woe,
That through this mournful vale unfriended go ;
And, pale with sympathy, hast paused to hear
The saddest complaints e'er told to human ear. 50

Go then, the task fulfilled, the trial o'er,
Where sickness, want, and pain are known no more !
How awful did thy lonely track appear,
Enlightening Misery's benighted sphere !

As when an angel all-serene goes forth
To still the raging tempest of the north,
The embattled clouds that hid the struggling day,
Slow from his face retire in dark array ;

On the black waves, like promontories hung,
 A light, as of the orient morn, is flung,
 Till blue and level heaves the silent brine,
 And the new-lighted rocks at distance shine ;
 Ev'n so didst thou go forth with cheering eye—
 Before thy glance the shades of misery fly ;
 So didst thou hush the tempest, stilling wide
 Of human woe the loud-lamenting tide.

59

Nor shall the spirit of those deeds expire,
 As fades the feeble spark of vital fire,
 But beam abroad, and cheer with lustre mild
 Humanity's remotest prospects wild,
 Till this frail orb shall from its sphere be hurled,
 Till final ruin hush the murmuring world,
 And all its sorrows, at the awful blast
 Of the archangel's trump, be but as shadows past !

70

Relentless Time, that steals with silent tread,
 Shall tear away the trophies of the dead.
 Fame, on the pyramid's aspiring top,
 With sighs shall her recording trumpet drop ;
 The feeble characters of Glory's hand
 Shall perish, like the tracks upon the sand ;
 But not with these expire the sacred flame
 Of Virtue, or the good man's honoured name.

80

HOWARD ! it matters not, that far away
 From Albion's peaceful shore thy bones decay :
 Him it might please, by whose sustaining hand
 Thy steps were led through many a distant land,
 Thy long and last abode should there be found,
 Where many a savage nation prowls around :
 That Virtue from the hallowed spot might rise,
 And, pointing to the finished sacrifice,
 Teach to the roving Tartar's savage clan
 Lessons of love, and higher aims of man.

90

The hoary chieftain, who thy tale shall hear, 98
Pale on thy grave shall drop his faltering spear ;
The cold, unpitying Cossack thirst no more
To bathe his burning falchion deep in gore ;
Relentless to the cry of carnage speed,
Or urge o'er gasping heaps his panting steed !

Nor vain the thought that fairer hence may rise
New views of life, and wider charities. 100
Far from the bleak Riphean mountains hoar,
From the cold Don, and Wolga's wandering shore,
From many a shady forest's lengthening tract,
From many a dark-descending cataract,
Succeeding tribes shall come, and o'er the place,
Where sleeps the general friend of human race,
Instruct their children what a debt they owe ;
Speak of the man who trode the paths of woe ;
Then bid them to their native woods depart,
With new-born virtue stirring in their heart. 110

When o'er the sounding Euxine's stormy tides
In hostile pomp the Turk's proud navy rides,
Bent on the frontiers of the Imperial Czar,
To pour the tempest of vindictive war ;
If onward to those shores they haply steer,
Where, HOWARD, thy cold dust reposes near,
Whilst o'er the wave the silken pennants stream,
And seen far off the golden crescents gleam,
Amid the pomp of war, the swelling breast
Shall feel a still unwonted awe impressed, 120
And the relenting Pagan turn aside
To think—on yonder shore the *Christian* died !

But thou, O Briton ! doomed perhaps to roam
An exile many a year and far from home,
If ever fortune thy lone footsteps leads
To the wild Nieper's banks, and whispering reeds,

O'er HOWARD'S grave thou shalt impassioned bend, 127
 As if to hold sad converse with a friend.
 Whate'er thy fate upon this various scene,
 Where'er thy weary pilgrimage hath been,
 There shalt thou pause ; and shutting from thy heart
 Some vain regrets that oft unbidden start,
 Think upon him to every lot resigned,
 Who wept, who toiled, and perished for mankind.

For me, who musing, HOWARD, on thy fate,
 These pensive strains at evening meditate,
 I thank thee for the lessons thou hast taught
 To mend my heart, or animate my thought.
 I thank thee, HOWARD, for that awful view
 Of life which thou hast drawn, most sad, most true. 140
 Thou art no more ! and the frail fading bloom
 Of this poor offering dies upon thy tomb.
 Beyond the transient sound of earthly praise
 Thy virtues live, perhaps, in seraph's lays !
 I, borne in thought, to the wild Nieper's wave,
 Sigh to the reeds that whisper o'er thy grave.¹

SHAKSPEARE.

1 O SOVEREIGN Master ! who with lonely state
 Dost rule as in some isle's enchanted land,
 On whom soft airs and shadowy spirits wait,
 Whilst scenes of " faerie " bloom at thy command,
 On thy wild shores forgetful could I lie,
 And list, till earth dissolved to thy sweet minstrelsy !

¹ The town of Cherson, on the Black Sea, where Howard the philanthropist died, is entirely supplied with fuel by reeds, of which there is an inexhaustible forest in the shallows of the Nieper.—*Craven's Travels*.