

E L E G I E S

BY MR. DELAP.

ELEGY I.

AH stay!—thy wand oblivious o'er my eyes
Yet wave, mild power of sleep!—my prayer is vain;
She flies, the partial nurse of nature flies,
With all her fothing visionary train.

Then let me forth; and near yon flowering thorn
Taste heaven's pure breath; while rob'd in amber vest,
Fresh from her watery couch, the youthful morn
Steals on the slumbers of the drowsy east.

Lo, at her presence, the strong arm of toil,
With glittering sickle, mows the prime of May;
While yon poor hirelings, for the mine's rude soil,
Leave to their sleeping babes their cots of clay.

With sturdy step, they cheerly whistle o'er
The path that flings across the reedy plain,
To the deep caverns of that yawning moor,
Whose shaggy breast abhors the golden grain.

There,

There, in her green dress, nature never roves,
 Spreads the gay lawn, nor lifts the lordly pine,
 They see no melting clouds refresh the groves,
 No living landscape drawn by hands divine.

But many a fathom from the sunny breeze,
 Their painful way in central night they wear;
 Heave the pik'd axes on their bended knees,
 Or fidealong the rough quarry slowly tear.

Yet while damp vapours chill each reeking brow,
 How loudly laughs the jovial voice of mirth;
 Pleas'd that the wages of the day allow
 A social blaze to cheer their evening hearth.

There the chaste housewife, with maternal care,
 Her thrifty distaff plies, in grave attire;
 Blest to behold her ruddy offspring wear
 The full resemblance of their sturdy fire.

To spread with such coarse fare their homely board
 As fits the genius of their little fate,
 Free from those ills that haunt their pamper'd lord;
 To be unhappy we must first be great.

In these dark caves, where heaven's paternal hand,
 Far from the world, their private cradle laid,
 They toil secure; the storms that strike the land
 With wild dismay roll harmless o'er their head.

For who, the load of weary life to bear,
 Wou'd from these murky mansions chace the slave?
 Who cease to breathe heaven's pure and chearful air,
 To be but living tenants of the grave?

Yet harras'd as they are, their face still wears
 The reverend comeliness of green old age;
 No stains their mind from worldly science bears;
 Their ray of knowledge gleams from nature's page.

The few plain rules her simple lessons give,
 They still thro' life with pleas'd attention ply;
 Their helpless offspring bid them wish to live,
 Their breathless parents bid them learn to die.

And surely heaven whose penetrating sight
 Pierces the soul, and reads its inmost groan,
 Must see content, with more sincere delight,
 Toil in the mine, than triumph on the throne;

Seeⁿ Charles, more pleas'd, within the convent's gloom,
 Seeking the slave's calm nights, their temperate days,
 And peaceful passage to the private tomb,
 Than diadem'd with glory's crimson rays.

ⁿ Charles V. of Spain, who in the full blaze of his glory resigned
 the throne to his son Philip, and retired to a convent in Estremadura.

Ev'n the proud sage, whose deep mysterious brain
Has reason'd all the balm of hope away,
Convinc'd that learning's but ingenious pain,
Might hail their happier lot, and sighing say,

“ Oh had I thus, within the dark profound,
“ By daily labor earn'd my daily food;
“ Or with yon feedman sow'd the quickening ground,
“ Or cleav'd with ponderous axe the groaning wood.

“ Full many an hour that now, tho' sped with art,
“ On flow and dusky pinions fullen flies,
“ Full many an anxious wish, or pang of heart,
“ That reason's boasted anodyne defies,

“ Had ne'er been born. Nor had th' uneasy mind,
“ Pent in the prison of this mortal mould,
“ Felt its ethereal energy confin'd,
“ Its brightest sunshine in dark clouds enroll'd.

“ But native sense her modest course had run;
“ Her faintly lustre untaught virtue spread;
“ Health crown'd my toils, and e'er the day was done,
“ Sound sleep beneath some alder's rustling shade.

“ Then, as I stole down life's declining hill,
“ Here nature's gifts had furnish'd nature's needs,
“ The brook's cold beverage every latent ill
“ Had starv'd, that cloyster'd contemplation feeds.

“ Till, in the peaceful shade of this lone bower,
“ Or near yon shattered tower in silence laid,
“ The orient orb, that watch’d my natal hour,
“ Had brightly glitter’d o’er my mouldering head.”



T O S I C K N E S S .

E L E G Y II.

HOW blith the flowery graces of the Spring
From nature’s wardrobe come : and hark how gay
Each glittering insect, hovering on the wing,
Sings their glad welcome to the fields of May.

They gaze, with greedy eye, each beauty o’er;
They suck the sweet breath of the blushing rose;
Sport in the gale, or sip the rainbow shower;
Their life’s short day no pause of pleasure knows.

Like their’s, dread power, my chearful morn display’d
The flattering promise of a golden noon,
Till each gay cloud, that sportive nature spread,
Died in the gloom of thy distemper’d frown.

Yes, ere I told my two and twentieth year,
Swift from thy quiver flew the deadly dart;
Harmless it past ’mid many a blithe compeer,
And found its fated entrance near my heart.