

*Time, Death, and Eternity.**A NIGHT THOUGHT.*

HAIL, awful darkness! that with pitchy
Robe

Borrowed of Chaos, dost, awhile, enfold
The habitable world, and sea and sky ;
Thee I now woo, at solemn midnight Hour
That listens to the voice of my complaint.
Oft it is heard, when on the restless couch
Of tossing pain, Care lies and weeps till morn,
And sheds its tears, sad, tort'ring tears,
The Essence of the Heart's disastrous woe.
I shed them now,—but long I am not doom'd
To feel their cank'ring drops adown my cheek ;
Death soon will make it pale, and lay me safe
From every mortal pain within the grave.



Fig. 5. Mores's Sub. at R. Ackermann's, no. Strand.



The song now bursts beyond the bounds of time.
And immortality concludes the Rhyme.

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—Come happy hour,—haste on thy swift career,

And with Fate's barbed shaft give wish'd for peace.

What peace on that fell dart? Yes, lasting peace:—

Peace that will never interruption know;

Peace, such as Angels taste, and Heaven bestows.

—Farewell then, thou vain world no more I bend

To thy capricious power! nor all the gilded baits

That wealth can boast or Lordly greatness give,

Nor even graceful Beauty's smiling charm

Could tempt me to the treach'rous shore again.

I go where rich and poor together sleep,

And the Slave's dust doth mingle with his Lord:

Where the rod drops from Power's unnerved hand

And Beauty feeds the hunger of the worm.

—You smile, but there the good man's sorrows
end,

And all his Joys begin. The grave's the path,
The shadowy path which leads to endless day,
Where suns with purest ray, eternal shine,
To their meridian fix'd, and set no more.

Haste then and weave my shroud, and bring
the bier

And bear me to be mingled with the dust.
Let not the plumes nod o'er my sable hearse,
Nor Sculpture labour with the flatt'ring strain:
Let not the blazing torch make midnight
noon,

To light me to my long and dark abode;
But may the Summer Sun at Evening Hour
Cast its faint rays upon the awful scene,
Where Earth is given to Earth, and Dust to
Dust.

Smile then, ye gay ones, as I pour the strain,
Or o'er my plaintive musings breath a sigh
Of friendly pity!—Grateful I return

The pitying sigh, breath'd from a pensive
heart,

A heart, which though it hovers o'er the tomb,
Boasts brighter Joys, than the gay, glitt'ring
Scenes

Where your delights are center'd, can bestow.
—I soon shall be at rest :—can ye say that,
Ye Youthful train, who travel through the
maze,

The giddy maze of Passion's checquer'd dance?
Can ye say that, with Fevers in your heart,
That strive each hour to quench the burning
flame,

At Pleasure's warm, intoxicating Spring.

Heaven is the seat of Mercy, there enthron'd
The Cherub sits, in mild but awful state :
From thence he views the hearts of mortal
men

With pitying eye, and wishes to delay
The stern and steady course of rig'rous Law

And stops the Scourge-man's hand, to pour a
balm

Into the wounds which vengeful Justice gives
To erring mortals : then invites them back
From Errors's fatal path, to Virtue's way,
And beams eternal sunshine o'er their heads.

Say, what is pleasure Ye mistaken fair!

Is it to yield your beauties to the wish
Of him who buys with gold the venal Joy?

Is it to give the mercenary smile
To him you do not love, in sad Exchange

For the gay lustre which adorns your hair,
And all your gawdy show and vain attire,

The Liv'ry of your more than servile state.

Tell me, and tell me true ;—when ye have
stray'd

At Evening Hour along the Village path,

Though deck'd in flaunting Fashion's glitt'ring
robe

Have you not envied Virtue's homely dress,

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And wish'd to change your mansion for the
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Where she, well pleas'd, beneath her humble
Thatch,
Sits smiling o'er the Labours of the Wheel.

Mine is a pensive mind : to me more dear
The Ev'ning's purple hue, and rising mist,
Circling, in mantle grey, the verdant hill
And Sylvan upland, than the mid-day pomp,
Of Nature, gilded by the gorgeous Sun.
The triumphs of the great, the splendid show
Of proud Magnificence demand in vain
My reverence : more soothing far to me
The Turf that heaves upon the peasant's
grave,
And the once fragrant flowers that wither there.
Nor all the sounds of Music strike my soul
With such affecting power, as doth the Knell
Which calls the dead to their expecting home.
—I walk around the Tomb, and pensive view
The quiet cavern, in whose dark abode,

When evil tongues hiss forth the foul abuse,
When Fortune turns away, and Friends prove
false,

Man may a safe, and peaceful refuge find,
A certain refuge and a sure retreat.

—Where is the Covert from Life's frequent
storm?—

Ye who have long been toss'd upon the tide,
The flowing tide, of Time, O tell me where.

Is it amid the vales where pleasure sports,
With all her airy tribes; or on the giddy
height

Where proud Ambition takes its tott'ring
seat;

Or is it in the dreary, darksome cave,
Where starving Av'rice trembles o'er its gold?

Is it in bowers form'd of roses sweet,
And hung with every garland of the Spring
Wove by the Fingers of assiduous Love?

Or where, in Learning's cell the studious lamp
Throws its pale, quiv'ring light upon the
page,

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VOL. II.

By long and midnight toil severely fram'd.

—Nor in the flowery vales where pleasure
sports,

Nor where Ambition rears the tottering seat;—

'Tis not within the Miser's gloomy cave ;

'Tis not within the roseate Bowers of Love,

Nor where the pale Lamp lights the studious
sage,

To midnight toil : alas, it is not there.

And while we seek in vain amid the great

Or on the gorgeous thrones where monarchs
sit,

It often may be found in humble cot

Where Virtue with the honest peasant dwells.

—And what is Virtue? 'Tis the conscious
power

Of acting right in spite of every foe,

That may oppose its base malicious aim

To check the pure designs which it inspires.

—It is to stem the tide Corruption rolls
 O'er half the world, to curb the impetuous
 will
 Of lawless passion, and, on Life's vast stage,
 To act that noble part which will attain
 The good man's praise and the applause of
 Heaven.

—Yes, Virtue, potent Virtue, can secure
 'Gainst every peril; 'tis a triple shield
 To him who has it, 'gainst the pointed darts
 Of ev'ry enemy; the hour of death
 With all its gloom, gives not a fear to him,
 Who triumphs o'er the grave; he stands se-
 cure
 Amid the ruins of a fallen world.

—Virtue will listen to the trumpet's sound,
 With holy awe, yet hear it unappall'd,
 And feels ETERNITY its destin'd sphere:—
 When all the works of Man shake to their
 base,
 And the world melts away whereon they stood;
 When TIME's last agonising hour is come,

And DEATH, who, from Creation's pregnant
hour,
Has made the world a grave, himself shall
die,
When Man from his long slumber shall awake,
And the Day breaks that never more shall
close ;
Then Virtue shall its promis'd glory claim,
And find it, too, at the o'erflowing Source
Of Heaven's stupendous and eternal Joys.

FINIS.

J. Diggins, Printer, St. Ann's Lane, London.

And Death who from Creation's beginning

hour

Has made the world a grave, himself shall

die

He shall rise from his long slumber shall awake,

And the Day breaks that never more shall

close

Then Virtue shall its promise'd glory claim,

And find it, too, at the crowning source

Of Heaven's stipend and eternal joys

To spend the day, the night, the year, the age

In praising God, the Father, Son, and Spirit

Who reigns above, within, and underneath

With Father, Son, and Spirit, ever one

The same, the same, the same, the same, the same

FINIS

The Dance of Death is now concluded

And the Authors have their share

In the reward of their labor

And the Reader's share is to be

That he will be contented

With the little that is here

And that he will be contented

SEC

Death smiles
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2. CHAMP
Have patience
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