

AUTUMN

The Spring is gone, the Summer-beauty wanes,
Like setting sunbeams, in their last decline;
As evening shadows, lingering on the plains,
Gleam dim and dimmer till they cease to shine:
The busy bee hath humm'd himself to rest;
Flowers dry to seed, that held the sweets of Spring;
Flown is the bird, and empty is the nest,
His broods are rear'd, no joys are left to sing.
There hangs a dreariness about the scene,
A present shadow of a bright has been.

Ah, sad to prove that Pleasure's golden springs,
Like common fountains, should so quickly dry,
And be so near allied to vulgar things!—
The joys of this world are but born to die.

AUTUMN

Autumn comes laden with her ripened load
Of fruitage and so scatters them abroad
That each fern-smothered heath and mole-hill waste
Are black with bramble berries—where in haste
The chubby urchins from the village hie
To feast them there, stained with the purple dye;
While painted woods around my rambles be
In draperies worthy of eternity.
Yet will the leaves soon patter on the ground,
And death's deaf voice awake at every sound:
One drops—then others—and the last that fell
Rings for those left behind their passing bell.
Thus memory every where her tidings brings
How sad death robs us of life's dearest things.

AUTUMN

The thistledown's flying, though the winds are all still,
On the green grass now lying, now mounting the hill,
The spring from the fountain now boils like a pot;
Through stones past the counting it bubbles red-hot.

The ground parched and cracked is like overbaked bread,
The greensward all wracked is, bents dried up and dead.
The fallow fields glitter like water indeed,
And gossamers twitter, flung from weed unto weed.

Hill-tops like hot iron glitter bright in the sun,
And the rivers we're eying burn to gold as they run;

Burning hot is the ground, liquid gold is the air;
Whoever looks round sees Eternity there.

AUTUMN

I love the fitfull gusts that shakes
The casement all the day
And from the mossy elm tree takes
The faded leaf away
Twirling it by the window-pane
With thousand others down the lane.

I love to see the shaking twig
Dance till the shut of eve
The sparrow on the cottage rig
Whose chirp would make believe
That spring was just now flirting by
In summers lap with flowers to lie.

I love to see the cottage smoke
Curl upwards through the naked trees
The pigeons nestled round the coat
On dull November days like these
The cock upon the dunghill crowing
The mill sails on the heath a-going.

The feather from the ravens breast
Falls on the stubble lea
The acorns near the old crows nest
Fall pattering down the tree
The grunting pigs that wait for all
Scramble and hurry where they fall.

AUTUMN

ME it delights in mellow autumn tide
To mark the pleasaunce that my eye surrounds,
The forest trees like coloured posies pied,
The uplands meal grey and russet grounds ;
Seeking for joy where joyaunce most abounds,
Not found, I ween, in courts and halls of pride,
Where folly feeds on flattery's sights and sounds,
And with sick heart but seemeth to
True pleasaunce is with humble food
Like shepherd swain who plucks the
With savoury appetite from hedgerow briars,
Then drops content by molehill's sunny side,
Proving thereby low joys and small desires
Are easiest fed and soonest satisfied.

AUTUMN MORNING

The autumn morning waked by many a gun
Throws o'er the fields her many-coloured light
Wood wildly touched close-tanned and stubbles dun
A motley paradise for earth's delight
Clouds ripple as the darkness breaks to light
And clover fields are hid with silver mist
One shower of cobwebs o'er the surface spread
And threads of silk in strange disorder twist
Round every leaf and blossom's bottly head.
Hares in the drowning herbage scarcely steal
But on the battered pathway squats abed
And by the cart-rut nips her morning meal
Look where we may the scene is strange and new
And every object wears a changing hue

A REFLECTION IN AUTUMN

Now Autumn's come—adieu the pleasing greens
The charming Landscape & the flowrey plain
All are deserted from these motley scenes
With blighted yellow ting'd & russet stain
Tho desolation seems to triumph here
Yet these are spring to what we still shall find
The trees must all in nakedness appear
'Reft of their foliage by the blustry wind
Just so 'twill fare with me in Autumns life
Just so I'd wish—but may the trunk & all
Die with the leaves—nor taste that wintry strife
Where Sorrows urge—& fear Impedes the fall!

AUTUMN

(from The Village Minstrel, 1821)

The summer-flower has run to seed,
And yellow is the woodland bough;
And every leaf of bush and weed
Is tipt with autumn's pencil now.

And I do love the varied hue,
And I do love the browning plain;
And I do love each scene to view,
That's mark'd with beauties of her reign.

The woodbine-trees red berries bear,
That clustering hang upon the bower;
While, fondly lingering here and there,
Peeps out a dwindling sickly flower.

The trees' gay leaves are turned brown,
By every little wind undress'd;
And as they flap and whistle down,
We see the birds' deserted nest.

No thrush or blackbird meets the eye,
Or fills the ear with summer's strain;
They but dart out for worm and fly,
Then silent seek their rest again.

Beside the brook, in misty blue,
Bilberries glow on tendrils weak,
Where many a bare-foot splashes through,
The pulpy, juicy prize to seek:

For 'tis the rustic boy's delight,
Now autumn's sun so warmly gleams,
And these ripe berries tempt his sight,
To dabble in the shallow streams.

And oft his rambles we may trace,
Delv'd in the mud his printing feet,
And oft we meet a chubby face
All stained with the berries sweet.

The cowboy oft slives down the brook,
And tracks for hours each winding round,
While pinders, that such chances look,
Drive his rambling cows to pound.
The woodland bowers, that us'd to be
Lost in their silence and their shade,
Are now a scene of rural glee,
With many a nutting swain and maid.

The scrambling shepherd with his hook,
'Mong hazel boughs of rusty brown
That overhang some gulphing brook,
Drags the ripen'd clusters down.

While, on a bank of faded grass,
Some artless maid the prize receives;
And kisses to the sun-tann'd lass,
As well as nuts, the shepherd gives.

I love the year's decline, and love
Through rustling yellow shades to range,
O'er stubble land, 'neath willow grove,
To pause upon each varied change:

And oft have thought 'twas sweet, to list
The stubbles crackling with the heat,

Just as the sun broke through the mist
And warm'd the herdsman's rushy seat;

And grunting noise of rambling hogs,
Where pattering acorns oddly drop;
And noisy bark of shepherds' dogs,
The restless routs of sheep to stop;

While distant thresher's swingle drops
With sharp and hollow-twanking raps;
And, nigh at hand, the echoing chops
Of hardy hedger stopping gaps;

And sportsmen's trembling whistle-calls
That stay the swift retreating pack;
And cowboy's whoops, and squawking brawls,
To urge the straggling heifer back.

Autumn-time, thy scenes and shades
Are pleasing to the tasteful eye;
Though winter, when the thought pervades,
Creates an ague-shivering sigh.

Grey-bearded rime hangs on the morn,
And what's to come too true declares;
The ice-drop hardens on the thorn,
And winter's starving bed prepares.

No music's heard the fields among;
Save where the hedge-chats chittering play,
And ploughman draws his lonely song,
As cutting short the dreary day.

Now shatter'd shades let me attend,
Reflecting look on their decline,
Where pattering leaves confess their end,
In sighing flutterings hinting mine.

For every leaf, that twirls the breeze,
May useful hints and lessons give;
The falling leaves and fading trees
Will teach and caution us to live.

"Wandering clown," they seem to say,
"In us your coming end review:
Like you we lived, but now decay;
The same sad fate approaches you."

Beneath a yellow fading tree,
As red suns light thee, Autumn-morn,
In wildest rapture let me see

The sweets that most thy charms adorn.

O while my eye the landscape views,
What countless beauties are display'd;
What varied tints of nameless hues, —
Shades endless melting into shade.

A russet red the hazels gain,
As suited to their drear decline;
While maples brightest dress retain,
And in the gayest yellows shine.

The poplar tree hath lost its pride;
Its leaves in wan consumption pine;
They hoary turn on either side,
And life to every gale resign.
The stubborn oak, with haughty pride
Still in its lingering green, we view;
But vain the strength he shows is tried,
He tinges slow with sickly hue.
The proudest triumph art conceives,
Or beauties nature's power can crown,
Grey-bearded time in shatters leaves;
Destruction's trample treads them down.

Tis lovely now to turn one's eye,
The changing face of heaven to mind;
How thin-spun clouds glide swiftly by,
While lurking storms slow move behind.

Now suns are clear, now clouds pervade,
Each moment chang'd, and chang'd again;
And first a light, and then a shade,
Swift glooms and brightens o'er the plain.

Poor pussy through the stubble flies,
In vain, o'erpowering foes to shun;
The lurking spaniel points the prize,
And pussy's harmless race is run.

The crowing pheasant, in the brakes,
Betrays his lair with awkward squalls;
A certain aim the gunner takes,
He clumsy fluskers up, and falls.

But hide thee, muse, the woods among,
Nor stain thy artless, rural rhymes;
Go leave the murderer's wiles unsung,
Nor mark the harden'd gunner's crimes.

The fields all clear'd, the labouring mice

To sheltering hedge and wood patrol,
Where hips and haws for food suffice,
That chumbled lie about their hole.

The squirrel, bobbing from the eye,
Is busy now about his hoard,
And in old nest of crow or pye
His winter-store is oft explor'd.

The leaves forsake the willow grey,
And down the brook they whirl and wind;
So hopes and pleasures whirl away,
And leave old age and pain behind.

The thorns and briars, vermilion-hue,
Now full of hips and haws are seen;
If village-prophecies be true,
They prove that winter will be keen.
Hark! started are some lonely strains:
The robin-bird is urg'd to sing;
Of chilly evening he complains,
And dithering droops his ruffled wing.

Slow o'er the wood the puddock sails;
And mournful, as the storms arise,
His feeble note of sorrow wails
To the unpitying frowning skies.

More coldly blows the autumn-breeze;
Old winter grins a blast between;
The north-winds rise and strip the trees,
And desolation shuts the scene.

AUTUMN
(from The Rural Muse, 1835)

Syren of sullen moods and fading hues,
Yet haply not incapable of joy,
Sweet Autumn! I thee hail
With welcome all unfeigned;

And oft as morning from her lattice peeps
To beckon up the sun, I seek with thee
To drink the dewy breath
Of fields left fragrant then,

In solitudes, where no frequented paths
But what thy own foot makes betray thine home,
Stealing obtrusive there
To meditate thy end:

By overshadowed ponds, in woody nooks,
With ramping sallows lined, and crowding sedge,
Which woo the winds to play,
And with them dance for joy;

And meadow pools, torn wide by lawless floods,
Where water-lilies spread their oily leaves,
On which, as wont, the fly
Oft battens in the sun;

Where leans the mossy willow half way o'er,
On which the shepherd crawls astride to throw
His angle, clear of weeds
That crowd the water's brim;
Or crispy hills, and hollows scant of sward,
Where step by step the patient lonely boy,
Hath cut rude flights of stairs
To climb their steepy sides;

Then track along their feet, grown hoarse with noise,
The crawling brook, that ekes its weary speed,
And struggles through the weeds
With faint and sullen brawl.—

These haunts I long have favoured, more as now
With thee thus wandering, moralizing on;
Stealing glad thoughts from grief,
And happy, though I sigh.

Sweet Vision, with the wild dishevelled hair,
And raiment shadowy of each wind's embrace,
Fain would I win thine harp
To one accordant theme.

Now not inaptly craved, communing thus,
Beneath the curdled arms of this stunt oak,
While pillowed on the grass,
We fondly ruminate

O'er the disordered scenes of woods and fields,
Ploughed lands, thin travelled with half-hungry sheep,
Pastures tracked deep with cows,
Where small birds seek for seed:

Marking the cow-boy that so merry trills
His frequent, unpremeditated song,
Wooing the winds to pause,
Till echo brawls again;
As on with plashy step, and clouted shoon,
He roves, half indolent and self-employed,
To rob the little birds

Of hips and pendant haws,

And sloes, dim covered as with dewy veils,
And rambling bramble-berries, pulpy and sweet,
Arching their prickly trails
Half o'er the narrow lane:

Noting the hedger front with stubborn face
The dank bleak wind, that whistles thinly by
His leathern garb, thorn proof,
And cheek red hot with toil;

While o'er the pleachy lands of mellow brown,
The mower's stubbling scythe clogs to his foot
The ever eking whisp,
With sharp and sudden jerk,

Till into formal rows the russet shocks
Crowd the blank field to thatch time-weathered barns,
And hovels rude repair,
Stript by disturbing winds.

See! from the rustling scythe the haunted hare
Scampers circuitous, with startled ears
Prickt up, then squat, as by
She brushes to the woods,

Where reeded grass, breast-high and undisturbed,
Forms pleasant clumps, through which the soothing winds
Soften her rigid fears,
And lull to calm repose.
Wild Sorceress! me thy restless mood delights,
More than the stir of summer's crowded scenes,
Where, jostled in the din,
Joy palled my ear with song;

Heart-sickening for the silence, that is here
Not broken inharmoniously, as now
That lone and vagrant bee
Booms faint with weary chime.

Now filtering winds thin winnow through the woods
In tremulous noise, that bids, at every breath,
Some sickly cankered leaf
Let go its hold, and die.

And now the bickering storm, with sudden start,
In flirting fits of anger carps aloud,
Thee urging to thine end,
Sore wept by troubled skies.

And yet, sublime in grief! thy thoughts delight
To show me visions of most gorgeous dyes,
Haply forgetting now
They but prepare thy shroud;

Thy pencil dashing its excess of shades,
Improvident of waste, till every bough
Burns with thy mellow touch
Disorderly divine.

Soon must I view thee as a pleasant dream
Droop faintly, and so reckon for thine end,
As sad the winds sink low
In dirges for their queen;
While in the moment of their weary pause,
To cheer thy bankrupt pomp, the willing lark
Starts from his shielding clod,
Snatching sweet scraps of song.

Thy life is waning now, and Silence tries
To mourn, but meets no sympathy in sounds,
As stooping low she bends,
Forming with leaves thy grave;

To sleep inglorious there mid tangled woods,
Till parched lipped Summer pines in drought away,
Then from thine ivy'd trance
Awake to glories new.

THE SHEPHERD'S CALENDAR POEMS

"The Shepherd's Calendar - August"

Harvest approaches with its bustling day
The wheat tans brown and barley bleaches grey
In yellow garb the oat land intervenes
And tawney glooms the valley thronged with beans
Silent the village grows, wood wandering dreams
Seem not so lovely as its quiet seems
Doors are shut up as on a winters day
And not a child about them lies at play
The dust that winnows neath the breezes feet
Is all that stirs about the silent street
Fancy might think that desert spreading fear
Had whisperd terrors into quiets ear
Or plundering armys past the place had come
And drove the lost inhabitants from home
The fields now claim them where a motley crew
Of old and young their daily tasks pursue

The barleys beard is grey and wheat is brown
And wakens toil betimes to leave the town
The reapers leave their beds before the sun
And gleaners follow when home toils are done
To pick the littered ear the reaper leaves
And glean in open fields among the sheaves
The ruddy child nursed in the lap of care
In toils rude ways to do its little share
Beside its mother poddles oer the land
Sun burnt and stooping with a weary hand
Picking its tiney glean of corn or wheat
While crackling stubbles wound its legs and feet
Full glad it often is to sit awhile
Upon a smooth green baulk to ease its toil
And feign would spend an idle hour to play
With insects strangers to the moiling day
Creeping about each rush and grassy stem
And often wishes it was one of them
In weariness of heart that it might lye
Hid in the grass from the days burning eye
That raises tender blisters on his skin
Thro holes or openings that have lost a pin
Free from the crackling stubs to toil and glean
And smiles to think how happy it had been
Whilst its expecting mother stops to tye
Her handful up and waiting his supply
Misses the resting younker from her side
And shouts of rods and morts of threats beside
Pointing to the grey willows while she tells
His fears shall fetch one if he still rebels
Picturing harsh truths in its unpracticed eye
How they who idle in the harvest lye
Shall well deserving in the winter pine
Or hunt the hedges with the birds and swine
In vain he wishes that the rushes height
Were tall as trees to hide him from her sight
Leaving his pleasant seat he sighs and rubs
His legs and shows scratchd wounds from piercing stubs
To make excuse for play but she disdains
His little wounds and smiles while he complains
And as he stoops adown in troubles sore
She sees his grief and bids him sob no more
As bye and bye on the next sabbath day
She'll give him well earned pence as well as play
When he may buy almost with out a stint
Sweet candied horehound cakes and pepper mint
Or streaking sticks of luscious lolipop
What ere he chuses from the tempting shop
Wi in whose diamond winder shining lye
Things of all sorts to tempt his eager eye
Rich sugar plumbs in phials shining bright

In every hue young fancys to delight
Coaches and ladys of gilt ginger bread
And downy plumbs and apples streaked with red
Such promises all sorrows soon displace
And smiles are instant kindled in his face
Scorning all troubles which he felt before
He picks the trailing ears and mourns no more
The fields are all alive with busy noise
Of labours sounds and insects humming joys
Some oer the glittering sickle sweating stoop
Startling full oft the partridge coveys up
Some oer the rustling scythe go bending on
And shockers follow where their toils have gone
First turning swaths to wither in the sun
Where mice from terrors dangers nimbly run
Leaving their tender young in fears alarm
Lapt up in nests of chimbled grasses warm
And oft themselves for safty search in vain
From the rude boy or churlish hearted swain
Who beat their stone chinkd forks about the ground
And spread an instant murder all around
Tho oft the anxious maidens tender prayer
Urges the clown their little lives to spare
Who sighs while trailing the long rake along
At scenes so cruel and forgets her song
And stays with love his murder aiming hand
Some ted the puffing winnow down the land
And others following roll them up in heaps
While cleanly as a barn door beesome sweeps
The hawling drag with gathering weeds entwined
And singing rakers end the toils behind

When the sun stoops to meet the western sky
And noons hot hours have wanderd weary bye
They seek an hawthorn bush or willow tree
Or stouk or shock where coolest shadows be
Where baskets heaped and unbroadhd bottles lye
Which dogs in absence watchd with wary eye
To catch their breath awhile and share the boon
Which beavering time allows their toil at noon
All gathering sit on stubbs or sheaves the hour
Where scarlet poppys linger still in flower
Stript in his shirt the hot swain drops adown
And close beside him in her unpind gown
Next to her favoured swain the maiden steals
Blushing at kindness which her love reveals
Who makes a seat for her of things around
And drops beside her on the naked ground
Wearied with brambles catching at her gown
And pulling nutts from branches pulld adown
By friendly swain the maid Wi heaving breast

Upon her lovers shoulder leans at rest
Then from its cool retreat the beer they bring
And hand the stout hooped bottle round the ring
Each swain soaks hard-the maiden ere she sips
Shrieks at the bold wasp settling on her lips
That seems determined only hers to greet
As if it fancied they were cherries sweet
So dog forgoes his sleep awhile or play
Springing at frogs that rustling jump away
To watch each morsel that the boon bestows
And wait the bone or crumb the shepherd throws
For shepherds are no more of ease possest
But share the harvests labours with the rest

When day declines and labour meets repose
The bawling boy his evening journey goes
At toils unwearied call the first and last
He drives his horses to their nights repast
In dewey close or meadow to sojourn
And often ventures on his still return
O'er garden pales or orchard walls to hie
When sleeps safe key hath locked up dangers eye
All but the mastiff watching in the dark
Who snuffs and knows him and forbears to bark
With fearful haste he climbs each loaded tree
And picks for prizes which the ripest be
Pears plumbs or filberts covered o'er in leams
While the pale moon creeps high in peaceful dreams
And o'er his harvest theft in jealous light
Fills empty shadows with the power to fright
And owlet screaming as it bounces nigh
That from some barn hole pops and hurries bye
Scared at the cat upon her nightly watch
For rats that come for dew upon the thatch
He hears the noise and trembling to escape
While every object grows a dismal shape
Drops from the tree in fancies swiftest dread
By ghosts pursued and scampers home to bed
Quick tumbling o'er the mossy mouldering wall
And looses half his booty in the fall
Where soon as ere the morning opens its eyes
The restless hogs will happen on the prize
And crump adown the mellow and the green
And makes all seem as nothing ne'er had been
Amid the broils of harvests weary reign
How sweet the sabbath wakes its rest again
For each weary mind what rapture dwells
To hear once more its pleasant chiming bells
That from each steeple peeping here and there
Murmur a soothing lullaby to care
The shepherd journeying on his morning rounds

Pauses awhile to hear their pleasing sounds
While the glad children free from toils employ
Mimic the ding dong sounds and laugh for joy
The fields themselves seem happy to be free
Where insects chatter with unusual glee
While solitude the stubbs and grass among
Appears to muse and listen to the song

In quiet peace awakes the welcomed morn
Men tired and children with their gleanings worn
Weary and stiff lie round their doors the day
To rest themselves with little heart for play
No more keek horns in homestead close resounds
As in their school boy days at hare and hounds
Nor running oer the street from wall to wall
With eager shouts at 'cuck and catch the ball'
In calm delight the sabbath wears along
Yet round the cross at noon a tempted throng
Of little youngers with their pence repair
To buy the downy plumb and luscious pear
That melt with mouth-which gardeners never fail
For gains strong impulse to expose for sale
And on the circling cross steps in the sun
Sit when the parson has his sermon done
When grandams that against his rules rebell
Come with their baskets heaped wi fruit to sell
That thither all the season did pursue
Wi mellow goosberrys of every hue
Green ruffs and raspberry reds and drops of gold
That makes mouths water often to behold
Sold out to clowns in totts oft deemed too small
Who grudging much the price eat husks and all
Nor leaves a fragment round to cheer the eye
Of searching swine that murmurs hungry by
And currans red and white on cabbage leaves
While childrens fingers itches to be thieves
And black red cherries shining to the sight
As rich as brandy held before the light
Now these are past he still as Sunday comes
Sits on the cross with baskets heaped with plums
And Jenitens streaked apples suggest sweet
Others spice scented ripening with the wheat
And pears that melt with mouth like honey which
He oft declares to make their spirits itch
They are so juicy ripe and better still
So rich they een might suck em thro a quill
Here at their leisure gather many a clown
To talk of grain and news about the town
And here the boy wi toils earned penny comes
In hurrying speed to purchase pears or plums
And oer the basket hangs wi many a smile

Wi hat in hand to hold his prize the while

Not so the boys that begs for pence in vain
Of deaf eard dames that threat while they complain
Who talk of the good dinners they have eat
And wanting more as nothing but consiet
Vowing they ne'er shall throw good pence away
So bids them off and be content wi play
Reaching her rod that hangs the chimney oer
And scaring their rude whinings to the door
Who sob aloud and hang their hats adown
To hide their tears and saun along the town
Venturing wi sullen step his basket nigh
And often dipping a desiring eye
Stone hearted dames thrifts errors to believe
Who make their little bellys yearn to thieve
But strong temptation must to fears resign
For close beside the stocks in terror shine
So choaking substitutes for loss of pelf
He keeps his hungry fingers to himself
And mopes and sits the sabbath hours away
Wi heart too weary and too sad for play
So sundays scenes and leisure passes bye
In rests soft peace and home tranquillity
Till monday morning doth its cares pursue
And wakes the harvests busy toils anew

“The Shepherd’s Calendar - September”

Harvest awakes the morning still
And toils rude groups the valleys fill
Deserted is each cottage hearth
To all life save the crickets mirth
Each burring wheel their sabbath meets
Nor walks a gossip in the streets
The bench beneath its eldern bough
Lined oer with grass is empty now
Where blackbirds caged from out the sun
Could whistle while their mistress spun.
All haunt the thronged fields still to share
The harvests lingering bounty there
As yet no meddling boys resort
About the streets in idle sport
The butterflye enjoys his hour
And flirts unhaced from flower to flower
And humming bees that morning calls
From out the low huts mortar walls
Which passing boy no more controuls
Flye undisturbed about their holes
And sparrows in glad chirpings meet

Unpelted in the quiet street

None but imprison'd children now
Are seen where dames with angry brow
Threaten each younker to his seat
That thro' the school door eyes the street
Or from his horn book turns away
To mourn for liberty and play
Loud are the mornings early sounds
That farm and cottage yard surrounds
The creaking noise of opening gate
And clanking pumps where boys await
With idle motion to supply
The thirst of cattle crowding bye
The low of cows and bark of dogs
And cackling hens and wineing hogs
Swell high-while at the noise awoke
Old goody seeks her milking cloak
And hastens out to milk the cow
And fill the troughs to feed the sow
Or seeking old hens laid astray
Or from young chickens drives away
The circling kite that round them flies
Waiting the chance to seize the prize
Hogs trye thro gates the street to gain
And steal into the fields of grain
From nights dull prison comes the duck
Waddling eager thro the muck
Squeezing thro the orchard pales
Where mornings bounty rarely fails
Eager gobbling as they pass
Dew worms thro the padded grass
Where blushing apples round and red
Load down the boughs and pat the head
Of longing maid that hither goes
To hang on lines the drying cloaths
Who views them oft with tempted eye
And steals one as she passes bye
Where the holly oak so tall
Far oer tops the garden wall
That latest blooms for bees provide
Hived on stone benches close beside
The bees their teasing music hum
And threaten war to all that come
Save the old dame whose jealous care
Places a trapping bottle there
Filled with mock sweets in whose disguise
The honey loving hornet dies

Upon the dovecoats mossy slates
The piegons coo around their mates

Where morns sunbeams early fall
By the barn or stable wall
Basking hens in playfull rout
Flap the smoaking dust about
In the barn hole sits the cat
Watching within the thirsty rat
Who oft at morn its dwelling leaves
To drink the moisture from the eves
The redbreast with his nimble eye
Dare scarcely stop to catch the flye
That tangled in the spiders snare
Mourns in vain for freedom there
The dog beside the threshold lyes
Mocking sleep with half shut eyes
With head crouched down upon his feet
Till strangers pass his sunny seat
Then quick he pricks his ears to hark
And bustles up to growl and bark
While boys in fear stop short their song
And sneak on hurrys fears along
And beggar creeping like a snail
To make his hungry hopes prevail
Oer the warm heart of charity
Leaves his lame halt and hastens bye

The maid afield now leaves the farm
With brimming bottles on her arm
Loitering unseen in narrow lane
To be oertook by following swain
Who happy thus her truth to prove
Carrys the load and talks of love
Full soon the harvest waggons sound
Rumbling like thunder all around
In ceasless speed the corn to load
Hurrying down the dusty road
While driving boy with eager eye
Watches the church clock passing bye
Whose gilt hands glitter in the sun
To see how far the hours have run
Right happly in the breathless day
To see it wearing fast away
Yet now and then a sudden shower
Will bring to toil a resting hour
When under sheltering shocks a crowd
Of merry voices mingle loud
Wearing the short lived boon along
With vulgar tale and merry song
Draining with leisures laughing eye
Each welcome bubbling bottle drye
Till peeping suns dry up the rain
Then off they start to toil again

Anon the fields are wearing clear
And glad sounds hum in labours ear
When childern halo 'here they come
And run to meet the harvest home
Stuck thick with boughs and thronged with boys
Who mingle loud a merry noise
Glad that the harvests end is nigh
And weary labour nearly bye
Where when they meet the stack thronged yard
Cross bunns or pence their shouts reward

Then comes the harvest supper night
Which rustics welcome with delight
When merry game and tiresome tale
And songs increasing with the ale
Their mingled uproar interpose
To crown the harvests happy close
While rural mirth that there abides
Laughs till she almost cracks her sides

Now harvests busy hum declines
And labour half its help resigns
Boys glad at heart to play return
The shepherds to their peace sojourn
Rush-bosomed solitudes among
Which busy toil disturbed so long
The gossip happy all is oer
Visits again her neighbours door
For scandals idle tales to dwell
Which harvest had no time to tell
And on each bench at even tide
Which trailing vine leaves nearly hide
And free from all its sultry strife
Enjoy once more their idle life
A few whom waning toil reprieves
Thread the forests sea of leaves
Where the pheasant loves to hide
And the darkest glooms abide
Beneath the old oaks mossd and grey
Whose shadows seem as old as they
Where time hath many seasons won
Since aught beneath them saw the sun.
Within these brambly solitudes
The ragged noisy boy intrudes
To gather nuts that ripe and brown
As soon as shook will patter down
Thus harvest ends its busy reign
And leaves the fields their peace again

Where autumns shadows idly muse
And tinge the trees with many hues

Amid whose scenes I'm feign to dwell
And sing of what I love so well
But hollow winds and tumbling floods
And humming showers and moaning woods
All startle into sudden strife
And wake a mighty lay to life
Making amid their strains divine
All songs in vain so mean as mine

“The Shepherd’s Calendar - October”

Nature now spreads around in dreary hue
A pall to cover all that summer knew
Yet in the poets solitary way
Some pleasing objects for his praise delay
Something that makes him pause and turn again
As every trifle will his eye detain
The free horse rustling through the stubble land
And bawling herd boy with his motly band
Of hogs and sheep and cows who feed their fill
Oer cleared fields rambling where so ere they will
The geese flock gabbling in the splashy fields
And quaking ducks in pondweeds half conseald
Or seeking worms along the homclose sward
Right glad of freedom from the prison yard
While every cart rut dribbles its low tide
And every hollow splashing sports provide
The hedger stopping gaps wi pointed bough
Made by intruding horse and blundering cow
The milk maid tripping on her morning way
And fodderers oft tho early cutting hay
Dropping the littering forkfulls from his back
Side where the thorn fence circles round the stack
The cotter journeying wi his noisev swine
Along the wood side where the brambles twine
Shaking from dinted cups the acorns brown
And from the hedges red awes dashing down
And nutters rustling in the yellow woods
Scaring from their snug lairs the pheasant broods
And squirrels secret toils oer winter dreams
Picking the brown nuts from the yellow beams
And hunters from the thickets avenue
In scarlet jackets startling on the view
Skimming a moment oer the russet plain
Then hiding in the colord woods again
The ploping guns sharp momentary shock
Which eccho bustles from her cave to mock
The sticking groups in many a ragged set
Brushing the woods their harmless loads to get
And gipseys camps in some snug shelterd nook

Where old lane hedges like the pasture brook
Run crooking as they will by wood and dell
In such lone spots these wild wood roamers dwell
On commons where no farmers claims appear
Nor tyrant justice rides to interfere
Such the abodes neath hedge or spreading oak
And but discovered by its curling smoak
Puffing and peeping up as wills the breeze
Between the branches of the colored trees
Such are the pictures that October yields
To please the poet as he walks the fields
Oft dames in faded cloak of red or grey
Loiters along the mornings dripping way
Wi wicker basket on their withered arms
Searching the hedges of home close or farms
Where brashy elder trees to autumn fade
Each cotters mossy hut and garden shade
Whose glossy berries picturesquely weaves
Their swathy bunches mid the yellow leaves
Where the pert sparrow stains his little bill
And tutling robin picks his meals at will
Black ripening to the wan suns misty ray
Here the industrious huswives wend their way
Pulling the brittle branches careful down
And hawking loads of berries to the town
Wi unpretending skill yet half divine
To press and make their elderberry wine
That bottled up becomes a rousing charm
To kindle winters icy bosom warm
That wi its merry partner nut brown beer
Makes up the peasants Christmas keeping cheer
While nature like fair woman in decay
Which pale consumption hourly wastes away
Upon her waning features pale and chill
Wears dreams of beauty that seem lovely still
Among the heath furze still delights to dwell
Quaking as if with cold the harvest bell
The mushroom buttons each moist morning brings
Like spots of snow in the green tawney rings
And fuzz balls swelled like bladders in the grass
Which oft the merry laughing milking lass
Will stoop to gather in her sportive airs
And slive in mimicked fondness unawares
To smut the brown cheek of the teasing swain
Wi the black powder which their balls contain
Who feigns offence at first that love may speed
Then charms a kiss to recompence the deed
The flying clouds urged on in swiftest pace
Like living things as if they runned a race
The winds that o'er each coming tempest broods
Waking like spirits in their startling moods

Fluttering the sear leaves on the blasting lea
That litters under every fading tree
And pausing oft as falls the pattering rain
Then gathering strength and twirling them again
The startld stockdove hurried wizzing bye
As the still hawk hangs oer him in the sky
Crows from the oak trees qawking as they spring
Dashing the acorns down wi beating wing
Waking the woodlands sleep in noises low
Pattrring on crimpt brakes withering brown below
While from their hollow nest the squirrels (pop)
Adown the tree to pick them as they drop
The starnel crowds that dim the muddy light
The crows and jackdaws flapping home at night
And puddock circling round its lazy flight
Round the wild sweeing wood in motion slow
Before it perches on the oaks below
And hugh black beetles revelling alone
In the dull evening with their heavy drone
Buzzing from barn door straw and hovel sides
Where fodderd cattle from the night abides
These pictures linger thro the shortning day
And cheer the lone bards mellancholy way
And now and then a solitary boy
Journeying and muttering o'er his dreams of joy

“The Shepherd’s Calendar - November”

The landscape sleeps in mist from morn till noon;
And, if the sun looks through, 'tis with a face
Beamless and pale and round, as if the moon,
When done the journey of her nightly race,
Had found him sleeping, and supplied his place.
For days the shepherds in the fields may be,
Nor mark a patch of sky - blindfold they trace,
The plains, that seem without a bush or tree,
Whistling aloud by guess, to flocks they cannot see.

The timid hare seems half its fears to lose,
Crouching and sleeping 'neath its grassy lair,
And scarcely startles, tho' the shepherd goes
Close by its home, and dogs are barking there;
The wild colt only turns around to stare
At passer by, then knaps his hide again;
And moody crows beside the road forbear
To fly, tho' pelted by the passing swain;
Thus day seems turn'd to night, and tries to wake in vain.

The owlet leaves her hiding-place at noon,
And flaps her grey wings in the doubling light;

The hoarse jay screams to see her out so soon,
And small birds chirp and startle with affright;
Much doth it scare the superstitious wight,
Who dreams of sorry luck, and sore dismay;
While cow-boys think the day a dream of night,
And oft grow fearful on their lonely way,
Fancying that ghosts may wake, and leave their graves by day.

Yet but awhile the slumbering weather flings
Its murky prison round - then winds wake loud;
With sudden stir the startled forest sings
Winter's returning song - cloud races cloud,
And the horizon throws away its shroud,
Sweeping a stretching circle from the eye;
Storms upon storms in quick succession crowd,
And o'er the sameness of the purple sky
Heaven paints, with hurried hand, wild hues of every dye.

At length it comes along the forest oaks,
With sobbing ebbs, and uproar gathering high;
The scared, hoarse raven on its cradle croaks,
And stockdove-flocks in hurried terrors fly,
While the blue hawk hangs o'er them in the sky.-
The hedger hastens from the storm begun,
To seek a shelter that may keep him dry;
And foresters low bent, the wind to shun,
Scarce hear amid the strife the poacher's muttering gun.

The ploughman hears its humming rage begin,
And hies for shelter from his naked toil;
Buttoning his doublet closer to his chin,
He bends and scampers o'er the elting soil,
While clouds above him in wild fury boil,
And winds drive heavily the beating rain;
He turns his back to catch his breath awhile,
Then ekes his speed and faces it again,
To seek the shepherd's hut beside the rushy plain.

The boy, that scareth from the spiry wheat
The melancholy crow - in hurry weaves,
Beneath an ivied tree, his sheltering seat,
Of rushy flags and sedges tied in sheaves,
Or from the field a shock of stubble thieves.
There he doth dithering sit, and entertain
His eyes with marking the storm-driven leaves;
Oft spying nests where he spring eggs had ta'en,
And wishing in his heart 'twas summer-time again.

Thus wears the month along, in checker'd moods,
Sunshine and shadows, tempests loud, and calms;
One hour dies silent o'er the sleepy woods,

The next wakes loud with unexpected storms;
A dreary nakedness the field deforms -
Yet many a rural sound, and rural sight,
Lives in the village still about the farms,
Where toil's rude uproar hums from morn till night
Noises, in which the ears of Industry delight.

At length the stir of rural labour's still,
And Industry her care awhile forgoes;
When Winter comes in earnest to fulfil
His yearly task, at bleak November's close,
And stops the plough, and hides the field in snows;
When frost locks up the stream in chill delay,
And mellows on the hedge the jetty sloes,
For little birds - then Toil hath time for play,
And nought but threshers' flails awake the dreary day.