

The Anacreontea

Anacreon



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ODE I. — ON HIS LYRE.

While I sweep the sounding string,
While th’ Atridæ’s praise I sing,
Victors on the Trojan plain,
Or to Cadmus raise the strain,
Hark! in soft and whisper’d sighs,
Love’s sweet notes the shell replies.
Late I strung my harp anew,
Changed the strings — the subject too:
Loud I sung Alcides’ toils,
Still the lyre my labour foils;
Still with Love’s sweet silver sounds
Every martial theme confounds.
Farewell! heroes, chiefs, and kings,
Naught but love will suit my strings.

ODE II. — ON WOMEN.

Pointed horns, the dread of foes,
Nature on the bull bestows;
Horny hoofs the horse defend,
Swift-wing’d feet the hare befriend;
Lions’ gaping jaws disclose
Dreadful teeth in grinning rows;
Wings to birds her care supplied,
Finny fishes swim the tide;
Nobler gifts to man assign’d,
Courage firm and strength of mind.
From her then exhausted store
Naught for woman has she more:
How does Nature prove her care?
Beauty’s charms is woman’s share,

Stronger far than warrior's dress
Is her helpless loveliness.
Safety smiles in beauty's eyes,
She the hostile flame defies:
Fiercest swords submissive fall —
Lovely woman conquers all!

ODE III. — CUPID BENIGHTED.

‘Twas at the solemn midnight hour,
When silence reigns with awful pow’r,
Just when the bright and glittering Bear
Is yielding to her keeper's care;
When, spent with toil, with cares oppress’d,
Man's busy race has sunk to rest,
Sly Cupid, sent by cruel fate,
Stood loudly knocking at my gate.
“Who's there,” I cried, “at this late hour?
Who is it batters thus my door?
Begone! you break my blissful dreams.”
But he, on mischief bent, it seems,
With feeble voice and piteous cries
In childish accents thus replies:
“Be not alarm’d, kind sir, ’tis I,
A little, wretched, wandering boy.
Pray ope the door — I've lost my way
This moonless night — alone I stray:
I'm stiff with cold, I'm drench’d all o’er;
For pity's sake pray ope the door.”
Touch’d with this simple tale of wo,
And little dreaming of a foe,
I rose, lit up my lamp, and straight
Undid the fastenings of the gate;
And there indeed a boy I spied,
With bow and quiver by his side.
Wings too he wore — a strange attire!

My guest I seated near the fire,
And while the blazing fagots shine,
I chafed his little hands in mine.
His dank and dripping locks I wrung,
That down his shoulders loosely hung.
Soon as his cheeks began to glow,
“Come now,” he cries, “let’s try this bow
For much I fear, this rainy night,
The wet and damp have spoiled it quite.”
That instant twanged the sounding string,
Loud as the whizzing gadfly’s wing:
Too truly aimed, the fatal dart
My bosom pierced with painful smart.
Up sprung the boy with laughing eyes,
And, “Wish me joy, mine host,” he cries.
“My bow is sound in every part;
Thou’lt find the arrow in thy heart.”

ODE IV. — ON HIMSELF.

On this flowery couch reclining,
Thick with leaves of myrtle strewed,
Every graver care resigning,
I will drink in joyous mood.
Mis tunic shortened & standing near me,
His waist with rushy girdle bound,
With rosy wine let Cupid cheer me,
And serve the golden goblet round.
For, ah! with what unwearied pace
The ceaseless wheel of life runs on!
Just like the chariot’s rapid race,
How swift the course, how quickly run!
Yet thus, alas! our moments fly;
Thus pass our fleeting years away;

And soon shall we neglected lie,
A little dust & a lump of clay!
Then why, when life's short scene is o'er,
Anoint a cold unconscious stone?
Why vainly rich libations pour,
Or call ray ghost with useless moan?
Nay, rather, friends, anoint me now,
While life remains, and fate is kind;
With rosy garlands crown my brow,
And go, my lovely fair one find.
My cares I'll drown in pleasure's tide,
Before my wand'ring spirit go
Where unsubstantial spectres glide,
And dance in dismal shades below.

ODE V. — ON THE ROSE.

With sparkling wine sweet roses join,
& I will make the nectar's draught divine;
Let mirth and laughter rule the hour,
While roses, pluck'd from Love's own bower,
Around our moisten'd temples twine,
And add fresh fragrance to the wine.
Oh, lovely rose! to thee I sing,
Thou sweetest, fairest child of spring!
Oh thou art dear to all the gods,
The darling of their bless'd abodes.
Thy breathing buds and blossoms fair
Entwine young Cupid's golden hair,
When gayly dancing, hand in hand,
He joins the Graces' lovely band.
Then bring fresh garlands, crown my brows,
And while thus joyous, I carouse,
Admitted, Bacchus, to thy shrine,

Thy praise I'll sing in hymns divine;
Or, thick with rosy chaplets crown'd,
With Chloe dance a sprightly round,
Whose snowy bosom softly swells,
And tales of tender transport tells.

ODE VI. — THE BANQUET.

With glowing wreaths of roses crown'd,
We'll pass the cheerful goblet round;
But with no squeamish, modest sips,
The cup shall kiss our thirsty lips.
And see, to grace the festive hour,
The maiden seeks our shelter'd bower,
Whose pretty, slender foot well suits
The music of the soft-toned lutes;
While ivy wreath'd, her thyrsus fair
She rustles through the yielding air.
And hark! a fair-haired youth begins,
And as he wakes the warbling strings
His liquid voice breathes odours round,
And mingles with the melting sound.
With golden locks, young Cupid see,
And Bacchus, young and fair as he;
With these is lovely Venus too,
Who hastes to join the sportive crew;
While we old men can scarce refrain
To live the life we loved again.

ODE VII. — ON CUPID.

Cupid once, with staff in hand,
(A slender hyacinthine wand,)
Slow walking with a tottering pace,
Defied me to the rapid race.

Away we flew o'er flood and fell,
O'er craggy rock and bushy dell,
Till hastening on with swiftest speed,
A serpent stung me; then indeed
My heart forgot its wonted play;
I fainted & sunk; and died away.

The urchin laughed at my disgrace,
And while his pinions fann'd my face,
“My friend,” he cried, “you clearly prove
That you are not a match for Love!”

ODE VIII. — ON HIS DREAM.

Peaceful slumbering through the night,
On a purple couch reclined,
Dreams of joy and visions bright
Bacchus sent to charm my mind.

Me thought I join'd in rapid race
With flying nymphs a sportive crew,
And urging on with swiftest pace,
Still kept the lovely game in view.

While youths, as young Lyæus fair,
With jealous hate, and envy stung,
Who saw my joy, but could not share
Reviled me as I pass'd along.

A kiss I claim'd & my promised prize;
But as on pleasure's brink I seem,
The vision fled my cheated eyes:
I woke, and lo! 'twas all a dream!

Then lonely, sad, and angry too,
To find my high-raised hopes were vain,
The dear delusion to renew,
I sigh'd, and sunk to sleep again.

ODE IX. — ON A DOVE.

Pretty pigeon, tell me, pray,
Whither speeding, whence away?
Breathing balmy odours round,
Where thy fluttering pinions sound?
Who despatch'd thee through the air?
What commission dost thou bear?
'Anacreon, the blithe and gay,
The master dear whom I obey,
Sent me swift from yonder grove
To seek the lady of his love.
I dare not tell the name she bears,
But beauty's sweetest smile she wears:
Possess'd of every pleasing art,
She reigns supreme o'er every heart.
Fair Venus sold me to the bard,
A little hymn the fix'd reward.
So now the poet's page am I,
His courier through the pathless sky;
And sometimes, as you see me now,
The bearer of some tender vow.
He thinks, perhaps, he pleases me,
By saying I shall soon be free;
But though I should the boon obtain,
His willing slave I'll still remain.
For, ah! I do not wish to roam,
Or quit my sweet, my happy home,
Far flying over hill and plain
My wretched, rustic food to gain;
Or shivering on some tree to stay,
And coo the cheerless hours away:
For now I feast on dainty bread,
And by the hands I love am fed;
And when the cup has pressed his lip,
His sweet delicious wine I sip;

And when my heart is light and gay,
I sometimes little frolics play;
Upon his shoulder take my place,
And with my wings o'erspread his face.
Or if to sleep my humour suit,
I perch upon his warbling lute,
And by his careful hand caress'd,
By softest sounds am lull'd to rest.
'I've told you all &— begone! adieu!
And let me now my flight pursue.
Nay, friend, no longer urge my stay,
For I have prated like a jay."

ODE X. — ON A WAXEN CUPID.

A waxen Cupid, nicely wrought,
A rustic youth for sale had brought.
"Say, what's your price, my friend?" I cried,
When thus the silly clown replied,
In Doric phrase, devoid of skill:
"E'en take him, sir, for what you will:
'Tis cheap, you'll say; but, truth to tell,
No images I make or sell.
But as for this young rogue you see,
He must not &— shall not dwell with me."
"If so, my pretty youth," I said,
"Our bargain shall be quickly made:
To you this little coin I'll give,
And, Cupid, thou with me shalt live.
And do thou now my breast inspire,
There kindle all thy former fire;
Oh let me boast a lover's name,
Or thou thyself shalt melt in flame."

ODE XI. — ON HIMSELF.

“Anacreon,” the lasses say,
“Old fellow, you have had your day:
Consult your mirror, mark with care,
How scanty now your silver hair;
Old wintry Time has shed his snows,
And bald and bare your forehead shows.”
But faith! I know not where they’re gone,
Or if I’ve any left — or none;
But this I know, that every day
Shall see me sportive, blithe, and gay;
For ’tis our wisdom so to do
The nearer death appears in view.

ODE XII. — ON A SWALLOW.

What punishment shall I decree,
Vexatious, chattering bird, to thee?
Say, shall I clip thy restless wing?
Or, like the cruel Thracian king,
Tear out that tongue whose noisy scream
Has loused me from so sweet a dream?
For oh! methought my love was nigh,
Till, startled by thy twittering cry,
She fled upon the wings of morn,
And left me joyless and forlorn.

ODE XIII. — ON HIMSELF.

Poor Atys, as old poets sing,
“er the wild mountains wandering,
Degraded from his former state,
Cybele’s love now turned to hate,
With plaintive cries invoked relief,
Till madness brought an end to grief.
And some who to the waters throng,
Of laurell’d Phœbus, god of song,

At Claros drink the vocal wave,
And with prophetic fury rave;
Then shall not I when wine inspires,
And Chloe's eyes dart love's bright fires,
When bathed in sweets, without alloy,
And rapt in wild, delirious joy,
Refuse a while stern reason's sway,
And be as madly wild as they?

ODE XIV. — ON CUPID.

Cease, cease the combat, I'll obey,
Oh, mighty Love! I own thy sway.
Cupid planned a new campaign,
And bade me join his camp again;
But I, grown weary of the trade,
Like a rebel disobeyed.
Straight the monarch, much displeased,
His dreadful bow and quiver seized,
And, wafted on his pinions light,
Defied me to the field of fight.
Then clad for war, like Peleus's son,
A corslet bright I buckled on;
With ample shield and quivering spear,
I waited till the foe drew near.
His bow-string twanged & then seized with dread,
My courage failed & I trembling fled.
He plied his darts till all were spent;
Nor did his anger then relent:
Himself he changed into a dart,
And shot like lightning through my heart.
Ah me! I felt my life-blood flow;
I sunk beneath my conquering foe
How vainly then a shield I wear!
In vain defensive arms I bear;

For victory who can hope to win
While fiercely burns the war within?

ODE XV. — HAPPY LIFE.

Famed Gyges's treasures I could see,
From envious thoughts and wishes free.
On golden heaps with scorn I frown;
I would not wear a monarch's crown.
Far other joys and cares are mine,
For which such bawbles I resign.
To bathe my beard with sweet perfumes,
To crown my brows with spring's fresh blooms;
These — these are things that claim my care.
This day is mine — I'll freely share
The joys it brings; for who can know
If he shall see the next or no?
Then, while thy summer sky is clear,
Nor death nor danger hover near,
The happy hours of life employ
In song, and dance, and festive joy;
And let the rattling dice assign
The royal honours of the wine,
Ere surly Death thy garland tear,
Or fell disease with frown severe,
Forbid the nectar's juice to sip,
And dash the goblet from thy lip.

ODE XVI. — THE CAPTIVE.

Some sing of Thebes, and some prolong
The battle-shouts of Phrygian wars;
But I must trill a captive's song,
Sigh o'er my wounds, and count my scars.

Of conquering fleets no slave am I,
No armies claim me for their prize;
But all my foes in ambush lie,
And dart their fires from Pyrrhus's eyes!

ODE XVII. — ON A SILVER BOWL.

Mulciber, thou skilful wright,
Carve for me this silver bright;
But I do not wish to see
Polished arms or panoply.
What are arms or wars to me?

Carve me out a mighty bowl,
That my ever-thirsty soul
In the generous juice may steep.
Make it very — very deep.
On the margin do not trace
Uncouth shape or horrid face
Grave not there the northern wain
Stern Orion, god of rain,
Boötes, or the Pleiades;
What concern have I with these?
Trail thereon the tender vine,
There let purple clusters shine;
Picture too the god of wine.
There let fair-haired Cupid be,
And Bathyllus, fair as he:
Make them beautiful and bold,
Burnish high like polished gold:
Let them in one labour join,
Treading out the gushing wine.

ODE XVIII. — ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

Dear artist, take this silver store,
And try thy skilful hand once more;

Produce a large and handsome bowl
To charm my eyes, and cheer my soul.
Around its polish'd surface bring
The flowery pride of purple spring;
There let the soft and vernal hours
Shed rosy sweets in plenteous showers.
Engrave no foreign mystic rite,
No marvellous tale that shocks the sight;
But draw the generous god of wine,
Blithe Bacchus, son of Jove divine.
Let Venus, love's sweet smiling queen,
With youthful Hymen deck the scene:
His dread artillery laid aside,
Let Cupid mid the Graces glide,
As in the sprightly dance they join
Beneath the high-imbowering vine,
Whose glowing clusters peep between
The foliage bright of glossy green.
With these a youthful group display,
As fair as Phœbus, god of day,
Though Phœbus join not in their play.

ODE XIX. — REASONS FOR DRINKING.

The earth drinks up the genial rains
Which deluge all her thirsty plains;
The lofty trees that pierce the sky
Drain up the earth and leave her dry;
Th' insatiate sea imbibes, each hour,
The welcome breeze that brings the shower;
The sun, whose fires so fiercely burn,
Absorbs the wave; and, in her turn,
The modest moon enjoys, each night,
Large draughts of his celestial light.
Then, sapient sirs, pray tell me why,

If all things drink, why may not I?

ODE XX. — TO HIS MISTRESS.

On desert Phrygia's silent sands
Poor Niobe an image stands;
And Pandion's injured child, we know,
Still, twittering, tells her tale of wo.
But would the gods the change allow,
And hear and grant my tender vow,
Dear girl! thy mirror I would be,
That thou might'st always smile on me.
Thy vest I'd be, to guard with care
Those heaving breasts, and nestle there.
Oh! would I were a limpid wave,
Thy soft and beauteous limbs to lave;
Thy perfumed oil, that I might share
The glory of thy golden hair!
Or, dearer still, that slender zone,
Which makes thy beauties all its own:
Thy pearly chain, that shines so fair,
But cannot with thy neck compare:
Thy very sandal I would be,
To kiss the foot that trod on me!

ODE XXI. — SUMMER.

Bring, maidens, bring a well-mix'd bowl,
And let me slake my thirsty soul;
For, scorched beneath this sultry sky,
My spirits sink & I faint & I die.
This garland, late so fresh and fair,
I twined amid my curling hair;
But all its faded flow'rets now
Have wither'd on my burning brow.

Bring fresher wreaths my head to shade;
Bring others still when those shall fade.
But, oh! what ease can wine impart
When love's fierce flame consumes the heart?
In vain to groves or shades I fly,
This inward flame will never die!

ODE XXII. — THE BOWER.

Haste, my love, this shade to seek,
The spreading tree is passing fair,
Like clustering curls on Beauty's cheek,
See it waves its wanton hair.

The streamlet murmuring at our feet
Rolls its music through the grove;
'Tis a scene for lovers meet,
Where each object whispers love.

The tree, the stream, the silent hour,
All persuasive, seem to say,
'Viewing such a lovely bower,
Can you pass another way?'

ODE XXIII. — THE VANITY OF WEALTH.

Could glittering heaps, or golden store,
Life preserve, or health restore,
Then with ceaseless, anxious pain,
Riches I would strive to gain,
That should death, unwish'd for, come,
Pointing to the dreary tomb,
I might cry, in sprightly tone,
'Here's my ransom, Death! begone!'
But, alas! since well I know
Life cannot be purchased so,

Why indulge the useless sigh?
Fate decrees that all shall die.
Vainly to our wealth we trust,
Poor or wealthy — die we must.
Present joys then let me share,
Rosy wine to banish care;
Cheerful friends that faithful prove,
Beauty’s smiles and blissful love.

ODE XXIV. — LIFE TO BE ENJOYED.

Born a mortal; doom’d to tread
Life’s rough path of pain and wo,
All the past with ease is read,
But the future who can know?
Hence! away, distracting cares,
Make no fellowship with me;
Point not to my silvering hairs,
You and I shall ne’er agree.
Ere fate forbid all further joy,
First amid the festive throng,
Bacchus shall my hours employ
With mirth, and dance, and joyous song.

ODE XXV. — THE CURE FOR CARE.

When with gloomy griefs oppress’d,
Wine can charm those griefs to rest;
Toil and trouble, care and wo,
I’m determined ne’er to know.
Though in care my life were pass’d,
Cruel death would come at last.
Shall I ever anxious grieve?
Shall I thus myself deceive?

No! we'll drain the rosy bowl,
'Tis a cordial for the soul;
'Tis a charm that lulls to rest
Every anxious, aching breast.

ODE XXVI. — IN PRAISE OF WINE.

When the nectar'd bowl I drain
Gloomy cares forego their reign;
Richer than the Lydian king,
Hymns of love and joy I sing;
Ivy wreaths my temples twine,
And, while careless I recline,
While bright scenes my vision greet,
Tread the world beneath my feet.
Fill the cup, my trusty page,
Anacreon, the blithe and sage,
As his maxim, ever said,
Those slain by wine are noble dead.

ODE XXVII. — THE SAME SUBJECT.

When the generous god of wine,
Bacchus, son of Jove divine,
Frees my soul from anxious care,
Fills my breast and revels there,
Then I lead the mazy dance,
Rapt in pleasure's giddy trance.
Oh! what transports then I prove —
Sweet the joys of wine and love!
Music breathes its softest strains,
Venus too with Bacchus reigns.
Thus, with wine and beauty bless'd,
Thus I charm my cares to rest,
Ever joyous, blithe, and gay,

Dance the happy hours away.

ODE XXVIII. — ON HIS MISTRESS.

Best of painters, lend thy aid,
Draw the lines of light and shade;
Master of the Rhodian art,
Paint the charmer of my heart;
Absent though the maiden be,
Beauties I'll describe to thee,
Thou, undazzled, ne'er couldst see.
Paint her dark and glossy hair,
Flowing down her neck so fair:
Further yet I must presume,
Let it seem to breathe perfume.
Her ivory forehead next thy care,
Shining mid her jet-black hair;
Let thy utmost skill be seen
In the dainty space between,
Where by sable archers cross'd,
Where the lessening shade is lost.
Let her liquid eye of fire,
Like Minerva's, awe inspire;
With Cytherea's softness too
Temper the celestial blue;
Paint her lovely cheek and nose,
Blending milk with blush of rose;
Paint her pretty, pouting lips,
Where the bee its honey sips,
Where Persuasion sits and smiles,
With a thousand winning wiles.
Every pleasing grace must deck
Her pretty dimpled chin and neck;
And let nameless beauties dwell

In her bosom's gentle swell.
In a thin and purple dress
Veil this form of loveliness:
Her body hide, her shape express.
Enough! no further proof I seek,
She lives & she breathes & soft! did she speak?

ODE XXX. — CUPID TAKEN PRISONER.

Cupid, once, was rambling found
On the Muses' hallowed ground;
Straight they weave a rosy chain,
And the little god detain.
Him to Beauty soon they gave,
Mighty Love is Beauty's slave.
Cytherea ransoms brought,
To release her son she sought;
But no fee, no ransom now,
The happy captive will allow.
Love hath learned his art too well,
And with Beauty still will dwell.

ODE XXXI. — PLEASING PHRENSY.

Yes! let me & let me drain the bowl,
And pour its pleasures on my soul;
Let Bacchus now his reign employ,
Till reason reels, oppress'd with joy.
Orestes, by the furies led,
Barefooted to the mountains fled.
Alcmæon too, in frantic mood,
Like him was stain'd with mother's blood;
But I disclaim such dreadful deeds,
My madness from my joy proceeds.
Then bring the bowl, I cry again,

Who shall that maddening joy restrain?
When Hercules went mad of yore,
The Iphitean bow he bore;
His rattling quiver's dreadful sound
Spread awe and consternation round.
Great Ajax, too, when madness raged,
Whole hosts of fancied Greeks engaged;
When, grasping fierce his seven-fold shield,
With Hector's sword he sought the field.
But though with wine I mad should be,
May no such fury seize on me!
No dreadful bow or sword I bear,
A flowery garland decks my hair.
This brimming bowl shall crown my bliss,
Then welcome madness such as this!

ODE XXXII. — ON THE NUMBER OF HIS MISTRESSES.

If thou canst number o'er to me
Every leaf on every tree,
Or count the ceaseless waves that roar
Against the billow-beaten shore,
Thou sufficient skill hast proved;
Thou shalt count the names I've loved.
At Athens first, Minerva's town,
Full five-and-thirty write me down;
But oh! at Corinth, rich and fair,
What hosts of loved ones had I there!
For beauteous nymphs it bears the sway,
For none so beauteous sure as they.
Next, my lovely Lesbians tell,
Ionians, Carians, those that dwell
At far-famed Rhodes; you may in all
The trifling sum two thousand call.

What! think'st thou that I yet have done?
Resume thy tablets & one by one,
I'll count thee o'er my Syrian fair,
And Egypt too must claim a share;
And fertile Creta yet remains,
Where Love his empire still maintains.
The dark-eyed nymphs that shared my flame,
At Spain and Afric, shall I name?
To sultry India's farthest pole,
Whose dusky charms have fired my soul!

ODE XXXIII. — ON A SWALLOW.

Pretty, twittering, fickle guest,
Here you build your summer nest;
But, ere storms deface the sky,
Back to warmer worlds you fly;
To Memphis, or the banks of Nile,
Where bright suns for ever smile.
But, alas! nor peace nor rest
Dwells within my hapless breast:
Love still builds and hatches there,
Full-fledged loves for flight prepare;
Some, unhatched, yet quiet dwell,
Some just struggling through the shell,
While their ceaseless chirping noise
Every hope of peace destroys.
Some usurp the parent's care,
And the younger nestlings rear;
These, when grown, will young ones breed;
Others still to them succeed.
Thus, alas! what hope remains &
What can ease my bosom's pains,
Since within its secret cell
Loves innumerable dwell?

ODE XXXIV. — TO HIS MISTRESS.

Fly me not, thou scornful fair,
Why reject me so?
Is it that my scanty hair
Is whiter than the snow?
Beauty's blooming flower is thine,
And on thy cheek it glows;
But do not lilies brighter shine
When blended with the rose?

ODE XXXV. — ON A PICTURE REPRESENTING
EUROPA.

This bull, my boy, is surely meant
The mighty Jove to represent,
Since on his back he seems to bear
Through pathless seas a Tyrian fair.
With steady strength he stems the tide,
His hoofs the billows dash aside;
For sure no other bull but he
Would from his lovely heifers flee,
And tempt the dangers of the sea.

ODE XXXVI. — LIFE TO BE ENJOYED.

Why prate to me of critic rules,
And jargon of the jangling schools?
Your learned dogmas, prithee, spare,
They're useless all — not worth my care.
I'll hear thee gladly, canst thou tell
The happy art of living well;
How best to mix the sparkling wine,
To make the mellow draught divine;
How best to please the lovely fair,
For this indeed is worth my care.

Alas! each day, each hour I know,
My hoary locks still whiter grow:
Then bring the goblet — let me drink,
'Twill only make me sad to think
How near, how very near the day
When, mixed with earth and kindred clay,
My soul no more shall taste of joy,
Nor schemes of bliss my mind employ.

ODE XXXVII. — ON THE SPRING.

The newborn Spring awakes the flowers,
And bathes their buds in dewy showers:
The roses bloom, the Graces wear
Fresh flowery garlands in their hair.
How sleeps the sea in placid rest!
No storms disturb its peaceful breast;
But oft upon its surface green
The diving duck is sporting seen.
From distant skies now comes the crane
To seek her well-known haunts again;
The smiling sun resumes his sway,
And drives the dismal clouds away;
The teeming earth is big with fruits,
Forth into day the olive shoots;
Rich, juicy clusters deck the vine,
Which soon shall ripen into wine:
The charming sight with joy I see,
To Bacchus welcome — and to me.

ODE XXXVIII. — ON HIMSELF.

True, ah! true, I'm growing old;
Why should not the truth be told?
Still, from youths I never shrink

When the business is to drink.
When the joyous troop advance,
Still I join the merry dance:
I no useless sceptre bear;
But on high my bottle rear.
Should the grape some hero fire,
Should he wars and fights desire,
Let him fight then, if he please,
I prefer my peaceful ease.
Bring me, then, my gentle page,
Wine that glows with strength and age.
True, I'm old; but you shall see
Old Silenus, full of glee,
Acted to the life by me.

ODE XXXIX. — ON HIMSELF.

When the rosy wine inspires,
Every muse my bosom fires,
All the joys of love and song
Cheer my heart and tune my tongue.
When the joys of wine I share,
Farewell every anxious care;
Sportive winds my sorrows sweep
To the restless, roaring deep.
When I drain the spacious bowl,
Bacchus charms my ravish'd soul;
Perfumed gales from beds of flowers
Bathe in bliss the happy hours.
When with rosy garlands crown'd,
The social cup I pass around;
Rapt in fancy's airy dream,
Peaceful pleasures are my theme.

When I quaff the grape's rich juice,
Bathed in liquid sweets profuse,
Venus claims my votive strain,
Chloe fills my arms again.

When the joy-inspiring draught
Frees my soul from anxious thought,
Graver thoughts I fling away,
Sporting with the young and gay.

When I glow with generous wine,
Life's real blessings all are mine,
Joys beyond the reach of fate ;
Death is sure in every state.

ODE XL. — CUPID WOUNDED.

Young Cupid, once, in luckless hour,
Saw and pluck'd his favourite flower,
A blooming rose ; whose leaves among
A bee that slept his finger stung.
Loud he scream'd with sudden pain,
Stamp'd and sobb'd ; then scream'd again.
He runs ; he flies through mead and grove,
To seek the beauteous Queen of Love.
'Ah me! mamma, I'm kill'd,' he cries,
'Thy child, thy own dear Cupid dies!
For, as I play'd on yonder plain,
A winged serpent ; ah! what pain!
A thing the ploughmen call a bee,
With dart of poison wounded me.'
Fair Venus, smiling, thus replies:
'Oh dry those pretty pearly eyes;
Think if a little insect's sting
Such painful smart to Cupid bring,
Oh, what must their keen anguish be
Who're wounded to the heart by thee!'

ODE XLI. — THE BANQUET OF WINE.

Come, let the mantling cups be crown'd;
And let the jovial song go round.
To Bacchus still the strain prolong,
Who taught the dance, and loves the song.
Companion blithe with Cupid seen,
Beloved alike by beauty's queen;
The father, he, of joy and mirth,
To him the Graces owe their birth.
He heals the wounds of pain and grief,
In him the wretched find relief.
When blooming youths present the bowl
Sweet joys alone possess the soul;
And, borne aloft, our sorrows fly
On swift-wing'd storms that sweep the sky.
Then let us anxious thoughts dismiss,
And pledge the cup to scenes of bliss;
For what avails heart-rending care,
Since mortal man is sorrow's heir.
How short his life's uncertain date!
Unknown and dark his future state.
But when the brimming bowl I drain
I love to dance along the plain,
With sweet perfumes to bathe my hair
And frolic with the young and fair.
Let anxious idiots still despise
The joys which wiser men will prize.
Then, while the jovial cup goes round,
To Bacchus let the song resound.

ODE XLII. — ON HIMSELF.

A friend to mirth and harmless sport,
I love the dance which Bacchus taught.
I dearly love to wake the lyre

When wine or love my lays inspire;
But dearer, sweeter joys I prove,
When with gay smiling maids I rove;
While hyacinths sweet odours breathe,
And round my brows their blossoms wreath,
My heart from envious thoughts is free,
And even Envy still spares me:
From Slander's venom's tongue I fly,
And shun the shafts of calumny.
Fierce quarrels o'er the festive board
My honest heart has e'er abhorred;
But, dancing to the lute's soft strain,
I love to join the blooming train.
Oh! let us banish barbarous strife,
And lead a happy, peaceful life.

ODE XLIII. — ON THE GRASSHOPPER.

Happy insect! all agree
None can be more blessed than thee;
Thou, for joy and pleasure born,
Sipp'st the honey'd dew of morn.
Happier than the sceptred king,
Mid the boughs we hear thee sing.
All the season's varied store,
All thy little eyes explore,
Fruits that tempt, and flowers that shine,
Happy insect! all are thine.
Injuring nothing, blamed by none,
Farmers love thee — pretty one!
All rejoice thy voice to hear
Singing blithe when summer's near.
Thee the tuneful Muses love,
Sweetly chirping in the grove;
Thee the great Apollo bless'd

With a voice above the rest.
Thou from wasting age art free,
Time has naught to do with thee.
Skilful creature, child of song,
Though to earth thou dost belong,
Free from Nature's woes and pains,
Free from flesh, or blood-filled veins,
Happy thing! thou seem'st to me
Almost a little god to be!

ODE XLIV. — THE DREAM.

I dream'd, that over earth and sky,
Possess'd with wings, I seem'd to fly;
While Love pursued with swiftest pace,
And soon o'ertook me in the chase;
Though at his little feet were hung
Large leaden weights, that loosely swung.
"What can this vision mean?" I cried;
"It surely may be thus applied, —
That I, who once could freely rove
Through all the flowery paths of love,
Who laugh'd at lovers and their pains,
Am fettered now with stronger chains."

ODE XLV. — CUPID'S DARTS.

The rugged mate of love's soft queen
Was at the Lemnian forges seen;
And while their fires intensely glow,
Was forging darts for Cupid's bow;
Sharp-pointed shafts of polished steel,
Which human hearts so keenly feel.
The gentle Venus, for her part,
In honey dipped each finished dart;

But cruel Cupid took them all,
And steep'd their barbed points in gall.
Returning from the battle rude,
The mighty Mars their business view'd;
And, leaning on his massy spear,
'What use,' he cried, with scornful sneer,
'These puny darts & these trifling toys
Mere playthings & only fit for boys?
'Hold!' Cupid cries, 'here's one & try
this,
You'll find it not so much amiss;
'Tis strongly made; and, for its size,
Its weight will cause you much surprise.'
The god received it. Venus tried
To check her laugh, and turn'd aside;
But Mars, with sudden grief possess'd,
Cried, groaning from his inmost breast,
'This little shaft gives wondrous pain;
Here & take it & take it back again.'
'Nay, Mars, I give it with good will;
Pray keep the pretty plaything still.'

ODE XLVI. — THE POWER OF GOLD.

A thousand pains we lovers prove,
Still what were life devoid of love?
But ah! what wo, when doom'd to mourn
The love that never meets return!
In vain we boast of noble birth,
And vain is wisdom, wit, or worth,
Since sordid wealth alone is sought,
And even love with gold is bought.
Oh may he sleep in endless night,
Who brought the shining plague to light;
Who first gave worth to useless ore,

And taught mankind to sigh for more!
Gold breaks through every sacred tie,
And bids a friend or brother die;
The fruitful source of kindred strife,
Gold would not spare a parent's life.
Long wars and murders, crimes untold,
All spring from cursed thirst of gold;
And I by sad experience know
'Tis gold that works the lover's wo!

ODE XLVII. — YOUNG OLD AGE.

I love the cheerful, blithesome sage,
Whose temper ne'er betrays his age.
I love the youth that dances well,
To music of the sounding shell.
But when an aged youth like me
Can join the dance with sportive glee,
Though age in hoary locks appears,
His heart is young, despite his years.

ODE XLVIII. — HAPPY LIFE.

Oh! for the harp, the harp of fire,
That godlike Homer strung;
But ah! on such a blood-stain'd lyre
Could love's soft notes be sung?
No! let the measured cups be brought,
And from this scroll divine
I'll read the laws which Bacchus taught
To votaries of the wine.
Then warm in heart, but wisely gay,
I'll join the sportive throng;

With joy the merry harp I'll play,
And thrill the jovial song.

ODE XLIX. — TO A PAINTER.

Dear artist, while I wake the string,
Paint thou the lovely scenes I sing:
First, let my fix'd, delighted eyes,
Behold a well-built city rise;
And with inventive skill portray
Its people happy, blithe, and gay.
Describe the Bacchanalian throng,
Engaged in festive dance and song;
Where, while the shrill-voiced pipe is mute,
Is heard the softly-breathing flute.
And if the crowded space permit,
To make the blissful scene complete,
Let happy pairs be seen to rove,
Intent on life's best business & love.

ODE L. — ON BACCHUS.

See! the youthful god descends;
Bacchus, who the youth befriends,
Strings his nerves, strong toil to bear,
Courage gives to win the fair;
Graceful ease and skill bestows,
When the vigorous dancer glows.
In his hand behold he bears
An antidote for human cares;
Bless'd with which poor mortals gam
Pleasure's draught unmix'd with pain.
He preserves the future wine,
While the crimson clusters shine,
Ere the juice is taught to flow,
Sweet assuager of our wo.

Wine, the cure of every ill,
Proves the best physician still;
All its happy patients find
Health of body, ease of mind.
Sound in mind — in body sound,
While the rolling year goes round,
Till the grapes again appear,
Med’cine for another year.

ODE LI. — ON A MEDAL REPRESENTING VENUS.

What matchless skill! what art divine
On this bright silver medal shine!
On every side; above, below,
The floods of ocean seem to flow;
While softly gliding, calm and clear,
The undulating waves appear.
Some heav’n-taught genius, in its flight.
Has dared attempt the wondrous sight
Of Venus, love’s soft deity,
Emerging from the silver sea.
What bright and dazzling beauties rise
To charm the gazer’s ravish’d eyes!
And those the jealous waves conceal,
Sure none but impious hands reveal.
She, like some sea-flower, fresh and gay,
Shines glittering on her watery way.
Where’er the lovely goddess swims,
Obsequious billows kiss her limbs;
Now rise above, now sink below
Her rose-bud breasts and neck of snow.
As virgin lilies brighter show
Amid the dark-leaved violet’s glow,
So through the dark-blue wave is seen
The beauteous form of love’s dear queen.

See, gayly sporting at her side,
Young laughing Loves on dolphins ride,
And o'er the silvery surface glide.
The crooked natives of the deep,
With wanton curve and bounding leap,
Attend the goddess in her tram,
Where'er she smiling skims the main.

ODE LII. — ON THE VINTAGE.

Now ripen'd by the genial sun,
The grapes are glean'd; the sports begun.
See youths and smiling virgins bear
The purple produce of the year;
In vats the luscious burden lies,
And home the modest maiden hies:
For joyous youths alone remain,
With blood-red juice their limbs to stain,
To crush the cluster's bloomy pride,
And revel in the crimson tide.
Then loud they raise the vintage hymn,
When foaming o'er the vessel's brim
They view the joy-inspiring juice,
Which Bacchus sends them for their use.
Should hoary age inhale the draught,
His youth renew'd, at least in thought,
His tottering, trembling limbs advance,
And try the long-forgotten dance.
But when the youth its influence feels,
When wine prevails, and reason reels;
When wandering through the lonely grove
His heart beats high with hopes of love;
If there, beneath the secret shade,
He chance to spy some lovely maid,
Who, press'd by sleep's invading power,

Lies slumbering mid the leafy bower,
Herself the fairest, frailest flower, —
Before the startled maid can rouse
He breathes his hasty, burning vows,
And while his breast with Bacchus glows,
His lawless love he dares propose.
In vain the angry fair denies,
He better reads her telltale eyes;
And sure of victory ere —tis won,
His eager suit he urges on;
And when his soft persuasion fails,
Rude, boisterous Bacchus oft prevails:
And thus the wanton god decoys
The youth to wild intemperate joys.

ODE LIII. — ON THE ROSE.

Thou, my friend, shalt sweep the string,
I, in softest strains will sing,
While its fragrance round us flows,
The queen of flowers — the lovely rose.
Its perfumed breath ascends the skies
On every gentle gale that sighs:
Its sweets descend to earth again,
Alike beloved by gods and men.
When Spring awakes the slumbering flowers,
And music breathes amid the bowers,
Thee, darling gem, the Graces wear
Intwined amid their flowing hair;
And rosy wreaths alone may dress
The queen of love and loveliness.
In every song and fable known
The Muses claim thee as their own.

Thou bidd—st thy blooming sweetness blow
In thorny paths of pain and wo.
But, oh! what joy, when bless—d we rove

Through rosy bowers, and dream of love;
While bliss on every breeze is borne,
To pluck the rose without the thorn;
With gentlest touch its leaves to press,
And raise it to our soft caress!
Oh! thou art still the poet's theme,
And thee a welcome guest we deem,
To grace our feasts and deck our hair,
When Bacchus bids us banish care.
— Nature does thy beauties prize,
She steals thy tints to paint the skies;
For rosy-finger'd is the morn
With which the crimson veil is drawn.
The lovely nymphs we always deck
With rosy arms and rosy neck,
And roseate tints are ever seen
To bloom the cheeks of beauty's queen.
Its power to sooth the pangs of pain
Physicians try, nor try in vain;
And — when life and hope are fled
Its deathless scent embalms the dead:
For, though its withering charms decay,
And, one by one, all fade away,
Its grateful smell the rose retains,
And redolent of youth remains.
But, lyrist, let it next be sung
From whence this precious treasure sprung —
When first from ocean's dewy spray
Fair Venus rose to upper day;
When, fearful to the powers above,
The armed Pallas sprung from Jove;
—Twas then they say the jealous earth
First gave the lovely stranger birth.
A drop of pure nectareous dew

From heaven the bless'd immortals threw;
A while it trembled on the thorn,
And then the lovely rose was born.
To Bacchus they the flower assign,
And roses still his brows intwine.

ODE LIV. — ON HIMSELF.

While I view the youthful throng,
Fancy whispers I am young!
To the merry dance I fly,
Who so gay, so brisk as I?
Haste, Cybele, bring me flowers,
Bring sweet roses from the bowers;
Quick a graceful garland twine,
Youthful vigour still is mine.
Hateful, hoary age, away!
Let me sport with striplings gay;
Bring the bright autumnal bowl —
Age can ne'er subdue the soul.
Still I raise the cheerful strain,
Still the brimming bowl I drain;
Still with native humour gay,
Sport the happy hours away!

ODE LV. — THE LOVER'S MARK.

The courser bears a brand of fire,
To mark his owner, or his sire;
The turban, twisted round his brows,
The fiery foreign Parthian shows;
And I by instinct sure can tell
The lover's mark — I know it well:
For love in vain concealment tries,
The soul peeps through the telltale eyes.

ODE LVI. — ON HIS OLD AGE.

Alas! my youth, my joys have fled,
The snows of age have bleach'd my head.
Tedious, toothless, trembling age,
Must now alone my thoughts engage!
Adieu, ye joys which once I knew —
To life, to love, to all, adieu!
Henceforth, unhappy! doom'd to know
Tormenting fears of future wo!
Oh! how my soul with horror shrinks
When'er my startled fancy thinks
Of Pluto's dark and dreary cave,
The chill, the cheerless, gaping grave!
When death's cold hand has closed these eyes
And stifled life's last struggling sighs,
In darkness and in dust must I,
Alas! for ever — ever lie!

ODE LVII. — THAT MODERATION ENHANCES ENJOYMENT.

Haste! haste thee, boy, and bring the bowl,
To quench this fever of the soul;
The copious stream with skill combine,
Add ten parts water, five of wine;
The cooling draught will thirst assuage,
Nor in the breast too fiercely rage.
Oh cease, my friends, for shame, give o'er
These clamorous shouts, this deaf'ning roar:
This Scythian scene all peace destroys;
Turns joy to madness, mirth to noise.
Let cheerful temperance rule the soul,
The best ingredient in the bowl.

ODE LVIII. — LOVE IN THE HEART.

As once, amid the rosy bowers,
I wove a crown of fairest flowers,
Love, little urchin, lurking sly
Beneath the leaves I chanced to spy;
Around his wings the wreath I twine,
And plunge him in a cup of wine:
Then love, in each delicious draught,
I from the foaming goblet quaff'd.
Oh! still he moves his fluttering wings,
Still to my heart strange transport brings.

ODE LIX. — ON HIMSELF.

Methought, in sleep's delightful trance,
I saw Anacreon advance;
The tuneful Teian, skill'd to sing
The lays of love on warbling string.
I hasten'd to his kind embrace,
And kiss'd his sweetly smiling face.
Though somewhat old, he seemed to wage
Successful war with spiteful age:
For love still beam'd in each bright eye,
And from his lips there seem'd to fly
Sweet gales of rich and rosy wine,
Which shed a fragrance quite divine.
His slow and staggering steps were stay'd
By laughing Cupid's kindly aid.
The garland that entwined his hair
The bard unbound and bade me wear.
Anacreon's burning soul it breathed,
And I with it my brows enwreathed.
Ever since my heart is doom'd to prove
The pleasing pains of lasting love.

ODE LX. — ON THE SPRING.

How sweet through sunny meads to stray,
With Flora's rich profusion gay,
While Zephyr breathes its softest sighs,
And mingled perfumes round us rise!
How sweet beneath the secret shade,
By the vine's broad foliage made,
With some loved fair to pass the day,
And talk th' unheeded hours away!