



Coradella Collegiate Bookshelf Editions.

Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience. William Blake.



Purchase the entire
Coradella Collegiate
Bookshelf on CD at
<http://collegebookshelf.net>

Open

Contents



About the author

William Blake (November 28, 1757–August 12, 1827) was an English poet, mystic, painter and printmaker, or "Author & Printer," as he signed many of his books.



Blake was born at 28 Broad Street, Golden Square, London, England into a middle-class family. His artistic talent was noticed and encouraged from an early age. At ten years old, he began engraving copies of drawings of Greek antiquities, a practice that was then preferred to real-life drawing. Four years later he became apprenticed to an engraver, Henry Basire. After two years Basire sent him to copy art from the Gothic churches in London. At the age of twenty-one Blake finished his apprenticeship and set up as a professional engraver.

In 1779 he became a student at the Royal Academy, where he rebelled against what he regarded as the unfinished style of fashionable painters such as Rubens. He preferred the Classical exactness of Michelangelo and Raphael.

In 1782 Blake met John Flaxman, who was to become his patron. In the same year he married a poor illiterate girl named Catherine Boucher, who was five years his junior. Catherine could neither read nor write and even signed her wedding contract with an X. Blake taught her reading and writing and even trained her as an engraver. At that time, George Cumberland, one of the founders of the National Gallery, became an admirer of Blake's work.

Blake's first collection of poems, *Poetical Sketches*, was published circa 1783. In 1788, at the age of thirty-one, Blake began to experiment with "relief etching", which was the method used to produce most of his books of poems. Blake claimed the method was revealed to him in a vision of his dead brother, Robert. The process is also referred to as "illuminated printing," and final products as "illuminated books" or "prints." Illuminated printing involved writing the text of the poems on copper plates with pens and brushes, using an acid-resistant medium. Illustrations could appear alongside words in the manner of earlier illuminated manuscripts. He then etched the plates in acid in order to dissolve away the untreated copper and leave the design standing. The pages printed from these plates then had to be hand-colored in water colors and stitched together to make up a volume. Blake used illuminated printing for four of his works: the *Songs of Innocence and Experience*, *The Book of Thel*, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, and *Jerusalem*. Each of his illuminated books was thus a unique work of art and a radical break with not only traditional book printing but the traditional means of presenting poetic and philosophical discourse. Blake seems to have believed, or rather hoped, that self-published books could liberate the artist and author from the tyranny of censorship by Church and State but its time-consuming nature meant that his most personal and prophetic works reached a minute audience in his lifetime.

[Read more about William Blake at Wikipedia.](#)



SONGS OF EXPERIENCE

Contents

SONGS OF INNOCENCE

Introduction
The Shepherd
The Echoing Green
The Lamb
The Little Black Boy
The Blossom
The Chimney-Sweeper
The Little Boy Lost
The Little Boy Pound
Laughing Song
A Cradle Song
The Divine Image
Holy Thursday
Night
Spring
Nurse's Song
Infant Joy
A Dream
On Another's Sorrow

Introduction
Earth's Answer
The Clod and the Pebble
Holy Thursday
The Little Girl Lost
The Little Girl Found
The Chimney-Sweeper
Nurse's Song
The Sick Rose
The Fly
The Angel
The Tiger
My Pretty Rose-Tree
Ah, Sunflower
The Lily
The Garden of Love
The Little Vagabond
London
The Human Abstract
Infant Sorrow
A Poison Tree
A Little Boy Lost
A Little Girl Lost
A Divine Image
A Cradle Song
The Schoolboy
To Tirzah
The Voice of the Ancient Bard

Click on a poem to jump to the page in the file.

Note:

The best way to read this ebook is in Full Screen mode: click View, Full Screen to set Adobe Acrobat to Full Screen View. This mode allows you to use Page Down to go to the next page, and affords the best reading view. Press Escape to exit the Full Screen View.



Songs of Innocence and Songs of Experience

by William Blake

NOTICE

Copyright © 2004 thewritdirection.net
Please note that although the text of this ebook is in the
public domain, this pdf edition is a copyrighted
publication.

FOR COMPLETE DETAILS, SEE
COLLEGEBOOKSHELF.NET/COPYRIGHTS

Songs of Innocence.

Introduction.

Piping down the valleys wild,
Piping songs of pleasant glee,
On a cloud I saw a child,
And he laughing said to me:

‘Pipe a song about a Lamb!’
So I piped with merry cheer.
‘Piper, pipe that song again.’
So I piped: he wept to hear.

‘Drop thy pipe, thy happy pipe;
Sing thy songs of happy cheer!’
So I sung the same again,
While he wept with joy to hear.

‘Piper, sit thee down and write

In a book, that all may read.
 So he vanished from my sight;
 And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen,
 And I stained the water clear,
 And I wrote my happy songs
 Every child may joy to hear.

The Shepherd.

How sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot!
 From the morn to the evening he strays;
 He shall follow his sheep all the day,
 And his tongue shall be filled with praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,
 And he hears the ewes' tender reply;
 He is watchful while they are in peace,
 For they know when their shepherd is nigh.



The Echoing Green.

The sun does arise,
 And make happy the skies;
 The merry bells ring
 To welcome the Spring;
 The skylark and thrush,
 The birds of the bush,
 Sing louder around
 To the bells' cheerful sound;
 While our sports shall be seen
 On the echoing green.

Old John, with white hair,
 Does laugh away care,
 Sitting under the oak,
 Among the old folk.
 They laugh at our play,
 And soon they all say,
 'Such, such were the joys
 When we all—girls and boys -
 In our youth-time were seen
 On the echoing green.'

Till the little ones, weary,
 No more can be merry:

The sun does descend,
 And our sports have an end.
 Round the laps of their mothers
 Many sisters and brothers,
 Like birds in their nest,
 Are ready for rest,
 And sport no more seen
 On the darkening green.

The Lamb.

Little lamb, who made thee?
 Does thou know who made thee,
 Gave thee life, and bid thee feed
 By the stream and o'er the mead;
 Gave thee clothing of delight,
 Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
 Gave thee such a tender voice,
 Making all the vales rejoice?
 Little lamb, who made thee?
 Does thou know who made thee?

Little lamb, I'll tell thee;
 Little lamb, I'll tell thee:



He is called by thy name,
 For He calls Himself a Lamb.
 He is meek, and He is mild,
 He became a little child.
 I a child, and thou a lamb,
 We are called by His name.
 Little lamb, God bless thee!
 Little lamb, God bless thee!

The Little Black Boy.

My mother bore me in the southern wild,
 And I am black, but O my soul is white!
 White as an angel is the English child,
 But I am black, as if bereaved of light.

My mother taught me underneath a tree,
 And, sitting down before the heat of day,
 She took me on her lap and kissed me,
 And, pointing to the East, began to say:

'Look on the rising sun: there God does live,
 And gives His light, and gives His heat away,
 And flowers and trees and beasts and men receive

Comfort in morning, joy in the noonday.

'And we are put on earth a little space,
That we may learn to bear the beams of love;
And these black bodies and this sunburnt face
Are but a cloud, and like a shady grove.

'For, when our souls have learned the heat to bear,
The cloud will vanish, we shall hear His voice,
Saying, "Come out from the grove, my love and care,
And round my golden tent like lambs rejoice."

Thus did my mother say, and kissed me,
And thus I say to little English boy.
When I from black, and he from white cloud free,
And round the tent of God like lambs we joy,

I'll shade him from the heat till he can bear
To lean in joy upon our Father's knee;
And then I'll stand and stroke his silver hair,
And be like him, and he will then love me.



The Blossom.

Merry, merry sparrow!
Under leaves so green
A happy blossom
Sees you, swift as arrow,
Seek your cradle narrow,
Near my bosom.
Pretty, pretty robin!
Under leaves so green
A happy blossom
Hears you sobbing, sobbing,
Pretty, pretty robin,
Near my bosom.

The Chimney-Sweeper.

When my mother died I was very young,
And my father sold me while yet my tongue
Could scarcely cry 'Weep! weep! weep! weep!'
So your chimneys I sweep, and in soot I sleep.

There's little Tom Dacre, who cried when his head,
That curled like a lamb's back, was shaved; so I said,

'Hush, Tom! never mind it, for, when your head's bare,
You know that the soot cannot spoil your white hair.'

And so he was quiet, and that very night,
As Tom was a-sleeping, he had such a sight! -
That thousands of sweepers, Dick, Joe, Ned, and Jack,
Were all of them locked up in coffins of black.

And by came an angel, who had a bright key,
And he opened the coffins, and set them all free;
Then down a green plain, leaping, laughing, they run
And wash in a river, and shine in the sun.

Then naked and white, all their bags left behind,
They rise upon clouds, and sport in the wind:
And the angel told Tom, if he'd be a good boy,
He'd have God for his father, and never want joy.

And so Tom awoke, and we rose in the dark,
And got with our bags and our brushes to work.
Though the morning was cold, Tom was happy and warm:
So, if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.



The Little Boy Lost.

'Father, father, where are you going?
O do not walk so fast!
Speak, father, speak to your little boy,
Or else I shall be lost.'

The night was dark, no father was there,
The child was wet with dew;
The mire was deep, and the child did weep,
And away the vapour flew.

The Little Boy Found.

The little boy lost in the lonely fen,
Led by the wandering light,
Began to cry, but God, ever nigh,
Appeared like his father, in white.

He kissed the child, and by the hand led,
And to his mother brought,
Who in sorrow pale, through the lonely dale,
Her little boy weeping sought.

Laughing Song.

When the green woods laugh with the voice of joy,
 And the dimpling stream runs laughing by;
 When the air does laugh with our merry wit,
 And the green hill laughs with the noise of it;

When the meadows laugh with lively green,
 And the grasshopper laughs in the merry scene;
 When Mary and Susan and Emily
 With their sweet round mouths sing 'Ha ha he!'

When the painted birds laugh in the shade,
 Where our table with cherries and nuts is spread:
 Come live, and be merry, and join with me,
 To sing the sweet chorus of 'Ha ha he!'

A Cradle Song.

Sweet dreams, form a shade
 O'er my lovely infant's head!
 Sweet dreams of pleasant streams
 By happy, silent, moony beams!



Sweet Sleep, with soft down
 Weave thy brows an infant crown!
 Sweet Sleep, angel mild,
 Hover o'er my happy child!

Sweet smiles, in the night
 Hover over my delight!
 Sweet smiles, mother's smiles,
 All the livelong night beguiles.

Sweet moans, dovelike sighs,
 Chase not slumber from thy eyes!
 Sweet moans, sweeter smiles,
 All the dovelike moans beguiles.

Sleep, sleep, happy child!
 All creation slept and smiled.
 Sleep, sleep, happy sleep,
 While o'er thee thy mother weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
 Holy image I can trace;
 Sweet babe, once like thee
 Thy Maker lay, and wept for me:

Wept for me, for thee, for all,

When He was an infant small.
Thou His image ever see,
Heavenly face that smiles on thee!

Smiles on thee, on me, on all,
Who became an infant small;
Infant smiles are His own smiles;
Heaven and earth to peace beguiles.

The Divine Image.

To Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
All pray in their distress,
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
Is God our Father dear;
And Mercy, Pity, Peace, and Love,
Is man, His child and care.

For Mercy has a human heart;
Pity, a human face;
And Love, the human form divine:



And Peace the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine:
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,
In heathen, Turk, or Jew.
Where Mercy, Love, and Pity dwell,
There God is dwelling too.

Holy Thursday.

'Twas on a holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
The children walking two and two, in red, and blue, and
green:
Grey-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white
as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters
flow.

O what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of Lon-
don town!

Seated in companies they sit, with radiance all their own.
 The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of
 lambs,
 Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent
 hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of
 song,
 Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven
 among:
 Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the
 poor.
 Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

Night.

The sun descending in the West,
 The evening star does shine;
 The birds are silent in their nest,
 And I must seek for mine.
 The moon, like a flower
 In heaven's high bower,
 With silent delight,
 Sits and smiles on the night.



Farewell, green fields and happy groves,
 Where flocks have took delight,
 Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
 The feet of angels bright;
 Unseen, they pour blessing,
 And joy without ceasing,
 On each bud and blossom,
 And each sleeping bosom.

They look in every thoughtless nest
 Where birds are covered warm;
 They visit caves of every beast,
 To keep them all from harm:
 If they see any weeping
 That should have been sleeping,
 They pour sleep on their head,
 And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,
 They pitying stand and weep;
 Seeking to drive their thirst away,
 And keep them from the sheep.
 But, if they rush dreadful,
 The angels, most heedful,
 Receive each mild spirit,

New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
 Shall flow with tears of gold:
 And pitying the tender cries,
 And walking round the fold:
 Saying: 'Wrath by His meekness,
 And, by His health, sickness,
 Is driven away
 From our immortal day.

'And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
 I can lie down and sleep,
 Or think on Him who bore thy name,
 Graze after thee, and weep.
 For, washed in life's river,
 My bright mane for ever
 Shall shine like the gold,
 As I guard o'er the fold.'

Spring.

Sound the flute!
 Now it's mute!
 Birds delight,



Day and night,
 Nightingale,
 In the dale,
 Lark in sky, -
 Merrily,
 Merrily, merrily to welcome in the year.

Little boy,
 Full of joy;
 Little girl,
 Sweet and small;
 Cock does crow,
 So do you;
 Merry voice,
 Infant noise;
 Merrily, merrily to welcome in the year.

Little lamb,
 Here I am;
 Come and lick
 My white neck;
 Let me pull
 Your soft wool;
 Let me kiss
 Your soft face;
 Merrily, merrily we welcome in the year.

Nurse's Song.

When voices of children are heard on the green,
 And laughing is heard on the hill,
 My heart is at rest within my breast,
 And everything else is still.
 'Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
 And the dews of night arise;
 Come, come, leave off play, and let us away,
 Till the morning appears in the skies.'

'No, no, let us play, for it is yet day,
 And we cannot go to sleep;
 Besides, in the sky the little birds fly,
 And the hills are all covered with sheep.'
 'Well, well, go and play till the light fades away,
 And then go home to bed.'
 The little ones leaped, and shouted, and laughed,
 And all the hills echoed.

Infant Joy.

'I have no name;
 I am but two days old.'



What shall I call thee?
 'I happy am,
 Joy is my name.'
 Sweet joy befall thee!

Pretty joy!
 Sweet joy, but two days old.
 Sweet joy I call thee:
 Thou dost smile,
 I sing the while;
 Sweet joy befall thee!

A Dream.

Once a dream did weave a shade
 O'er my angel-guarded bed,
 That an emmet lost its way
 Where on grass methought I lay.

Troubled, wildered, and forlorn,
 Dark, benighted, travel-worn,
 Over many a tangled spray,
 All heart-broke, I heard her say:

'O my children! do they cry,
Do they hear their father sigh?
Now they look abroad to see,
Now return and weep for me.'

Pitying, I dropped a tear:
But I saw a glow-worm near,
Who replied, 'What wailing wight
Calls the watchman of the night?'

'I am set to light the ground,
While the beetle goes his round:
Follow now the beetle's hum;
Little wanderer, hie thee home!'

On Another's Sorrow.

Can I see another's woe,
And not be in sorrow too?
Can I see another's grief,
And not seek for kind relief?

Can I see a falling tear,
And not feel my sorrow's share?



Can a father see his child
Weep, nor be with sorrow filled?

Can a mother sit and hear
An infant groan, an infant fear?
No, no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

And can He who smiles on all
Hear the wren with sorrows small,
Hear the small bird's grief and care,
Hear the woes that infants bear -

And not sit beside the nest,
Pouring pity in their breast,
And not sit the cradle near,
Weeping tear on infant's tear?

And not sit both night and day,
Wiping all our tears away?
O no! never can it be!
Never, never can it be!

He doth give His joy to all:
He becomes an infant small,
He becomes a man of woe,



He doth feel the sorrow too.

Think not thou canst sigh a sigh,
 And thy Maker is not by:
 Think not thou canst weep a tear,
 And thy Maker is not near.

O He gives to us His joy,
 That our grief He may destroy:
 Till our grief is fled and gone
 He doth sit by us and moan.

Songs of Experience.

Introduction.

Hear the voice of the Bard,
 Who present, past, and future, sees;
 Whose ears have heard
 The Holy Word
 That walked among the ancient trees;

Calling the lapsed soul,
 And weeping in the evening dew;
 That might control
 The starry pole,
 And fallen, fallen light renew!

'O Earth, O Earth, return!
 Arise from out the dewy grass!
 Night is worn,
 And the morn
 Rises from the slumbrous mass.

'Turn away no more;
 Why wilt thou turn away?
 The starry floor,
 The watery shore,
 Is given thee till the break of day.'

Earth's Answer.

Earth raised up her head
 From the darkness dread and drear,
 Her light fled,
 Stony, dread,
 And her locks covered with grey despair.

'Prisoned on watery shore,
 Starry jealousy does keep my den
 Cold and hoar;



Weeping o'er,
 I hear the father of the ancient men.

'Selfish father of men!
 Cruel, jealous, selfish fear!
 Can delight,
 Chained in night,
 The virgins of youth and morning bear.

'Does spring hide its joy,
 When buds and blossoms grow?
 Does the sower
 Sow by night,
 Or the ploughman in darkness plough?

'Break this heavy chain,
 That does freeze my bones around!
 Selfish, vain,
 Eternal bane,
 That free love with bondage bound.'

The Clod and the Pebble.

'Love seeketh not itself to please,
Nor for itself hath any care,
But for another gives its ease,
And builds a heaven in hell's despair.'

So sung a little clod of clay,
Trodden with the cattle's feet,
But a pebble of the brook
Warbled out these metres meet:

'Love seeketh only Self to please,
To bind another to its delight,
Joys in another's loss of ease,
And builds a hell in heaven's despite.'

Holy Thursday.

Is this a holy thing to see
In a rich and fruitful land, -
Babes reduced to misery,
Fed with cold and usurous hand?



Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty!

And their sun does never shine,
And their fields are bleak and bare,
And their ways are filled with thorns,
It is eternal winter there.

For where'er the sun does shine,
And where'er the rain does fall,
Babe can never hunger there,
Nor poverty the mind appal.

The Little Girl Lost.

In futurity
I prophesy
That the earth from sleep
(Grave the sentence deep)

Shall arise, and seek
For her Maker meek;

And the desert wild
Become a garden mild.

In the southern clime,
Where the summer's prime
Never fades away,
Lovely Lyca lay.

Seven summers old
Lovely Lyca told.
She had wandered long,
Hearing wild birds' song.

'Sweet sleep, come to me,
Underneath this tree;
Do father, mother, weep?
Where can Lyca sleep?

'Lost in desert wild
Is your little child.
How can Lyca sleep
If her mother weep?

'If her heart does ache,
Then let Lyca wake;
If my mother sleep,



Lyca shall not weep.

'Frowning, frowning night,
O'er this desert bright
Let thy moon arise,
While I close my eyes.'

Sleeping Lyca lay,
While the beasts of prey,
Come from caverns deep,
Viewed the maid asleep.

The kingly lion stood,
And the virgin viewed:
Then he gambolled round
O'er the hallowed ground.

Leopards, tigers, play
Round her as she lay;
While the lion old
Bowed his mane of gold,

And her bosom lick,
And upon her neck,
From his eyes of flame,
Ruby tears there came;

While the lioness
Loosed her slender dress,
And naked they conveyed
To caves the sleeping maid.

The Little Girl Found.

All the night in woe
Lyca's parents go
Over valleys deep,
While the deserts weep.

Tired and woe-begone,
Hoarse with making moan,
Arm in arm, seven days
They traced the desert ways.

Seven nights they sleep
Among shadows deep,
And dream they see their child
Starved in desert wild.

Pale through pathless ways



The fancied image strays,
Famished, weeping, weak,
With hollow piteous shriek.

Rising from unrest,
The trembling woman pressed
With feet of weary woe;
She could no further go.

In his arms he bore
Her, armed with sorrow sore;
Till before their way
A couching lion lay.

Turning back was vain:
Soon his heavy mane
Bore them to the ground,
Then he stalked around,

Smelling to his prey;
But their fears allay
When he licks their hands,
And silent by them stands.

They look upon his eyes,
Filled with deep surprise;

And wondering behold
A spirit armed in gold.

On his head a crown,
On his shoulders down
Flowed his golden hair.
Gone was all their care.

'Follow me,' he said;
'Weep not for the maid;
In my palace deep,
Lyca lies asleep.'

Then they followed
Where the vision led,
And saw their sleeping child
Among tigers wild.

To this day they dwell
In a lonely dell,
Nor fear the wolfish howl
Nor the lion's growl.



The Chimney-Sweeper.

A little black thing among the snow,
Crying! 'weep! weep!' in notes of woe!
'Where are thy father and mother? Say!' -
'They are both gone up to the church to pray.

'Because I was happy upon the heath,
And smiled among the winter's snow,
They clothed me in the clothes of death,
And taught me to sing the notes of woe.

'And because I am happy and dance and sing,
They think they have done me no injury,
And are gone to praise God and His priest and king,
Who made up a heaven of our misery.'

Nurse's Song.

When the voices of children are heard on the green,
And whisperings are in the dale,
The days of my youth rise fresh in my mind,
My face turns green and pale.

Then come home, my children, the sun is gone down,
 And the dews of night arise;
 Your spring and your day are wasted in play,
 And your winter and night in disguise.

The Sick Rose.

O rose, thou art sick!
 The invisible worm,
 That flies in the night,
 In the howling storm,

 Has found out thy bed
 Of crimson joy,
 And his dark secret love
 Does thy life destroy.

The Fly.

Little Fly,
 Thy summer's play
 My thoughtless hand



Has brushed away.

Am not I
 A fly like thee?
 Or art not thou
 A man like me?

For I dance,
 And drink, and sing,
 Till some blind hand
 Shall brush my wing.

If thought is life
 And strength and breath,
 And the want
 Of thought is death;

Then am I
 A happy fly.
 If I live,
 Or if I die.

The Angel.

I dreamt a dream! What can it mean?
 And that I was a maiden Queen
 Guarded by an Angel mild:
 Witless woe was ne'er beguiled!

And I wept both night and day,
 And he wiped my tears away;
 And I wept both day and night,
 And hid from him my heart's delight.

So he took his wings, and fled;
 Then the morn blushed rosy red.
 I dried my tears, and armed my fears
 With ten thousand shields and spears.

Soon my Angel came again;
 I was armed, he came in vain;
 For the time of youth was fled,
 And grey hairs were on my head.

*The Tiger.*

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
 In the forests of the night,
 What immortal hand or eye
 Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
 Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
 On what wings dare he aspire?
 What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder and what art
 Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
 And, when thy heart began to beat,
 What dread hand and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
 In what furnace was thy brain?
 What the anvil? what dread grasp
 Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
 And watered heaven with their tears,
 Did He smile His work to see?
 Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tiger, tiger, burning bright
 In the forests of the night,
 What immortal hand or eye
 Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

My Pretty Rose Tree.

A flower was offered to me,
 Such a flower as May never bore;
 But I said, 'T've a pretty rose tree,'
 And I passed the sweet flower o'er.

Then I went to my pretty rose tree,
 To tend her by day and by night;
 But my rose turned away with jealousy,
 And her thorns were my only delight.

Ah, Sunflower.

Ah, sunflower, weary of time,
 Who countest the steps of the sun;



Seeking after that sweet golden clime
 Where the traveller's journey is done;

Where the Youth pined away with desire,
 And the pale virgin shrouded in snow,
 Arise from their graves, and aspire
 Where my Sunflower wishes to go!

The Lily.

The modest Rose puts forth a thorn,
 The humble sheep a threat'ning horn:
 While the Lily white shall in love delight,
 Nor a thorn nor a threat stain her beauty bright.

The Garden of Love.

I went to the Garden of Love,
 And saw what I never had seen;
 A Chapel was built in the midst,
 Where I used to play on the green.

And the gates of this Chapel were shut,
 And 'Thou shalt not' writ over the door;
 So I turned to the Garden of Love
 That so many sweet flowers bore.

And I saw it was filled with graves,
 And tombstones where flowers should be;
 And priests in black gowns were walking their rounds,
 And binding with briars my joys and desires.

The Little Vagabond.

Dear mother, dear mother, the Church is cold;
 But the Alehouse is healthy, and pleasant, and warm.
 Besides, I can tell where I am used well;
 Such usage in heaven will never do well.

But, if at the Church they would give us some ale,
 And a pleasant fire our souls to regale,
 We'd sing and we'd pray all the livelong day,
 Nor ever once wish from the Church to stray.

Then the Parson might preach, and drink, and sing,
 And we'd be as happy as birds in the spring;



And modest Dame Lurch, who is always at church,
 Would not have bandy children, nor fasting, nor birch.

And God, like a father, rejoicing to see
 His children as pleasant and happy as He,
 Would have no more quarrel with the Devil or the barrel,
 But kiss him, and give him both drink and apparel.

London.

I wander through each chartered street,
 Near where the chartered Thames does flow,
 A mark in every face I meet,
 Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every man,
 In every infant's cry of fear,
 In every voice, in every ban,
 The mind-forged manacles I hear:

How the chimney-sweeper's cry
 Every blackening church appals,
 And the hapless soldier's sigh
 Runs in blood down palace-walls.

But most, through midnight streets I hear
 How the youthful harlot's curse
 Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
 And blights with plagues the marriage hearse.

The Human Abstract.

Pity would be no more
 If we did not make somebody poor,
 And Mercy no more could be
 If all were as happy as we.

And mutual fear brings Peace,
 Till the selfish loves increase;
 Then Cruelty knits a snare,
 And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears,
 And waters the ground with tears;
 Then Humility takes its root
 Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
 Of Mystery over his head,



And the caterpillar and fly
 Feed on the Mystery.

And it bears the fruit of Deceit,
 Ruddy and sweet to eat,
 And the raven his nest has made
 In its thickest shade.

The gods of the earth and sea
 Sought through nature to find this tree,
 But their search was all in vain:
 There grows one in the human Brain.

Infant Sorrow.

My mother groaned, my father wept:
 Into the dangerous world I leapt,
 Helpless, naked, piping loud,
 Like a fiend hid in a cloud.

Struggling in my father's hands,
 Striving against my swaddling bands,
 Bound and weary, I thought best
 To sulk upon my mother's breast.

*A Poison Tree.*

I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears
Night and morning with my tears,
And I sunned it with smiles
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,
Till it bore an apple bright,
And my foe beheld it shine,
And he knew that it was mine, -

And into my garden stole
When the night had veiled the pole;
In the morning, glad, I see
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

A Little Boy Lost.

'Nought loves another as itself,
Nor venerates another so,
Nor is it possible to thought
A greater than itself to know.

'And, father, how can I love you
Or any of my brothers more?
I love you like the little bird
That picks up crumbs around the door.'

The Priest sat by and heard the child;
In trembling zeal he seized his hair,
He led him by his little coat,
And all admired his priestly care.

And standing on the altar high,
'Lo, what a fiend is here!' said he:
'One who sets reason up for judge
Of our most holy mystery.'

The weeping child could not be heard,
The weeping parents wept in vain:
They stripped him to his little shirt,

And bound him in an iron chain,

And burned him in a holy place
Where many had been burned before;
The weeping parents wept in vain.
Are such things done on Albion's shore?

A Little Girl Lost.

Children of the future age,
Reading this indignant page,
Know that in a former time
Love, sweet love, was thought a crime.

In the age of gold,
Free from winter's cold,
Youth and maiden bright,
To the holy light,
Naked in the sunny beams delight.

Once a youthful pair,
Filled with softest care,
Met in garden bright
Where the holy light



Had just removed the curtains of the night.

There, in rising day,
On the grass they play;
Parents were afar,
Strangers came not near,
And the maiden soon forgot her fear.

Tired with kisses sweet,
They agree to meet
When the silent sleep
Waves o'er heaven's deep,
And the weary tired wanderers weep.

To her father white
Came the maiden bright;
But his loving look,
Like the holy book,
All her tender limbs with terror shook.

On a, pale and weak,
To thy father speak!
O the trembling fear!
O the dismal care
That shakes the blossoms of my hoary hair!

A Divine Image.

Cruelty has a human heart,
 And Jealousy a human face;
 Terror the human form divine,
 And Secrecy the human dress.

The human dress is forged iron,
 The human form a fiery forge,
 The human face a furnace sealed,
 The human heart its hungry gorge.

A Cradle Song.

Sleep, sleep, beauty bright,
 Dreaming in the joys of night;
 Sleep, sleep; in thy sleep
 Little sorrows sit and weep.

Sweet babe, in thy face
 Soft desires I can trace,
 Secret joys and secret smiles,
 Little pretty infant wiles.



As thy softest limbs I feel,
 Smiles as of the morning steal
 O'er thy cheek, and o'er thy breast
 Where thy little heart doth rest.

O the cunning wiles that creep
 In thy little heart asleep!
 When thy little heart doth wake,
 Then the dreadful light shall break.

The Schoolboy.

I love to rise in a summer morn,
 When the birds sing on every tree;
 The distant huntsman winds his horn,
 And the skylark sings with me:
 O what sweet company!

But to go to school in a summer morn, -
 O it drives all joy away!
 Under a cruel eye outworn,
 The little ones spend the day
 In sighing and dismay.



Ah then at times I drooping sit,
 And spend many an anxious hour;
 Nor in my book can I take delight,
 Nor sit in learning's bower,
 Worn through with the dreary shower.

How can the bird that is born for joy
 Sit in a cage and sing?
 How can a child, when fears annoy,
 But droop his tender wing,
 And forget his youthful spring!

O father and mother if buds are nipped,
 And blossoms blown away;
 And if the tender plants are stripped
 Of their joy in the springing day,
 By sorrow and care's dismay, -

How shall the summer arise in joy,
 Or the summer fruits appear?
 Or how shall we gather what griefs destroy,
 Or bless the mellowing year,
 When the blasts of winter appear?

To Tirzah.

Whate'er is born of mortal birth
 Must be consumed with the earth,
 To rise from generation free:
 Then what have I to do with thee?

The sexes sprung from shame and pride,
 Blowed in the morn, in evening died;
 But mercy changed death into sleep;
 The sexes rose to work and weep.

Thou, mother of my mortal part,
 With cruelty didst mould my heart,
 And with false self-deceiving tears
 Didst blind my nostrils, eyes, and ears,

Didst close my tongue in senseless clay,
 And me to mortal life betray.
 The death of Jesus set me free:
 Then what have I to do with thee?

*The Voice of the Ancient Bard.*

Youth of delight! come hither
And see the opening morn,
Image of Truth new-born.
Doubt is fled, and clouds of reason,
Dark disputes and artful teasing.
Folly is an endless maze;
Tangled roots perplex her ways;
How many have fallen there!
They stumble all night over bones of the dead;
And feel—they know not what but care;
And wish to lead others, when they should be led.









































































































































