



John Peace's marginalia to Wordsworth's
"Tintern Abbey"

[Marginal comments are indicated by page number when they are not immediately next to a line in the poem. Marginal comments are indicated by line number when they are immediately beside the corresponding line in the poem.]

He murmurs near the running brooks a music sweeter than their own. Vol. II. 167.
[marginalia p 201]¹

X This line omitted in 2nd. edition. (no other alterations) [marginalia to lines 19-20]

X So thought I when my foot stepped upon his threshold, and so have I found.
[marginalia to lines 63-65]

X He said to me at Rydal (in October 1838), "my favourite text is – 'giving thanks to God always for all things' [marginalia to line 133-135]

p. 210 [marginalia to line 149]

Finished as he came down Park Street, Bristol. (This he told me as we came down that street upon his next visit to Bristol in 1839.) [marginalia p 210]

¹ This is a line from Wordsworth's "A Poet's Epitaph," included in Volume II of *Poems* (1815).

*The murmurs near the evening brook
A music sweeter than their own.*

201 vol. II. 167.

LINES

WRITTEN A FEW MILES ABOVE

TINTERN ABBEY,

ON REVISITING THE BANKS OF THE WYE DURING

A TOUR,

July 13, 1798.



Five years have passed ; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters ! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a sweet inland murmur.*—Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
Which on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion ; and connect

* The river is not affected by the tides a few miles
above Tintern.

The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
 The day is come when I again repose
 Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
 These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
 Which, at this season, with their unripe fruits,
 Among the woods and copses lose themselves,
 Nor, with their green and simple hue, disturb
 The wild green landscape. Once again I see
 These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
 Of sportive wood run wild; these pastoral farms
 Green to the very door; and wreathes of smoke
 Sent up, in silence, from among the trees,
 And the low copses—coming from the trees
 With some uncertain notice, as might seem,
 Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
 Or of some hermit's cave, where by his fire
 The hermit sits alone.

Though absent long,
 These forms of beauty have not been to me,

*x This line omitted in 2nd edition.
 (no other alterations)*

As is a landscape to a blind man's eye :
 But oft, in lonely rooms, and mid the din
 Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
 In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
 Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart,
 And passing even into my purer mind
 With tranquil restoration :—feelings too
 Of unremembered pleasure ; such, perhaps,
 As may have had no trivial influence
 On that best portion of a good man's life ;
 His little, nameless, unremembered acts
 Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
 To them I may have owed another gift,
 Of aspect more sublime ; that blessed mood,
 In which the burthen of the mystery,
 In which the heavy and the weary weight
 Of all this unintelligible world
 Is lightened :—that serene and blessed mood,
 In which the affections gently lead us on,

Until, the breath of this corporeal frame,
 And even the motion of our human blood
 Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
 In body, and become a living soul :
 While with an eye made quiet by the power
 Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
 We see into the life of things.

If this

Be but a vain belief, yet, oh ! how oft,
 In darkness, and amid the many shapes
 Of joyless day-light ; when the fretful stir
 Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
 Have hung upon the beatings of my heart,
 How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee
 O sylvan Wye ! Thou wanderer through the woods
 How often has my spirit turned to thee !

And now, with gleams of half-extinguish'd thought

With many recognitions dim and faint,
 And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
 The picture of the mind revives again :
 While here I stand, not only with the sense
 Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
 That in this moment there is life and food
 For future years. And so I dare to hope
 Though changed, no doubt, from what I was, when
 first

I came among these hills ; when like a roe
 I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
 Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
 Wherever nature led ; more like a man
 Flying from something that he dreads, than one
 Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
 (The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
 And their glad animal movements all gone by,
 To me was all in all.—I cannot paint

** So thought I when my foot
 stepped upon his threshold.
 and so have I found.*

What then I was. The sounding cataract
 Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
 The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
 Their colours and their forms, were then to me
 An appetite: a feeling and a love,
 That had no need of a remoter charm,
 By thought supplied, or any interest
 Unborrowed from the eye. — That time is
 past,
 And all its aching joys are now no more,
 And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
 Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur: other gifts
 Have followed, for such loss, I would believe,
 Abundant recompence. For I have learned
 To look on nature, not as in the hour
 Of thoughtless youth, but hearing oftentimes
 The still, sad music of humanity,
 Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power

To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
 A presence that disturbs me with the joy
 Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
 Of something far more deeply interfused,
 Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
 And the round ocean, and the living air,
 And the blue sky, and in the mind of man,
 A motion and a spirit, that impels
 All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
 And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
 A lover of the meadows and the woods,
 And mountains; and of all that we behold
 From this green earth; of all the mighty world
 Of eye and ear, both what they half-create,*

* This line has a close resemblance to an admirable
 line of Young, the exact expression of which I cannot
 recollect.

And what perceive; well pleased to recognize
 In nature and the language of the sense,
 The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
 The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
 Of all my moral being.

Nor, perchance,
 If I were not thus taught, should I the more
 Suffer my genial spirits to decay:
 For thou art with me, here, upon the banks
 Of this fair river; thou, my dearest Friend,
 My dear, dear Friend, and in thy voice I catch
 The language of my former heart, and read
 My former pleasures in the shooting lights
 Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
 May I behold in thee what I was once,
 My dear, dear Sister! And this prayer I make,
 Knowing that Nature never did betray

The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
 Through all the years of this our life, to lead
 From joy to joy: for she can so inform
 The mind that is within us, so impress
 With quietness and beauty, and so feed
 With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
 Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
 Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
 The dreary intercourse of daily life,
 Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
 Our cheerful faith that all which we behold
 Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
 Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
 And let the misty mountain winds be free
 To blow against thee: and in after years,
 When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
 Into a sober pleasure, when thy mind
 Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
 Thy memory be as a dwelling-place

*He said to me at Rydal in October 1838,
 "My favorite text is - 'giving thanks to
 God always for all things'."*

For all sweet sounds and harmonies ; Oh ! then,
 If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
 Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
 Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
 And these my exhortations ! Nor, perchance,
 If I should be, where I no more can hear
 Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
 Of past existence, wilt thou then forget
 That on the banks of this delightful stream
 We stood together ; and that I, so long
 A worshipper of Nature, hither came,
 Unwearied in that service : rather say
 With warmer love, oh ! with far deeper zeal
 Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
 That after many wanderings, many years
 Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
 And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
 More dear, both for themselves, and for thy sake.

E N D.

*Finished as he came down Park
 Street, Bristol. (Mr. Keble told me as
 we came down that Street upon his next
 visit to Bristol in 1839.)*