

9
Gray's Elegy,
set to music

by
Thomas Billington,
Harpsichord & Singing Master.

Opera VIII.

Price 4^s.

London. Printed for the Author
and to be had at his house N^o 24, Charlotte Street Rathbone Place
and at all the Music Shops,
Where may be had his Quartettos, Trios, 3 Setts of Canzonetts & 6 Songs,
Likewise Boccherini's 6 Sonatas adapted for the Harpsichord or Piano Forte,
by the above Author.

Harbor



Billington

AN ELEGY

Written in a Country Church Yard.

1

THE Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea;
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his drony flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tow'r
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wand'ring near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree's shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,
The swallow twitt'ring from the straw-built shed,
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
Or busy housewife ply her evening care;
No children run to lisp their father's return,
Or climb his knees the enviy'd kifs to share.

Of the harvest to their sickle yield;
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke:
How jocund did they drive their team afield!
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile
The short and simple annals of the poor.

The boast of Heraldry, the Pomp of Pow'r,
And all that Beauty, all that Wealth e'er gave,
Await alike th'inevitable hour:
The paths of Glory lead but to the grave!

Nor you, ye Proud impute to These the fault,
If Mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
Where thro' the long drawn isle and fretted vault
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Can storied urn or animated bust
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flatt'ry sooth the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd
Or wak'd to extasy the living lyre.

But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
Rich with the spoils of Time, did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of their soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flow'r is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village Hampden that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood,
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

Th'applause of lisp'ning senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes;

Their lot forbad; nor circumscrib'd alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confin'd;
Forbad to wade thro' slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind;

The struggling pangs of conscious Truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous Shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learnt to stray,
Along the cool sequester'd vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

Yet ev'n these bones from insult to protect,
Some frail memorial still erected high,
With uncouth rhimes and shapeless sculpture deck'd
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

Their name, their years, spelt by th'unletter'd Muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply;
And many a holy text around the strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing, ling'ring look behind?

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of th'unhonour'd dead,
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate;

Haply some hoary headed swain may say, —
"Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn;

"There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
His listless length at noon tide would he stretch,
And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

"Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove;
Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

"One morn I miss'd him on th'accustom'd hill,
"Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree:
"Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
"Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he.

"The next, with dirges due in sad array,
"Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him borne:
"Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
"Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

HERE rests his head upon the lap of Earth,
A Youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown;
Fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth,
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own.

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere;
Heav'n did a recompence as largely send:
He gave to Mis'ry all he had, a tear,
He gain'd from Heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend.

No farther seek his merits to disclose,
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)
The bosom of his Father and his God.

Accomp^t.

Slow

The Curfew tolls the knell of parting day,

the lowing herd wind flow-ly o'er the lea;

the plowman homeward plods his wea-ry way, and

leaves the world to darknefs and to me. and leaves the world to

darknefs and to me.

Moderato

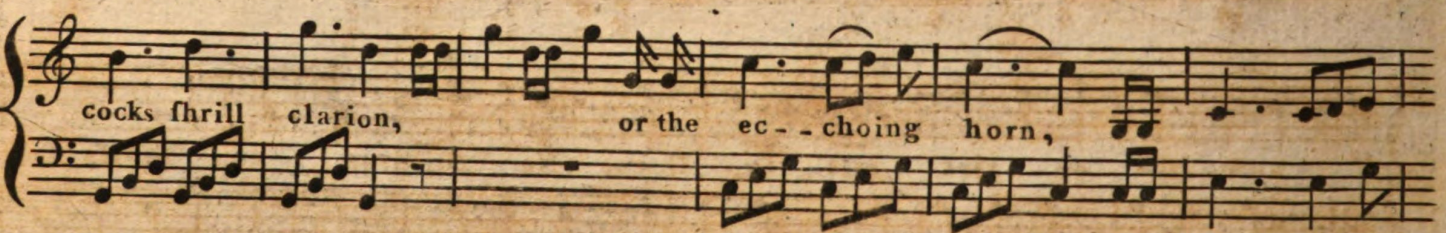
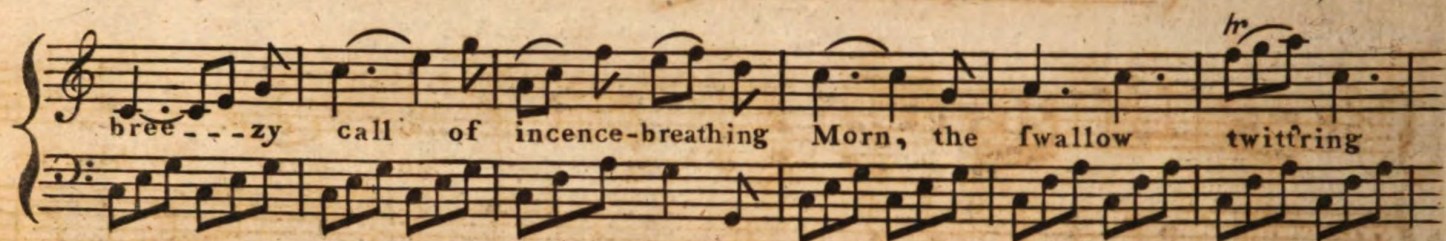
The musical score consists of five systems of staves. Each system has a treble and bass staff joined by a brace. The key signature is two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is 3/4. The tempo is marked 'Moderato'. The lyrics are written below the staves, with some words underlined. Fingerings are indicated by numbers 1-5 below the notes. Ornaments are marked with 'h' above notes. The score ends with a double bar line.

Now
fades the glimmering landscape on the fight, and all the
air a fo- - lemn still- - ness holds;
Save where the bee- - tle wheels his dromy flight, and drowsy tinklings
lull the dif- - tant folds.

2
Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
The moping owl does to the moon complain
Of such, as wandering near her secret bow'r,
Molest her ancient solitary reign.

3
Beneath those rugged elms, that yew trees shade,
Where heaves the turf in many a mould'ring heap,
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

Allegretto



Air by Haydn

Slow
Affettuoso

For them no more the blazing
hearth shall burn, or by - - fy house - - wife ply her ev'ning care; No
children run to lift their fire's re - - turn, or climb his
knees the en - - vied kifs to share. No children run to lift their
fire's re - - turn, or climb his knees the envied kifs to
share.

6 6 4 2 6 6 6
6 6 6 5 4 3 7 5 4 6 3 6 6 6 5 6 4 5 3 9 8 4 3
6 6 6 7 3 7 3 6 5 5 6 4 2
6 6 6 5 7 6 6 6 4 2 6 6 6
6 6 6 5 7 6 6 6 6 5 6 4 5 3

9 8 4 3

Allegro

Oft did the harvest to their fickle yield, their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has

broke: how jo-cund did they drive their team a-field! how bow'd the woods be-

-neath their sturdy stroke! Let not am-

-bi-tion mock their useful toil, their home-ly joys and def-ti-ny ob-

-scure; nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile the short and sim-ple

annals of the poor.

Air by Haydn

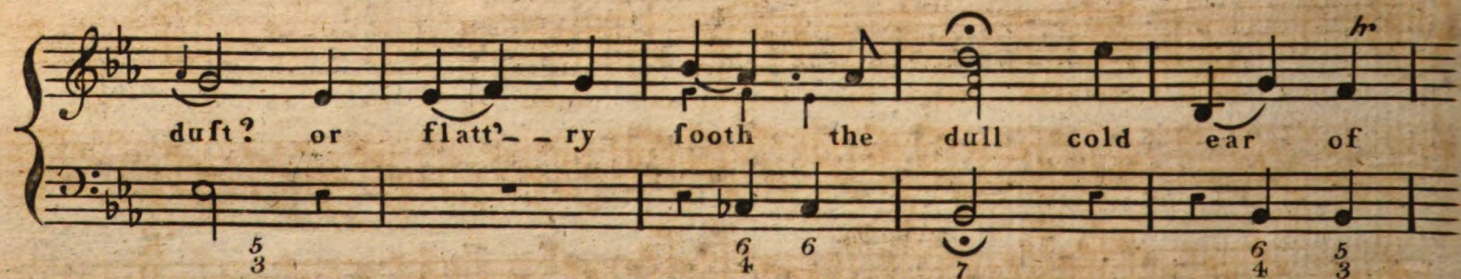
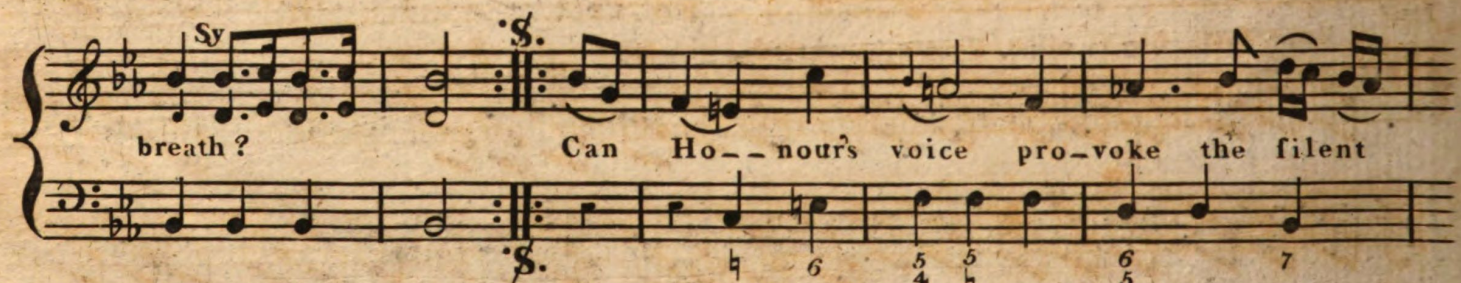
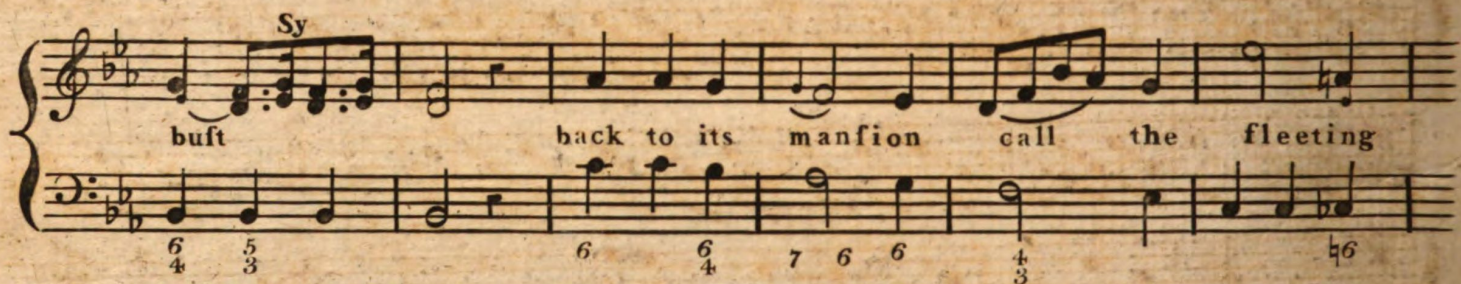
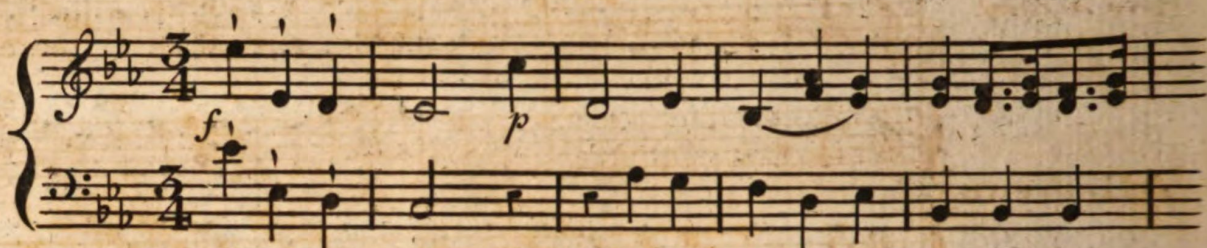
Andante

Affettuoso

The boast of heraldry, the pomp of pow'r, and all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
 await a - - like thin - e - vitable hour: the paths of glory lead but to the grave.

Nor you, ye proud, impute to these the fault, if mem'ry o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
 where thro' the long drawn Ifle and fretted vault the pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

Largo
e
Cantabile



Harp Accompt

Allegretto

Perhaps in this ne-glec-ted spot is

laid, some heart once pregnant with celestial fire - - - Hands that the

rod of empire might have fway'd, or wak'd to ex - ta - cy the

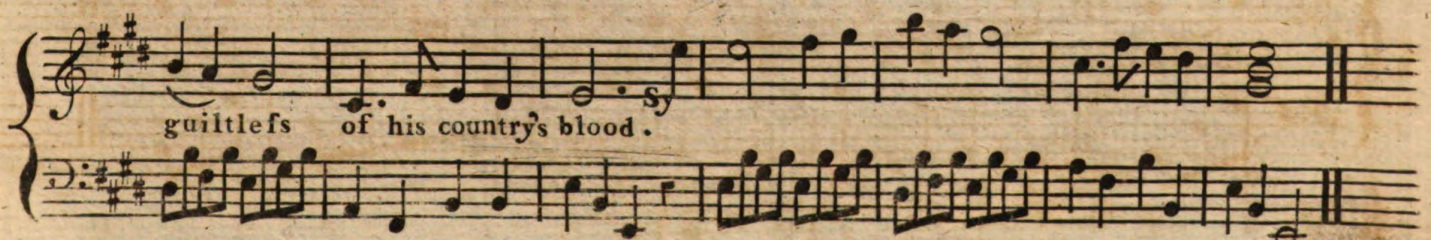
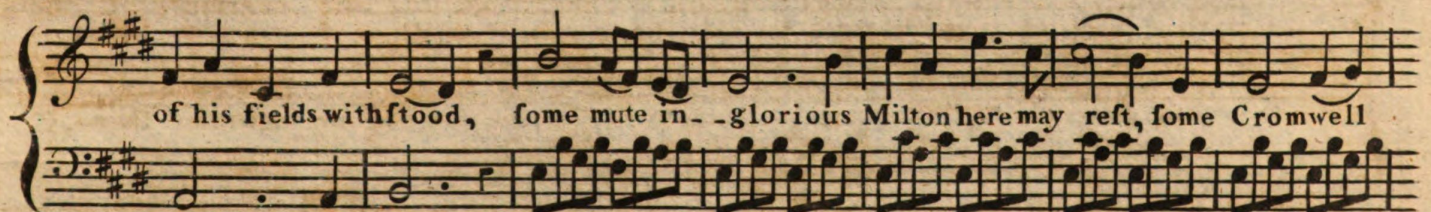
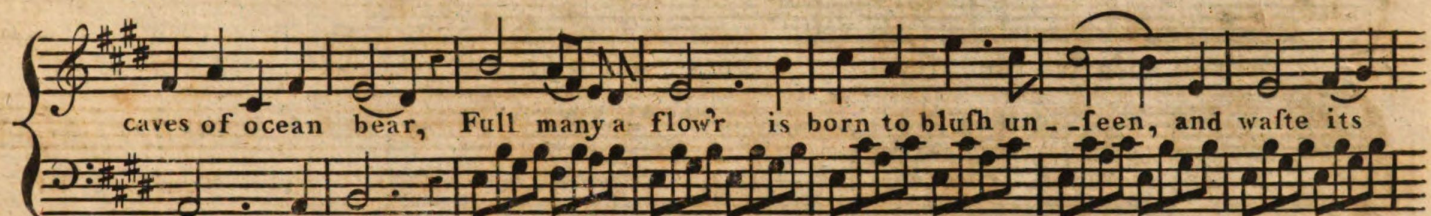
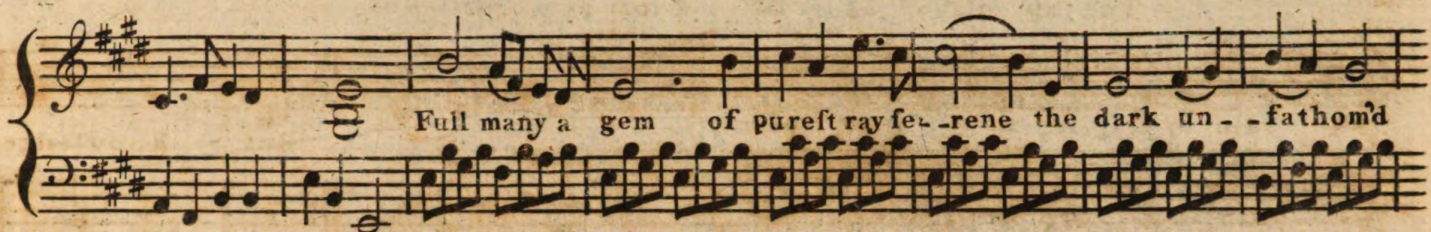
liv - ing lyre

Air by Vanhall

Slow

But knowledge
 to their eyes her ample page, rich with the spoils of
 time did neer un - - roll, Chill pe - nu - ry re - - pres'd their
 no - - ble rage, and froze the ge - - nial current of their
 Soul.

Slow



Moderato

1st Treble2^d Treble

Bass

The ap-plause of listning senates to command, the threats of pain and

ruin to despise, to scatter plen-ty o'er a smiling land, and read their hist'ry

in a nation's eyes. Their lot for-bad: nor circumscrib'd a lone their growing virtues, but their crimes con-

-find, for-bad to wade through slaughter to a throne, and shut the gates of mercy on mankind, The

struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide, to quench the blushes of ingenuous shame, or

heap the shrine of luxury and pride, with incense kindled at the muses flame.

Grazioso

Far from the madding crowd's ig--no--ble strife, their
fo--ber wishes never learnt to stray; a--long the cool fe--quester'd
vale of life they kept the noiseless te--nor of their way.

Sy

<p>2 Yet evn these bones from insult to protect, Some frail memorial still erected high, With uncouth rhimes and shapeless sculpture deck'd, Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.</p>	<p>3 Their name, their years, spelt by th'unletter'd muse, The place of fame and elegy supply, And many a holy text around the strews, That teach the rustic moralist to die.</p>
--	---

4
For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,
That left the warm precincts of cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?

Slow

On
some fond breast the parting soul re-lies, some pious drops the
closing eye re-quires, Evn from the tomb the voice of nature cries; evn
in our ashes live their wonted fires.

Recit:

For thee, who mindful of th'unhonour'd dead, dost in these
lines their artless tale re-late, if chance, by lonely contemplation led, some kindred
spirit shall inquire thy fate, Haply some hoary headed Swain may say,

Andante

Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn

Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn brushing with

hast-ty steps the dew a way to meet the Sun up-

-on the upland lawn.

2
 "There at the foot of yonder nodding beech,
 "That wreathes its old fantastick roots so high,
 "His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
 "And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

3
 "Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
 "Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
 "Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn;
 "Or craz'd with care, or cross'd in hopeless love.

4
 "One morn I mis'd him on th' accus'd hill,
 "Along the heath, and near his fav'rite tree:
 "Another came, nor yet beside the rill,
 "Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood, was he.

5
 "The next, with dirges due in sad array,
 "Slow thro' the church-way path we saw him borne:
 "Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay
 "Grav'd on the stone beneath yon aged thorn."

THE EPITAPH

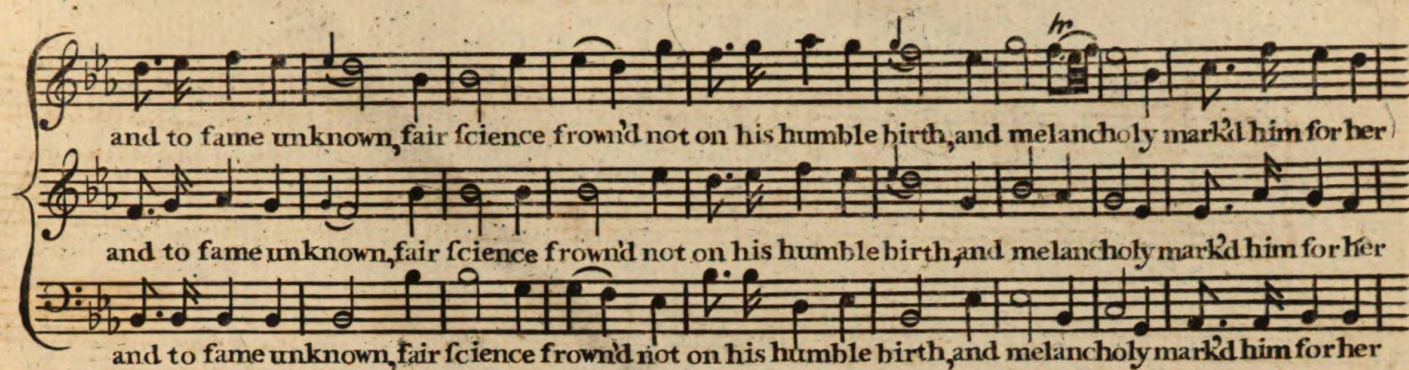
Here rests his head up--on the lap of earth, a youth to fortune and to fame un-
 -known, fair Science frown'd not on his humble birth, and me-lan-choly mark'd him for her own.
 Large was his bounty and his Soul sincere, heav'n did a recompence as largely send, he
 gave to misery all he had, a tear, he gain'd from heav'n ('twas all he wish'd) a friend. No
 farther seek his merits to disclose, or draw his frailties from their dread abode, there
 they a--like in trembling hope repose the bosom of his father and his God.

The Epitaph Harmoniz'd for three Mens Voices.

NB. The Lady's may join by Singing the melody as above.

Contra Tenor
 Tenor
 Bass

Here rests his head up--on the lap of earth, a youth to fortune
 Here rests his head up--on the lap of earth, a youth to fortune
 Here rests his head up--on the lap of earth, a youth to fortune



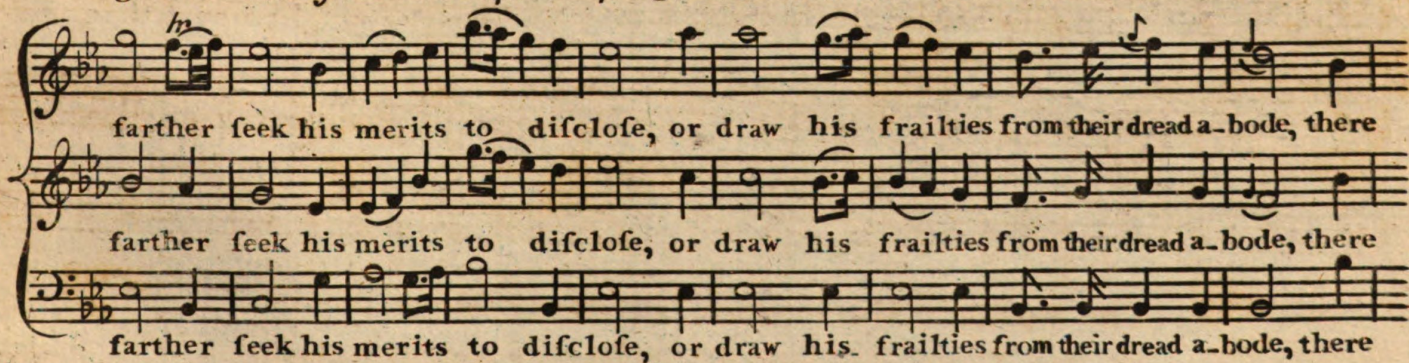
and to fame unknown, fair science frownd not on his humble birth, and melancholy mark'd him for her
and to fame unknown, fair science frownd not on his humble birth, and melancholy mark'd him for her
and to fame unknown, fair science frownd not on his humble birth, and melancholy mark'd him for her



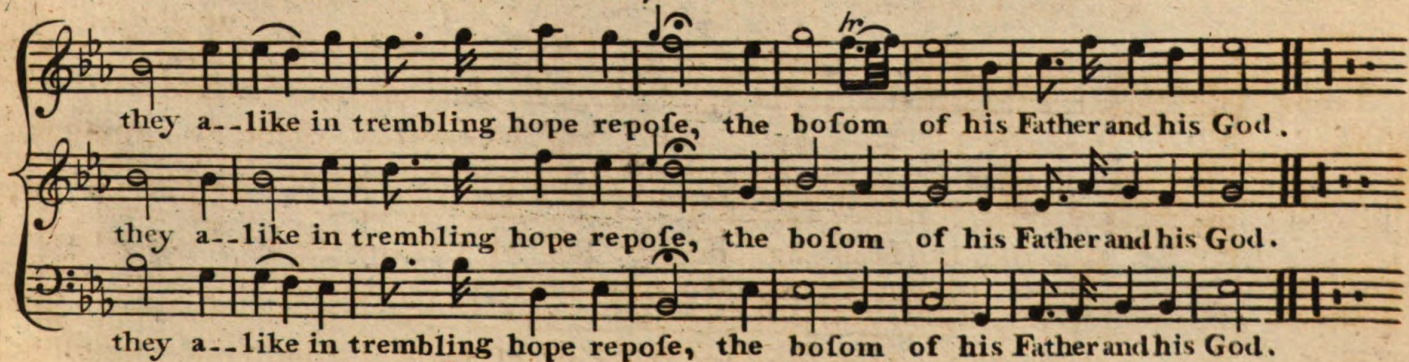
own: Large was his bounty and his Soul sincere, Heav'n did a recompence as largely send, he
own: Large was his bounty and his Soul sincere, Heav'n did a recompence as largely send, he
own: Large was his bounty and his Soul sincere, Heav'n did a recompence as largely send, he



gave to misery all he had, a tear, he gain'd from heav'n 'twas all he wish'd a friend. No
gave to misery all he had, a tear, he gain'd from heav'n 'twas all he wish'd a friend. No
gave to misery all he had, a tear, he gain'd from heav'n 'twas all he wish'd a friend. No



farther seek his merits to disclose, or draw his frailties from their dread a-bode, there
farther seek his merits to disclose, or draw his frailties from their dread a-bode, there
farther seek his merits to disclose, or draw his frailties from their dread a-bode, there



they a--like in trembling hope repose, the bosom of his Father and his God.
they a--like in trembling hope repose, the bosom of his Father and his God.
they a--like in trembling hope repose, the bosom of his Father and his God.