

Confucius, first printed in his *Musen-Almenach für das Jahr 1796* (Neustrelitz 1795) 39, then together with a second part in *Gedichte* (1800):

Dreyfach ist der Schritt der Zeit.
Zögernd kommt die Zukunft hergezogen,
Pfeilschnell ist das Jetzt entfliegen,
Ewig still steht die Vergangenheit.

Keine Ungeduld beflügelt
Ihren Schritt, wenn sie verweilt.
Keine Furcht, kein Zweifeln zügelt
Ihren Lauf, wenn sie enteilt.
Keine Reu, kein Zaubersegen
Kann die stehende bewegen.

Möchtest du beglückt und weise
Endigen des Lebens Reise?
Nimm die Zögernde zum Rath,
Nicht zum Werkzeug deiner That.
Wähle nicht die Fliehende zum Freund,
Nicht die Bleibende zum Feind.

It will be noted that C gives a line-for-line equivalence in Schiller's first stanza, and syncopates pairs of lines in the remainder.

The text given here reproduces the text of *CN* I 1138, dividing it into verses.

Time—3 fold—
Future slow—
Present swift—
Past immoveable—
No impatience will quicken the Loiterer— 5
no Terror, no delight rein in the Flyer—
No Regret set in motion the stationary—
Would'st be happy, take the Delayer for thy counselor,
do not choose the Flyer for thy Friend, 10
nor the ever-remainder for thy Enemy—

288. LINES ON THE BREEZE AND HOPE

[1802?]

The lines are known only from a transcript in SH's hand, where they are untitled and unsigned. The supposition of C's authorship rests on association and internal evidence alone.

If even the Breeze, that agitates the Air,
Effect a celebrated *purpose* there;
If even the Thistle Down, it wafts away,
Soft-bearing future Plants but *seem* to stray;
Surely the Hope, that agitates the Mind,
Is not a Thing without an *end* design'd.

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289. A LETTER TO —

[Apr 1802]

The lines were never intended for publication, even though they appear to have been revised and improved, and their circulation was confined to a few members of the Wordsworth-Coleridge circle before they were "discovered" in 1937. Two very similar ms texts are known, and they appear to derive from a lost original. The version given here is from C's own fair copy, which he perhaps made for WW and DW. The ms was prepared with deliberation but muddled in the execution, and suggests that the title was determined at a later stage.

The lines draw on observations and feelings that had been gestating for twelve months and more before they were written. C had lamented his marriage, declaring that "the Poet is dead in me" (*CL* II 713–17: to W. Godwin 25 Mar 1801; 715–17: to T. N. Longman 26 [27] Mar 1801; 725: to W. Godwin 28 Apr 1801; 774–5: to RS 9 Nov 1801; etc); indeed, he sketched an outline of the lines back in Dec 1801:

A lively picture of a man, disappointed in marriage, & endeavoring to make a compensation to himself by virtuous & tender & brotherly friendship with an amiable Woman—the obstacles—the jealousies—the impossibility of it.—Best advice that he should as much as possible withdraw himself from pursuits of morals &c—& devote himself to abstract sciences— (*CN* I 1065)

The incident central to lines 99–110, which C later detached and worked up



10. A View Taken in the Vale of St John Looking towards Keswick in Cumberland, pen and watercolour sketch made on 17 Aug 1786 by Francis Towne. Coleridge frequently traversed the valley when he lived at Keswick, writing in Oct 1803: "St John's Vale, o the Lights, the watry white Sun-sections, like a moonlight/ indeed the whole walk is enchantment" (Notebook 16 f 18: CN I 1542)

into a separate poem (see 294 *The Day Dream*, 629 *A Day Dream*), took place at Gallow Hill between 2 and 13 Mar 1802; and there is evidence that a number of other features—e.g. the connection with Milton's poems—were in C's mind at about the same time (see CN I 1155, and entries 1151–7 as a whole).

In view of the associative and evolving manner of the poem, it is unlikely to have been written precisely in its present form at one sitting. The first definite reference to the lines is an account of C reading them on 21 Apr (*DWJ* I 135–6), and it is not absolutely certain that they were sent to SH. Although one of the two mss is in MH's hand, there are reasons for thinking that this is a copy of a copy, possibly made some months after, and although it is addressed to SH, it may have been shown only to WW and DW.

The ms title continues on a second line "April 4, 1802.—Sunday Evening." The occasion and the unnamed recipient of the "letter" are as much a focus for events extending before and afterwards in C's personal and literary life as they are a record of historical fact. The date was the eve of WW's departure to propose to the sister of the woman C loved, thereby taking a step which involved irrevocable separation from Annette Vallon and their child. C had stayed up all night on 3 Apr to urge on WW this course of action, which his own conscience prevented him from taking himself (*CN* III 3304). And the date also marks the end of a visit from WW and DW, in which C's hopes for WW's future mingled with despondency and apprehension for his own present and future state. The EC notes point to some of the personal and literary connections of the lines.

When C recited the poem on 21 Apr, DW was deeply affected (*DWJ* I 135–6), and their reverberations continue into poems which WW wrote before he left to visit Calais and settle matters with Annette in mid-Jul. The echoes are particularly strong in *Stanzas Written in my Pocket-copy of Thomson's "Castle of Indolence"* and *The Leech Gatherer*, and other connections are described by Newlyn 59–86, etc. WW's response makes up the background against which C constructed 293 *Dejection: An Ode* from the materials of the *Letter*, in which a cry of pain and a plea for sympathy are converted into an affirmation fit to be published on WW's wedding-day. *Dejection: An Ode* is C's own comment, and the most complete, on the values and form of the present lines.

Well! if the Bard was weatherwise, who made
The grand old Ballad of Sir Patrick Spence,
This Night, so tranquil now, will not go hence
Unrous'd by winds, that ply a busier trade

2. C quoted the relevant stanza of the ballad of Sir Patrick Spens as an epigraph to 293 *Dejection: An Ode*. The rimmed circle of the moon was

an image C privately shared with WW and DW before and after his lines were written (see *RX* 173–5).

Than that, which moulds yon clouds in lazy flakes, 5
 Or the dull sobbing Draft, that drones & rakes
 Upon the Strings of this Eolian Lute,
 Which better far were mute.
 For, lo! the New Moon, winter-bright!
 And overspread with phantom Light, 10
 (With swimming phantom Light o'erspread
 But rimm'd & circled with a silver Thread)
 I see the Old Moon in her Lap, foretelling
 The coming-on of Rain & squally Blast—
 O! Sara! that the Gust ev'n now were swelling, 15
 And the slant Night-shower driving loud & fast!

 A Grief without a pang, void, dark, & drear,
 A stifling, drowsy, unimpassion'd Grief
 That finds no natural Outlet, no Relief
 In word, or sigh, or tear— 20
 This, Sara! well thou know'st,
 Is that sore Evil, which I dread the Most,
 And off'nest suffer! In this heartless Mood
 To other thoughts by yonder Throstle woo'd,
 That pipes within the Larch-tree, not unseen, 25
 (The Larch, which pushes out in tassels green
 It's bundled Leaflets) woo'd to mild Delights
 By all the tender Sounds & gentle Sights
 Of this sweet Primrose-month—& vainly woo'd
 O dearest Sara! in this heartless Mood 30
 All this long Eve, so balmy & serene,
 Have I been gazing on the western Sky
 And it's peculiar Tint of Yellow Green—
 And still I gaze—& with how blank an eye!
 And those thin Clouds above, in flakes & bars, 35
 That give away their Motion to the Stars;
 Those Stars, that glide behind them, or between,
 Now sparkling, now bedimm'd, but always seen;
 Yon crescent Moon, as fix'd as if it grew

17. Cf Gen 1.2 "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep"; and 303-4EC.

26-7. C had observed the larches thus appearing during Mar 1802 (CN 1 1142).

In it's own cloudless, starless Lake of Blue— 40
 A boat becalm'd dear William's Sky Canoe!
 —I see them all, so excellently fair!
 I see, not feel, how beautiful they are.

 My genial Spirits fail—
 And what can these avail 45
 To lift the smoth'ring Weight from off my Breast?
 It were a vain Endeavor,
 Tho' I should gaze for ever
 On that Green Light which lingers in the West!
 I may not hope from outward Forms to win 50
 The Passion & the Life whose Fountains are within!
 These lifeless Shapes, around, below, Above,
 O what can they impart?
 When even the gentle Thought, that thou, my Love!
 Art gazing now, like me, 55
 And see'st the Heaven, I see—
 Sweet Thought it is—yet feebly stirs my Heart!

 Feebly! O feebly!—Yet
 (I well remember it)
 In my first Dawn of Youth that Fancy stole 60
 With many secret Yearnings on my Soul.

41. dear William's Sky Canoe] An allusion to the Prologue to WW's then unpublished *Peter Bell* (WPW II 331-8).

42-3. Cf *King Lear* IV i 70-1 "that will not see | Because he doth not feel".

44. genial Spirits] The phrase comes from *Samson Agonistes* 594, and Milton's blind lonely hero who mourns a gift he had lost through an imprudent marriage offers obvious parallels. The phrase had been used before by WW in *Tintern Abbey* 113 (WPW II 262), and C repeats it (var) in 652 *The Garden of Boccaccio* 2.

49. When RS met the line in its

later, published version (with "that" for "which"), he told Anna Seward on 25 Jul 1807 that it derived from the part of *Madoc* he had completed by 1799: "The last green light that lingers in the west" (*Madoc*—1805—II xxxvi 260). (RS's letter has not been published: its contents were communicated to me by KC.) At the same time, 116 *Written at Shurton Bars* 5 is evidence that C had previously been awakened to the perception of "green radiance" by WW. (*Shurton Bars* indeed constitutes an earlier "Answer to a Letter", written in the happy, early days of C's marriage.)

At eve, sky-gazing in "ecstatic fit"
 (Alas! for cloister'd in a city School
 The Sky was all, I knew, of Beautiful)
 At the barr'd window often did I sit, 65
 And oft upon the leaded School-roof lay,
 And to myself would say—
 There does not live the Man so stripp'd of good affections
 As not to love to see a Maiden's quiet Eyes
 Uprais'd, and linking on sweet Dreams by dim Connections 70
 To Moon, or Evening Star, or glorious western Skies—
 While yet a Boy, this Thought would so pursue me
 That often it became a kind of Vision to me!

Sweet Thought! and dear of old
 To Hearts of finer Mould! 75
 Ten thousand times by Friends & Lovers blest!
 I spake with rash Despair,
 And ere I was aware,
 The Weight was somewhat lifted from my Breast!
 O Sara! in the weather-fended Wood, 80
 Thy lov'd haunt! where the Stock-doves coo at Noon,
 I guess, that thou has stood

62. ecstatic fit] From Milton *The Passion* 42. Milton's stanza describes Ezekiel's vision of the chariot of God—a vision that possessed particular significance for Böhme and other such writers as well as for C. The skygazing scene is also described in 171 *Frost at Midnight* 51–3; cf WW *The Prelude* (1850) vi 266–70. C's sense of loss at having been separated from natural surroundings in childhood was exacerbated as he came to compare WW's experience, and the difference between the childhood experiences of the two poets became a shared myth.

68–73. C described the same early thoughts—which he claimed he had in 1787—in a poem written in the 1820s. See 574 *First Advent of Love*

and headnote.

80. "Weather-fends" is a Shakespearean coinage (*The Tempest* v i 10), and the phrase was used again by William Crowe in *Lewesdon Hill* 4—a book C borrowed in Mar 1795 (*Bristol LB* No 38) and later praised highly (*BL* ch 1—CC—i 17–18), and a favourite text with WW and DW, who lived near Lewesdon at Race-down before moving to Alfoxden. Cf *Excursion* II 417–20 (*WPW* v 56–7): "a penthouse, framed . . . To weather-fend a little turf-built seat."

81. the Stock-doves] C remembered them at other times also: see e.g. *CN* III 3639. An early sketch of Gallow Hill, now at DCL, shows an unusual and prominent dovecote on the barn adjoining the house.

And watch'd yon Crescent, & it's ghost-like Moon.
 And yet, far rather in my present Mood
 I would, that thou'dst been sitting all this while 85
 Upon the sod-built Seat of Camomile—
 And tho' thy Robin may have ceas'd to sing,
 Yet needs for *my* sake must thou love to hear
 The Bee-hive murmuring near,
 That ever-busy & most quiet Thing 90
 Which I have heard at Midnight murmuring.

I feel my spirit moved—
 And wheresoe'er thou be,
 O Sister! O Beloved!
 Those dear mild Eyes, that see 95
 Even now the Heaven, *I* see—
 There is a Prayer in them! It is for *me*—
 And I, dear Sara—I am blessing *thee*!

It was as calm as this, that happy night
 When Mary, thou, & I together were, 100
 The low decaying Fire our only Light,
 And listen'd to the Stillness of the Air!
 O that affectionate & blameless Maid,
 Dear Mary! on her Lap my head she lay'd—
 Her Hand was on my Brow, 105
 Even-as my own is now;
 And on my Cheek I felt thy eye-lash play.
 Such Joy I had, that I may truly say,
 My Spirit was awe-stricken with the Excess
 And trance-like Depth of it's brief Happiness. 110

Ah fair Remembrances, that so revive
 The Heart, & fill it with a living Power,

86. the sod-built Seat of Camomile] Completed by C, WW, and DW on 10 Oct 1801: *DWJ* i 77; *CM* (CC) III 837.

91. Cf 629 *A Day Dream* 35.

99–110. The incident described in this stanza took place at Gallow Hill on C's visit between 2 and 13 Mar

1802. It formed the focus of a separate poem, written perhaps immediately after the *Letter* and before 293 *Dejection: An Ode*, viz 294 *The Day Dream* (also 629 *A Day Dream*). C recalled it vividly in Mar 1810 (*CN* III 3708 f 11^v).

Where were they, Sara?—or did I not strive
 To win them to me?—on the fretting Hour
 Then when I wrote thee that complaining Scroll
 Which even to bodily Sickness bruis'd thy Soul!
 And yet thou blam'st thyself alone! And yet
 Forbidd'st me all Regret!

And must I not regret, that I distress'd
 Thee, best belov'd! who lovest me the best?
 My better mind had fled, I know not whither,
 For o! was this an Absent Friend's Employ
 To send from far both Pain & Sorrow thither
 Where still his Blessings should have call'd down Joy!
 I read thy guileless Letter o'er again—
 I hear thee of thy blameless Self complain—
 And only this I learn—& this, alas! I know—
 That thou art weak & pale with Sickness, Grief, & Pain—
 And *I—I* made thee so!

O for my own sake I regret perforce
 Whatever turns thee, Sara! from the Course
 Of calm Well-being & a Heart at rest!
 When thou, & with thee those, whom thou lov'st best,
 Shall dwell together in one happy Home,
 One House, the dear *abiding* Home of All,
 I too will crown me with a Coronal—
 Nor shall this Heart in idle Wishes roam
 Morbidly soft!

No! let me trust, that I shall wear away
 In no inglorious Toils the manly Day,
 And only now & then, & not too oft,
 Some dear & memorable Eve will bless
 Dreaming of all your Loves & Quietness.

Be happy, & I need thee not in sight.
 Peace in thy Heart, & Quiet in thy Dwelling,

136. Cf *Intimations Ode* 40 "My head hath its coronal" (*WPW* IV 280). WW had begun his poem on 27 Mar, and the first four stanzas were per-

haps among the verses repeated to C at Greta Bank on 4 Apr (*DWJ* I 129). See line 295 below.

Health in thy Limbs, & in thine Eyes the Light
 Of Love, & Hope, & honorable Feeling—
 Where e'er I am, I shall be well content!
 Not near thee, haply shall be more content!
 To all things I prefer the Permanent.
 And better seems it for a heart, like mine,
 Always to *know*, than sometimes to behold,
 Their Happiness & thine—

For Change doth trouble me with pangs untold!
 To see thee, hear thee, feel thee—then to part
 Oh!—it weighs down the Heart!

To *visit* those, I love, as I love thee,
 Mary, & William, & dear Dorothy,
 It is but a temptation to repine—

The transientness is Poison in the Wine,
 Eats out the pith of Joy, makes all Joy hollow,
 All Pleasure a dim Dream of Pain to follow!
 My own peculiar Lot, my house-hold Life
 It is, & will remain, Indifference or Strife—
 While *ye* are *well & happy*, twould but wrong you—
 If I should fondly yearn to be among you—
 Wherefore, O wherefore! should I wish to be
 A wither'd branch upon a blossoming Tree?

But (let me say it! for I vainly strive
 To beat away the Thought) but if thou pin'd,
 Whate'er the Cause, in body, or in mind,
 I were the miserablest Man alive

To know it & be absent! Thy Delights
 Far off, or near, alike I may partake—
 But o! to mourn for thee, & to forsake

All power, all hope of giving comfort to thee—
 To know that thou are weak & and worn with pain,
 And not to hear thee, Sara! not to view thee—

Not sit beside thy Bed,
 Not press thy aching Head,
 Not bring thee Health again—

At least to hope, to try—
 By this Voice, which thou lov'st, & by this earnest Eye—

Nay, wherefore did I let it haunt my Mind
 The dark distressful Dream! 185
 I turn from it, & listen to the Wind
 Which long has rav'd unnotic'd! What a Scream
 Of agony by Torture lengthen'd out
 That Lute sent forth! O thou wild Storm without!
 Jagg'd Rock, or mountain Pond, or blasted Tree, 190
 Or Pine-grove, Whither Woodman never clomb,
 Or lonely House, long held the Witches' Home,
 Methinks were fitter Instruments for Thee,
 Mad Lutanist! that in this month of Showers,
 Of dark brown Gardens, & of peeping Flowers, 195
 Mak'st Devil's Yule, with worse than wintry Song
 The Blossoms, Buds, and timorous Leaves among!
 Thou Actor, perfect in all tragic Sounds!
 Thou mighty Poet, even to frenzy bold!
 What tell'st thou now about? 200
 'Tis of the Rushing of an Host in Rout—
 And many Groans from men with smarting Wounds—
 At once they groan with smart, and shudder with the Cold!
 Tis hush'd! there is a Trance of deepest Silence,
 Again! but all that Sound, as of a rushing Crowd, 205
 And Groans & tremulous Shudderings, all are over—
 And it has other Sounds, and all less deep, less loud!
 A Tale of less Affright,
 And temper'd with Delight,
 As William's Self had made the tender Lay— 210
 Tis of a little Child
 Upon a heathy Wild,
 Not far from home—but it has lost it's way—
 And now moans low in utter grief & fear—
 And now screams loud, & hopes to make it's Mother hear! 215

Tis Midnight! and small Thoughts have I of Sleep—
 Full seldom may my Friend such Vigils keep—

191. Cf *Il Penseroso* 135–7.
 197–206. The phrasing of the other
 ms differs at several points.

202–3. A similitude for the wind
 which C had noted on 21 Oct 1800
 (CN I 832).

208–15. A reference to WW *Lucy*
Gray (WPW I 234–6).

215. The same image of the wind
 occurred to C as early as 1 Feb 1801.
 See CL II 669: to TP.

O breathe She softly in her gentle Sleep!
 Cover her, gentle Sleep! with wings of Healing—
 And be this Tempest but a Mountain Birth! 220
 May all the Stars hang bright above her Dwelling,
 Silent, as tho' they *watch'd* the sleeping Earth!
 Healthful & light, my Darling! may'st thou rise
 With clear & chearful Eyes—
 And of the same good Tidings to me send! 225
 For, oh! beloved Friend!
 I am not the buoyant Thing, I was of yore—
 When like an own Child, I to JOY belong'd;
 For others mourning oft, myself oft sorely wrong'd,
 Yet bearing all things then, as if I nothing bore! 230

Yes, dearest Sara! Yes!
 There *was* a time when tho' my path was rough,
 The Joy within me dallied with Distress;
 And all Misfortunes were but as the Stuff
 Whence Fancy made me Dreams of Happiness: 235
 For Hope grew round me, like the climbing Vine,
 And Leaves & Fruitage, not my own, seem'd mine!
 But now Ill Tidings bow me down to earth/
 Nor care I, that they rob me of my Mirth/
 But oh! each Visitation 240
 Suspends what Nature gave me at my Birth,

220. a Mountain Birth] An al-
 lusion to Horace *Ars poetica* 139
 "Parturient montes, nascetur ridicu-
 lus mus" tr Fairclough (LCL) 463
 "Mountains will labour, to birth will
 come a laughter-rousing mouse!" Cf
 CM (CC) III 334.

221–2. Quoted (var) at the close of
 C's letter to SH about Sir Thomas
 Browne, 10 Mar 1804 (CL II 1083).

222*. The other ms has an extra line
 here—"Like elder Sisters, with love-
 twinkling Eyes!"—and omits line
 224. Manuscript evidence suggests
 that the passage containing lines 222–
 42 might have been particularly prob-
 lematic for C up to the time the pre-

sent transcript was made.

231. Absent from the other ms.

232. In a notebook entry of 1809
 C repeated the opening phrase (from
 the opening line of WW's *Intimations*
Ode) in a couplet which jocularly in-
 verts the present mood (CN III 3635 =
 456 *Couplet Written in November*
 1809). Cf 269 *The Mad Monk* 9.

236–7. C quoted the lines when he
 described how he was "in the first
 dawn of my literary life" in BL ch 22
 (CC) II 159. Cf Virgil *Georgics* 2.82
 "miraturque novas frondes et non sua
 poma" tr Fairclough (LCL) I 122–3
 "and marvels at its strange leafage and
 fruits not its own".

My shaping Spirit of Imagination!
 I speak not now of those habitual Ills
 That wear out Life, when two unequal Minds
 Meet in one House, & two discordant Wills— 245
 This leaves me, where it finds,
 Past cure, & past Complaint—a fate Austere
 Too fix'd & hopeless to partake of Fear!

But thou, dear Sara! (dear indeed thou art,
 My Comforter! A Heart within my Heart!) 250
 Thou, & the Few, we love, tho' few ye be,
 Make up a world of Hopes & Fears for me.
 And if Affliction, or distemp'ring Pain,
 Or wayward Chance befall you, I complain
 Not that I mourn—O Friends, most dear! most true! 255
 Methinks to weep with you
 Were better far than to rejoice alone—
 But that my coarse domestic Life has known
 No Habits of heart-nursing Sympathy,
 No Grievs, but such as dull and deaden me, 260
 No mutual mild Enjoyments of it's own,
 No Hopes of it's own Vintage, None, o! none—
 Whence when I mourn'd for you, my Heart might borrow
 Fair forms & living Motions for it's Sorrow.
 For not to think of what I needs must feel, 265
 But to be still & patient all I can;
 And haply by abstruse Research to steal
 From my own Nature all the Natural Man—
 This was my sole Resource, my wisest plan!
 And that, which suits a part, infects the whole, 270
 And now is almost grown the Temper of my Soul.

242. shaping Spirit] For other, significant contexts of the phrase see 271.X1 *The Triumph of Loyalty* I ii 170, 272 *The Night-scene* 81; cf also *CL* II 663: to H. Davy 11 Jan 1801; 664: to TP 19 Jan 1801.

259–60. Transposed in the other

ms.

267. abstruse Research] The phrase occurs later in *CN* II 2036, from which it is quite clear that it refers in the poem to an antidote of his feelings for SH, not to the opposite of poetry and imagination.

My little Children are a Joy, a Love,
 A good Gift from above!
 But what is Bliss, that still calls up a Woe,
 And makes it doubly keen 275
 Compelling me to *feel*, as well as *KNOW*,
 What a most blessed Lot mine might have been.
 Those little Angel Children (woe is me!)
 There have been hours, when feeling how they bind
 And pluck out the Wing-feathers of my Mind, 280
 Turning my Error to Necessity,
 I have half-wish'd, they never had been born!
 That seldom! But sad Thoughts they always bring,
 And like the Poet's Philomel, I sing
 My Love-song, with my breast against a Thorn. 285

With no unthankful Spirit I confess,
 This clinging Grief too, in it's turn, awakes
 That Love, and Father's Joy; but O! it makes
 The Love the greater, & the Joy far less,
 These Mountains too, these Vales, these Woods, these Lakes, 290
 Scenes full of Beauty & of Loftiness
 Where all my Life I fondly hop'd to live—
 I were sunk low indeed, did they *no* solace give;
 But oft I seem to feel, & evermore I fear,
 They are not to me now the Things, which once they were. 295

O Sara! we receive but what we give,
 And in *our* Life alone does Nature live.
 Our's is her Wedding Garment, our's her Shroud—
 And would we aught behold of higher Worth
 Than that inanimate cold World allow'd 300
 To the poor loveless ever-anxious Crowd,
 Ah! from the Soul itself must issue forth
 A Light, a Glory, and a luminous Cloud
 Enveloping the Earth!

295. Cf *Intimations Ode* 9 “The things which I have seen I now can see no more” (*WPW* IV 279). The previous line in the other ms (reading “I fear”) brings the couplet slightly

closer to *WW*. Cf line 136EC.

303–4. Cf Gen 1.3 “And God said, Let there be light: and there was light”; see line 17EC.

And from the Soul itself must there be sent 305
A sweet & potent Voice, of it's own Birth,
Of all sweet Sounds the Life & Element.

O pure of Heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the Soul may be,
What, & wherein it doth exist, 310

This Light, this Glory, this fair luminous Mist,
This beautiful & beauty-making Power!
Joy, innocent Sara! Joy, that ne'er was given
Save to the Pure, & in their purest Hour,
Joy, Sara! is the Spirit & the Power, 315
That wedding Nature to us gives in Dower
A new Earth & new Heaven

Undreamt of by the Sensual & the Proud!
Joy is that strong Voice, Joy that luminous Cloud—
We, we ourselves rejoice! 320

And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the Echoes of that Voice,
All Colors a Suffusion of that Light.

Sister & Friend of my devoutest Choice!
Thou being innocent & full of love, 325
And nested with the Darlings of thy Love,
And feeling in thy Soul, Heart, Lips, & Arms
Even what the conjugal & mother Dove
That borrows genial Warmth from those, she warms,
Feels in her thrill'd wings, blessedly outspread— 330
Thou free'd awhile from Cares & human Dread
By the Immenseness of the Good & Fair
Which thou see'st every where—

313, 315, 319. In a later notebook entry C glosses "Joy" as when "the Heart is full as of a deep & quiet fountain overflowing insensibly, or the gladness of Joy, when the fountain overflows ebullient" (*CN* II 2279). The word became an almost technical term in his poetic vocabulary, but always associated with images of the conflict and reconciliation of oppo-

sites, in some sort of balanced tension, and with his love for SH—as here.

317. Cf Rev 21.1 "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away".

325–30. In 1807 C took up the image for the opening lines of 423 *To Two Sisters*.

Thus, thus should'st thou rejoice!
To thee would all Things live from Pole to Pole, 335
Their Life the Eddying of thy living Soul.
O dear! O Innocent! O full of Love!
A very Friend! A Sister of my Choice—
O dear, as Light & Impulse from above,
Thus may'st thou ever, evermore rejoice! 340

290. A SOLILOQUY OF THE FULL MOON, SHE BEING IN A MAD PASSION

[Late Apr 1802]

Although C had noted the sight of a remarkable moon on 15 Sept 1801 (*CN* I 983) and at other times, as had DW, the present soliloquy was probably prompted by the full moon of 16 Apr 1802 and sent to the Wordsworths on 27 Apr (*DWJ* I 139). The poem was therefore probably written at the end of the same month as the verse letter to SH (poem 289), and it celebrates, from another point of view and in a different spirit, the full moon, as the earlier poem had fixed on the new(ish) moon. Whether C was prompted by any such thoughts is unknown, but the two poems do share a number of motifs besides the central one. The thought might also have been in SH's mind when she chose this as the first of all C's poems to be copied into her album.

There are two ms texts—one in C's hand, sent to WW and DW, another copied later by SH into her album—and the poem was never published. The later version omits thirteen superfluous lines at the end, adds others (lines 16–21), and makes other revisions; this is the version reproduced here, but the layout of C's holograph is followed, in which all lines are centred on the page-width.

Now as Heaven is my Lot, they're the Pests of the Nation!
Wherever they can come
With clankum and blankum
'Tis all Botheration, & Hell & Damnation,

336. Eddying] No previous examples of the word are recorded by *OED*. C used it again in *BL* ch 22 (*CC* II 136—"an eddying instead of progression of thought"—to describe a limitation of WW's style.