



**THE REPRESENTATION OF BEAUTY DISCOURSE IN *LORD
BYRON'S* SELECTED POEMS**

THESIS

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**ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES
JEMBER UNIVERSITY
2019**



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Submitted to English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Jember University, in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Sarjana Sastra in English
Studies

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother, Diah Wahyuni, and my father, Holil, for the never ending love and support poured over me throughout my life.



MOTTO

Beauty is much more than skin deep.
Danielle Pelkey

You can't control everything; you just have to do your best with every opportunity.
Priyanka Chopra

Beauty is not in the face; beauty is a light in the heart
Khalil Gibran



DECLARATION

I hereby state that this thesis entitled **“The Representation of Beauty Discourse in Lord Byron’s Selected is Poems”** an original piece of writing. I state that the analysis and the research described in this thesis have never been submitted for any other degree or any publications. I certify to the best of my knowledge that all sources used and any helps received in the preparation of this thesis have been acknowledged.

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Hopefully, this thesis can give contribution towards the English Studies, especially those who intend to develop their knowledge on the study of literature.

Jember,

Anisa Hikmah Suryandari

SUMMARY

The Representation of Beauty Discourse in Lord Byron's Selected Poems; Anisa Hikmah Suryandari, 120110101083; 2019: 42 pages; English Department, Faculty of Humanities, Jember University.

This research analyzes the construction of beauty discourse represented in Lord Byron's poems. There are three Lord Byron's poems that produce beauty concept in Romantic era. They are *She Walks in Beauty* (1814), *Sonnet-to Genevra* (1813), and *Stanzas for Music* (1815). These three poems create the concept of beauty differently, but they have similarity that is beauty depictions are always associated with natural elements. The first poem entitled *She Walks in Beauty* tells about intellectual beauty as well as physical beauty. The second poem entitled *Sonnet to Genevra* describes about physical or intellectual beauty is always leads to the God, or Trancendentalism. The third poem entitled *Stanzas for Music* tells about the beauty of voice is expressed with natural elements that reinforce the beauty of voice.

The main goals of this research are to uncover the construction of beauty discourse in the poems and the ideological interest beyond it. Therefore, there are three questions which are drawn to achieve the goal. First, to find how beauty is constructed in the poems. Second, to describe how beauty is constructed in the contextual background which is the British Romantic society. The last is to reveal the ideological interest beyond the beauty construction by correlating the poems and the contextual background. Therefore, I use Stuart Hall's theory of Representation and the concept of discursive model by Michel Foucault to correlate between the discourse and power behind the beauty construction.

The result of this research shows that the construction of beauty discourse by Lord Byron intends to create the concept of beauty that related to the theme of Romantic era. The two big themes in Romantic era are 'back to nature' and transcendentalism. In other hand, Byron criticizes the Industrial Revolution through

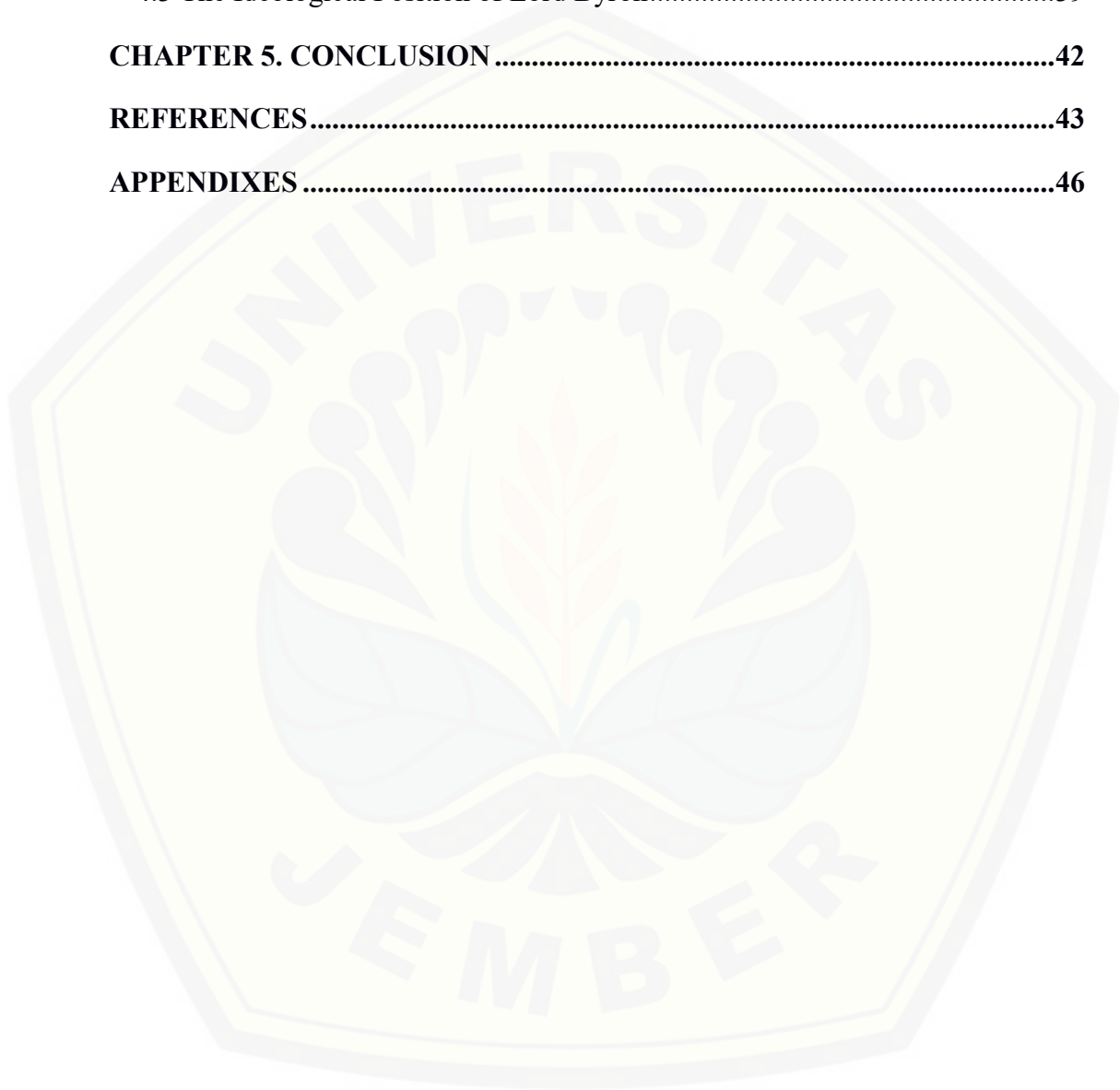
idealizing beauty concept in his poems. Byron totally agree to the concept of beauty in Romantic era and also the Romantic movement.



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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter shows the basic idea of conducting the research. It provides the background of study, the research question, and the goals of study. The background of study shows the general idea of how the research will be. The research questions are the focus of this research. Later, the goals of study provide well-understood idea.

1.1 Background of Study

Romantic Movement was one of literary movements which happened around 1790-1830. Romantic was the reaction of the classic period and the raising up of industrial revolution. It tried to criticize the regime of the church and the presence of machine. Classic period was the period where the rules of literary works were strict, especially in poetry as one of literary work. The spirit of age of the classic period was the opposite of Romantic. In the classic period, the form was more important than the content. The reason was more important than emotion and imagination, and social convictions were more important than the individual ones. It is influenced by the intervention of political factor. (Albert,1975: 305-307)

“The age of pope intensified the movement that, as we have seen, began after the Restoration. The drift away from the poetry of passion was more pronounced than ever, the ideals of ‘wit’ and ‘common sense’ were more zealously pursued and the lyrical note was almost unheard. In its place we find in poetry the overmastering desire for neatness and perspicuity, for edge in point in style, and for correctness in technique. These aims received expression in the devotion to the heroic couplet, the aptest medium for the purpose. In this type of poetry the supreme master is Pope; apart from him the age produced no great poet. On the other hand, the other great names of the period—Swift, Addison, Steele, Defoe—are those of prose writers primarily, and prose-writers of a very high quality”. (Albert,1975:187)

Albert explains that the age of pope or the age of classical has been intervened in giving the soul to the spirit of the age. Poetry became a rural

literary work that is full of rules in its writing. The poet of the time wrote the poetry based on the reasons. They believed that the ideals of wit and common sense were more important. They also wrote the poem by looking at the technique, neatness, and perspicuity. It shows that the poet of the time considered that the form was more important than the content. On the other hand, this also showed that prose was a dominant writing of literary work.

Because it was the opposite of classic period, Romantic Movement gave the new spirit of the age. Romantic subject gave birth to new interests. Those interests are naturalism and romanticism. Naturalism is devoted to nature in literature and art. It means that nature engages in creating a true way to nature. Romanticism is the movement that has tendency to return the old poetic and stand against the classic period. The romantic subject also returned the older poetic forms such as blank verse, and the lyrical stanzas of the Elizabethans. It also has some characteristics; they are natural, simple, and ordinary in terms of language, country-oriented, using blank verse, and stressing on the power of imagination and feelings (Albert, 1975:290).

According to Edward Albert (1975:224), the return of nature means a return to the real nature, such as earth, air, and not the bookish nature of the artificial pastoral. In that time, the sympathy for the poor and oppressed was high. The poets wrote the poems that talk about man's position in the world of nature. This led to great activity in religious and political speculation. Romantic opposed the conventional literary technique. It was altered from heroic couplet to blank verse, from the ideals of wit and common sense to stressing emotion and imagination, and from neatness and perspicuity to strength, simplicity, and sincerity.

During the Romantic period, poetry developed well. Romantic movement gave the full romantic spirit to great poets and writers. One of the great poet in romantic period was Lord Byron. His full name is George Gordon Lord Byron. He was born on January, 22th 1788 in London. He is the son of a rake and scoundred man, and his mother is Scottish heiress, Miss Gordon of Gight. He attended Harrow school from 1801-1805 and then Trinity College at Cambridge University

until 1808. His carrier started in 1809. During his life, he spent his time to write and travel to other countries. He had two children. They are Ada and Allegra Byron. Byron was died on April 19, 1824. (Classic Poetry Series: 2) Byron's work showed admiration for nature. His poems were full of emotion and talked about human purity. It has correlation with the spirit of Romantic period. Besides, Byron works also talked about beauty. During his writing trip, he wrote many letters and poems. His poems which talked about beauty are *She Walks in Beauty* (1814), *Sonnet-to Genevra* (1813), and *Stanzas for Music* (1815). In Byron's works we can find many words, phrases, and sentences that construct the meaning of beauty. Some examples make me assume that in Byron's works, there are many constructions of beauty discourses.

Beauty is interesting topic to discuss in literary works. The concept of beauty has discussed since an imperialism classic Greece. The concept of beauty has risen for the first time by a classic Greece philosopher, Plato. Beauty was a means to the Good (Jennifer: 2007). Commonly, beauty is described as something that gives pleasure and admiration for whoever sees it. It is usually relates the quality within physical object. Good means something that correlated to high quality and acceptable standard (Oxford Dictionary). It means beauty has correlation to quality of appearance, moral, aesthetic, and art. In beauty, there are lots of things that become quality of beauty such as skin color or shape of body. Every period produces different quality of beauty. It depends on culture, social conventions, and also media propaganda.

The reason why I am interested and choose Lord Byron's poems as the subject at my research is in Lord Byron's poems, there are many constructions of beauty discourses that are interested in exploring. Beside of that, the topic of beauty always become endless topic to discuss because every period beauty discourses are different. Beauty is not always about appearance, physical, or inner beauty. Beauty is one of points that can be used fight power and a regime that dominate the society. Thus, I choose and interested in this topic.

1.2 The Research Question

The problems that are discussed in this research are formulated into three questions. They are:

1. How is beauty represented in Lord Byron's selected poems?
2. What is the contextual condition of beauty in Romantic period presented in the poems?
3. What is the ideological position of Lord Byron in his poems?

1.3 The Goal of Study

This research aims to reveal the beauty representation in Lord Byron's poems. This research is appropriate to enrich the knowledge about representation criticism through literary work especially poetry. It is also to enrich the beauty studies through different point of view. The topic that I have discussed, beauty, is the interesting and endless topic that can be discussed all of time.

CHAPTER 2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are two subchapters that are discussed. First, two previous researches are needed in this research to guide the discussion. The second is theoretical review that consists of representation theory by Stuart Hall as the main theory in this research.

2.1 Previous Research

There are two previous researches that have relation to main topic in my research thesis. The first is a thesis from Siti Hanifa entitled “The Representation of Beauty discourse in Scott Westerfeld’s *Uglies Series* (2016)”. This thesis delivers the construction of beauty discourse that produced differently by two society groups. She described and explained how the beauty discourse is constructed by American society that has correlation with the contextual background. She used theory of representation by Stuart Hall that focuses on encoding process and the concept of discursive model by Michel Foucault. The goals of her thesis are find how the beauty discourse represented in the *Uglies Series*, draw the American contextual background at that time and find what the ideology beyond the beauty construction. I use this research as first previous research because this thesis uses the same theory and topic. I use the theory of representation by Stuart Hall that focuses on constructionist approach and also discursive model by Michel Foucault, but I have different object to discuss.

The second previous research is from Asik Putri Ayu Sari Ratnaningsih thesis entitled “The Concept of Beauty in Lord Byron’s Poems *She Walks in Beauty* and *There Be None of Beauty’s Daughter*: A Reader Response Study on English Department Students of Faculty of Humanities of University Airlangga (2016)”. This thesis is about the beauty concept that lies in two poems of Lord Byron. The writer uses reader response approach to gain the purpose of her study. For collecting the data, Asik Putri uses open questionnaire that consisted of five questions. Then, she uses descriptive interpretative method for analyzing the data. The result of her thesis is she categorizes the concept

of beauty that lies in the poem “She Walks in Beauty”, into natural beauty, pure beauty, physical beauty, beauty as life enjoyment, beauty as an idiot, indescribable beauty, pleasurable beauty, elegant beauty and beauty in the eye of the beholder. Then, for “The be None of beauty’s Daughters”, Asik Putri categorizes the concept of beauty into natural beauty, physical beauty, non-physical beauty, beauty as an idol, pleasurable beauty, and irreplaceable beauty.

The goals of her thesis is to gain the concept of beauty that lies in two Lord Byron’s poems through reader respond approach. I use this thesis because the similar topic about beauty discourse and same literary work about two poems from Lord Byron. It explains about the reader respond of two Lord Byron poems entitled She Walks in Beauty and There be None of Beauty’s Daughter, but different theory. I explain about representation of beauty in Lord Byron’s poems but this thesis explains about reader response of two lord Byron’s poems.

2.2 Stuart Hall’s Representation Theory

Representation theory is appropriate to analyze this research. Representation theory is composed by Stuart Hall. Hall says (1997:15) representation is an essential process by which meaning is produced and exchanged between members of a culture. It involves the use of language, of signs and images which stand for or represent things. It means that representation is a part of the production and the exchange of meaning. Language and sign are media for the process of production and the exchange of meaning. Society as members of culture has a role to produce and exchange the meaning. Through representation, society produced and exchanged the meaning that involves language and sign.

Hall has perspective to representation. There are two systems of representation. They are mental process and language. Mental representation is all things which we carry around in our heads. Meaning depends on the system of concepts and images are formed in our mind which can stand for or represent the

world. Language is the second system of representation involved in the overall process of constructing meaning (1997: 17-18). Hall says that we can represent or exchange the meaning or concept if we have an access to share language. The concept in our mind can be shared to others by language.

2.3 Constructionist Approach

The construction of meaning is not as simple as we see. The process of construction meaning involves background of culture. The background of culture of everyone is different from others. This is the reason why the interpretation of one and another is different. Hall stressed that just people who belong to same culture can share or communicate to others because they share a broadly similar conceptual map. They also share the same way of interpreting language or sign. Thus, people who belong to same culture are able to communicate or share the meaning or concept, so they have the same way of interpretation or make a sense of the world (1997:19).

There are three approaches in Stuart Hall's theory to correlate the production of meaning and representation. They are the reflective, the intentional, and the constructionist approaches. These approaches lead us to know how representation of meaning works through language. According to Hall in the reflective approach, meaning is thought to lie in the object, person, idea, or event in the real world and language functions like mirror, to reflect the true meaning as it already exists (1997:24). It means that language acts as a mirror that reflects phenomena or something that already exist in the real life to the text.

The second is the intentional approach. Hall says that (1997:24) language is the speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. It means that the author has its own way delivering meaning through language. The author delivers meaning into society. The society and the author must have the same codes and conventions of linguistic to get understandable meaning. The linguistic conventions and the codes must be shared in order to get the one's meaning intended.

The third approach is constructionist approach. Hall says (1997:25) that constructionist approach uses language to represent the author's concepts. The representational systems, concepts, and signs through the language are used to exchange the meaning and in order to communicate the concept meaningfully to others.

Stuart Hall explains that there are two ways of constructionist approach. First, is using the semiotics by Ferdinand Saussure, and the second is discourse with discursive method by Stuart Hall. According to Jonathan Culler (1976,p.19), Saussure says the production of meaning depends on language: "language is a system of signs". It means that all the material objects such as written words, sounds, images, paintings, etc. can function as signs and communicate meaning too. In Saussure's approach, the sign divide into two elements. There are signifier and signified. Saussure argued Signifier is the form (the actual word, image, and photo) or we call it the material object. Signified is the concept or idea in our head with which the form is associated. The correlation between signifier and signified is not permanently fixed. It is caused words shift their meaning and the concepts which they refer also change. It means that the concept or meaning is different from one period to another. (Culler, 1976, p.23)

The discursive model is proposed by Michel Foucault. Foucault says discourse in literature is not study about language but discourse is system of representation. Discourse is a group of statements which provide a language for talking about a way of representing the knowledge about a particular topic at a particular historical moment. Discourse is about the production of knowledge through language (Hall, 1992, p.291). According to the quotation, discourse constructs knowledge or topic through language. It is also strengthened by Hall. Language consists of words, sentences, paragraphs, and also narrations. Discourse in a text builds the knowledge. Knowledge influences how the participants talk, define, argue, and give ideas about certain phenomenon or object that exist in certain moment.

Based on the explanation above, the representation theory will be the main tool to analyze this research. The constructionist approach and discursive method

will be applied to explain this analysis in detail. These two approaches are used to find the beauty discourses that are constructed correlation to discourses in Romantic Movement as a part of cultural movement in English in 1800-1850.



CHAPTER 3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the research methodology conducted in this research. This chapter is divided into three sub chapters. The method includes the type of research, the data collection, and the data processing and analysis.

3.1 The Type of Research

Research method is needed to conduct the research. This research uses the qualitative as the research method because the data are in the form of words, metaphors and sentences (stanzas). They are not the form of numbers. According to Blaxter (2006: 64) “Qualitative research, on the other hand, is concerned with collecting and analyzing information in as many forms, chiefly non-numeric, as possible.” In this research, I use qualitative research to find the phenomena that are related to beauty as the main topic discussion of this research. The text is taken from Lord Byron selected poems in form of words, phrases, and sentences of beauty discourse. To help and support this analysis, I collect the data that related to beauty discourse in books, journals, websites, and articles. The result of the data can be analyzed by Stuart Hall’s theory of representation.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection is a process of collecting data for the research. According to Blaxter (2006:154) there are four ways to collect the data. They are documents, interviews, observations, and questioners. According to this research, the data are collected from many written materials. The data in this research are divided into two kinds: primary and secondary data. The primary data are collected from Lord Byron’s poems: *She Walks in Beauty* (1814), *Sonnet-to Geneva* (1813), and *Stanzas For Music* (1815) as the object of the study. The data are taken from words, phrases, and sentences that related to beauty discourse. The secondary data to support this research are taken from the dictionaries, articles, journals, websites and the previous researches of the similar topic but different objects

3.3 Data Processing and Data Analysis

After collecting data, the next step is data processing and data analysis. There are some steps in this research. The first step is reading the poems: *She Walks in Beauty* (1814), *Sonnet-to Geneva* (1813), and *Stanzas For Music* (1815). From this step, I find some data that related to the beauty discourse in the form of words, phrases, and sentences.

The next step is analyzing data. There are three problems in this research. The First, I analyze the poems to find how beauty is constructed in Byron's poems by collecting all the data in the form of words, phrases, and sentences. I apply the Stuart Hall's theory which focuses on constructionist approach to explain how the beauty is constructed in Byron's poems. Constructionist approach has two models of discourses. There are semiotic by Saussure and Barthes and discursive model that proposed by Michel Foucault. I will only use discourse model by Foucault to explain how the discourses of beauty in Byron's poems are produced through language (words, phrases, and sentences). The production of meaning will create the knowledge of beauty. Later, the knowledge will produce the beauty discourse that consumed and shared by society. This is the shape of discursive practice that has correlation with the power. It means that the beauty discourse which consumed by society is regulated by dominant power.

Furthermore, to answer the question number two, I elaborate the construction of beauty discourses in London society in Romantic period. It is also to find how the beauty discourse is produced in Romantic period through articles, journals, and books that related to beauty discourse at the time. It is included the secondary data that support the construction of beauty in his poems. Later, I analyze the ideological position of Byron's as the author that creates the construction of beauty discourse in his poems and explore his alignment and point of view in Romanticism. To answer this problem, I begin through the beauty statement in his poems and connecting it with British Romanticism's context.

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

The beauty discourse is represented in three Lord Byron's poems. In a poem entitled *She Walks in Beauty*, the beauty concept emphasizes more on what is in physics such as aura, while physics is a manifestation of inner beauty. In the poem *Sonnet to Genevra*, the beauty concept that physical and intellectual leads to the divine. At stanzas for music, the beauty concept that is put forward is the beauty of sound that uses natural instruments. Overall it can be concluded that the concept of beauty formed by the era of Romanticism through Byron's poetry is emphasizing things that surpass the physical itself. Beauty is depicted using natural instruments that actually all these beauties lead to God.

Through Stuart Hall's representation theory, the beauty discourse can be found in three of Byron's poems. Moreover, through the conception of the Discursive model proposed by Michel Foucault, the correlation between the production of beauty is owned by Lord Byron. Thus, Byron's construction intends to get a similar goal to gain domination over society.

The construction of beauty discourse delivered in the poems represents the real condition representative in which the author — Lord Byron — lives. As mind-body-dualism becomes the issue that has concerned philosophers for the century and the whole beauty concept in the poems, a similar phenomenon happens in the British romantic society. The idealized beauty always leads to the divine.

Lord Byron as the author of the *She Walks in Beauty*, *Sonnet To Genevra*, and *Stanzas for Music* gives portrayals that is the tool used to criticize the regime. By bringing other instruments, Byron can make beauty as a tool for dealing with two regimes at once namely the classical period and industrial revolution. In addition, he also fights his own people, the upper class. Byron illustrates that restraint of mind, taste, and spirit is inhumane.

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APPENDIX

She Walks In Beauty

She walks in Beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellowed to that tender light
Which Heaven to gaudy day denies.

One shade the more, one ray the less,
Had half impaired the nameless grace
Which waves in every raven tress,
Or softly lightens o'er her face;
Where thoughts serenely sweet express,
How pure, how dear their dwelling-place.

And on that cheek, and o'er that brow,
So soft, so calm, yet eloquent,
The smiles that win, the tints that glow,
But tell of days in goodness spent,
A mind at peace with all below,
A heart whose love is innocent

Sonnet to Genevra

Thine eyes' blue tenderness, thy long fair hair,
And the wan lustre of thy features caught
from contemplation—where serenely wrought,
seems sorrow's softness charm'd from its despair—
have thrown such speaking sadness in thine air that—
but I know thy blessed bosom fraught
with mines of unalloy'd and stainless thought--
I should have deem'd thee doom'd to earthly care.
With such an aspect, by his colours blent,
when from his beauty-breathing pencil born
(Except that thou hast nothing to repent),
The Magdalen of Guido saw the morn--
such seemst thou—but how much more excellent!
With naught Remorse can claim—nor Virtue Scorn

Stanzas for Music

There be none of beauty's daughters

With a magic like thee;

And like music on the waters

Is thy sweet voice to me:

When, as if its sound were causing

The charmed ocean's pausing,

The waves lie still and gleaming,

And the lulled winds seem dreaming:

And the midnight Moon is weaving

Her bright chain o'er the deep;

Whose breast is gently heaving,

As an infant's asleep:

So the spirit bows before thee,

To listen and adore thee;

With a full but soft emotion,

Like the swell of Summer's ocean.