

SPIRITS OF THE DEAD

Thy soul shall find itself alone—
Alone of all on earth—unknown
The cause—but none are near to pry
Into thine hour of secrecy.

Be silent in that solitude,
Which is not loneliness—for then
The spirits of the dead, who stood
In life before thee, are again
In death around thee, and their will
Shall then o'ershadow thee—be still:

For the night, tho' clear, shall frown:
And the stars shall look not down
From their thrones, in the dark heav'n;
With light like Hope to mortals giv'n,
But their red orbs, without beam,
To thy withering heart shall seem
As a burning, and a fever
Which would cling to thee forever.

But 'twill leave thee, as each star
In the morning light afar
Will fly thee—and vanish:
—But its *thought* thou can'st not banish.

The breath of God will be still;
And the wisp upon the hill
By that summer breeze unbrok'n
Shall charm thee—as a token,
And a symbol which shall be
Secrecy in thee.

[1827]