

TO——

1

Should my early life seem,
(As well it might,) a dream—
Yet I build no faith upon
The king Napoleon—
I look not up afar
To my destiny in a star:

2

In parting from you now
Thus much I will avow—
There are beings, and have been
Whom my spirit had not seen
Had I let them pass me by
With a dreaming eye—
If my peace hath flown away
In a night—or in a day—
In a vision—or in none—
Is it the less gone?—

3

I am standing 'mid the roar
Of a weather-beaten shore,
And I hold within my hand
Some particles of sand—
How few! and how they creep
Thro' my fingers to the deep!

My early hopes? no—they
Went gloriously away,
Like lightning from the sky
At once—and so will I.

4

So young? ah! no—not now—
Thou hast not seen my brow,
But they tell thee I am proud—
They lie—they lie aloud—
My bosom beats with shame
At the paltriness of name
With which they dare combine
A feeling such as mine—
Nor Stoic? I am not:
In the terror of my lot
I laugh to think how poor
That pleasure “to endure!”
What! shade of Zeno!—I!
Endure!—no—no—defy.

[1829]