

THE DESCENT OF LIBERTY, A MASK

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The Descent of Liberty, a Mask by Leigh Hunt

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LEIGH HUNT

**THE DESCENT OF
LIBERTY, A MASK**

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DESCENT OF LIBERTY,

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THE
DESCENT OF LIBERTY,
A MASK;

BY
LEIGH HUNT.

Aprite, O Muse, i chiusi fonti, aprite.
Cominci omai da questo dì giocondo
Più che mai bello a rinovarsi il mondo.

CELIO MAGNO.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR GALE, CURTIS, AND FENNER,
PATERNOSTER ROW.

1815.

C. H. Reynell, Printer, 21, Piccadilly, London.

DEDICATION.

TO THOMAS BARNES, ESQ.

OF THE INNER TEMPLE.

MY DEAR BARNES,

I DEDICATED the first poetical attempt of my maturer years to a man of wit and scholarship, who stood the next above me at school ;—allow me to present the second to another, who stood the next below. How far he was my superior in general knowledge, and the anticipation of a manly judgment, I well remember ;—but I am not

going to deviate into the old language of dedications;—I merely allude to these circumstances as calculated to call up pleasant recollections with a variety of readers, and in grateful acknowledgment of a species of friendship, which is of all others the most agreeable. It is the oldest of all friendships; and yet has a charm, which prevents the enjoyers of it from ever seeming to grow old with each other.

Pray forget, if you can, while you are listening to a still more familiar and fire-side voice, your other intimate friends, the great poets; and believe me

Most sincerely your's,

LEIGH HUNT.

Surrey Jail,
10th July, 1814.

PREFACE.



THE following piece was written, partly to vary the hours of imprisonment and ill health, partly to indulge the imagination of the author during a season of public joy when he could realize no sights for himself, and chiefly to express the feelings of hope and delight, with which every enthusiastic lover of freedom must have witnessed the downfall of the great Apostate from Liberty. The romantic nature of the circumstances, which led to and accompanied that striking event, rendered a political allusion more