

LAYS OF THE FUTURE

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Lays of the Future by William Leask

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WILLIAM LEASK

**LAYS OF
THE FUTURE**

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BY WILLIAM LEASK.

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1853.

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PREFACE

THAT there is "a good time coming" is believed by some, rather hoped than believed by others, and absolutely despaired of by multitudes. The writer of this little volume believes, and therefore speaks. The grand peculiarity of his "good time" may appear impossible to the world, and unscriptural to a large portion of the Church. To his mind it is neither; and while he goes to the sacred scriptures alone for his arguments and his facts, he has indicated a rich field where poetry may in these latter days glorify herself, and cheer suffering humanity with a hope that will not make ashamed.

Kennington, 1853.

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LAYS OF THE FUTURE.

A PRAYER.

HELP, Thou Almighty Father, help thy child,
By sorrow smitten, and by sin defil'd.
I feel alone, with multitudes around ;
I feel myself a cumberer of the ground.
My heart beats sadly, though the brilliant sun
Ascends the skies his joyful race to run.
The green earth laughs beneath his cheerful light,
But I would seek the silent gloom of night.
A rock-lin'd cave in some wild solitude,
Where feet of wand'ring men have never stood,
Would suit my feelings and relieve my breast,
Would cheer my heart and yield me needed rest.
There with the stars at midnight hour I'd talk,
And watch the imperial Comet's golden walk.

The fair Moon's beams and gently passing breeze,
Glancing and sighing through the lofty trees,
Whose ancient solitude did never know
The fatal echo of the woodman's blow,
Should make me music, whose entrancing lays
Would wake my soul to strains of ardent praise.
No tidings from the frantic world should come,
To spoil the pleasures of my peaceful home ;
No foaming rumour of approaching war,
My hallow'd musings should disturb and mar ;
Or what is worse, the falsehood cry of " Peace !"
While truth lies chain'd bad governments to please.
I'd see no more the pallid widow sigh,
I'd hear no more the ragged orphan cry ;
No more I'd look on literature and grace
Rudely contemn'd by Ignorance in place ;
No more feel agony of soul, in sight
Of justice crush'd beneath the heel of might ;
No more weep tears of heart-wrung sorrow o'er
The poor insulted at the wealthy's door ;
No more my soul should groan beneath the load
Of conscious impotence in serving God.

Press'd to my heart, the truth I highly prize
Should bloom in peace, and fit me for the skies.
Temptation gone, the love of heaven should find
A fruitful garden in a hallow'd mind.
I'd hear no more the rival shouts of creeds
Battling for faith, but overlooking deeds.
No more should grief hang cloud-like on my soul,
From crowding errors which I can't control;
No more should bitterness of heart betray
Impatience with the follies of the day;
And as the years stole softly o'er my head,
I'd wait, prepar'd, the summons from the dead.
Is this the way by which the mind is train'd
For the grand future? This request obtain'd,
Would the ideal of my fancy come,
And be the tenant of my hermit home?
Is this the way the wondrous Model-Man
Lived on the earth? Is this the settled plan
Of moral discipline for him whose soul,
Fir'd with divine ambition, would control
The gross and earthly appetites, and bring
His ransom'd spirit to the glorious King?