

# **THE PIRATE, A FRAGMENT**

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The Pirate, a Fragment by J. H. Duckett

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**J. H. DUCKETT**

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A FRAGMENT**



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A FRAGMENT.

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BY J. H. DUCKETT.

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TO

**EDWARD**

**LORD VISCOUNT EXMOUTH,**

**BARON EXMOUTH, G. C. B. K. T. S. AND D. C. L.**

**ADMIRAL OF THE BLUE, &c. &c.**

**THIS POEM**

**IS REVERENTLY DEDICATED**

**BY HIS LORDSHIP'S**

**MOST HUMBLE AND DEVOTED SERVANT,**

**J. H. D.**





## Introduction.

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It was in passing over some of the most mountainous and romantic parts of Switzerland, (where the snow, falling at all seasons of the year, creates those immense fields of ice, or glaciers, which, raising their lofty summits above the clouds, form precipices of the most terrific and stupendous appearance; on which the nimble Chamois is never seen to bound, and where the mountain shrub is never seen to flourish,) that these beautiful lines of Lord Byron, in his Ode to Time, occurred to my recollection:—

- “ One scene even thou canst not deform ;
- “ The limit of thy sloth or speed,
- “ When future wanderers bear the storm
- “ Which we shall sleep too sound to heed.
- “ And I can smile to think how weak,
- “ Thine efforts shortly shall be shewn ;
- “ When all the vengeance thou canst wreak,
- “ Must fall upon—a nameless stone.”

Yea, it appeared to me, that a "nameless stone," or very probably no stone at all, except the riven rock that had bounded from its foundation of past ages, should, in a short time, cover me. Yet I felt myself most agreeably surprised at the sight of those beautiful corruscations of the glittering ice, which, reflecting back the rays of the sun in a thousand varied colours, present the most splendid appearance the eye can behold. To see those wonders of the creation shooting their tall spires into many a fantastic shape; at one time assuming the appearance of turreted castles, pyramids, and domed edifices—at another, presenting the view of unbounded forests, interspersed with cottages. The terror I felt at my perilous situation was great, traversing over paths hanging betwixt heaven and earth, expecting that every step I proceeded would plunge me into gulfs, to the bottom of which the eye could not reach. This situation, so novel, and apparently so dangerous, for awhile contracted my power of thinking, and all my ideas were absorbed in one only thought, that of a

conclusion to my journey sooner than I could expect, and indeed sooner than I could wish.

I was not suffered to remain long in this vacuity of reverie, for the clouds began to gather in a fleecy canopy over our heads, and gave the necessity of looking around for a shelter from the impending storm. The wind was hoarsely roaring amongst the icy rocks, and driving full in our faces a sleet more piercing than can be easily described. There was no object that presented itself to our longing sight that could for a moment protect us from the inclemency of the weather. Our mules, that had travelled several leagues, and patiently endured their tedious journey without making one false step, began to flag, and our guides could give us no hope of a speedy end to our day's route, except the one already mentioned. The sun had been long declining in the west, and the snow, which now fell in large flakes, exhibited one of the most dreary prospects I ever beheld. The endeavours of our guides to elevate their spirits by humming o'er some funeral dirge, or whistling some plaintive