

And planted here the guardian shade,
 And sent soft waters murmuring by;
 Thus quietly thy summer goes,
 Thy days declining to repose.

Smit with those charms, that must decay,
 I grieve to see your future doom;
 They died—nor were those flowers more gay,
 The flowers that did in Eden bloom;
 Unpitying frosts, and Autumn's power
 Shall leave no vestige of this flower.

From morning suns and evening dews
 At first thy little being came:
 If nothing once, you nothing lose,
 For when you die you are the same;
 The space between, is but an hour,
 The frail duration of a flower.

(1786; 1788)

THE INDIAN BURYING GROUND (1787)

In spite of all the learned have said,
 I still my old opinion keep;
 The *posture*, that *we* give the dead,
 Points out the soul's eternal sleep.

Not so the ancients of these lands—
 The Indian, when from life released,
 Again is seated with his friends,
 And shares again the joyous feast.¹

His imaged birds, and painted bowl,
 And venison, for a journey dressed,

1. The North American Indians bury their dead in a sitting posture; decorating the corpse with wampum, the images of birds, quadrupeds, &c: And (if that of a warrior) with bows, arrows, tomhaws and other military weapons (Freneau's note).

Bespeak the nature of the soul,
 ACTIVITY, that knows no rest.

His bow, for action ready bent,
 And arrows, with a head of stone,
 Can only mean that life is spent,
 And not the old ideas gone.

Thou, stranger, that shalt come this way,
 No fraud upon the dead commit—
 Observe the swelling turf, and say
 They do not *lie*, but here they *sit*.

Here still a lofty rock remains,
 On which the curious eye may trace
 (Now wasted, half, by wearing rains)
 The fancies of a ruder race.

Here still an aged elm aspires,
 Beneath whose far-projecting shade
 (And which the shepherd still admires)
 The children of the forest played!

There oft a restless Indian queen
 (Pale *Shebah*, with her braided hair)
 And many a barbarous form is seen
 To chide the man that lingers there.

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
 In habit for the chase arrayed,
 The hunter still the deer pursues,
 The hunter and the deer, a shade!

And long shall timorous fancy see
 The painted chief, and pointed spear,
 And Reason's self shall bow the knee
 To shadows and delusions here.

(1787; 1788)