

KEATS

ON SEEING THE ELGIN MARBLES FOR THE FIRST TIME

My spirit is too weak; mortality

    Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,

    And each imagined pinnacle and steep

Of godlike hardship tells me I must die

Like a sick eagle looking at the sky.

    Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep,

    That I have not the cloudy winds to keep

Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.

Such dim-conceived glories of the brain

    Bring round the heart an indescribable feud;

So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,

    That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude

Wasting of old Time -with a billowy main,

    A sun, a shadow of a magnitude.

*Composed MARCH 1-2, 1817; Published March 9, 1817*