THE SEASONS - THOMSON

B.P.B.
1816.32

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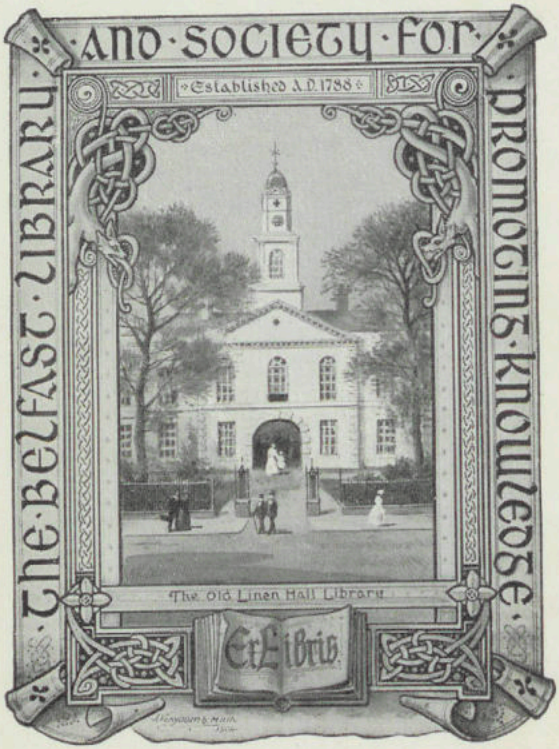

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THE

SEASONS;

BPB/1816.32

BY JAMES THOMSON.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

An Account of the Author's Life and Writings.

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LIFE OF THOMSON.

It is commonly said, that the life of a good writer is best read in his works; which can scarcely fail to receive a peculiar tincture from his temper, manners, and habits: the distinguishing character of his mind, his ruling passion, at least, will appear there undisguised. But however just this observation may be, and although we might safely rest Mr. Thomson's fame, as a good man, as well as a man of genius, on this sole footing, yet the desire which the public always shows of being more particularly acquainted with the history of an eminent author, ought not to be disappointed, as it proceeds not from mere curiosity, but chiefly from affection and gratitude to those by whom they have been entertained and instructed.

To give some account of a deceased friend is often a piece of justice likewise, which ought not to be refused to his memory—to prevent or efface the impertinent fictions which officious biographers are so apt to collect and propagate. And we may add, that the circumstances of an author's life will sometimes throw the best light upon his writings; instances whereof we shall meet with in the following pages.

Mr. Thomson was born at Ednam, in the shire of Roxburgh, on the 11th of September, in the year 1700. His father, minister of that place, was but little known beyond the narrow circle of his co-pres-

byters, and to a few gentlemen in the neighbourhood; but highly respected by them for his piety, and his diligence in the pastoral duty; as appeared afterwards in their kind offices to his widow and orphan family.

The reverend Messrs. Riccarton and Gusthart, particularly, took a most affectionate and friendly part in all their concerns. The former, a man of uncommon penetration and good taste, had very early discovered, through the rudeness of young Thomson's puerile essays, a fund of genius well deserving culture and encouragement. He undertook, therefore, with the father's approbation, the chief direction of his studies, furnished him with the proper books, corrected his performances, and was daily rewarded with the pleasure of seeing his labour so happily employed.

The other reverend gentleman, Mr. Gusthart, late one of the ministers of Edinburgh, and senior of the chapel-royal, was no less serviceable to Mrs. Thomson in the management of her little affairs; which, after the decease of her husband, burdened as she was with a family of nine children, required the prudent counsels and assistance of that faithful and generous friend.

Sir William Bennett, likewise, well known for his gay humour and ready poetical wit, was highly delighted with our young poet, and used to invite him to pass the summer-vacation at his country-seat; a scene of life which Mr. Thomson always remembered with particular pleasure. But what he wrote during that time, either to entertain Sir William and Mr. Riccarton, or for his own amusement, he destroyed every new-year's day; committing his little pieces to the flames in their due order, and crowning the solemnity with a copy of verses, in which were humorously recited the several grounds of their condemnation.

After the usual course of school-education, under an able master at Jedburgh, Mr. Thomson was sent to the university of Edinburgh. But in the second year of his admission, his studies were for some time interrupted by the death of his father, who was carried off so suddenly, that it was not possible for Mr. Thomson, with all the diligence he could use, to receive his last blessing. This affected him to an uncommon degree; and his relations still remember some extraordinary instances of his grief and filial duty on that occasion.

Mrs. Thomson, whose maiden name was Hume, and who was co-heiress of a small estate in the country, did not sink under this misfortune. She consulted her friend Mr. Gusthart; and having, by his advice, mortgaged her moiety of the farm, repaired with her family to Edinburgh, where she lived in a decent frugal manner, till her favourite son had not only finished his academical course, but was even distinguished and patronised as a man of genius. She was, hereself, a person of uncommon natural endowments; possessed of every social and domestic virtue; with an imagination for vivacity and warmth, scarcely inferior to her son's, and which raised her devotional exercises to a pitch bordering on enthusiasm.

But whatever advantage Mr. Thomson might derive from the complexion of his parent, it is certain he owed much to a religious education; and that his early acquaintance with the sacred writings contributed greatly to that *sublime* by which his works will be for ever distinguished. In his first pieces, the *Seasons*, we see him at once assume the majestic freedom of an eastern writer; seizing the grand images as they rise, clothing them in his own expressive language, and preserving, throughout, the grace, the variety,

and the dignity, which belong to a just composition; unhurt by the stiffness of formal method.

About this time the study of poetry was become general in Scotland, the best English authors being universally read, and imitations of them attempted. Addison had lately displayed the beauties of Milton's immortal work; and his remarks on it, together with Mr. Pope's celebrated Essay, had opened the way to an acquaintance with the best poets and critics.

But the most learned critic is not always the best judge of poetry; taste being a gift of nature, the want of which Aristotle and Bossu cannot supply; nor even the study of the best originals, when the reader's faculties are not tuned in a certain consonance to those of the poet: and this happened to be the case with certain learned gentlemen into whose hands a few of Mr. Thomson's first essays had fallen. Some inaccuracies of stile, and those luxuriancies which a young writer can hardly avoid, lay open to their cavils and censure. So far indeed they might be competent judges; but the fire and enthusiasm of the poet had entirely escaped their notice. Mr. Thomson, however, conscious of his own strength, was not discouraged by this treatment; especially as he had some friends on whose judgment he could better rely, and who thought very differently of his performances. Only, from that time, he began to turn his views towards London; where works of genius may always expect a candid reception and due encouragement; and an accident soon after entirely determined him to try his fortune there.

The divinity chair at Edinburgh was then filled by the reverend and learned Mr. Hamilton; a gentleman universally respected and beloved; and who had particularly endeared himself to the young divines under his care, by his kind offices, his candour, and affabili-

ty. Our author had attended his lectures for about a year, when there was prescribed to him, for the subject of an exercise, a psalm in which the power and majesty of God are celebrated. Of this psalm he gave a paraphrase and illustration, as the nature of the exercise required; but in a style so highly poetical, as surprised the whole audience. Mr. Hamilton, as his custom was, complimented the orator upon his performance, and pointed out to the students the most masterly striking parts of it; but at last, turning to Mr. Thomson, he told him, smiling, that if he thought of being useful in the ministry, he must keep a stricter rein upon his imagination, and express himself in language more intelligible to an ordinary congregation.

This gave Mr. Thomson to understand that his expectations from the study of theology might be very precarious; even though the church had been more his free choice than probably it was. So that, having soon after received some encouragement from a lady of quality, a friend of his mother's, then in London, he quickly prepared himself for his journey; and although this encouragement ended in nothing beneficial, it served for the present as a good pretext, to cover the imprudence of committing himself to the wide world, unfriended and unpatronised, and with the slender stock of money he was then possessed of.

But his merit did not long lie concealed. Mr. Forbes, afterwards lord president of the court of session, then attending the service of parliament, having seen a specimen of Mr. Thomson's poetry in Scotland, received him very kindly, and recommended him to some of his friends; particularly to Mr. Aikman, who lived in great intimacy with many persons of distinguished rank and worth. This gentleman, from a connoisseur

in painting, was become a professed painter; and his taste being no less just and delicate in the kindred art of descriptive poetry than in his own, no wonder that he soon conceived a friendship for our author. What a warm return he met with, and how Mr. Thomson was affected by his friend's premature death, appears in the copy of verses which he wrote on that occasion.

In the mean time, our author's reception, wherever he was introduced, emboldened him to risk the publication of his Winter; in which, as himself was a mere novice in such matters, he was kindly assisted by Mr. Mallet, then private tutor to his grace the duke of Montrose, and his brother the lord George Graham, so well known afterwards as an able and gallant sea officer. To Mr. Mallet he likewise owed his first acquaintance with several of the wits of that time, an exact information of their characters, personal and poetical, and how they stood affected to each other.

The poem of Winter, published in March, 1726, was no sooner read than universally admired; those only excepted, who had not been used to feel, or to look for any thing in poetry, beyond a point of satirical or epigrammatical wit, a smart antithesis richly trimmed with rhyme, or the softness of an elegiac complaint. To such, his manly classical spirit could not readily recommend itself, till, after a more attentive perusal, they had got the better of their prejudices, and either acquired or affected a truer taste. A few others stood aloof, merely because they had long before fixed the articles of their poetical creed, and resigned themselves to an absolute despair of ever seeing any thing new and original. These were somewhat mortified to find their notions disturbed by the appearance of a

poet, who seemed to owe nothing but to nature and his own genius. But, in a short time, the applause became unanimous; every one wondering how so many pictures, and pictures so familiar, should have moved them but faintly to what they felt in his descriptions. His digressions too, the overflowings of a tender benevolent heart, charmed the reader no less; leaving him in doubt, whether he should more admire the poet, or love the man.

From that time Mr. Thomson's acquaintance was courted by all men of taste; and several ladies of high rank and distinction became his declared patronesses; the countess of Hartford, Miss Drelincourt, afterwards viscountess Primrose, Mrs. Stanley, and others. But the chief happiness which his Winter procured him, was, that it brought him acquainted with Dr. Rundle, afterwards lord bishop of Derry: who, upon conversing with Mr. Thomson, and finding in him qualities greater still, and of more value than those of a poet, received him into his intimate confidence and friendship; promoted his character every where; introduced him to his great friend the lord chancellor Talbot; and some years after, when the eldest son of that nobleman was to make his tour of travelling, recommended Mr. Thomson as a proper companion for him. His affection and gratitude to Dr. Rundle, and his indignation at the treatment that worthy prelate had met with, are finely expressed in his poem to the memory of lord Talbot. The true cause of that undeserved treatment has been secreted from the public, as well as the dark manœuvres that were employed: but Mr. Thomson, who had access to the best information, places it to the account of

.....Slanderous zeal, and politics infirm,
Jealous of worth.——

Meanwhile, our poet's chief care had been, in return for the public favour, to finish the plan which their wishes laid out for him; and the expectations which his Winter had raised, were fully satisfied by the successive publication of the other seasons: of Summer, in the year 1727; of Spring, in the beginning of the following year; and of Autumn, in a quarto edition of his works, printed in 1730.

In that edition the seasons are placed in their natural order, and crowned with that inimitable Hymn, in which we view them in their beautiful succession, as one whole, the immediate effect of infinite power and goodness. In imitation of the Hebrew bard, all nature is called forth to do homage to the Creator, and the reader is left enraptured in silent adoration and praise.

Besides these, and his tragedy of Sophonisba, written, and acted with applause, in the year 1729, Mr. Thomson had, in 1727, published his poem to the memory of sir Isaac Newton, then lately deceased; containing a deserved encomium of that incomparable man, with an account of his chief discoveries; sublimely poetical, and yet so just, that an ingenious foreigner, the count Algarotti, takes a line out of it for the text of his philosophical dialogues, "Il Neutonianismo par le dame:" this was in part owing to the assistance he had of his friend Mr. Gray, a gentleman well versed in the Newtonian philosophy, who, on that occasion, gave him a very exact, though general, abstract of its principles.

That same year, the resentment of our merchants, for the interruption of their trade by the Spaniards in America, running very high, Mr Thomson zealously took part in it; and wrote his poem Britannia, to rouse the nation to revenge. And although this piece

is the less read that its subject was but accidental and temporary, the spirited generous sentiments that enrich it can never be out of season; they will at least remain a monument of that love of his country, that devotion to the public, which he is ever inculcating as the perfection of virtue, and which none ever felt more pure, or more intense, than himself.

Our author's poetical studies were now to be interrupted, or rather improved, by his attendance on the honourable Mr. Charles Talbot on his travels. A delightful task indeed! endowed as that young nobleman was by nature, and accomplished by the care and example of the best of fathers, in whatever could adorn humanity; graceful of person, elegant in manners and address, pious, humane, generous; with an exquisite taste in all the finer arts.

With this amiable companion and friend, Mr. Thomson visited most of the courts and capital cities in Europe; and returned with his views greatly enlarged; not of exterior nature only, and the works of art, but of human life and manners, of the constitution and policy of the several states, their connections, and their religious institutions. How particular and judicious his observations were, we see in his poem of Liberty, begun soon after his return to England. We see, at the same time, to what a high pitch his love of his country was raised, by the comparisons he had all along been making of our happy well-poised government with those of other nations. To inspire his fellow-subjects with the like sentiments; and to show them by what means the precious freedom we enjoy may be preserved, and how it may be abused or lost, he employed two years of his life in composing that noble work; upon which, conscious of the importance and dignity of the sub-

ject, he valued himself more than upon all his other writings.

While Mr. Thomson was writing the first part of Liberty, he received a severe shock, by the death of his noble friend and fellow-traveller; which was soon followed by another that was severer still, and of more general concern, the death of lord Talbot himself, which Mr. Thomson, so pathetically and so justly laments in the poem dedicated to his memory. In him the nation saw itself deprived of an uncorrupted patriot, the faithful guardian of their rights, on whose wisdom and integrity they had founded their hopes of relief from many tedious vexations; and Mr. Thomson, besides his share in the general mourning, had to bear all the affliction which a heart like his could feel, for the person whom, of all mankind, he most revered and loved. At the same time, he found himself, from an easy competency, reduced to a state of precarious dependence, in which he passed the remainder of his life, excepting only the two last years of it, during which he enjoyed the place of Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands, procured for him by the generous friendship of lord Lyttleton.

Immediately upon his return to England with Mr. Talbot, the chancellor had made him his secretary of briefs; a place of little attendance, suiting his retired indolent way of life, and equal to all his wants. This place fell with his patron; and although the noble Lord who succeeded to lord Talbot in office, kept it vacant for some time, probably till Mr. Thomson should apply for it, he was so dispirited, and so listless to every concern of that kind, that he never took one step in the affair; a neglect which his best friends greatly blamed in him.

Yet could not his genius be depressed, or his temper hurt by this reverse of fortune. He resumed, with time, his usual cheerfulness, and never abated one article in his way of living; which, though simple, was genial and elegant. The profits arising from his works were not inconsiderable; his tragedy of Agamemnon, acted in 1738, yielded a good sum; Mr. Millar was always at hand, to answer or even to prevent his demands; and he had a friend or two besides, whose hearts, he knew, were not contracted by the ample fortunes they had acquired, who would of themselves interpose, if they saw any occasion for it.

But his chief dependence, during this long interval, was on the protection and bounty of his royal highness Frederic prince of Wales; who, upon the recommendation of lord Lyttleton, then his chief favourite, settled on him a handsome allowance. And afterwards, when he was introduced to his royal highness, that excellent prince, who truly was what Mr. Thomson paints him, "the friend of mankind and of merit," received him very graciously, and ever after honoured him with many marks of particular favour and confidence. A circumstance, which does equal honour to the patron and the poet, ought not here to be omitted; that my lord Lyttleton's recommendation came altogether unsolicited, and long before Mr. Thomson was personally known to him.

It happened, however, that the favour of his royal highness was in one instance of some prejudice to our author; in the refusal of a licence for his tragedy of Edward and Eleonora, which he had prepared for the stage in the year 1739. The reader may see that this play contains not a line which could justly give offence: but the ministry, still sore from certain pas-

quinades, which had lately produced the stage-act; and as little satisfied with some parts of the prince's political conduct, as he was with their management of the public affairs; would not risk the representation of a piece written under his eye, and, they might probably think, by his command.

This refusal drew after it another; and in a way which, as it is related, was rather ludicrous. Mr. Paterson, a companion of Mr. Thomson, afterwards his deputy, and then his successor in the general surveyorship, used to write out fair copies for his friend, when such were wanted for the press or for the stage. This gentleman likewise courted the tragic muse; and had taken for his subject, the story of Arminius the German hero. But this play, guiltless as it was, being presented for a licence, no sooner had the censor cast his eyes on the hand-writing in which he had seen Edward and Eleonora, than he cried out, "Away with it!" and the author's profits were reduced to what his bookseller could afford for a tragedy in distress.

Mr. Thomson's next dramatic performance was the masque of Alfred, written, jointly with Mr. Mallet, by command of the prince of Wales, for the entertainment of his royal highness' court, at his summer-residence. This piece, with some alterations, and the music new, has since been brought upon the stage by Mr. Mallet: but the edition given of it in the works of our author is from the original, as it was acted at Clifden, in the year 1740, on the birth-day of her royal highness the princess Augusta.

In the year 1745, his Tancred and Sigismunda, taken from the novel in Gil Blas, was performed with applause; and from the deep romantic distress of the lovers, continues to draw crowded houses. The suc-

cess of this piece was indeed insured from the first, by Mr. Garrick and Mrs. Cibber appearing in the principal characters, which they heightened and adorned with all the magic of their never-failing art.

He had, in the mean time, been finishing his Castle of Indolence, in two cantos. It was, at first, little more than a few detached stanzas, in the way of raillery on himself, and on some of his friends, who would reproach him with indolence, while he thought them, at least, as indolent as himself. But he saw very soon that the subject deserved to be treated more seriously, and in a form fitted to convey one of the most important moral lessons.

The stanza which he uses in this work is that of Spenser, borrowed from the Italian poets; in which he thought rhymes had their proper place, and were even graceful; the compass of the stanza admitting an agreeable variety of final sounds; while the sense of the poet is not cramped or cut short, nor yet too much dilated, as must often happen when it is parcelled out into rhymed couplets, the usual measure indeed of our elegy and satire; but which always weakens the higher poetry, and, to a true ear, will sometimes give it an air of the burlesque.

This was the last piece Mr. Thomson himself published; his tragedy of Coriolanus being only prepared for the theatre, when a fatal accident robbed the world of one of the best men, and best poets that lived in it.

He had always been a timorous horseman, and more so, in a road where numbers of giddy or unskilful riders are continually passing: so that when the weather did not invite him to go by water, he would commonly walk the distance between London and

Richmond, with any acquaintance that offered; with whom he might chat and rest himself, or perhaps dine by the way. One summer evening, being alone, in his walk from town to Hammersmith, he had overheated himself, and in that condition imprudently took a boat to carry him to Kew; apprehending no bad consequences from the chill air on the river, which his walk to his house, at the upper end of Kew-lane, had always hitherto prevented. But now the cold had so seized him, that next day he found himself in a high fever, so much the more to be dreaded that he was of a full habit. This, however, by the use of proper medicines, was removed, so that he was thought to be out of danger: till the fine weather having tempted him to expose himself once more to the evening dews, his fever returned with violence, and with such symptoms as left no hopes of a cure. Two days had passed before his relapse was known in town. At last, Mr. Mitchell and Mr. Reid, with Dr. Armstrong, being informed of it, posted out at midnight to his assistance: but, alas! came only to endure a sight of all others the most shocking to nature, the last agonies of their beloved friend. This lamented death happened on the 27th day of August, 1748.

His testamentary executors were, the lord Lyttleton, whose care of our poet's fortune and fame ceased not with his life; and Mr. Mitchell, a gentleman equally noted for the truth and constancy of his private friendships, and for his address and spirit as a public minister. By their united interest, the orphan play of Coriolanus was brought on the stage to the best advantage: from the profits of which, and the sale of manuscripts and other effects, all demands were duly satisfied, and a handsome sum remitted to his sisters.

My lord Lyttleton's prologue to this piece was admired as one of the best that had hitherto been written: the best spoken it certainly was. The sympathising audience saw that then indeed Mr. Quin was no actor; that the tears he shed were those of real friendship and grief.

Mr. Thomson's remains were deposited in the church of Richmond, under a plain stone, without any inscription. It was not till the year 1762, that the noble design was proposed, to erect for him a funeral monument in Westminster Abbey. In order to defray the necessary expense of this undertaking, Mr. A. Millar published, by subscription, a splendid edition of our author's works in quarto, the entire profits of which he cheerfully dedicated to this purpose: and it was further proposed, that any remaining sum, after paying all expenses, should be remitted to his relations. This generous publication met with deserved encouragement. His present majesty, her royal highness the princess dowager of Wales, his royal highness the duke of York, and the principal nobility and gentry in Great Britain appear in the list of subscribers.—Nor must we omit taking notice, that Madame Bontems, a French lady, who has obliged the world with a translation of the Seasons into her own language, (a translation equally faithful and elegant) desired likewise to be a subscriber to this edition of Mr. Thomson's works. It was, however, unlucky, that by a well-intended, though ill-judged parsimony, the execution of this work was committed to an inferior artist, who erected a monument, not indeed destitute of merit, but from which neither our author, nor the abbey, nor the present age, will derive any honour.

It is pretty strange, that upon the death of Mr. Thomson, his brother poets did not at all exert themselves on the occasion, as they had lately done for one who had been the terror of poets all his life-time. This silence furnished matter to one of his friends for an excellent satirical epigram, which we are sorry we cannot give the reader. Only one gentleman, Mr. Collins, who had lived some time at Richmond, but forsook it when Mr. Thomson died, wrote an ode to his memory. This, for the dirge-like melancholy it breathes, and the warmth of affection that seems to have dictated it, we shall subjoin to the present account.

Our author himself hints, somewhere in his works, that his exterior was not the most promising, his make being rather robust than graceful; though it is known that in his youth he had been thought handsome. His worst appearance was when you saw him walking alone, in a thoughtful mood: but let a friend accost him, and enter into conversation, he would instantly brighten into a most amiable aspect, his features no longer the same, and his eye darting a peculiar animated fire. The case was much alike in company; where, if it was mixed, or very numerous, he made but an indifferent figure: but with a few select friends he was open, sprightly, and entertaining. His wit flowed freely, but pertinently, and at due intervals, leaving room for every one to contribute his share. Such was his extreme sensibility, so perfect the harmony of his organs with the sentiments of his mind, that his looks always announced, and half-expressed, what he was about to say, and his voice corresponded exactly to the manner

and degree in which he was affected. This sensibility had one inconvenience attending it, that it rendered him the very worst reader of good poetry; a sonnet, or a copy of tame verses, he could manage pretty well, or even improve them in the reading; but a passage of Virgil, Milton, or Shakespeare, would sometimes quite oppress him, that you could hear little else than some ill-articulated sounds, rising as from the bottom of his breast.

He had improved his taste upon the best originals, ancient and modern; but could not bear to write what was not strictly his own—what had not more immediately struck his imagination, or touched his heart; so that he is not in the least concerned in that question about the merit or demerit of imitators. What he borrows from the ancients, he gives us in an avowed faithful paraphrase or translation; as we see in a few passages taken from Virgil, and in that beautiful picture from Pliny the elder, where the course and gradual increase of the Nile, are figured by the stages of man's life.

The autumn was his favourite season for poetical composition, and the deep silence of the night the time he commonly chose for such studies; so that he would often be heard walking in his library till near morning, humming over, in his way, what he was to correct and write out next day.

The amusements of his leisure hours were civil and natural history, voyages, and the relations of travellers, the most authentic he could procure; and had his situation favoured it, he would certainly have excelled in gardening, agriculture, and every rural improvement and exercise. Although he performed on no instrument, he was passionately fond of music, and would sometimes listen a full hour at his window to the nightingales in Richmond gardens. While abroad,

he had been greatly delighted with the regular Italian drama, such as Metastasio writes, as it is there heightened by the charms of the best voices and instruments; and looked upon our theatrical entertainments as in one respect, naked and imperfect, when compared with the ancient, or with those of Italy; wishing sometimes that a chorus at least, and a better recitative could be introduced.

Nor was his taste less exquisite in the arts of painting, sculpture, and architecture. In his travels, he had seen all the most celebrated monuments of antiquity, and the best productions of modern art; and studied them so minutely, and with so true a judgment, that in some of his descriptions in the poem of Liberty, we have the master-pieces there mentioned, placed in a stronger light perhaps than if we saw them with our eyes; at least more justly delineated than in any other account extant; so superior is a natural taste of the grand and beautiful, to the traditional lessons of a common virtuoso. His collection of prints, and some drawings from the antique, are now in the possession of his friend Mr. Gray, of Richmond-hill.

As for his more distinguishing qualities of mind and heart, they are better represented in his writings than they can be by the pen of any biographer. There his love of mankind, of his country and friends—his devotion to the Supreme Being, founded on the most elevated and just conceptions of his operations and providence, shine out in every page. So unbounded was his tenderness of heart that it took in even the brute creation—judge what it must have been towards his own species. He is not indeed known, through his whole life, to have given any person one moment's pain by his writings or otherwise. He took no part in the poetical squabbles which happened in his time; and

was respected and left undisturbed by both sides. He would even refuse to take offence, when he justly might, by interrupting any personal story that was brought him, with some jest, or some humorous apology for the offender. Nor was he ever seen ruffled or discomposed, but when he heard or read of some flagrant instance of injustice, oppression, or cruelty; then indeed the strongest marks of horror and indignation were visible in his countenance.

These amiable virtues, this divine temper of mind, did not fail of their due reward. His friends loved him with an enthusiastic ardor, and lamented his untimely fate in a manner that was long remembered; the best and greatest men of his time honoured him with their friendship and protection; the applause of the public attended every appearance he made; the actors, of whom the most eminent were his friends and admirers, grudging no pains to do justice to his tragedies. At present, indeed, if we except Tancred, they are seldom called for; the simplicity of his plots, and the models he worked after, not suiting the reigning taste, nor the impatience of an English theatre. They may hereafter come to be in vogue; but we hazard no comment or conjecture upon them, or upon any part of Mr. Thomson's works; neither need they any defence or apology, after the reception they have had at home, and in the foreign languages into which they have been translated. We shall only say, that to judge from the imitations of his manner, which have been following him close from the very first publication of Winter, he seems to have fixed no inconsiderable era of the English poetry.

ODE

ON THE DEATH OF MR. JAMES THOMSON.

BY MR. COLLINS.

The scene of the following stanzas is supposed to lie on the Thames, near Richmond.

I.

In yonder grave a druid lies,
Where slowly winds the stealing wave;
The year's best sweets shall duteous rise,
To deck its poet's sylvan grave.

II.

In yon deep bed of whisp'ring reeds,
His airy harp* shall now be laid;
That he whose heart in sorrow bleeds,
May love through life the soothing shade.

* The harp of Æolus, of which see a description in the Castle of Indolence.

III.

Then maids and youths shall linger here,
And while its sounds at distance swell,
Shall sadly seem, in Pity's ear,
To hear the woodland pilgrim's knell.

IV.

Remembrance oft shall haunt the shore,
When Thames in summer-wreaths is drest,
And oft suspend the dashing oar,
To bid his gentle spirit rest.

V.

And oft as Ease and Health retire
To breezy lawn, or forest deep,
The friend shall view yon whitening spire,*
And mid the varied landscape weep.

VI.

But thou, who own'st that earthly bed,
Ah! what will every dirge avail?
Or tears which love and pity shed,
That mourn beneath the gliding sail?

VII.

Yet lives there one whose heedless eye
Shall scorn thy pale shrine glimmering near?
With him, sweet bard, may fancy die,
And joy desert the blooming year.

VIII.

But thou, lorn stream, whose sullen tide
No sedge-crowned sisters now attend,

* Richmond church.

Now waft me from the green hill's side,
Whose cold turf hides the buried friend.

IX.

And see, the fairy vallies fade,
Dun night has veil'd the solemn view;
Yet once again, dear parted shade,
Meek nature's child,—again adieu!

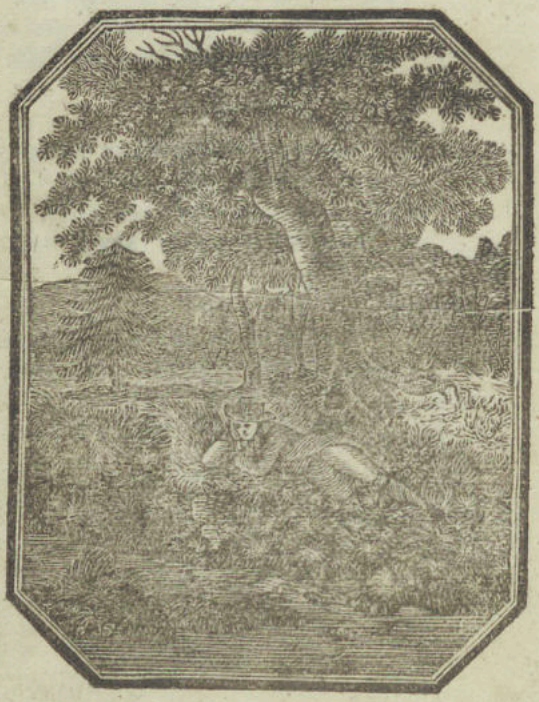
X.

The genial meads assigned to bless
Thy life, shall mourn thy early doom;
There hinds and shepherd-girls shall dress
With simple hands thy rural tomb.

XI.

Long, long thy stone and pointed clay,
Shall melt the musing Briton's eyes;
Oh, vales and wild woods! shall he say,
In yonder grave your Druid lies

FRONTISPIECE.



Hence, let me haste into the mid-wood shade,
Where scarce a sun-beam wanders through the gloom;
And on the dark-green grass, beside the brink
Of haunted stream, that by the roots of oak
Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
And sing the glories of the circling year. &c.

Summer—line 9, &c.

SPRING.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Inscribed to the countess of Hartford. The season is described as it affects the various parts of nature, ascending from the lower to the higher; with digressions arising from the subject. Its influence on inanimate matter, on vegetables, on brute animals, and last on man; concluding with a dissuasive from the wild and irregular passion of love, opposed to that of a pure and happy kind.

SPRING.

Come, gentle Spring, ethereal mildness, come;
And from the bosom of yon dropping cloud,
While music wakes around, veiled in a shower
Of shadowing roses, on our plains descend.

O Hartford! fitted, or to shine in courts 5
With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
With innocence and meditation joined
In soft assemblage,—listen to my song,
Which thy own season paints; when nature all
Is blooming and benevolent, like thee. 10

And see where surly Winter passes off,
Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts:
His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,
The shatter'd forest, and the ravag'd vale;
While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch 15
Dissolving snows in livid torrents lost,
The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.

As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd;
And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets 20
Deform the day delightless; so that scarce
The bittern knows his time, with bill ingulf'd,
To shake the sounding marsh; or from the shore,

The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
And sing their wild notes to the listening waste. 25

At last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun,
And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more
Th' expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold;
But, full of life and vivifying soul,
Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them, thin,
Fleecy and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven. 31

Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,
Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
Joyous, th' impatient husbandman perceives
Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers 35
Drives from their stalls, to where the well-us'd plough
Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.
There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke
They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark. 40
Meanwhile, incumbent o'er the shining share
The master leans, removes th' obstructing clay,
Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.

While through the neighb'ring fields the sower stalks
With measur'd step; and liberal throws the grain 45
Into the faithful bosom of the ground.
The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene.

Be gracious, Heav'n! for now laborious man
Has done his part. Ye fostering breezes, blow!
Ye softening dews, ye tender showers, descend! 50
And temper all, thou world-reviving sun,
Into the perfect year. Nor ye who live
In luxury and ease, in pomp and pride,
Think these lost themes unworthy of your ear:
Such themes as these the rural Maro sung 55

To wide imperial Rome, in the full height
Of elegance and taste, by Greece refin'd.
In ancient times, the sacred plough employ'd
The kings, and awful fathers of mankind:
And some, with whom compar'd, your insect tribes 60
Are but the beings of a summer's day,
Have held the scales of empire, rul'd the storm
Of mighty war; then, with unweary'd hand,
Disdaining little delicacies, seiz'd
The plough, and greatly independent liv'd. 65

Ye generous Britons! venerate the plough,
And o'er your hills, and long withdrawing vales,
Let Autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
Luxuriant and unbounded: as th sea,
Far through his azure turbulent domain, 70
Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports;
So with superior boon may your rich soil,
Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
O'er every land, the naked nations clothe, 75
And be the exhaustless granary of a world!

Nor only through the lenient air this change
Delicious breathes; the penetrative sun,
His force deep darting to the dark retreat
Of vegetation, sets the steaming power 80
At large to wander o'er the verdant earth,
In various hues; but chiefly thee, gay green!
Thou smiling Nature's universal robe!
United light and shade! where the sight dwells
With growing strength, and ever-new delight. 85

From the moist meadow to the withered hill,
Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,

And swells, and deepens, to the cherish'd eye.
The hawthorn whitens; and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees, 90
Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd,
In full luxuriance to the sighing gales;
Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
And the birds sing conceal'd. At once, array'd
In all the colours of the flushing year, 95
By Nature's swift and secret-working hand,
The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
With lavish'd fragrance; while the promis'd fruit
Lies yet a little embryo, unperceiv'd
Within its crimson folds. Now from the town 100
Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damps,
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
Of sweet-brier hedges I pursue my walk; 105
Or taste the smell of dairy; or ascend
Some eminence, Augusta, in thy plains,
And see the country, far diffus'd around,
One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower
Of mingled blossoms; where the raptur'd eye 110
Hurries from joy to joy, and, hid beneath
the fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies.

If, brush'd from Russian wilds, a cutting gale
Rise not, and scatter from his humid wings
The clammy mildew; or, dry-blowing, breathe 115
Untimely frost; before whose baleful blast
The full-blown spring through all her foliage shrinks
Joyless and dead, a wide-dejected waste.
For oft, engender'd by the hazy north,
Myriads on myriads, insect armies warp 120
Keen in the poison'd breeze; and wasteful eat

Through buds and bark, into the blacken'd core,
Their eager way. A feeble race! yet oft
The sacred sons of vengeance; on whose course
Corrosive famine waits, and kills the year. 125
To check this plague, the skilful farmer chaff,
And blazing straw, before his orchard burns;
Till, all involv'd in smoke, the latent foe
From ev'ry cranny, suffocated, falls;
Or scatters o'er the blooms the pungent dust 130
Of pepper, fatal to the frosty tribe:
Or, when th' envenomed leaf begins to curl,
With sprinkled water drowns them in their nest;
Nor, while they pick them up with busy bill,
The little trooping birds unwisely scares. 135

Be patient, swains; these cruel-seeming winds
Blow not in vain. Far hence they keep repress'd
Those deep'ning clouds on clouds, surcharg'd with rain,
That o'er the vast Atlantic, hither borne,
In endless train, would quench the summer blaze, 140
And, cheerless, drown the crude unripen'd year.

The north-east spends his rage; he now shut up
Within his iron cave, th' effusive south,
Warms the wide air, and o'er the void of heav'n
Breathes the big clouds with vernal showers distent
At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise, 146
Scarce staining ether; but by swift degrees,
In heaps on heaps, the doubling vapour sails
Along the loaded sky, and mingling deep
Sits on th' horizon round a settled gloom: 150
Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
Oppressing life; but lovely, gentle, kind,
And full of every hope and every joy,
The wish of nature. Gradual sinks the breeze

Into a perfect calm; that not a breath 155
Is heard to quiver through the closing woods;
Or rustling turn the many-twinkling leaves
Of aspin tall. Th' uncurling floods diffus'd
In glassy breadth, seem through delusive lapse
Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all, 160
And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
Drop the dry sprig, and mute-imploring, eye
The falling verdure. Hush'd in short suspense,
The plumy people streak their wings with oil,
To throw the lucid moisture trickling off; 165
And wait th' approaching sign to strike, at once,
Into the general choir. E'en mountains, vales,
And forests seem, impatient, to demand
The promis'd sweetness. Man superior walks
Amid the glad creation, musing praise, 170
And looking lively gratitude. At last
The clouds consign their treasures to the fields:
And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow
In large effusion, o'er the freshened world. 175
The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard,
By such as wander through the forest walks,
Beneath th' umbrageous multitude of leaves.
But who can hold the shade, while heav'n descends
In universal bounty, shedding herbs, 180
And fruits, and flowers, on Nature's ample lap?
Swift fancy fir'd anticipates their growth;
And, while the milky nutriment distils,
Beholds the kindling country colour round.

Thus all day long the full distended clouds 185
Indulge their genial stores, and well shower'd earth
Is deep enrich'd with vegetable life;
Till, in the western sky, the downward sun

Looks out effulgent, from amid the flush
Of broken clouds, gay shifting to his beam. 190
The rapid radiance instantaneous strikes
Th' illumin'd mountain, through the forest streams,
Shakes on the floods, and in a yellow mist,
Far smoking o'er th' interminable plain,
In twinkling myriads lights the dewy gems. 195
Moist, bright, and green, the landscape laughs around;
Full swell the woods; their every music wakes,
Mix'd in wild concert with the warbling brooks,
Increas'd, the distant bleatings of the hills,
And hollow lows responsive from the vales, 200
Whence blending all the sweetened zephyr springs.
Mean time refracted from yon eastern cloud,
Bestriding earth, the grand ethereal bow
Shoots up immense; and every hue unfolds
In fair proportion, running from the red, 205
To where the violet fades into the sky.
Here, awful Newton, the dissolving clouds
Form, fronting on the sun, thy showery prism;
And to the sage-instructed eye unfold
The various twine of light, by thee disclos'd 210
From the white mingling maze. Not so the boy;
He wondering views the bright enchantment bend
Delightful o'er the radiant fields, and runs
To catch the falling glory; but amaz'd
Beholds th' amusive arch before him fly, 215
Then vanish quite away. Still night succeeds,
A soften'd shade, and saturated earth
Awaits the morning-beam, to give to light,
Rais'd through ten thousand different plastic tubes,
The balmy treasures of the former day. 220

Then spring the living herbs, profusely wild,
O'er all the deep green earth, beyond the power

Of botanist to number up their tribes;
Whether he steals along the lonely dale,
In silent search, or through the forest, rank 225
With what the dull incurious weeds account,
Bursts his blind way; or climbs the mountain rock,
Fir'd by the nodding verdure of its brow.
With such a liberal hand has Nature flung
Their seeds abroad, blown them about in winds, 230
Innumerous mixed them with the nursing mould,
The moistening current, and prolific rain.

But who their virtues can declare? who pierce
With vision pure, into the secret stores
Of health, and life, and joy? the food of man, 235
While yet he liv'd in innocence, and told
A length of golden years; unflesh'd in blood,
A stranger to the savage arts of life,
Death, rapine, carnage, surfeit, and disease;
The lord, and not the tyrant of the world. 240

The first fresh dawn then wak'd the gladdened race
Of uncorrupted man, nor blushed to see
The sluggard sleep beneath its sacred beam:
For their light slumbers gently fumed away;
And up they rose, as vigorous as the sun, 245
Or to the culture of the willing glebe,
Or to the cheerful tendance of the flock.
Meantime the song went round; and dance and sport,
Wisdom and friendly talk, successive stole
Their hours away; while in the rosy vale 250
Love breathed his infant sighs, from anguish free,
And full replete with bliss; save the sweet pain,
That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.
Nor yet injurious act, nor surly deed,
Was known among those happy sons of Heaven; 255

For reason and benevolence were law.
Harmonious nature too look'd smiling on.
Clear shone the skies, cool'd with eternal gales,
And balmy spirit all. The youthful sun
Shot his best rays, and still the gracious clouds 260
Dropp'd fatness down; as o'er the swelling mead,
The herds and flocks commixing, play'd secure.
This when, emergent from the gloomy wood,
The glaring lion saw, his horrid heart
Was meeken'd, and he joined his sullen joy. 265
For music held the whole in perfect peace;
Soft sigh'd the flute; the tender voice was heard,
Warbling the varied heart; the woodlands round
Applied their quire, and winds and waters flow'd
In consonance. Such were those prime of days. 270

But now those white unblemished manners, whence
The fabling poets took their golden age,
Are found no more amid these iron times,
These dregs of life! Now the distemper'd mind
Has lost that concord of harmonious powers, 275
Which forms the soul of happiness; and all
Is off the poise within; the passions all
Have burst their bounds; and reason, half extinct,
Or impotent, or else approving, sees
The foul disorder. Senseless and deform'd, 280
Convulsive anger storms at large; or pale
And silent, settles into fell revenge.
Base envy withers at another's joy,
And hates that excellence it cannot reach.
Desponding fear, of feeble fancies full, 285
Weak and unmanly, loosens every power.
Ev'n love itself is bitterness of soul,
A pensive anguish pining at the heart;
Or, sunk to sordid int'rest, feels no more

That noble wish, that never cloy'd desire, 290
Which, selfish joy disdaining, seeks alone
To bless the dearer object of its flame.
Hope sickens with extravagance, and grief,
Of life impatient, into madness swells;
Or in dead silence wastes the weeping hours. 295
These, and a thousand mix'd emotions more,
From ever changing views of good and ill,
Form'd infinitely various, vex the mind
With endless storm; whence, deeply rankling, grows
The partial thought, a listless unconcern, 300
Cold, and averting from our neighbour's good:
Then dark disgust and hatred, winding wiles,
Coward deceit, and ruffian violence:
At last, extinct each social feeling, fell
And joyless inhumanity pervades 305
And petrifies the heart. Nature, disturb'd,
Is deem'd, vindictive, to have chang'd her course.

Hence, in old dusky time, a deluge came;
When the deep-cleft disparting orb, that arch'd
The central waters round, impetuous rush'd 310
With universal burst, into the gulf,
And o'er the high-pil'd hills of fractur'd earth
Wide dash'd the waves, in undulation vast;
Till from the centre to the streaming clouds,
A shoreless ocean tumbled round the globe. 315

The seasons, since, have with severer sway
Oppress'd a broken world: the Winter keen
Shook forth his waste of snows; and Summer shot
His pestilential heats. Great Spring, before,
Green'd all the year; and fruits and blossoms blush'd,
In social sweetness, on the self-same bough. 321
Pure was the temperate air, an even calm

Perpetual reign'd, save what the zephyrs bland
Breath'd o'er the blue expanse: for then nor storms
Were taught to blow, nor hurricanes to rage; 325
Sound slept the waters; no sulphureous glooms
Swell'd in the sky, and sent the lightning forth;
While sickly damps, and cold autumnal fogs,
Hung not, relaxing, on the springs of life.
But now, of turbid elements the sport, 330
From clear to cloudy toss'd, from hot to cold,
And dry to moist, with inward-eating change,
Our drooping days are dwindled down to nought,
Their period finish'd ere 'tis well begun.

And yet the wholesome herb neglected dies, 335
Though with the pure exhilarating soul
Of nutriment and health, and vital powers,
Beyond the search of art, 'tis copious bless'd.
For, with hot ravin fir'd, insanguin'd man
Is now become the lion of the plain, 340
And worse. The wolf, who from the nightly fold
Fierce drags the bleating prey, ne'er drunk her milk,
Nor wore her warming fleece; nor has the steer,
At whose strong chest the deadly tyger hangs,
Ere plow'd for him. They too are temper'd high,
With hunger stung and wild necessity,
Nor lodges pity in their shaggy breast.
But *man*, whom Nature form'd of milder clay,
With ev'ry kind emotion in his heart,
And taught alone to weep: while from her lap 350
She pours ten thousand delicacies, herbs,
And fruits, as numerous as the drops of rain,
Or beams that gave them birth: shall he, fair form!
Who wears sweet smiles, and looks erect on heav'n,
E'er stoop to mingle with the prowling herd, 355
And dip his tongue in gore? The beast of prey,

Blood-stain'd, deserves to bleed: but you, ye flocks,
What have ye done; ye peaceful people, what
To merit death? You, who have given us milk
In luscious streams, and lent us your own coat 360
Against the winter's cold? And the plain ox,
That harmless, honest, guileless animal,
In what has he offended? He, whose toil,
Patient, and ever-ready, clothes the land
With all the pomp of harvest; shall he bleed, 365
And struggling groan beneath the cruel hands
Even of the clown he feeds? and that, perhaps,
To swell the riot of th' autumnal feast,
Won by his labour? Thus the feeling heart
Would tenderly suggest; but 'tis enough, 370
In this late age, adventurous, to have touch'd
Light on the numbers of the Samian sage.
High Heaven forbids the bold presumptuous strain,
Whose wisest will has fixed us in a state
That must not yet to pure perfection rise. 375

Now when the first foul torrent of the brooks,
Swell'd with the vernal rains, is ebb'd away;
And, whitening, down their mossy tinctur'd stream
Descends the billowy foam; now is the time,
While yet the dark-brown water aids the guile, 380
To tempt the trout. The well-dissembl'd fly,
The rod fine tapering with elastic spring,
Snatch'd from the hoary steed the floating line,
And all thy slender wat'ry stores prepare.
But let not on thy hook the tortur'd worm, 385
Convulsive, twist in agonizing folds;
Which, by rapacious hunger swallow'd deep,
Gives, as you tear it from the bleeding breast
Of the weak, helpless, uncomplaining wretch,
Harsh pain and horror to the tender hand. 390

When with his lively ray the potent sun
Has pierc'd the streams, and rous'd the finny race,
Then, issuing cheerful, to thy sport repair:
Chief should the western breezes curling play,
And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds. 395
High to their fount, this day, amid the hills,
And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks;
The next, pursue their rocky channel'd maze,
Down to the river, in whose ample wave
Their little Naiads love to sport at large. 400
Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
Is mix'd the trembling stream, or where it boils
Around the stone, or from the hollow'd bank
Reverted plays in undulating flow;
There throw, nice judging, the delusive fly; 405
And, as you lead it round in artful curve,
With eye attentive mark the springing game.
Straight as above the surface of the flood
They wanton rise, or urg'd by hunger leap,
Then fix with gentle twitch the barbed hook; 410
Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,
And to the shelving shore slow dragging some,
With various hand proportioned to their force.
If yet too young, and easily deceiv'd,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod, 415
Him, piteous of his youth, and the short space
He has enjoyed the vital light of heav'n,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream
The speckled captive throw. But should you lure
From his dark haunt beneath the tangled roots 420
Of pendant trees, the monarch of the brook,
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly;
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear. 425

At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun
Passes a cloud, he desp'rate takes the death,
With sullen plunge. At once he darts along,
Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthened line;
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed, 430
The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode;
And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,
That feels him still, yet to his furious course
Gives way, you, now retiring, following now 435
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage:
Till, floating broad upon his breathless side,
And to his fate abandon'd, to the shore
You gaily drag your unresisting prize.

Thus pass the temperate hours; but when the sun
Shakes from his noonday throne the scatt'ring clouds,
Even shooting listless languor thro' the deeps;
Then seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
Where scattered wide the lily of the vale
Its balmy essence breathes; where cowslips hang 445
The dewy head; where purple violets lurk
With all the lowly children of the shade:
Or lie reclin'd beneath yon spreading ash,
Hung o'er the steep, whence, borne on liquid wing,
The sounding culver shoots; or where the hawk, 450
High in the beetling cliff, his ærie builds.
There let the classic page thy fancy lead
Thro' rural scenes, such as the Mantuan swain
Paints in the matchless harmony of song.
Or catch thyself the landscape gliding swift 455
Athwart imagination's vivid eye:
Or by the vocal woods and waters lulled,
And lost in lonely musing, in the dream,
Confus'd, of careless solitude, where mix

Ten thousand wandering images of things, 460
Sooth every gust of passion into peace;
All but the swellings of the soften'd heart,
That waken, not disturb, the tranquil mind.

Behold, yon breathing prospect bids the Muse
Throw all her beauty forth. But who can paint 465
Like Nature? Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers?
Or can it mix them with that matchless skill,
And lose them in each other, as appears
In every bud that blows? If fancy then 470
Unequal fails beneath the pleasing task,
Ah, what shall language do? ah, where find words
Ting'd with so many colours, and whose power,
To life approaching, may perfume my lays
With that fine oil, those aromatic gales, 475
That inexhaustive flow continual round?

Yet, though successless, will the toil delight.
Come, then, ye virgins and ye youths, whose hearts
Have felt the raptures of refining love;
And thou, Amanda, come, pride of my song! 480
Form'd by the Graces, loveliness itself!
Come with those downcast eyes, sedate and sweet,
Those looks demure, that deeply pierce the soul,
Where, with the light of thoughtful reason mix'd,
Shines lively fancy, and the feeling heart: 485
Oh, come! and while the rosy-footed May
Steals blushing on, together let us tread
The morning dews, and gather in their prime
Fresh-blooming flowers to grace thy braided hair,
And thy lov'd bosom, that improves their sweets. 490

See where the winding vale its lavish stores

Irriguous spreads. See how the lily drinks
The latent rill, scarce oozing through the grass,
Of growth luxuriant; or the humid bank,
In fair profusion, decks. Long let us walk, 495
Where the breeze blows from yon extended field
Of blossom'd beans. Arabia cannot boast
A fuller gale of joy, than, liberal, thence
Breathes thro' the sense, and takes the ravish'd soul.
Nor is the mead unworthy of thy foot, 500
Full of fresh verdure, and unnumber'd flowers,
The negligence of Nature, wide and wild;
Where, undisguised by mimic Art, she spreads
Unbounded beauty to the roving eye.
Here their delicious task the fervent bees 505
In swarming millions tend; around, athwart,
Through the soft air the busy nations fly,
Cling to the bud, and with inserted tube
Suck its pure essence, its ethereal soul;
And oft, with bolder wing, they soaring dare 510
The purple heath, or where the wild thyme grows,
And yellow load them with the luscious spoil.

At length the finish'd garden to the view
Its vistas opens, and its alleys green.
Stretch'd thro' the verdant maze, the hurried eye 515
Distracted wanders; now the bowery walk
Of covert close, where scarce a speck of day
Falls on the lengthened gloom, protracted sweeps;
Now meets the bending sky; the river now,
Dimpling along; the breezy-ruffled lake, 520
The forest dark'ning round, the glitt'ring spire,
Th' ethereal mountain, and the distant main.
But why so far excursive? when at hand,
Along these blushing borders, bright with dew,
And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers, 525

Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace:
Throws out the snow-drop and the crocus first:
The daisy, primrose, violet, darkly blue,
And polyanthus of unnumber'd dyes;
The yellow wall-flower, stained with iron brown; 530
And lavish stock that scents the garden round:
From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
Anemonies; auriculas, enrich'd
With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves;
And full ranunculas, of glowing red. 535
Then comes the tulip race, where beauty plays
Her idle freaks; from family diffus'd
To family, as flies the father-dust,
The varied colours run; and while they break
On the charm'd eye, th' exulting florist marks, 540
With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
No gradual bloom is wanting, from the bud,
First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes;
Nor hyacinths, of purest virgin white,
Low bent, and blushing inward; nor jonquils, 545
Of potent fragrance; nor Narcissus fair,
As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still;
Nor broad carnations, nor gay-spotted pinks:
Nor, shower'd from every bush, the damask rose;
Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells, 550
With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
The breath of Nature, and her endless bloom.

Hail, SOURCE OF BEING! UNIVERSAL SOUL
Of heaven and earth! ESSENTIAL PRESENCE, hail!
To thee I bend the knee; to thee my thoughts 555
Continual, climb; who with a master-hand,
Hast the great whole into perfection touch'd.
By thee the various vegetative tribes,
Wrapt in a filmy net, and clad with leaves,

Draw the live ether, and imbibe the dew: 560
By thee disposed into congenial soils,
Stands each attractive plant, and sucks, and swells
The juicy tide: a twining mass of tubes.
At thy command, the vernal sun awakes
The torpid sap, detruded to the root 565
By wintry winds; that now in fluent dance,
And lively fermentation, mounting, spreads
All this innumerous-coloured scene of things.

As rising from the vegetable world
My theme ascends, with equal wing ascend, 570
My panting Muse! and hark, how loud the woods
Invite you forth in all your gayest trim.
Lend me your song, ye nightingales! oh pour
The mazy-running soul of melody
Into my varied verse! while I deduce 575
From the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,
The symphony of Spring, and touch a theme
Unknown to fame,—the passion of the groves.

When first the soul of love is sent abroad,
Warm through the vital air, and on the heart 580
Harmonious seizes, the gay troops begin,
In gallant thought, to plume the painted wing;
And try again the long-forgotten strain,
At first faint-warbled. But no sooner grows
The soft infusion prevalent and wide, 585
Than, all alive, at once their joy o'erflows
In music unconfin'd. Up springs the lark,
Shrill-voic'd and loud, the messenger of morn;
Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts 590
Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush

Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
Of the coy quiristers that lodge within,
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush 595
And wood-lark, o'er the kind contending throng
Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening Philomela deigns
To let them joy, and purposes in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day. 600
The black-bird, whistles from the thorny brake;
The mellow bull-finch answers from the grove:
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to these
Innumerous songsters, in the freshening shade 605
Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix,
Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert; while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole. 610

'Tis love creates their melody, and all
This waste of music is the voice of love;
That e'en to birds and beasts the tender art
Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
Try every winning way inventive love 615
Can dictate, and in courtship to their mates
Pour forth their little souls. First wide around
With distant awe, in airy rings they rove,
Endeavouring by a thousand tricks to catch
The cunning, conscious, half-averted glance 620
Of their regardless charmer. Should she seem,
Softening, the least approvance to bestow,
Their colours burnish, and by hope inspir'd,
They brisk advance; then on a suden struck,
Retire disorder'd; then again approach;

In fond rotation spread the spotted wing,
And shiver every feather with desire.

Connubial leagues agreed, to the deep woods
They haste away, all as their fancy leads,
Pleasure, or food, or secret safety prompts, 630
That Nature's great command may be obeyed;
Nor all the sweet sensations they perceive,
Indulg'd in vain. Some to the holly hedge
Nestling repair, and to the thicket some;
Some to the rude protection of the thorn 635
Commit their feeble offspring; the cleft tree
Offers its kind concealment to a few,
Their food its insects, and its moss their nests.
Others, apart, far in the grassy dale
Or roughening waste, their humble texture weave.
But most in woodland solitudes delight,
In unfrequented glooms, or shaggy banks,
Steep, and divided by a babbling brook,
Whose murmurs sooth them all the live-long day,
When by kind duty fix'd. Among the roots 645
Of hazel, pendant o'er the plaintive stream,
They frame the first foundation of their domes:
Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,
And bound with clay together. Now 'tis nought
But restless hurry through the busy air, 465
Beat by unnumber'd wings. The swallow sweeps
The slimy pool, to build his hanging house
Intent. And often, from the careless back
Of herds and flocks, a thousand tugging bills
Pluck hair and wool; and oft, when unobserv'd, 655
Steal from the barn a straw; till soft and warm,
Clean and complete, their habitation grows.

As thus the patient dam assiduous sits,
Not to be tempted from her tender task,
Or by sharp hunger, or by smooth delight, 660
Though the whole loosened Spring around her blows,
Her sympathising lover takes his stand
High on th' opponent bank, and ceaseless sings
The tedious time away ; or else supplies
Her place a moment, while she sudden flits 665
To pick the scanty meal. Th' appointed time
With pious toil fulfill'd, the callow young,
Warm'd and expanded into perfect life,
Their brittle bondage break, and come to light,
A helpless family, demanding food 670
With constant clamour: O what passions then,
What melting sentiments of kindly care
On the new parents seize! away they fly
Affectionate, and undesiring bear
The most delicious morsel to their young ; 675
Which equally distributed, again
The search begins. Even so a gentle pair,
By fortune sunk, but form'd of generous mould,
And charm'd with cares beyond the vulgar breast,
In some lone cot amid the distant woods, 680
Sustained alone by providential Heaven,
Oft, as they weeping eye their infant train,
Check their own appetites, and give them all.

Nor toil alone they scorn : exalting love,
By the great Father of the Spring inspir'd, 685
Gives instant courage to the fearful race,
And to the simple art. With stealthy wing,
Should some rude foot their woody haunts molest,
Amid a neighb'ring bush they silent drop,
And whirring thence, as if alarm'd, deceive 690
Th' unfeeling school-boy. Hence, around the head

Of wandering swain, the white-wing'd plover wheels
Her sounding flight, and then directly on
In long excursion skims the level lawn,
To tempt him from her nest. The wild-duck, hence,
O'er the rough moss, and o'er the trackless waste
The heath-hen flutters, pious fraud! to lead
The hot-pursuing spaniel far astray.

Be not the muse asham'd, here to bemoan
Her brothers of the grove, by tyrant man 700
Inhuman caught, and in the narrow cage
From liberty confin'd, and boundless air.
Dull are the pretty slaves, their plumage dull,
Ragged, and all its brightening lustre lost:
Nor is that sprightly wildness in their notes, 705
Which, clear and vig'rous, warbles from the beech.
O then, ye friends of love, and love-taught song,
Spare the soft tribes, this barb'rous art forbear;
If on your bosoms innocence can win,
Music engage, or piety persuade. 710

But let not chief the nightingale lament
Her ruin'd care, too delicately fram'd
To brook the harsh confinement of the cage.
Oft when returning with her loaded bill,
Th' astonish'd mother finds a vacant nest, 715
By the hard hand of unrelenting clowns
Robb'd, to the ground the vain provision falls;
Her pinions ruffle, and, low-drooping, scarce
Can bear the mourner to the poplar shade;
Where, all abandon'd to despair, she sings 720
Her sorrows through the night; and on the bough
Sole sitting, still at every dying fall
Takes up again her lamentable strain

Of winding woe; till wide around, the woods
Sigh to her song, and with her wail resound. 725

But now the feather'd youth their former bounds,
Ardent, disdain; and weighing oft their wings,
Demand the free possession of the sky:
This one glad office more, and then dissolves
Parental love at once, now needless grown. 730
Unlavish wisdom never works in vain.
'Tis on some ev'ning, sunny, grateful, mild,
When nought but balm is breathing thro' the woods,
With yellow lustre bright, that the new tribes
Visit the spacious heav'ns, and look abroad 735
On Nature's common, far as they can see,
Or wing, their range and pasture. O'er the boughs
Dancing about, still at the giddy verge
Their resolution fails; their pinions still,
In loose libration stretch'd, to trust the void, 740
Trembling, refuse, till down before them fly
The parent-guides, and chide, exhort, command,
Or push them off. The surging air receives
Its plumy burden, and their self-taught wings
Winnow the waving element. On ground 745
Alighted, bolder up again they lead,
Farther and farther on, the length'ning flight;
Till vanish'd ev'ry fear, and ev'ry power
Rous'd into life and action, light in air
Th' acquitted parents see their soaring race, 750
And, once rejoicing, never know them more.

High from the summit of a craggy cliff,
Hung o'er the deep, such as amazing frowns
On utmost *Kilda's shore, whose lonely race

* The farthest of the western islands of Scotland.

Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds, 755
The royal eagle draws his vig'rous young,
Strong pounc'd, and ardent with paternal fire.
Now fit to raise a kingdom of their own,
He drives them from his fort, the tow'ring seat,
For ages, of his empire; which in peace 760
Unstain'd he holds, while many a league to sea
He wings his course, and preys in distant isles.

Should I my steps turn to the rural seat,
Whose lofty elms, and venerable oaks,
Invite the rook, who, high amid the boughs, 765
In early Spring, his airy city builds,
And ceaseless caws amusive; there well pleas'd,
I might the various polity survey,
Of the mix'd household kind. The careful hen
Calls all her chirping family around, 770
Fed and defended by the fearless cock,
Whose breast with ardour flames, as on he walks,
Graceful, and crows defiance. In the pond,
The finely checquer'd duck, before her train,
Rows garrulous. The stately sailing swan 775
Gives out his snowy plumage to the gale;
And arching proud his neck, with oary feet
Bears forward fierce, and guards his osier-isle,
Protective of his young. The turkey nigh,
Loud threat'ning, reddens; while the peacock spreads
His ev'ry-colour'd glory to the sun,
And swims in radiant majesty along.
O'er the whole homely scene, the cooing dove
Flies thick in am'rous chace, and wanton rolls
The glancing eye, and turns the changeful neck. 785

While thus the gentle tenants of the shade
Indulge their purer loves, the rougher world
Of brutes below rush furious into flame,

And fierce desire. Through all his lusty veins
The bull, deep-scorched, the raging passion feels. 790
Of pasture sick, and negligent of food,
Scarce seen, he wades among the yellow broom,
While o'er his ample sides the rambling sprays
Luxuriant shoot; or through the mazy wood
Dejected wanders, nor th' enticing bud 795
Crops, though it presses on his careless sense.
And oft, in jealous mad'ning fancy wrapt,
He seeks the fight; and idly butting, feigns
His rival gor'd in ev'ry knotty trunk.
Him should he meet, the bellowing war begins: 800
Their eyes flash fury; to the hollow'd earth
Whence the sand flies, they mutter bloody deeds,
And groaning deep, the impetuous battle mix:
While the fair heifer, balmy-breathing, near,
Stands kindling up their rage. The trembling steed,
With this hot impulse seiz'd in every nerve,
Nor heeds the rein, nor hears the sounding thong;
Blows are not felt; but tossing high his head,
And by the well-known joy to distant plains
Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away; 810
O'er rocks, and woods, and craggy mountains flies;
And, neighing, on the aerial summit takes
Th' exciting gale; then, steep descending, cleaves
The headlong torrents, foaming down the hills,
Ev'n where the madness of the straiten'd stream 815
Turns in black eddies round: such is the force
With which his frantic heart and sinews swell.

Nor undelighted by the boundless Spring
Are the broad monsters of the foaming deep:
From the deep ooze and gelid cavern rous'd, 820
They flounce and tumble in unwieldy joy.
Dire were the strain, and dissonant, to sing

The cruel raptures of the savage kind:
How by this flame their native wrath sublim'd,
They roam, amid the fury of their heart, 825
The far-resounding waste in fiercer bands,
And growl their horrid loves. But this the theme
I sing, enraptur'd, to the British fair,
Forbids, and leads me to the mountain brow,
Where sits the shepherd on the grassy turf, 830
Inhaling, healthful, the descending sun.
Around him feeds his many-bleating flock,
Of various cadence; and his sportive lambs,
This way and that convolv'd, in friskful glee,
Their frolicks play. And now the sprightly race 835
Invites them forth; when swift, the signal given,
They start away, and sweep the massy mound
That runs around the hill; the rampart once
Of iron war; in ancient barbarous times,
When disunited Britain ever bled, 840
Lost in eternal broil: ere yet she grew
To this deep-laid indissoluble state,
Where Wealth and Commerce lift their golden heads;
And o'er our labours Liberty and Law,
Impartial, watch; the wonder of a world! 845

What is this mighty breath, ye sages, say,
That, in a powerful language, felt, not heard,
Instructs the fowls of heav'n; and thro' their breast
These arts of love diffuses? What but GOD?
Inspiring GOD! who, boundless spirit, all, 850
And unremitting energy, pervades,
Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.
He ceaseless works alone; and yet alone
Seems not to work: with such perfection fram'd
Is this complex stupendous scheme of things 855
But though conceal'd, to every purer eye

Th' informing Author, in his works appears:
Chief, lovely Spring, in thee, and thy soft scenes,
The smiling God is seen; while water, earth,
And air, attest his bounty; which exalts 860
The brute-creation to this finer thought,
And annual melts their undesigning hearts
Profusely thus in tenderness and joy.

Still let my song a nobler note assume,
And sing th' infusive force of Spring on man; 865
When heaven and earth, as if contending, vie
To raise his being, and serene his soul.
Can he forbear to join the general smile
Of Nature? Can fierce passions vex his breast,
While ev'ry gale is peace, and ev'ry grove 870
Is melody? Hence, from the bounteous walks
Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe;
Or only lavish to yourselves, away!
But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
Of all his thoughts, creative bounty burns
With warmest beam; and on your open front
And liberal eye, sits, from his dark retreat
Inviting modest Want. Nor, till invok'd
Can restless goodness wait; your active search 880
Leaves no cold wint'ry corner unexplor'd;
Like silent-working Heav'n, surprising oft
The lonely heart with unexpected good.
For you the roving spirit of the wind
Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds 885
Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;
And the sun sheds his kindest rays for you,
Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
Reviving sickness lifts her languid head;
Life flows afresh; and young-ey'd Health exalts 890

The whole creation round. Contentment walks
The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
To purchase. Pure serenity apace
Induces thought, and contemplation still. 895
By swift degrees the love of Nature works,
And warms the bosom; till at last sublim'd
To rapture and enthusiastic heat,
We feel the present deity, and taste
The joy of God to see a happy world! 900

These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,
Thy heart informed by reason's purer ray,
O Lyttleton, the friend! thy passions thus,
And meditations vary, as at large,
Courting the Muse, thro' Hagley-park thou stray'st,
Thy British Tempe! There along the dale,
With woods o'er-hung, and shagg'd with mossy rocks,
Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,
And down the rough cascade white-dashing fall,
Or gleam in lengthened vista through the trees, 910
You silent steal; or sit beneath the shade
Of solemn oaks, that tuft the swelling mounts
Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless hand,
And pensive listen to the various voice
Of rural peace: the herds, the flocks, the birds, 915
The hollow-whisp'ring breeze, the plaint of rills,
That, purling down amid the twisted roots
Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake
On the sooth'd ear. From these abstracted oft,
You wander thro' the philosophic world; 920
Where in bright train continual wonders rise,
Or to the curious or the pious eye.
And oft, conducted by historic truth,
You tread the long extent of backward time:

Planning, with warm benevolence of mind, 925
And honest zeal unwarp'd by party rage,
Britannia's weal; how from the venal gulf
To raise her virtue, and her arts revive.
Or, turning thence thy view, these graver thoughts
The Muses charm; while with sure taste refin'd, 930
Till nobly rises, emulous, thy own.
Perhaps thy lov'd Lucinda shares thy walk,
With soul to thine attun'd. Then Nature all
Wears to the lover's eye a look of love; 935
And all the tumult of a guilty world,
Tost by ungenerous passions, sinks away.
The tender heart is animated peace;
And, as it pours its copious treasures forth,
In varied converse, softening ev'ry theme, 940
You, frequent-pausing, turn, and from her eyes,
Where meekened sense, and amiable grace,
And lively sweetness dwell, enraptur'd drink
That nameless spirit of ethereal joy,
Unutterable happiness! which love 945
Alone bestows, and on a favour'd few.
Meantime you gain the height, from whose fair brow
The bursting prospect spreads immense around:
And snatch'd o'er hill and dale, and wood and lawn,
And verdant field, and dark'ning heath between, 950
And villages embosom'd soft in trees,
And spiry towns by surging columns mark'd
Of household smoke, your eye excursive roams;
Wide-stretching from the Hall, in whose kind haunt
The hospitable genius lingers still, 955
To where the broken landscape, by degrees,
Ascending, roughens into rigid hills;
O'er which the Cambrian mountains, like far clouds
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise.

Flush'd by the spirit of the genial year, 960
Now from the virgin's cheek a fresher bloom
Shoots, less and less, the live carnation round;
Her lips blush deeper sweets; she breathes of youth;
The shining moisture swells into her eyes,
In brighter flow; her wishing bosom heaves, 965
With palpitations wild; kind tumults seize
Her veins, and all her yielding soul is love.
From the keen gaze her lover turns away,
Full of the dear ecstatic power, and sick
With sighing languishment. Ah! then, ye fair, 970
Be greatly cautious of your sliding hearts:
Dare not th' infectious sigh, the pleading look,
Down-cast and low, in meek submission drest,
But full of guile. Let not the fervent tongue,
Prompt to deceive, with adulation smooth, 975
Gain on your purpos'd will; nor in the bower,
Where woodbines flaunt, and roses shed a couch,
While Evening draws her crimson curtains round,
Trust your soft minutes with betraying man.

And let th' aspiring youth beware of love, 980
Of the smooth glance beware; for 'tis too late,
When on his heart the torrent-softness pours.
Then wisdom prostrate lies, and fading fame
Dissolves in air away; while the fond soul,
Wrapt in gay visions of unreal bliss, 985
Still paints th' illusive form; the kindling grace;
Th' enticing smile; the modest-seeming eye,
Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying heav'n,
Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death:
And still, false-warbling in his cheated ear, 990
Her syren voice, enchanting, draws him on,
To guileful shores, and meads of fatal joy.

Ev'n present, in the very lap of love
Inglorious laid; while music flows around,
Perfumes, and oils, and wine, and wanton hours: 995
Amid the roses fierce Repentance rears
Her snaky crest; a quick-returning pang
Shoots thro' the conscious heart, where honour still
And great design, against th' oppressive load
Of luxury, by fits, impatient heave. 1000

But absent, what fantastic woes, arous'd,
Rage in each thought, by restless musing fed,
Chill the warm cheek, and blast the bloom of life,!
Neglected fortune flies; and sliding swift,
Prone into ruin, fall his scorn'd affairs. 1005
'Tis nought but gloom around; the darkened sun
Loses his light. The rosy-bosomed Spring
To weeping fancy pines; and yon bright arch,
Contracted, bends into a dusky vault.
All nature fades extinct; and she alone, 1010
Heard, felt, and seen, possesses ev'ry thought,
Fills ev'ry sense, and pants in ev'ry vein.
Books are but formal dulness; tedious, friends;
And sad, amid the social band he sits,
Lonely and unattentive. From his tongue 1015
Th' unfinish'd period falls; while, borne away
On swelling thought, his wafted spirit flies
To the vain bosom of his distant fair;
And leaves the semblance of a lover, fix'd
In melancholy site, with head declin'd, 1020
And love-dejected eyes. Sudden he starts,
Shook from his tender trance, and restless runs
To glimmering shades, and sympathetic glooms;
Where the dun umbrage o'er the falling stream
Romantic hangs; there thro' the pensive dusk 1025
Strays, in heart-thrilling meditation lost,

Indulging all to love; or on the bank
Thrown, amid drooping lilies, swells the breeze
With sighs unceasing, and the brook with tears.
Thus in soft anguish he consumes the day, 1030
Nor quits his deep retirement, till the moon
Peeps through the chambers of the fleecy east,
Enlightened by degrees, and in her train
Leads on the gentle hours; then forth he walks
Beneath the trembling languish of her beam, 1035
With soften'd soul, and woos the bird of eve
To mingle woes with his; or, while the world,
And all the sons of care lie hush'd in sleep,
Associates with the midnight shadows drear;
And, sighing to the lonely taper, pours 1040
His idly tortur'd heart into the page,
Meant for the moving messenger of love;
Where rapture burns on rapture, every line
With rising frenzy fir'd. But if on bed
Delirious flung, sleep from his pillow flies: 1045
All night he tosses, nor the balmy power
In any posture finds; till the grey morn
Lifts her pale lustre on the paler wretch,
Exanimate by love; and then perhaps
Exhausted nature sinks a while to rest, 1050
Still interrupted by distracted dreams,
That o'er the sick imagination rise,
And in black colours paint the mimic scene.
Oft with th' inchantress of his soul he talks;
Sometimes in crowds distress'd; or if retir'd 1055
To secret-winding flow'r-enwoven bowers,
Far from the dull impertinence of man,
Just as he, credulous, his endless cares
Begins to lose in blind oblivious love,
Snatch'd from her yielded hand, he knows not how,
Thro' forests huge, and long untravell'd heaths,

With desolation brown, he wanders waste,
In night and tempest wrapt, or shrinks aghast,
Back from the bending precipice; or wades
The turbid stream below, and strives to reach 1065
The farther shore, where, succourless and sad,
She with extended arms his aid implores;
But strives in vain; borne by th' outrageous flood
To distance down, he rides the ridgy wave,
Or whelm'd beneath the boiling eddy sinks. 1070

These are the charming agonies of love,
Whose misery delights. But through the heart
Should jealousy its venom once diffuse,
'Tis then delightful misery no more,
But agony unmix'd, incessant gall, 1075
Corroding ev'ry thought, and blasting all
Love's paradise. Ye fairy prospects, then,
Ye beds of roses, and ye bowers of joy,
Farewell! ye gleamings of departed peace,
Shine out your last! the yellow-tinging plague 1080
Internal vision taints, and in a night
Of livid gloom imagination wraps.
Ah! then, instead of love-enlightened cheeks,
Of sunny features, and of ardent eyes
With flowing rapture bright, dark looks succeed, 1085
Suffus'd and glaring with untender fire:
A clouded aspect, and a burning cheek,
Where the whole poison'd soul malignant sits,
And frightens love away. Ten thousand fears
Invented wild, ten thousand frantic views 1090
Of horrid rivals hanging on the charms
For which he melts in fondness, eat him up
With fervent anguish and consuming rage.
In vain reproaches lend their idle aid,
Deceitful pride, and resolution frail, 1095

Giving false peace a moment. Fancy pours
Afresh her beauties on his busy thought,
Her first endearments twining round the soul,
With all the witchcraft of ensnaring love.
Straight the fierce storm involves his mind anew 1100
Flames thro' the nerves, and boils along the veins;
While anxious doubt distracts the tortur'd heart:
For ev'n the sad assurance of his fears
Were ease to what he feels. Thus the warm youth,
Whom love deludes into his thorny wilds, 1105
Thro' flowery tempting paths, or leads a life
Of fever'd rapture, or of cruel care;
His brightest flames extinguish'd all, and all
His lively moments running down to waste.

But happy they, the happiest of their kind, 1110
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate,
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend.
'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace; but harmony itself, 1115
Attuning all their passions into love;
Where friendship full exerts her softest power,
Perfect esteem enlivened by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundless confidence; for nought but love
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.
Let him, ungenerous, who, alone intent
To bless himself, from sordid parents buys
The loathing virgin, in eternal care, 1125
Well merited, consume his nights and days:
Let barbarous nations, whose inhuman love
Is wild desire, fierce as the suns they feel;
Let eastern tyrants from the light of heaven

Seclude their bosom-slaves, meanly possess'd 1130
Of a mere, lifeless, violated form:
While those whom love cements in holy faith,
And equal transport, free as Nature live,
Disdaining fear. What is the world to them,
Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all! 1135
Who in each other clasp whatever fair
High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish;
Something than beauty dearer, should they look
Or on the mind, or mind illumin'd face;
Truth, goodness, honour, harmony, and love, 1140
The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven.
Meantime a smiling offspring rises round,
And mingles both their graces. By degrees
The human blossom blows; and every day,
Soft as it rolls along, shows some new charm, 1145
The father's lustre, and the mother's bloom.
Then infant reason grows apace, and calls
For the kind hand of an assiduous care.
Delightful task! to rear the tender thought,
To teach the young idea how to shoot, 1150
To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
To breathe th' enlivening spirit, and to fix
The generous purpose in the glowing breast.
Oh speak the joy! ye whom the sudden tear
Surprises often, while you look around, 1155
And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss,
All various nature pressing on the heart;
An elegant sufficiency, content,
Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
Ease and alternate labour, useful life, 1160
Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven.
These are the matchless joys of virtuous love;
And thus their moments fly. The seasons thus,
As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,

Still find them happy; and consenting Spring 1165
Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads:
Till evening comes at last, serene and mild;
When after the long vernal day of life,
Enamour'd more, as more remembrance swells
With many a proof of recollected love, 1170
Together down they sink in social sleep;
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.

SUMMER.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Invocation. Address to Mr. Doddington. An introductory reflection on the motion of the heavenly bodies; whence the succession of the seasons. As the face of Nature in this season is almost uniform, the progress of the poem is a description of a summer's day. The dawn. Sun-rising. Hymn to the sun. Forenoon. Summer insects described. Hay-making. Sheep-shearing. Noon-day. A woodland retreat. Groupe of herds and flocks. A solemn grove; how it affects a contemplative mind. A cataract, and rude scene. View of Summer in the torrid zone. Storm of thunder and lightning. A tale. The storm over, a serene afternoon. Bathing. Hour of walking. Transition to the prospect of a rich well-cultivated country; which introduces a panegyric on Great-Britain. Sunset. Evening. Night. Summer-meteors. A comet. The whole concluding with the praise of philosophy.

SUMMER.

From bright'ning fields of ether fair disclos'd,
Child of the sun, refulgent summer comes,
In pride of youth, and felt thro' nature's depth;
He comes attended by the sultry hours,
And ever-fanning breezes, on his way; 5
While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her blushful face; and earth and skies,
All smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.

Hence, let me haste into the mid-wood shade,
Where scarce a sun-beam wanders thro' the gloom;
And on the dark-green grass, beside the brink
Of haunted stream, that by the roots of oak
Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
And sing the glories of the circling year.

Come, Inspiration, from thy hermit seat, 15
By mortal seldom found: may Fancy dare,
From thy fix'd serious eye, and raptur'd glance,
Shot on surrounding Heav'n, to steal one look,
Creative of the poet, ev'ry power
Exalting to an ecstacy of soul?

And thou, my youthful Muse's early friend,
In whom the human graces all unite;

Pure light of mind, and tenderness of heart;
Genius and wisdom; the gay social sense,
By decency chastised; goodness and wit, 25
In seldom-meeting harmony combin'd;
Unblemish'd honour, and an active zeal
For Britain's glory, liberty, and man:
O Doddington! attend my rural song,
Stoop to my theme, inspirit every line, 30
And teach me to deserve thy just applause.

With what an awful world-revolving power
Were first th' unwieldy planets launch'd along
Th' illimitable void! thus to remain
Amid the flux of many thousand years, 35
That oft has swept the toiling race of men,
And all their labour'd monuments away,
Firm, unremitting, matchless in their course;
To the kind-temper'd change of night and day,
And of the seasons ever stealing round, 40
Minutely faithful; such th' all-perfect hand
That pois'd, impels, and rules the steady whole.

When now no more th' alternate twins are fir'd,
And Cancer reddens with the solar blaze,
Short is the doubtful empire of the night; 45
And soon, observant of approaching day,
The meek-ey'd Morn appears, mother of dews,
At first faint gleaming in the dappled east:
Till far o'er ether spreads the wid'ning glow;
And from before the lustre of her face, 50
White break the clouds away. With quickened step
Brown Night retires; young Day pours in apace,
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.
The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top,
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn. 55

Blue, through the dusk, the smoking currents shine;
And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps, awkward: while along the forest glade
The wild deer trip, and often turning gaze
At early passenger. Music awakes 60
The native voice of undissembled joy;
And thick around the woodland hymns arise.
Rous'd by the cock, the soon-clad shepherd leaves
His mossy cottage, where with peace he dwells;
And from the crowded fold, in order, drives 65
His flock, to taste the verdure of the morn.

Falsely luxurious, will not man awake;
And, springing from the bed of sloth, enjoy
The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
To meditation due and sacred song?
For is there aught in sleep can charm the wise;
To lie in dead oblivion, losing half
The fleeting moments of too short a life;
Total extinction of th' enlightened soul!
Or else to feverish vanity alive, 75
Wildered, and tossing through distemper'd dreams?
Who would in such a gloomy state remain
Longer than Nature craves; when every muse
And every blooming pleasure wait without,
To bless the wildly-devious morning walk? 80

But yonder comes the powerful king of day,
Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow,
Illum'd with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo! now, apparent all, 85
Aslant, the dew-bright earth, and colour'd air,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad,
And sheds the shining day, that burnish'd plays

On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering streams,
High-gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer, light,
Of all material beings first, and best!
Efflux divine! Nature's resplendent robe!
Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapt
In unessential gloom; and thou, O Sun!
Soul of surrounding worlds! in whom best seen 95
Shines out thy Maker! may I sing of thee?

'Tis by thy secret, strong, attractive force,
As with a chain indissoluble bound,
Thy system rolls entire: from the far bourne
Of utmost Saturn, wheeling wide his round 100
Of thirty years; to Mercury, whose disk
Can scarce be caught by philosophic eye,
Lost in the near effulgence of the blaze.

Informer of the planetary train!
Without whose quick'ning glance their cumbrous orbs
Were brute unlovely mass, inert and dead,
And not, as now, the green abodes of life!
How many forms of being wait on thee!
Inhaling spirit; from th' unfetter'd mind,
By thee sublim'd, down to the daily race, 110
The mixing myriads of thy setting beam.

The vegetable world is also thine,
Parent of seasons! who the pomp precede
That waits thy throne, as through thy vast domain,
Annual, along the bright ecliptic road, 115
In world rejoicing state, it moves sublime.
Meantime th' expecting nations, circled gay,
With all the various tribes of foodful earth,
Implore thy bounty, or send grateful up
A common hymn: while, round thy beaming car,

High-seen, the Seasons lead, in sprightly dance
Harmonious knit, the rosy-finger'd Hours,
The Zephyrs floating loose, the timely Rains,
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed Dews,
And softened into joy the surly storms. 125
These, in successive turn, with lavish hand,
Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower
Herbs, flowers, and fruits; till, kindling at thy touch,
From land to land is flush'd the vernal year.

Nor to the surface of enliven'd earth, 130
Graceful with hills, and dales, and leafy woods,
Her liberal tresses, is thy force confin'd:
But, to the bowel'd cavern, darting deep,
The mineral kinds confess thy mighty power.
Effulgent, hence the veiny marble shines; 135
Hence Labour draws his tools; hence burnish'd War
Gleams on the day: the nobler works of Peace
Hence bless mankind, and generous Commerce binds
The round of nations in a golden chain.

The unfruitful rock itself, impregn'd by thee, 140
In dark retirement forms the lucid stone.
The lively Diamond drinks thy purest rays.
Collected light, compact; that, polish'd bright,
And all its native lustre let abroad,
Dares, as it sparkles on the fair one's breast, 145
With vain ambition emulate her eyes.
At thee the Ruby lights its deepening glow,
And with a waving radiance inward flames.
From thee the Sapphire, solid ether, takes
Its hue cerulean; and, of ev'ning tinct, 150
The purple-streaming Amethyst is thine.
With thy own smile the yellow Topaz burns;
Nor deeper verdure dyes the robe of Spring,

When first she gives it to the southern gale,
Then the green Emerald shows. But, all combin'd,
Thick through the whitening Opal play thy beams;
Or, flying several, from its surface, form
A trembling variance of revolving hues,
As the site varies in the gazer's hand.

The very dead creation from thy touch 160
Assumes a mimic life. By thee refin'd,
In brighter mazes the relucent stream
Plays o'er the mead. The precipice abrupt,
Projecting horror on the blackened flood,
Softens at thy return. The desert joys 165
Wildly, through all his melancholy bounds.
Rude ruins glitter; and the briny deep,
Seen from some pointed promontory's top,
Far to the blue horizon's utmost verge,
Restless, reflects a floating gleam. But this 170
And all the much-transported Muse can sing,
Are to thy beauty, dignity, and use,
Unequal far; great delegated source
Of light, and life, and grace, and joy below!

How shall I then attempt to sing of HIM! 175
Who, LIGHT HIMSELF, in uncreated light
Invested deep, dwells awfully retir'd
From mortal eye, or angel's purer ken;
Whose single smile has, from the first of time,
Fill'd, overflowing, all those lamps of Heaven, 180
That beam for ever through the boundless sky:
But, should he hide his face, the astonished sun,
And all th' extinguish'd stars, would loosening reel
Wide from their spheres, and Chaos come again.

And yet, was ev'ry fault'ring tongue of man 185
ALMIGHTY FATHER! silent in thy praise;
Thy works themselves would raise a general voice,
Even in the depth of solitary woods
By human foot untrod; proclaim thy power,
And to the quire celestial THEE resound, 190
Th' eternal cause, support, and end of all!
To me be Nature's volume broad display'd;
And to peruse its all-instructing page,
Or, haply catching inspiration thence,
Some easy passage, raptur'd, to translate, 195
My sole delight; as through the falling glooms
Pensive I stray, or with the rising dawn
On Fancy's eagle wing excursive soar.

Now, flaming up the heavens, the potent sun
Melts into limpid air the high-rais'd clouds, 200
And morning fogs, that hovered round the hills,
In party-colour'd bands; till wide unveil'd
The face of Nature shines, from where earth seems,
Far stretch'd around, to meet the bending sphere.

Half in a blush of clustering roses lost, 205
Dew-dropping Coolness to the shade retires;
There, on the verdant turf, or flowery bed,
By gelid founts and careless rills to muse;
While tyrant Heat, dispreading through the sky,
With rapid sway, his burning influence darts 210
On man, and beast, and herb, and tepid stream.

Who can unpitying see the flow'ry race,
Shed by the morn, their new-flush'd bloom resign,
Before the parching beam? So fade the fair,
When fevers revel through their azure veins. 215
But one, the lofty follower of the sun,

Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
Drooping all night; and, when he warm returns,
Points her enamour'd bosom to his ray.

Home, from his morning task, the swain retr eats
His flock before him stepping to the fold;
While the full-udder'd mother lows around
The chearful cottage, then expecting food,
The food of innocence and health! The daw,
The rook and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks, 225
That the calm village in their verdant arms,
Sheltering, embrace, direct their lazy flight;
Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower'd,
All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.
Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene; 230
And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
The house-dog, with the vacant grey-hound, lies,
Out-stretch'd, and sleepy. In his slumbers one
Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults
O'er hill and dale; till, wakened by the wasp, 235
They starting snap. Nor shall the Muse disdain
To let the little noisy summer race
Live in her lay, and flutter through her song:
Not mean, though simple; to the sun allied,
From him they draw their animating fire. 240

Wak'd by his warmer ray, the reptile young
Come wing'd abroad; by the light air upborn,
Lighter, and full of soul. From every chink,
And secret corner, where they slept away
The wint'ry storms; or rising from their tombs, 245
To higher life, by myriads, forth at once,
Swarming they pour; of all the varied hues
Their beauty-beaming parent can disclose.
Ten thousand forms! ten thousand different tribes!

People the blaze. To sunny waters some 250
By fatal instinct fly; where on the pool
They, sportive, wheel; or, sailing down the stream,
Are snatch'd immediate by the quick-eyed trout,
Or darting salmon. Through the green-wood glade
Some love to stray; there lodg'd, amus'd, and fed,
In the fresh leaf. Luxurious, others make
The meads their choice, and visit every flower,
And every latent herb; for the sweet task
To propagate their kinds, and where to wrap,
In what soft beds, their young yet undisclosed, 260
Employs their tender care. Some to the house,
The fold, and dairy, hungry, bend their flight;
Sip round the pail, or taste the curdling cheese:
Oft, inadvertent, from the milky stream
They meet their fate; or weltering in the bowl, 265
With powerless wings around them wrapt, expire.

But chief to heedless flies the window proves
A constant death; where, gloomily retired,
The villain spider lives, cunning, and fierce,
Mixture abhorr'd! Amid a mangled heap 270
Of carcases, in eager watch he sits,
O'erlooking all his waving snares around.
Near the dire cell the dreadless wand'rer oft
Passes; as oft the ruffian shows his front;
The prey at last ensnared, he dreadful darts, 275
With rapid glide, along the leaning line;
And, fixing in the wretch his cruel fangs,
Strikes backward, grimly pleas'd; the fluttering wing,
And shriller sound declare extreme distress,
And ask the helping hospitable hand. 280

Resounds the living surface of the ground;
Nor undelightful is the ceaseless hum,

To him who muses through the woods at noon;
Or drowsy shepherd, as he lies reclin'd,
With half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade 285
Of willows grey, close crowding o'er the brook.

Gradual from these what numerous kinds descend,
Evading e'en the microscopic eye!
Full Nature swarms with life; one wond'rous mass
Of animals, or atoms organiz'd, 290
Waiting the vital breath, when Parent Heav'n
Shall bid his spirit blow. The hoary fen
In putrid streams emits the living cloud
Of pestilence. Through subterranean cells,
Where searching sun-beams scarce can find a way,
Earth animated heaves. The flowery leaf
Wants not its soft inhabitants. Secure
Within its winding citadel, the stone
Holds multitudes. But chief the forest boughs,
That dance unnumber'd to the playful breeze, 300
The downy orchard, and the melting pulp
Of mellow fruit, the nameless nations feed
Of evanescent insects. Where the pool
Stands mantled o'er with green, invisible,
Amid the floating verdure millions stray. 305
Each liquid too, whether it pierces, soothes,
Inflames, refreshes, or exalts the taste,
With various forms abounds. Nor is the stream
Of purest crystal, nor the lucid air,
Though one transparent vacancy it seems, 310
Void of their unseen people. These, conceal'd
By the kind art of forming Heav'n, escape
The grosser eye of man; for if the worlds
In worlds inclos'd, should on his senses burst,
From cates ambrosial, and the nectar'd bowl, 315

He would abhorrent turn ; and in dead night,
When silence sleeps o'er all, be stunn'd with noise.

Let no presuming impious railer tax
Creative Wisdom, as if aught was form'd
In vain, or not for admirable ends. 320
Shall little haughty ignorance pronounce
His works unwise, of which the smallest part
Exceeds the narrow vision of her mind?
As if upon a full-proportioned dome,
On swelling columns heav'd, the pride of art! 325
A critic-fly, whose feeble ray scarce spreads
An inch around, with blind presumption bold,
Should dare to tax the structure of the whole.
And lives the man, whose universal eye
Has swept at once th' unbounded scheme of things ;
Mark'd their dependence so, and firm accord,
As with unfaultering accent to conclude
That this availeth nought? Has any seen
The mighty chain of beings, less'ning down
From Infinite Perfection to the brink 335
Of dreary Nothing, desolate abyss!
From which astonish'd thought recoiling turns?
Till then alone let zealous praise ascend,
And hymns of holy wonder to that Power
Whose wisdom shines as lovely on our minds,
As on our smiling eyes his servant sun.

Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
Upward and downward, thwarting and convolv'd,
The quivering nations sport; till, tempest-wing'd,
Fierce winter sweeps them from the face of day. 345
E'en so luxurious men unheeding pass
An idle summer-life in fortune's shine,
A season's glitter! Thus they flutter on

From toy to toy, from vanity to vice;
Till, blown away by death, oblivion comes 350
Behind, and strikes them from the book of life.

Now swarms the village o'er the joyful mead:
The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
Healthful and strong; full as the summer-rose,
Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid, 355
Half-naked, swelling on the sight, and all
Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
E'en stooping age is here; and infant hands
Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load
O'ercharg'd, amid the kind oppression roll. 360
Wide flies the tedded grain; all in a row
Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
They spread the breathing harvest to the sun,
That throws refreshful round a rural smell;
Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground, 365
And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,
In order gay. While heard from dale to dale,
Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
Of happy labour, love, and social glee. 370

Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
Compelled, to where the mazy-running brook
Forms a deep pool; this bank abrupt and high,
And that fair-spreading in a pebbled shore. 375
Urg'd to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
The clamour much, of men, and boys, and dogs,
Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
Commit their woolly sides. And oft the swain,
On some impatient seizing, hurls them in: 38
Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,

Fast, fast they plunge amid the flashing wave,
And panting labour to the farthest shore.
Repeated this, till deep the well-wash'd fleece
Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt 385
The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream;
Heavy and dripping, to the breezy brow
Slow move the harmless race; where, as they spread
Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,
Inly disturb'd, and wond'ring what this wild 390
Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
The country fill; and, toss'd from rock to rock,
Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
At last, of snowy white, the gathered flocks
Are in the wattled pen innumerous press'd, 395
Head above head; and rang'd in lusty rows,
The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.
The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
With all her gay-dressed maids attending round.
One, chief, in gracious dignity enthron'd, 400
Shines o'er the rest, the past'ral queen, and rays
Her smiles, sweet-beaming, on her shepherd-king;
While the glad circle round them yield their souls
To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
Meantime their joyous task goes on apace: 405
Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some
Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side
To stamp his master's cypher, ready stand;
Others th' unwilling wether drag along;
And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy 410
Holds by the twisted horns th' indignant ram.
Behold where, bound, and of its robe bereft
By needy man, that all-depending lord,
How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies!
What softness in its melancholy face, 415
What dumb-complaining innocence appears!

Fear not, ye gentle tribes! 'tis not the knife
Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you wav'd;
No! 'tis the tender swain's well-guided shears,
Who having now, to pay his annual care, 420
Borrow'd your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again.

A simple scene! yet hence Britannia sees
Her solid grandeur rise; hence she commands
Th' exalted stores of ev'ry brighter clime, 425
The treasures of the sun without his rage:
Hence, fervent all, with culture, toil, and arts,
Wide glows her land; her dreadful thunder, hence,
Rides o'er the waves sublime, and now, e'en now,
Impending hangs o'er Gallia's humbled coast; 430
Hence rules the circling deep, and awes the world.

'Tis raging noon; and vertical, the Sun,
Darts on the head, direct, his forceful rays.
O'er heaven and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns, and all 435
From pole to pole is undistinguished blaze.
In vain the sight, dejected, to the ground
Stoops for relief; thence hot ascending steams,
And keen reflection, pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parch'd, the cleaving fields 440
And slippery lawn an arid hue disclose,
Blast Fancy's bloom, and wither e'en the soul.
Echo no more returns the chearful sound
Of sharp'ning scythe; the mower sinking heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfum'd; 445
And scarce a chirping grasshopper is heard
Through the dumb mead. Distressful nature pants;
The very streams look languid from afar
Or, through th' unshelter'd glade, impatient, seem
To hurl into the covert of the grove. 450

All-conquering heat, O intermit thy wrath!
And on my throbbing temples potent thus
Beam not so fierce! Incessant still you flow,
And still another fervent flood succeeds,
Pour'd on the head profuse. In vain I sigh, 455
And restless turn, and look around for night;
Night is far off; and hotter hours approach.
Thrice happy he, who on the sunless side
Of a romantic mountain, forest-crown'd,
Beneath the whole collected shade reclines: 465
Or in the gelid caverns, woodbine-wrought,
And fresh bedew'd with ever-spouting streams,
Sits coolly calm; while all the world without,
Unsatisfied and sick, tosses in noon.
Emblem instructive of the virtuous man, 465
Who keeps his temper'd mind serene and pure,
And every passion aptly harmonized,
Amid a jarring world with vice inflamed.

Welcome, ye shades! ye bowery thickets, hail!
Ye lofty pines! ye venerable oaks! 470
Ye ashes wild, resounding o'er the steep!
Delicious is your shelter to the soul,
As to the hunted hart the sallying spring,
Or stream full-flowing, that his swelling sides
Laves, as he floats along the herbag'd brink. 475
Cool thro' the nerves your pleasing comfort glides;
The heart beats glad; the fresh-expanded eye
And ear resume their watch; the sinews knit;
And life shoots swift through all the lightened limbs.

Around th' adjoining brook, that purls along 480
The vocal grove, now fretting o'er a rock,
Now scarcely moving through a reedy pool,
Now starting to a sudden stream, and now

Gently diffus'd into a limpid plain;
A various groupe the herds and flocks compose, 485
Rural confusion! On the grassy bank
Some ruminating lie; while others stand
Half in the flood, and often bending sip
The circling surface. In the middle droops
The strong laborious ox, of honest front,
Which, incomposed, he shakes; and from his sides
The troublous insects lashes with his tail,
Returning still. Amid his subjects, safe
Slumbers the monarch swain; his careless arm
Thrown round his head, on downy moss sustained;
Here laid, his scrip, with wholesome viands fill'd;
There, list'ning every noise, his watchful dog.

Light fly his slumbers, if perchance a flight
Of angry gad-flies fasten on the herd,
That startling scatters from the shallow brook,
In search of lavish stream. Tossing the foam,
They scorn the keeper's voice, and scour the plain,
Through all the bright severity of noon;
While from their labouring breasts a hollow moan
Proceeding, runs low bellowing round the hills. 505

Oft in this season too the horse, provok'd,
While his big sinews full of spirits swell,
Trembling with vigour, in the heat of blood,
Springs the high fence; and, o'er the field effus'd,
Darts on the gloomy flood, with stedfast eye, 510
And heart estranged to fear; his nervous chest,
Luxuriant and erect, the seat of strength!
Bears down th' opposing stream; quenchless his thirst,
He takes the river at redoubled draughts,
And with wide nostrils, snorting, skims the wave. 515

Still let me pierce into the midnight depth

Of yonder grove, of wildest, largest growth;
That, forming high in air a woodland quire,
Nods o'er the mount beneath. At every step,
Solemn and slow, the shadows blacker fall, 520
And all is awful listening gloom around.

These are the haunts of meditation; these
The scenes where ancient bards th' inspiring breath,
Ecstatic, felt; and from this world retired,
Conversed with angels, and immortal forms, 525
On gracious errands bent; to save the fall
Of virtue struggling on the brink of vice;
In waking whispers, and repeated dreams,
To hint pure thought, and warn the favoured soul
For future trials fated to prepare; 530
To prompt the poet, who devoted gives
His muse to better themes: to soothe the pangs
Of dying worth, and from the patriot's breast
(Backward to mingle in detested war,
But foremost when engaged) to turn the death; 535
And numberless such offices of love,
Daily and nightly, zealous to perform.

Shook sudden from the bosom of the sky,
A thousand shapes or glide athwart the dusk,
Or stalk majestic on. Deep-roused, I feel 540
A sacred terror, a severe delight,
Creep through my mortal frame; and thus, methinks,
A voice, than human more, th' abstracted ear
Of Fancy strikes; "Be not of us afraid,
Poor kindred man! thy fellow creatures, we 545
From the same Parent-Power our beings drew,
The same our Lord, and laws, and great pursuit.
Once some of us, like thee, through stormy life,
Toil'd, tempest-beaten, ere we could attain

This holy calm, this harmony of mind, 550
Where purity and peace immingle charms.
Then fear not us; but with responsive song,
Amid these dim recesses, undisturb'd
By noisy folly and discordant vice,
Of nature sing with us, and nature's God. 555
Here frequent, at the visionary hour,
When musing midnight reigns, or silent noon,
Angelic harps are in full concert heard,
And voices chanting from the wood-crown'd hill,
The deep'ning dale, or inmost sylvan glade: 560
A privilege bestowed by us alone
On contemplation, or the hallow'd ear
Of poet, swelling to seraphic strain."

And art thou, Stanley,* of that sacred band?
Alas, for us too soon! Though rais'd above 565
The reach of human pain, above the flight
Of human joy, yet, with a mingled ray
Of sadly pleas'd remembrance, must thou feel
A mother's love, a mother's tender woe,
Who seeks thee still in many a former scene; 570
Seeks thy fair form, thy lovely-beaming eyes,
Thy pleasing converse, by gay lively sense
Inspir'd; where moral wisdom mildly shone,
Without the toil of art; and virtue glowed
In all her smiles, without forbidding pride. 575
But O, thou best of parents! wipe thy tears;
Or rather to Parental Nature pay
The tears of grateful joy, who for a while
Lent thee this younger self, this opening bloom
Of thy enlightened mind, and gentle worth. 580

* A young lady, well known to the author, who died at the age of eighteen, in the year 1738.

Believe the Muse, the wint'ry blast of death
Kills not the buds of virtue; no, they spread,
Beneath the heav'nly beam of brighter suns,
Through endless ages, into higher powers.

Thus up the mount, in airy vision rapt, 585
I stray, regardless whither, till the sound
Of a near fall of water, every sense
Wakes from the charm of thought; swift shrinking [back,
I check my steps, and view the broken scene.

Smooth to the shelving brink a copious flood 590
Rolls fair and placid; where, collected all
In one impetuous torrent, down the steep
It thundering shoots, and shakes the country round.
At first, an azure sheet, it rushes broad;
Then, whitening by degrees, as prone it falls, 595
And from the loud-resounding rocks below
Dash'd in a cloud of foam, it sends aloft
A hoary mist, and forms a ceaseless shower.
Nor can the tortur'd wave here find repose;
But, raging still amid the shaggy rocks, 600
Now flashes o'er the scatter'd fragments, now
Along the hollow channel rapid darts;
And falling fast from gradual slope to slope,
With wild infracted course, and lessened roar,
It gains a safer bed, and steals, at last, 605
Along the mazes of the quiet vale.

Invited from the cliff, to whose dark brow
He clings, the steep-ascending eagle soars,
With upward pinions through the flood of day;
And, giving full his bosom to the blaze, 610
Gains on the sun: while all the tuneful race,
Smit by afflictive noon, disorder'd, droop,

Deep in the thicket; or from bower to bower,
Responsive, force an interrupted strain.
The stock-dove only through the forest coos, 615
Mournfully hoarse; oft ceasing from his plaint,
Short interval of weary woe! Again
The sad idea of his murder'd mate,
Struck from his side by savage fowler's guile,
Across his fancy comes; and then resounds 620
A louder song of sorrow through the grove.

Beside the dewy border let me sit,
All in the freshness of the humid air;
There, in that hollow'd rock, grotesque and wild,
An ample chair moss-lin'd, and over head 625
By flow'ring umbrage shaded; where the bee
Strays diligent, and with th' extracted balm
Of fragrant woodbine loads his little thigh.

Now, while I taste the sweetness of the shade,
While Nature lies around, deep-lull'd in noon, 630
Now come, bold Fancy, spread a daring flight,
And view the wonders of the torrid zone;
Climes unrelenting! with whose rage compar'd,
Yon blaze is feeble, and yon skies are cool.

See how at once the bright effulgent sun, 635
Rising direct, swift chases from the sky
The short-liv'd twilight; and with ardent blaze
Looks gaily fierce through all the dazzling air.
He mounts his throne; but kind before him sends,
Issuing from out the portals of the morn,
The general breeze,* to mitigate his fire,

* Which blows constantly between the tropics from

And breathe refreshment on a fainting world.
Great are the scenes, with dreadful beauty crown'd,
And barb'rous wealth, that see, each circling year,
Returning suns and double seasons pass;* 645
Rocks rich in gems, and mountains big with mines,
That on the high equator ridgy rise,
Whence many a bursting stream auriferous plays;
Majestic woods, of ever-vigorous green,
Stage above stage, high waving o'er the hills; 650
Or to the far horizon wide diffus'd,
A boundless deep immensity of shade.
Here lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
The noble sons of potent heat and floods
Prone rushing from the clouds, rear high to heaven
Their thorny stems, and broad around them throw
Meridian gloom. Here, in eternal prime,
Unnumber'd fruits, of keen delicious taste,
And vital spirit, drink, amid the cliffs,
And burning sands that bank the shrubby vales, 660
Redoubled day, yet in their rugged coats
A friendly juice to cool its rage contain.

Bear me, Pomona! to thy citron-groves;
To where the lemon and the piercing lime,
With the deep orange, glowing thro' the green, 665
Their lighter glories blend. Lay me reclin'd
Beneath the spreading tamarind, that shakes,

the east, or the collateral points the north-east and south-east; caused by the pressure of the rarefied air on that before it, according to the diurnal motion of the sun from east to west.

* In all climates between the tropics, the sun, as he passes and repasses in his annual motion, is twice a year vertical, which produces this effect.

Fann'd by the breeze, its fever-cooling fruit.
Deep in the night the massy locust sheds,
Quench my hot limbs; or lead me thro' the maze, 680
Embowering endless, of the Indian fig;
Or thrown at gayer ease, on some fair brow,
Let me behold, by breezy murmurs cool'd,
Broad o'er my head the verdant cedar wave,
And high palmetos lift their graceful shade. 675
O stretch'd amid these orchards of the sun,
Give me to drain the cocoa's milky bowl,
And from the palm to draw its fresh'ning wine!
More bounteous far than all the frantic juice
Which Bacchus pours. Nor, on its slender twigs 680
Low-bending, be the full pomegranate scorn'd;
Nor, creeping thro' the woods, the gelid race
Of berries. Oft in humble station dwells
Unboastful worth, above fastidious pomp.
Witness, thou best Anana, thou the pride 685
Of vegetable life, beyond whate'er
The poets imag'd in the golden age.
Quick let me strip thee of thy tufted coat,
Spread thy ambrosial stores, and feast with Jove.

From these the prospect varies. Plains immense
Lie stretch'd below, interminable meads,
And vast savannahs, where the wandering eye,
Unfixt, is in a verdant ocean lost.
Another Flora there, of bolder hues,
And richer sweets, beyond our garden's pride, 595
Plays o'er the fields, and showers with sudden hand
Exub'rant spring; for oft these vallies shift
Their green embroider'd robe to fiery brown,
And swift to green again, as scorching suns,
Or streaming dews and torrent rains, prevail. 700

Along these lonely regions, where retir'd
From little scenes of art, great Nature dwells
In awful solitude, and nought is seen
But the wild herds that own no master's stall,
Prodigious rivers roll their fatt'ning seas : 705
On whose luxuriant herbage, half-conceal'd
Like a fall'n cedar, far diffus'd his train,
Cas'd in green scales, the crocodile extends.
The flood disparts : behold! in plated mail,
Behemoth* rears his head. Glanced from his side
The darted steel in idle shivers flies ;
He fearless walks the plain, or seeks the hills ;
Where, as he crops his varied fare, the herds,
In wid'ning circle round, forget their food,
And at the harmless stranger wond'ring gaze. 715

Peaceful, beneath primeval trees, that cast
Their ample shade o'er Niger's yellow stream,
And where the Ganges rolls his sacred wave ;
Or 'mid the central depth of black'ning woods
High rais'd in solemn theatre around, 720
Leans the huge elephant ; wisest of brutes!
O truly wise! with gentle might endow'd,
Though pow'rful, not destructive! Here he sees
Revolving ages sweep the changeful earth,
And empires rise and fall ; regardless he 725
Of what the never resting race of men
Project ; thrice happy! could he scape their guile,
Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps,
Or with his towery grandeur swell their state,
The pride of kings! or else his strength pervert, 730
And bid him rage amid the mortal fray,
Astonish'd at the madness of mankind.

* The Hippopotamus, or river-horse.

Wide o'er the winding umbrage of the floods,
Like vivid blossoms glowing from afar,
Thick swarm the brighter birds. For nature's hand,
That with a sportive vanity has deck'd
The plumy nations, there her gayest hues
Profusely pours. But, if she bids them shine,
Array'd in all the beauteous beams of day,
Yet, frugal still, she humbles them in song.* 740
Nor envy we the gaudy robes they lent
Proud Montezuma's realm, whose legions cast
A boundless radiance waving on the sun,
While Philomel is ours; while in our shades
Thro' the soft silence of the list'ning night, 745
The sober-suited songstress trills her lay.

But come, my Muse, the desert-barrier burst,
A wild expanse of lifeless sand and sky:
And, swifter than the toiling caravan,
Shoot o'er the vale of Senaar; ardent climb 750
The Nubian mountains, and the secret bounds
Of jealous Abyssinia boldly pierce.
Thou art no ruffian, who beneath the mask
Of social commerce com'st to rob their wealth;
No holy fury thou, blaspheming Heaven 755
With consecrated steel to stab their peace,
And through the land, yet red from civil wounds,
To spread the purple tyranny of Rome.
Thou, like the harmless bee, may'st freely range
From mead to mead, bright with exalted flowers: 760
From jasmine grove to grove may'st wander gay,
Through palmy shades and aromatic woods,

* In all the regions of the torrid zone, the birds, though more beautiful in their plumage, are observed to be less melodious than ours.

That grace the plains, invest the peopled hills,
And up the more than Alpine mountains wave.
There, on the breezy summit, spreading fair 765
For many a league; or on stupendous rocks,
That from the sun-redoubling valley lift,
Cool to the middle air, their lawny tops;
Where palaces, and fanes, and villas rise;
And gardens smile around, and cultur'd fields; 770
And fountains gush, and careless herds and flocks
Securely stray; a world within itself,
Disdaining all assault; there let me draw
Ethereal soul, there drink reviving gales,
Profusely breathing from the spicy groves, 775
And vales of fragrance; there at distance hear
The roaring floods, and cataracts that sweep
From disembowel'd earth the virgin gold;
And o'er the varied landscape restless rove,
Fervent with life of every fairer kind; 780
A land of wonders, which the sun still eyes
With ray direct, as of the lovely realm
Enamour'd, and delighting there to dwell.

How chang'd the scene! In blazing height of noon
The sun, oppress'd, is plung'd in thickest gloom. 785
Still horror reigns, a dreary twilight round,
Of struggling night and day malignant mix'd.
For, to the hot equator crowding fast,
Where, highly rarefied, the yielding air
Admits their stream, incessant vapours roll, 790
Amazing clouds on clouds continual heap'd;
Or whirl'd tempestuous by the gusty wind,
Or silent borne along, heavy and slow,
With the big stores of steaming oceans charg'd.
Mean time, amid these upper seas, condens'd 795
Around the cold aerial mountain's brow,

And by conflicting winds together dash'd,
The thunder holds his black tremendous throne;
From cloud to cloud the rending lightnings rage;
Till, in the furious elemental war 800
Dissolv'd, the whole precipitated mass
Unbroken floods and solid torrents pours.

The treasures these, hid from the bounded search
Of ancient knowledge; whence, with annual pomp,
Rich king of floods, o'erflows the swelling Nile, 805
From his two springs in Gojam's sunny realm,
Pure-swelling out, he through the lucid lake
Of fair Dambea rolls his infant stream.
There, by the Naiads nurs'd, he sports away
His playful youth amid the fragrant isles, 810
That with unfading verdure smile around.
Ambitious, thence the manly river breaks;
And gathering many a flood, and copious fed
With all the mellowed treasures of the sky,
Winds in progressive majesty along; 815
Through splendid kingdoms now devolves his maze,
Now wanders wild o'er solitary tracts
Of life deserted sand; till, glad to quit
The joyless desart, down the Nubian rocks,
From thundering steep to steep, he pours his urn,
And Egypt joys beneath the spreading wave.

His brother Niger too, and all the floods
In which the full form'd maids of Afric lave
Their jetty limbs; and all that from the tract
Of woody mountains stretch'd thro' gorgeous Ind,
Fall on Cor'mandel's coast, or Malabar;
From Menam's* orient stream, that nightly shines

* The river that runs thro' Siam; on whose banks

With insect-lamps, to where Aurora sheds
On Indus' smiling banks the rosy shower;
All, at this bounteous season, ope their urns, 830
And pour untoiling harvest o'er the land.

Nor less thy world, COLUMBUS, drinks refresh'd,
The lavish moisture of the melting year.
Wide o'er his isles, the branching Oronoque
Rolls a brown deluge; and the native drives 835
To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees,
At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
Swell'd by a thousand streams, impetuous hurl'd
From all the roaring Andes, huge descends
The mighty * Orellana. Scarce the Muse 840
Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
Of rushing water; scarce she dares attempt
The sea-like Plata; to whose dread expanse,
Continuous depth, and wond'rous length of course,
Our floods are rills. With unabated force, 845
In silent dignity they sweep along,
And traverse lands unknown, and blooming wilds,
And fruitful desarts, worlds of solitude,
Where the sun smiles, and seasons teem in vain,
Unseen, and unenjoy'd. Forsaking these, 850
O'er peopled plains they fair-diffusive flow,
And many a nation feed, and circle safe
In their soft bosom, many a happy isle;
The seat of blameless Pan, yet undisturb'd
By Christian crimes and Europe's cruel sons. 855
Thus pouring on they proudly seek the deep,
Whose vanquish'd tide, recoiling from the shock,

a vast multitude of those insects called Fire-flies make a beautiful appearance in the night.

* The River of the Amazons.

Yields to the liquid weight of half the globe;
And Ocean trembles for his green domain.

But what avails this wond'rous waste of wealth? 860
This gay profusion of luxurious bliss?
This pomp of Nature? what their balmy meads,
Their powerful herbs, and Ceres void of pain?
By vagrant birds dispers'd, and wafting winds,
What their unplanted fruits? what the cool draughts,
Th' ambrosial food, rich gums, and spicy health,
Their forests yield? Their toiling insects what,
Their silky pride, and vegetable robes?
Ah! what avail their fatal treasures, hid
Deep in the bowels of the pitying earth, 870
Golconda's gems, and sad Potosi's mines;
Where dwelt the gentlest children of the sun?
What all that Afric's golden rivers roll,
Her odorous woods, and shining ivory stores?
Ill-fated race! the softening arts of Peace, 875
Whate'er the humanizing Muses teach;
The godlike wisdom of the temper'd breast;
Progressive truth, the patient force of thought;
Investigation calm, whose silent powers
Command the world; the LIGHT that leads to Heav'n;
Kind equal rule, the government of laws,
And all-protecting FREEDOM, which alone
Sustains the name and dignity of Man:
These are not theirs. The parent sun himself
Seems o'er this world of slaves to tyrannize; 885
And, with oppressive ray, the roseate bloom
Of beauty blasting, gives the gloomy hue,
And feature gross: or worse, to ruthless deeds,
Mad jealousy, blind rage, and fell revenge,
Their fervid spirit fires. Love dwells not there, 890
The soft regards, the tenderness of life,

The heart-shed tear, th' ineffable delight
Of sweet humanity: these court the beam
Of milder climes; in selfish fierce desire,
And the wild fury of voluptuous sense, 895
There lost. The very brute creation there
This rage partakes, and burns with horrid fire.

Lo! the green serpent, from his dark abode,
Which e'en Imagination fears to tread,
At noon forth-issuing, gathers up his train 900
In orbs immense; then, darting out anew,
Seeks the refreshing fount; by which diffus'd,
He throws his folds: and while with threat'ning tongue,
And deathful jaw's erect, the monster curls
His flaming crest, all other thirst appall'd, 905
Or shiv'ring flies, or check'd at distance stands,
Nor dares approach. But still more direful he,
The small close-lurking minister of fate,
Whose high-concocted venom through the veins
A rapid lightning darts, arresting swift 910
The vital current. Form'd to humble Man,
This child of vengeful Nature! There, sublim'd
To fearless lust of blood, the savage race
Roam, licens'd by the shading hour of guilt,
And foul misdeed, when the pure day has shut 915
His sacred eye. The tyger darting fierce
Impetuous on the prey his glance has doom'd:
The lively-shining leopard, speckled o'er
With many a spot, the beauty of the waste;
And, scorning all the taming arts of Man, 920
The keen hyena, fellest of the fell.
These, rushing from th' inhospitable woods
Of Mauritania, or the tufted isles
That verdant rise amid the Lybian wild,
Innumerous glare around their shaggy king, 925

Majestic stalking o'er the printed sand:
And with imperious and repeated roars,
Demand their fated food. The fearful flocks,
Crowd near the guardian swain; the nobler herds,
Where round their lordly bull, in rural ease, 930
They ruminating lie, with horror hear
The coming rage. Th' awaken'd village starts:
And to her flutt'ring breast the mother strains
Her thoughtless infant. From the pirate's den,
Or stern Morocco's tyrant fang escap'd, 935
The wretch half wishes for his bonds again:
While, uproar all, the wilderness resounds,
From Atlas eastward to the frighted Nile.

Unhappy he! who from the first of joys,
Society, cut off, is left alone 940
Amid this world of death. Day after day,
Sad on the jutting eminence he sits,
And views the main that ever toils below;
Still fondly forming in the farthest verge,
Where the round ether mixes with the wave, 945
Ships, dim-discover'd, dropping from the clouds.
At ev'ning to the setting sun he turns
A mournful eye, and down his dying heart
Sinks helpless; while the wonted roar is up,
And hiss continual, through the tedious night. 950
Yet here, e'en here, into these black abodes
Of monsters, unappall'd, from stooping Rome,
And guilty Cæsar, Liberty retir'd,
Her Cato following through Numidian wilds:
Disdainful of Campania's gentle plains,
And all the green delights Ausonia pours;
When for them she must bend the servile knee,
And fawning take the splendid robber's boon.

Nor stop the terrors of those regions here.
Commission'd demons oft, angels of wrath, 960
Let loose the raging elements. Breath'd hot,
From all the boundless furnace of the sky,
And the wide-glitt'ring waste of burning sand,
A suffocating wind the pilgrim smites
With instant death. Patient of thirst and toil, 965
Son of the desert, e'en the camel feels,
Shot through his wither'd heart, the fiery blast.
Or from the black-red ether, bursting broad,
Sallies the sudden whirlwind. Straight the sands,
Commov'd around, in gath ring eddies play: 970
Nearer and nearer still they dark'ning come;
Till, with the gen'ral all-involving storm
Swept up, the whole continuous wilds arise;
And, by their noon-day fount dejected thrown,
Or sunk at night in sad disastrous sleep, 975
Beneath descending hills, the caravan
Is buried deep. In Cairo's crowded streets
Th' impatient merchant, wond'ring, waits in vain,
And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

But chief at sea, whose ev'ry flexile wave 980
Obeys the blast, the aerial tumult swells.
In the dread ocean, undulating wide,
Beneath the radiant line that girts the globe,
The circling Typhon,* whirl'd from point to point,
Exhausting all the rage of all the sky. 985
And dire Ecnephia* reign. Amid the heav'ns,
Falsely serene, deep in a cloudy † speck
Compress'd, the mighty tempest brooding dwells:

* Typhon and Ecnephia, names of particular storms or hurricanes known only between the tropics.

† Called by sailors the Ox-eye, being in appearance at first no bigger.

Of no regard, save to the skilful eye,
Fiery and foul, the small prognostic hangs 990
Aloft, or on the promontory's brow
Musters its force. A faint deceitful calm,
A flutt'ring gale, the demon sends before,
To tempt the spreading sail. Then down at once,
Precipitant, descends a mingled mass 995
Of roaring winds, and flame, and rushing floods.
In wild amazement fix'd the sailor stands.
Art is too slow: by rapid fate oppress'd,
His broad-wing'd vessel drinks the whelming tide,
Hid in the bosom of the black abyss. 1000
With which mad seas the daring Gama* fought,
For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
Incessant, lab'ring round the stormy cape;
By bold ambition led, and bolder thirst
Of gold. For then from ancient gloom emerg'd 1005
The rising world of trade: the genius, then,
Of navigation, that, in hopeless sloth,
Had slumber'd on the vast Atlantic deep,
For idle ages, starting, heard at last
The Lusitanian Prince;† who, heav'n-inspir'd, 1010
To love of useful glory rous'd mankind,
And in unbounded commerce mix'd the world.

Increasing still the terrors of these storms,
His jaws horrific arm'd with threefold fate,
Here dwells the direful shark. Lur'd by the scent

* Vasco de Gama, the first who sailed round Africa, by the Cape of Good Hope, to the East Indies.

† Don Henry, third son to John the First, king of Portugal. His strong genius to the discovery of new countries was the chief source of all the modern improvements in navigation.

Of steaming crowds, of rank disease, and death,
Behold! he rushing cuts the briny flood,
Swift as the gale can bear the ship along;
And, from the partners of that cruel trade,
Which spoils unhappy Guinea of her sons, 1020
Demands his share of prey; demands themselves.
The stormy fates descend; one death involves
Tyrants and slaves; when straight, their mangled limbs
Crashing at once, he dyes the purple seas
With gore, and riots in the vengeful meal. 1025

When o'er this world, by equinoctial rains
Flooded immense, looks out the joyless sun,
And draws the copious steam from swampy fens,
Where putrefaction into life ferments,
And breathes destructive myriads; or from woods,
Impenetrable shades, recesses foul,
In vapours rank and blue corruption wrapt,
Whose gloomy horrors yet no desp'rate foot
Has ever dar'd to pierce; then, wasteful, forth
Walks the dire pow'r of pestilent disease. 1035
A thousand hideous fiends her course attend,
Sick nature blasting, and to heartless woe,
And feeble desolation, casting down
The tow'ring hopes and all the pride of man.
Such as of late, at Carthagena quench'd 1040
The British fire. You, gallant Vernon, saw
The miserable scene; you, pitying, saw
To infant weakness sunk the warrior's arm;
Saw the deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,
The lip pale-quiv'ring, and the beamless eye 1045
No more with ardour bright: you heard the groans
Of agonizing ships, from shore to shore;
Heard, nightly plung'd amid the sullen waves,
The frequent corse; while on each other fix'd,

In sad presage, the blank assistants seem'd, 1050
Silent, to ask whom fate would next demand.

What need I mention those inclement skies,
Where, frequent o'er the sick'ning city, plague,
The fiercest child of Nemesis divine,
Descends? From Ethiopia's poison'd woods, 1055
From stifled Cairo's filth, and fetid fields
With locust-armies putrefying * heap'd,
This great destroyer sprung. Her awful rage
The brutes escape: man is her destin'd prey,
Intemp'rate man! and, o'er his guilty domes, 1060
She draws a close incumbent cloud of death;
Uninterrupted by the living winds,
Forbid to blow a wholesome breeze; and stain'd
With many a mixture by the sun, diffus'd,
Of angry aspect. Princely wisdom, then,
Dejects his watchful eye; and from the hand 1065
Of feeble justice, ineffectual, drop
The sword and balance; mute the voice of joy,
And hush'd the clamour of the busy world.
Empty the streets, with uncouth verdure clad; 1070
Into the worst of deserts sudden turn'd
The cheerful haunt of men: unless escap'd
From the doom'd house, where matchless horror reigns,
Shut up by barb'rous fear, the smitten wretch,
With frenzy wild, breaks loose; and, loud to heav'n
Screaming, the dreadful policy arraigns,
Inhuman, and unwise. The sullen door,
Yet uninfected, on its cautious hinge
Fearing to turn, abhors society:

* These are the causes supposed to be the first origin of the plague, in Dr. Mead's elegant book on that subject.

Dependants, friends, relations, love himself, 1080
Savag'd by woe, forget the tender tie,
The sweet engagement of the feeling heart.
But vain their selfish care: the circling sky,
The wide enliv'ning air is full of fate;
And, struck by turns, in solitary pangs 1085
They fall, unblest, untended, and unmourn'd.
Thus o'er the prostrate city black despair
Extends her raven wing; while, to complete
The scene of desolation, stretch'd around,
The grim guards stand, denying all retreat, 1090
And give the flying wretch a better death.

Much yet remains unsung: the rage intense
Of brazen-vaulted skies, of iron fields,
Where drought and famine starve the blasted year:
Fir'd by the torch of noon to tenfold rage, 1095
Th' infuriate hill that shoots the pillar'd flame;
And, rous'd within the subterranean world,
Th' expanding earthquake, that resistless shakes
Aspiring cities from their solid base,
And buries mountains in the flaming gulf. 1100
But 'tis enough; return, my vagrant muse:
A nearer scene of horror calls thee home.

Behold, slow-settling o'er the lurid grove
Unusual darkness broods; and growing gains
The full possession of the sky, surcharg'd 1105
With wrathful vapour, from the sacred beds,
Where sleep the min'ral generations, drawn.
Thence nitre, sulphur, and the fiery spume
Of fat bitumen, steaming on the day,
With various-tinctur'd trains of latent flame, 1110
Pollute the sky, and in yon baleful cloud,
A redd'ning gloom, a magazine of fate,

Ferment; till, by the touch ethereal rous'd,
The dash of clouds, or irritating war
Or fighting winds, while all is calm below, 1115
They furious spring. A boding silence reigns,
Dread through the dun expanse; save the dull sound
That from the mountain, previous to the storm,
Rolls o'er the mutt'ring earth, disturbs the flood,
And shakes the forest-leaf without a breath. 1120
Prone, to the lowest vale, the ærial tribes
Descend: the tempest-loving raven scarce
Dares wing the dubious dusk. In rueful gaze
The cattle stand, and on the scowling heav'ns
Cast a deploring eye; by man forsook, 1125
Who to the crowded cottage hies him fast,
Or seeks the shelter of the downward cave.

'Tis list'ning fear and dumb amazement all:
When to the startled eye the sudden glance
Appears far south, eruptive through the cloud; 1130
And following slower, in explosion vast,
The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heav'n,
The tempest growls; but as it nearer comes,
And rolls it awful burden on the wind, 1135
The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more
The noise astounds: till over head a sheet
Of livid flame discloses wide; then shuts,
And opens wider; shuts and opens still
Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze. 1140
Follows the loosen'd aggravated roar,
Enlarging, deep'ning, mingling; peal on peal
Crush'd horrible, convulsing heav'n and earth.

Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
Or prone-descending rain. Wide-rent, the clouds

Pour a whole flood; and yet, its flame unquench'd,
Th' unconquerable lightning struggles through,
Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
And fires the mountains with redoubled rage.
Black from the stroke, above, the smould'ring pine
Stands a sad shatter'd trunk; and, stretch'd below,
A lifeless group the blasted cattle lie:
Here the soft flocks, with that same harmless look
They wore alive, and ruminating still
In fancy's eye; and there the frowning bull, 1155
And ox half rais'd. Struck on the castled cliff,
The venerable tower and spiry fane
Resign their aged pride. The gloomy woods
Start at the flash, and from their deep recess,
Wide-flaming out, their trembling inmates shake.
Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
The repercussive roar: with mighty crush,
Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
Of Penmanmaur heap'd hideous to the sky,
Tumble the smitten cliffs; and Snowden's peak, 1165
Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load.
Far-seen, the heights of heathy Cheviot blaze,
And Thule bellows through her utmost isles.

Guilt hears appall'd, with deeply troubled thought.
And yet not always on the guilty head 1170
Descends the fated flash. Young Celadon
And his Amelia were a matchless pair;
With equal virtue form'd, and equal grace,
The same, distinguish'd by their sex alone:
Hers the mild lustre of the blooming morn, 1175
And his the radiance of the risen day.

They lov'd: but such their guileless passion was,
As in the dawn of time inform'd the heart

Of innocence, and undissembling truth.
'Twas friendship heighten'd by the mutual wish,
Th' enchanting hope, and sympathetic glow,
Beam'd from the mutual eye. Devoting all
To love, each was to each a dearer self;
Supremely happy in th' awaken'd pow'r
Of giving joy. Alone, amid the shades, 1185
Still in harmonious intercourse they liv'd
The rural day, and talk'd the flowing heart,
Or sigh'd and look'd unutterable things.

So passed their life, a clear united stream,
By care unruffled; till, in evil hour, 1190
The tempest caught them on the tender walk,
Heedless how far, and where its mazes stray'd,
While, with each other blest, creative love
Still bade eternal Eden smile around.
Presaging instant fate her bosom heav'd 1195
Unwonted sighs, and stealing oft a look
On the big gloom, on Celadon her eye
Fell tearful, wetting her disorder'd cheek.
In vain assuring love, and confidence
In heav'n, repress'd her fear; it grew, and shook
Her frame near dissolution. He perceiv'd
Th' unequal conflict, and as angels look
On dying saints, his eyes compassion shed,
With love illumin'd high. "Fear not," he said,
"Sweet innocence! thou stranger to offence, 1205
And inward storm! He, who yon skies involves
In frowns of darkness, ever smiles on thee
With kind regard. O'er thee the secret shaft
That wastes at midnight, or th' undreaded hour
Of noon, flies harmless: and that very voice, 1210
Which thunders terror through the guilty heart,
With tongues of seraphs whispers peace to thine.

'Tis safety to be near thee sure, and thus
To clasp perfection!" From his void embrace,
Mysterious heav'n! that moment, to the ground,
A blacken'd corse, was struck the beauteous maid.
But who can paint the lover, as he stood,
Pierc'd by severe amazement, hating life,
Speechless, and fix'd in all the death of woe!
So, faint resemblance! on the marble tomb, 1220
The well dissembled mourner stooping stands,
For ever silent, and for ever sad.

As from the face of heav'n the shatter'd clouds
Tumultuous rove, th' interminable sky
Sublimer swells, and o'er the world expands 1225
A purer azure. Through the lighten'd air
A higher lustre and a clearer calm,
Diffusive, tremble; while, as if in sign
Of danger past, a glitt'ring robe of joy,
Set off abundant by the yellow ray, 1230
Invests the fields; and nature smiles reviv'd.

'Tis beauty all, and grateful song around,
Join'd to the low of kine, and num'rous bleat
Of flocks thick-nibbling through the clover'd vale.
And shall the hymn be marr'd by thankless man, 1235
Most favour'd; who, with voice articulate,
Should lead the chorus of this lower world?
Shall he, so soon forgetful of the hand
That hush'd the thunder, and serenes the sky,
Extinguish'd feel that spark the tempest wak'd, 1240
That sense of pow'rs exceeding far his own,
Ere yet his feeble heart has lost its fears?

Cheer'd by the milder beam, the sprightly youth
Speeds to the well-known pool, whose crystal depth

A sandy bottom shews. A while he stands 1245
Gazing th' inverted landscape, half afraid
To meditate the blue profound below;
Then plunges headlong down the circling flood.
His ebon tresses, and his rosy cheek
Instant emerge; and through th' obedient wave, 1250
At each short breathing by his lip repell'd,
With arms and legs according well, he makes,
As humour leads, an easy-winding path;
While, from his polish'd sides, a dewy light
Effuses on the pleas'd spectators round. 1255

This is the purest exercise of health,
The kind refresher of the summer-heats;
Nor, when cold Winter keens the bright'ning flood,
Would I weak-shiv'ring linger on the brink.
Thus life redoubles, and is oft preserv'd, 1260
By the bold swimmer, in the swift illapse
Of accident disastrous. Hence the limbs
Knit into force; and the same Roman arm,
That rose victorious o'er the conquer'd earth,
First learn'd, while tender, to subdue the wave.
E'en, from the body's purity, the mind
Receives a secret sympathetic aid.

Close in the covert of an hazel copse,
Where winding into pleasing solitudes
Runs out the rambling dale, young Damon sat, 1270
Pensive, and pierc'd with love's delightful pangs.
There to the stream that down the distant rocks
Hoarse-murm'ring fell, and plaintive breeze that play'd
Among the bending willows, falsely he
Of Musidora's cruelty complain'd.
She felt his flame; but deep within her breast,
In bashful coyness, or in maiden pride,

The soft return conceal'd; save when it stole
In side-long glances from her downcast eye,
Or from her swelling soul in stifled sighs. 1280
Touch'd by the scene, no stranger to his vows,
He fram'd a melting lay, to try her heart;
And if an infant passion struggled there,
To call that passion forth. Thrice happy swain!
A lucky chance, that oft decides the fate 1285
Of mighty monarchs, then decided thine.
For lo! conducted by the laughing loves,
This cool retreat his Musidora sought:
Warm in her cheek the sultry season glow'd;
And, rob'd in loose array, she came to bathe 1290
Her fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.
What shall he do? In sweet confusion lost,
And dubious flutt'rings, he a while remain'd:
A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,
A delicate refinement, known to few, 1295
Perplex'd his breast, and urg'd him to retire:
But love forbade. Ye prudes in virtue, say,
Say, ye severest, what would you have done?
Mean-time, this fairer nymph than ever blest
Arcadian stream, with timid eye around 1300
The banks surveying, stripp'd her beauteous limbs,
To taste the lucid coolness of the flood.
Ah! then, not Paris on the piny top
Of Ida panted stronger, when aside
The rival-goddesses the veil divine 1305
Cast unconfin'd, and gave him all their charms,
Than, Damon, thou, as from the snowy leg,
And slender foot, th' inverted silk she drew;
As the soft touch dissolv'd the virgin zone;
And, through the parting robe, th' alternate breast,
With youth wild-throbbing, on thy lawless gaze
In full luxuriance rose. But, desp'rate youth,

How durst thou risk the soul-distracting view,
As from her naked limbs, of glowing white,
Harmonious swell'd by Nature's finest hand, 1315
In folds loose floating fell the fainter lawn;
And fair expos'd she stood, shrunk from herself,
With fancy blushing, at the doubtful breeze
Alarm'd, and starting like the fearful fawn?
Then to the flood she rush'd; the parted flood 1320
Its lovely guest with closing waves receiv'd;
And every beauty softening, every grace
Flushing anew, a mellow lustre shed,
As shines the lily through the crystal mild,
Or as the rose amid the morning dew, 1325
Fresh from Aurora's hand, more sweetly glows.
While thus she wanton'd, now beneath the wave
But ill conceal'd, and now, with streaming locks,
That half embrac'd her in a humid veil,
Rising again, the latent Damon drew 1330
Such madd'ning draughts of beauty to the soul,
As for a while o'erwhelmed his raptur'd thought
With luxury too daring. Check'd at last
By love's respectful modesty, he deem d
The theft profane, if aught profane to love 1335
Can e'er be deem'd; and struggling from the shade,
With headlong hurry fled; but first these lines,
Traced by his ready pencil, on the bank
With trembling hand he threw: "Bathe on, my fair,
Yet unbeheld, save by the sacred eye 1340
Of faithful love: I go to guard thy haunt
To keep from thy recess each vagrant foot,
And each licentious eye." With wild surprise,
As if to marble struck, devoid of sense,
A stupid moment motionless she stood: 1345
So stands the statue that enchants the world, *

* The Venus of Medici.

So bending tries to veil the matchless boast,
The mingling beauties of exulting Greece.
Recov'ring, swift she flew to find those robes
Which blissful Eden knew not; and, array'd 1350
In careless haste, th' alarming paper snatch'd.
But, when her Damon's well-known hand she saw,
Her terrors vanish'd, and a softer train
Of mix'd emotions, hard to be describ'd,
Her sudden bosom seized: shame void of guilt, 1355
The charming blush of innocence, esteem
And admiration of her lover's flame,
By modesty exalted; e'en a sense
Of self-approving beauty stole across
Her busy thought. At length, a tender calm 1360
Hush'd by degress the tumult of her soul;
And on the spreading beech, that o'er the stream
Incumbent hung, she with the sylvan pen
Of rural lovers this confession carv'd,
Which soon her Damon kiss'd with weeping joy:
"Dear youth! sole judge of what these verses mean,
By fortune too much favour'd, but by love,
Alas! not favour'd less, be still as now
Discreet; the time may come you need not fly."

The sun has lost his rage: his downward orb 1370
Shoots nothing now but animating warmth,
And vital lustre; that, with various ray,
Lights up the clouds, those beauteous robes of heav'n,
Incessant roll'd into romantic shapes,
The dream of waking fancy! Broad below, 1375
Cover'd with rip'ning fruits, and swelling fast
Into the perfect year, the pregnant earth
And all her tribes rejoice. Now the soft hour
Of walking comes: for him who lonely loves

To seek the distant hills, and there converse 1380
With nature; there to harmonize his heart,
And in pathetic song to breathe around
The harmony to others. Social friends,
Attun'd to happy unison of soul;
To whose exulting eye a fairer world, 1385
Of which the vulgar never had a glimpse,
Displays its charms; whose minds are richly fraught
With philosophic stores, superior light;
And in whose breast, enthusiastic, burns
Virtue, the sons of int'rest deem romance; 1390
Now call'd abroad enjoy the falling day:
Now to the verdant portico of woods,
To nature's vast lyceum, forth they walk;
By that kind school where no proud master reigns,
The full free converse of the friendly heart, 1395
Improving and improv'd. Now from the world,
Sacred to sweet retirement, lovers steal,
And pour their souls in transport, which the sire
Of love, approving, hears, and calls it good. 1400
Which way, Amanda, shall we bend our course?
The choice perplexes. Wherefore should we choose?
All is the same with thee. Say, shall we wind
Along the streams? or walk the smiling mead?
Or court the forest-glades? or wander wild 1405
Among the waving harvests? or ascend,
While radiant Summer opens all its pride,
Thy hill, delightful Shene?* Here let us sweep
The boundless landscape: now the raptur'd eye,
Exulting swift, to huge Augusta send, 1410
Now to the sister-hills† that skirt her plain,

* The old name of Richmond, signifying in Saxon, shining, or splendour.

† Highgate and Hampstead.

To lofty Harrow now, and now to where
Majestic Windsor lifts his princely brow.
In lovely contrast to this glorious view,
Calmly magnificent, then will we turn
To where the silver Thames first rural grows. 1415
There let the feasted eye unwearied stray;
Luxurious, there, rove through the pendent woods
That nodding hang o'er Harrington's retreat;
And stooping thence to Ham's embowering walks,
Beneath whose shades, in spotless peace retir'd, 1420
With her, the pleasing partner of his heart,
The worthy Queensb'ry yet laments his Gay,
And polish'd Cornb'ry woos the willing Muse.
Slow let us trace the matchless vale of Thames,
Fair-winding up to where the Muses haunt 1425
In Twit'nam's bowers, and for their Pope* implore
The healing god;* to royal Hampton's pile,
To Clermont's terrac'd height, and Esher's groves,
Where, in the sweetest solitude embrac'd,
By the soft windings of the silent Mole, 1430
From courts and senates Pelham finds repose.
Enchanting vale! beyond whate'er the Muse
Has of Achaia or Hesperia sung!
O vale of bliss! O softly-swelling hills!
On which the power of cultivation lies, 1435
And joys to see the wonders of his toil.
Heavens! what a goodly prospect spreads around,
Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,
And glittering towns, and gilded streams, till all
The stretching landscape into smoke decays! 1440
Happy Britannia! where the queen of arts,
Inspiring vigour, liberty abroad
Walks, unconfined, ev'n to thy farthest cots,
And scatters plenty with unsparing hand.

* In his last sickness.

Rich is thy soil, and merciful thy clime; 1445
Thy streams unfailing in the summer's drought;
Unmatch'd thy guardian oaks; thy valleys float
With golden waves; and on thy mountains flocks
Bleat numberless; while, roving round their sides,
Bellow the blackening herds in lusty droves. 1450
Beneath, thy meadows glow, and rise unquell'd
Against the mower's scythe. On ev'ry hand
Thy villas shine. Thy country teems with wealth;
And property assures it to the swain,
Pleased, and unwearied in his guarded toil. 1455

Full are thy cities with the sons of art;
And trade, and joy, in every busy street,
Mingling are heard: e'en Drudgery himself,
As at the car he sweats, or dusty hews
The palace-stone, looks gay. Thy crowded ports,
Where rising masts an endless prospect yield,
With labour burn, and echo to the shouts
Of hurried sailor, as he hearty waves
His last adieu, and loosening every sheet,
Resigns the spreading vessel to the wind. 1465

Bold, firm and graceful, are thy generous youth,
By hardship sinew'd, and by danger fir'd,
Scatt'ring the nations where they go, and first,
Or on the listed plain, or stormy seas.
Mild are thy glories, too, as o'er the plans
Of thriving peace thy thoughtful sires preside;
In genius and substantial learning, high;
For every virtue, every worth, renown'd;
Sincere, plain-hearted, hospitable, kind;
Yet like the mustering thunder when provok'd, 1475
The dread of tyrants, and the sole resource
Of those that under grim oppression groan.

Thy sons of glory many! Alfred thee,
In whom the splendor of heroic war,
And more heroic peace, when govern'd well, 1480
Combine; whose hallowed name the virtues saint,
And his own Muses love; the best of kings!
With him thy Edwards and thy Henrys shine,
Names dear to fame; the first who deep impress'd
On haughty Gaul the terror of thy arms, 1485
That awes her genius still. In statesmen, thou,
And patriots, fertile. Thine a steady More,
Who, with a generous, though mistaken zeal,
Withstood a brutal tyrant's useful rage,
Like Cato firm, like Aristides just, 1490
Like rigid Cincinnatus nobly poor,
A dauntless soul erect, who smiled on death.
Frugal and wise, a Walsingham is thine;
A Drake, who made thee mistress of the deep,
And bore thy name in thunder round the world.
Then flamed thy spirit high; but who can speak
The numerous worthies of the maiden reign?
In Raleigh mark their every glory mix'd;
Raleigh, the scourge of Spain! whose breast with all
The sage, the patriot, and the hero, burn'd, 1490
Nor sunk his vigour, when a coward reign
The warrior fetter'd, and at last resigned,
To glut the vengeance of a vanquished foe.
Then, active still and unrestrained, his mind
Explor'd the vast extent of ages past, 1505
And with his prison-hours enriched the world;
Yet found no times, in all the long research,
So glorious, or so base, as those he proved,
In which he conquered, and in which he bled.
Nor can the Muse the gallant Sidney pass, 1510
The plume of war! with early laurels crowned,
The lover's myrtle, and the poet's bay.

A Hampden too is thine, illustrious land!
Wise, strenuous, firm, of unsubmitting soul,
Who stemm'd the torrent of a downward age, 1515
To slavery prone, and bade thee rise again,
In all thy native pomp of freedom bold.
Bright, at his call, thy age of men effulg'd;
Of men, on whom late time a kindling eye
Shall turn, and tyrants tremble while they read. 1520
Bring every sweetest flower, and let me strew
The grave where Russel lies; whose temper'd blood,
With calmest cheerfulness for thee resigned,
Stained the sad annals of a giddy reign;
Aiming at lawless power, though meanly sunk 1525
In loose inglorious luxury. With him
His friend, the British Cassius,* fearless bled;
Of high determin'd spirit, roughly brave,
By ancient learning to th' enlightened love
Of ancient freedom warm'd. Fair thy renown 1530
In awful sages and in noble bards;
Soon as the light of dawning science spread
Her orient ray, and waked the muses' song.
Thine is a Bacon; hapless in his choice!
Unfit to stand the civil storm of state, 1535
And through the smooth barbarity of courts,
With firm but pliant virtue, forward still
To urge his course; him for the studious shade
Kind nature formed, deep, comprehensive, clear,
Exact and elegant; in one rich soul, 1540
Plato, the Stagyrite, and Tully, join'd.
The great deliverer he! who from the gloom
Of cloister'd monks, and jargon-teaching schools,
Led forth the true philosophy, there long
Held in the magic chain of words and forms, 1545

* Algernon Sidney

And definitions void: he led her forth,
Daughter of Heav'n! that slow ascending still,
Investigating sure the chain of things,
With radiant finger points to Heav'n again.
The generous Ashley* thine, the friend of man; 1550
Who scanned his nature with a brother's eye,
His weakness prompt to shade, to raise his aim,
To touch the finer movements of the mind,
And with the moral beauty charm the heart.
Why need I name thy Boyle, whose pious search,
Amid the dark recesses of his works,
The great Creator sought? And why thy Locke,
Who made the whole internal world his own?
Let Newton, pure intelligence! whom God
To mortals lent, to trace his boundless works 1560
From laws sublimely simple, speak thy fame
In all philosophy. For lofty sense,
Creative fancy, and inspection keen
Through the deep windings of the human heart,
Is not wild Shakspeare thine and Nature's boast?
Is not each great, each amiable muse
Of classic ages, in thy Milton met?
A genius universal as his theme;
Astonishing as chaos; as the bloom
Of blowing Eden fair, as heav'n sublime. 1570
Nor shall my verse that elder bard forget,
The gentle Spenser, fancy's pleasing son,
Who, like a copious river, pour'd his song
O'er all the mazes of enchanted ground:
Nor thee, his ancient master, laughing sage, 1575
Chaucer, whose native manners-painting verse,
Well moraliz'd, shines through the Gothic cloud
Of time and language o'er thy genius thrown.

* Anthony Ashley Cooper, earl of Shaftesbury.

May my song soften, as thy daughters I,
Britannia, hail! for beauty is their own, 1580
The feeling heart, simplicity of life,
And elegance, and taste: the faultless form,
Shap'd by the hand of harmony; the cheek
Where the live crimson, through the native white
Soft-shooting, o'er the face diffuses bloom, 1585
And every nameless grace; the parted lip,
Like the red rose-bud moist with morning dew,
Breathing delight; and, under flowing jet,
Or sunny ringlets, or of circling brown,
The neck slight-shaded, and the swelling breast; 1590
The look resistless, piercing to the soul,
And by the soul inform'd, when, drest in love,
She sits high-smiling in the conscious eye.

Island of bliss! amid the subject seas,
That thunder round thy rocky coast, set up, 1595
At once the wonder, terror and delight
Of distant nations; whose remotest shores
Can soon be shaken by thy naval arm;
Not to be shook thyself, but all assaults
Baffling, as thy hoar cliffs the loud sea-wave. 1600

O Thou! by whose almighty nod the scale
Of empire rises, or alternate falls,
Send forth the saving virtues round the land,
In bright patrol: white peace, and social love;
The tender-looking charity, intent 1605
On gentle deeds, and shedding tears through smiles;
Undaunted truth, and dignity of mind;
Courage composed and keen; sound temperance,
Healthful in heart and look; clear chastity,
With blushes redd'ning as she moves along, 1610
Disordered at the deep regard she draws;
Rough industry; activity untir'd,

With copious life inform'd, and all awake;
While in the radiant front, superior, shines
That first paternal virtue, public zeal; 1615
Who throws o'er all an equal wide survey,
And, ever musing on the common weal,
Still labours glorious with some great design.

Low walks the sun, and broadens by degrees,
Just o'er the verge of day. The shifting clouds 1620
Assembled gay, a richly gorgeous train,
In all their pomp attend his setting throne.
Air, earth and ocean smile immense. And now,
As if his weary chariot sought the bowers
Of Amphitrite, and her tending nymphs, 1625
(So Grecian fable sung) he dips his orb;
Now half immers'd; and now a golden curve
Gives one bright glance, then total disappears.

For ever running an enchanted round,
Passes the day, deceitful, vain, and void; 1630
As fleets the vision o'er the formful brain,
This moment hurrying wild th' impassion'd soul,
The next in nothing lost 'Tis so to him,
The dreamer of this earth, an idle blank:
A sight of horror to the cruel wretch, 1635
Who all day long in sordid pleasure roll'd,
Himself an useless load, has squander'd vile,
Upon his scoundrel train, what might have cheer'd
A drooping family of modest worth.
But to the generous still-improving mind, 1640
That gives the hopeless heart to sing for joy,
Diffusing kind beneficence around,
Boastless, as now descends the silent dew;
To him the long review of order'd life
Is inward rapture, only to be felt. 1645

Confess'd, from yonder slow-extinguish'd clouds,
All ether softening, sober evening takes
Her wonted station in the middle air;
A thousand shadows at her beck. First this
She sends on earth; then that of deeper dye 1650
Steals soft behind; and then a deeper still,
In circle following circle, gathers round,
To close the face of things. A fresher gale
Begins to wave the wood, and stir the stream,
Sweeping with shadowy gust the fields of corn; 1655
While the quail clamours for his running mate.
Wide o'er the thistly lawn, as swells the breeze,
A whitening shower of vegetable down
Amusive floats. The kind impartial care
Of nature nought disdains; thoughtful to feed 1660
Her lowest sons, and clothe the coming year,
From field to field the feathered seeds she wings.

His folded flock secure, the shepherd home
Hies, merry-hearted; and by turns relieves
The ruddy milk-maid of her brimming pail: 1665
The beauty whom perhaps his witless heart,
Unknowing what the joy-mixt anguish means,
Sincerely loves, by that best language shown
Of cordial glances, and obliging deeds.
Onward they pass o'er many a panting height, 1673
And valley sunk, and unfrequented; where
At fall of eve the fairy people throng,
In various game and revelry to pass
The summer night, as village-stories tell.
But far about they wander from the grave 1675
Of him whom his ungentle fortune urg'd
Against his own sad breast to lift the hand
Of impious violence. The lonely tower

Is also shunn'd; whose mournful chambers hold,
(So night-struck fancy dreams) the yelling ghost.

Among the crooked lanes, on every hedge,
The glow-worm lights his gem; and, through the dark,
A moving radiance twinkles. Evening yields
The world to night; not in her winter robe
Of massy Stygian woof, but loose array'd 1685
In mantle dun. A faint erroneous ray,
Glanc'd from th' imperfect surfaces of things,
Flings half an image on the straining eye;
While wavering woods, and villages, and streams,
And rocks, and mountain-tops, that long retain'd
Th' ascending gleam, are all one swimming scene,
Uncertain if beheld. Sudden to heaven
Thence weary vision turns; where, leading soft
The silent hours of love, with purest ray
Sweet Venus shines; and from her genial rise, 1695
When day-light sickens, till it springs afresh,
Unrivall'd reigns, the fairest lamp of night.
As thus th' effulgence tremulous I drink,
With cherished gaze, the lambent lightnings shoot
Across the sky, or horizontal dart 1700
In wondrous shapes; by fearful murmuring crowds
Portentous deem'd. Amid the radiant orbs,
That more than deck, that animate the sky,
The life-infusing suns of other worlds;
Lo! from the dread immensity of space 1705
Returning, with accelerated course,
The rushing comet to the sun descends;
And, as he sinks below the shading earth,
With awful train projected o'er the heavens,
The guilty nations tremble. But, above 1710
Those superstitious horrors that enslave
The fond sequacious herd, to mystic faith

And blind amazement prone, th' enlightened few,
Whose godlike minds philosophy exalts,
The glorious stranger hail. They feel a joy 1715
Divinely great; they in their powers exult,
That wondrous force of thought which mounting spurns
This dusky spot, and measures all the sky.
While, from his far excursion through the wilds
Of barren ether, faithful to his time, 1720
They see the blazing wonder rise anew.
In seeming terror clad, but kindly bent
To work the will of all sustaining love:
From his huge vapoury train perhaps to shake
Reviving moisture on the numerous orbs 1725
Through which his long ellipsis winds; perhaps
To lend new fuel to declining suns,
To light up worlds, and feed th' eternal fire.

With thee, serene philosophy! with thee,
And thy bright garland, let me crown my song. 1730
Effusive source of evidence and truth!
A lustre shedding o'er th' ennobled mind,
Stronger than summer noon; and pure as that,
Whose mild vibrations soothe the parted soul,
New to the dawning of celestial day. 1735
Hence through her nourish'd powers, enlarg'd by thee,
She springs aloft, with elevated pride,
Above the tangling mass of low desires,
That bind the fluttering crowd; and angel-wing'd,
The heights of science and of virtue gains, 1740
Where all is calm and clear; with Nature round,
Or in the starry regions, or th' abyss,
To reason's and to Fancy's eye display'd:
The first up-tracing from the dreary void,
The chain of causes and effects, to him, 1745
The world-producing essence, who alone

Possesses being; while the last receives
The whole magnificence of heaven and earth,
And every beauty, delicate or bold,
Obvious or more remote, with livelier sense, 1750
Diffusive painted on the rapid mind.

Tutor'd by thee, hence poetry exalts
Her voice to ages; and informs the page
With music, image, sentiment and thought,
Never to die; the treasure of mankind, 1755
Their highest honour, and their truest joy.

Without thee, what were unenlightened man?
A savage roaming through the woods and wilds,
In quest of prey, and with th' unfashioned fur
Rough clad; devoid of every finer art, 1760
And elegance of life. Nor happiness
Domestic, mix'd of tenderness and care,
Nor moral excellence, nor social bliss,
Nor guardian law were his; nor various skill
To turn the furrow, or to guide the tool 1765
Mechanic; nor the heaven-conducted prow
Of navigation bold, that fearless braves
The burning line, or dares the wintry pole;
Mother severe of infinite delights!
Nothing, save rapine, indolence and guile, 1770
And woes on woes, a still-revolving train!
Whose horrid circle had made human life
Than non-existence worse; but, taught by thee,
Ours are the plans of policy and peace;
To live like brothers, and, conjunctive all, 1775
Embellish life. While thus laborious crowds
Ply the tough oar, philosophy directs
The ruling helm; or like the liberal breath

Of potent Heaven, invisible, the sail
Swells out, and bears th' inferior world along. 1780

Nor to this evanescent speck of earth
Poorly confin'd, the radiant tracts on high
Are her exalted range; intent to gaze
Creation through, and from that full complex
Of never ending wonders, to conceive 1785
Of the sole Being right, who spoke the word,
And nature mov'd complete. With inward view,
Thence on th' ideal kingdom swift she turns
Her eye; and instant, at her powerful glance,
Th' obedient phantoms vanish or appear; 1790
Compound, divide, and into order shift,
Each to his rank, from plain perception up
To the fair forms of fancy's fleeting train:
To reason then, deducing truth from truth;
And notion quite abstract; where first begins 1795
The world of spirits, action all and life,
Unfettered and unmix'd. But here the cloud,
So wills eternal Providence, sits deep.
Enough for us to know that this dark state,
In wayward passions lost, and vain pursuits, 1800
This infancy of being, cannot prove
The final issue of the works of God,
By boundless love and perfect wisdom form'd,
And ever rising with the rising mind.

AUTUMN.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Addressed to Mr. Onslow. A prospect of the fields ready for harvest. Reflections in praise of industry raised by that view. Reaping. A tale relative to it. A harvest storm. Shooting and hunting; their barbarity. A ludicrous account of fox-hunting. A view of an orchard. Wall-fruit. A vineyard. A description of fogs, frequent in the latter part of Autumn: whence a digression, enquiring into the rise of fountains and rivers. Birds of season considered, that now shift their habitation. The prodigious number of them that cover the northern and western isles of Scotland: hence a view of the country. A prospect of the discoloured, fading woods. After a gentle dusky day, moon-light. Autumnal meteors. Morning; to which succeeds a calm, pure, sun-shiny day, such as usually shuts up the season. The harvest being gathered in, the country dissolved in joy. The whole concludes with a panegyric on a philosophical country life.

AUTUMN.

CROWN'D with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
Comes jovial on; the Doric reed once more,
Well pleas'd, I tune. Whate'er the wintry frost
Nitrous prepared; the various blossom'd spring 5
Put in white promise forth; and summer-suns
Concocted strong; rush boundless now to view,
Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.

Onslow! the muse, ambitious of thy name,
To grace, inspire, and dignify her song, 10
Would from the public voice thy gentle ear
A while engage. Thy noble cares she knows,
The patriot-virtues that distend thy thought,
Spread on thy front, and in thy bosom glow;
While listening senates hang upon thy tongue, 15
Devolving through the maze of eloquence
A roll of periods, sweeter than her song.
But she too pants for public virtue; she,
Though weak of power, yet strong in ardent will,
Whene'er her country rushes on her heart, 20
Assumes a bolder note, and fondly tries
To mix the patriot's with the poet's flame.

When the bright Virgin gives the beauteous days,

And Libra weighs in equal scales the year;
From Heav'n's high cope the fierce effulgence shook
Of parting Summer, a serener blue,
With golden light enlivened, wide invests
The happy world. Attemper'd suns arise,
Sweet beam'd, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
A pleasing calm; while broad and brown below, 30
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
Rich, silent, deep, they stand; for not a gale
Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain:
A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow. 35
Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;
The clouds fly different; and the sudden sun
By fits effulgent gilds th' illumin'd field,
And black by fits the shadows sweep along.
A gaily checquer'd heart-expanding view, 40
Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
Unbounded tossing in a flood of corn.

These are thy blessings, Industry! rough power,
Whom labour still attends, and sweat, and pain;
Yet the kind source of every gentle art, 45
And all the soft civility of life:
Raiser of human kind, by nature cast,
Naked and helpless, out amid the woods
And wilds, to rude inclement elements;
With various seeds of art deep in the mind
Implanted; and, profusely pour'd around,
Materials infinite, but idle all.
Still unexerted in th' unconscious breast,
Slept the lethargic powers; corruption still,
Voracious, swallowed what the liberal hand 55
Of bounty scatter'd o'er the savage year;
And still the sad barbarian, roving, mix'd

With beasts of prey; or for his acorn-meal
Fought the fierce tusky boar; a shiv'ring wretch!
Aghast, and comfortless, when the bleak north, 60
With Winter charg'd, let the mix'd tempest fly,
Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost:
Then to the shelter of the hut he fled;
And the wild season, sordid, pin'd away.
For home he had not; home is the resort 65
Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
Supporting, and supported, polish'd friends
And dear relations mingle into bliss.
But this the rugged savage never felt,
Even desolate in crowds; and thus his days 70
Roll'd heavy, dark, and unenjoy'd along:
A waste of time! till industry approach'd,
And rous'd him from his miserable sloth:
His faculties unfolded; pointed out,
Where lavish nature the directing hand 75
Of art demanded: shew'd him how to raise
His feeble force by the mechanic powers,
To dig the min'ral from the vaulted earth,
On what to turn the piercing rage of fire,
On what the torrent, and the gather'd blast; 80
Gave the tall ancient forest to his axe;
Taught him to chip the wood, and hew the stone,
Till by degrees the finish'd fabric rose;
Tore from his limbs the blood-polluted fur,
And wrapt them in the woolly vestment warm, 85
Or bright in glossy silk, and flowing lawn;
With wholesome viands fill'd his table, pour'd
The gen'rous glass around, inspir'd to wake
The life-refining soul of decent wit:
Nor stopp'd at barren bare necessity; 90
But still advancing bolder, led him on
To pomp, to pleasure, elegance, and grace;

And, breathing high ambition through his soul,
Set science, wisdom, glory, in his view,
And bade him be the Lord of all below. 95

Then gath'ring men their natural powers combin'd
And form'd a public; to the gen'ral good
Submitting, aiming, and conducting all.
For this the patriot-council met, the full,
The free, and fairly-represented whole; 100
For this they plann'd the holy guardian laws,
Distinguish'd orders, animated arts,
And with joint force oppression chaining, set
Imperial justice at the helm; yet still
To them accountable: nor lavish dream'd 105
That toiling millions must resign their weal,
And all the honey of their search, to such
As for themselves alone themselves have rais'd.

Hence every form of cultivated life
In order set, protected, and inspir'd, 110
Into perfection wrought. Uniting all,
Society grew numerous, high, polite,
And happy. Nurse of art! the city rear'd
In beauteous pride her tower-encircled head;
And, stretching street on street, by thousands drew,
From twining woody haunts, or the tough yew
To bows strong-straining, her aspiring sons.

Then commerce brought into the public walk
The busy merchant; the big warehouse built;
Rais'd the strong crane; choak'd up the loaded street
With foreign plenty; and thy stream, O Thames,
Large, gentle, deep, majestic, king of floods!
Chose for his grand resort. On either hand,
Like a long wint'ry forest, groves of masts

Shot up their spires; the bellying sheet between 125
Possess'd the breezy void; the sooty hulk
Steer'd sluggish on; the splendid barge along
Row'd, regular, to harmony; around,
The boat, light skimming, stretch'd its oary wings:
While deep the various voice of fervent toil 130
From bank to bank increas'd; whence, ribb'd with oak,
To bear the British thunder, black and bold,
The roaring vesel rush'd into the main.

Then too the pillar'd dome, magnific, heav'd
Its ample roof; and luxury within 135
Pour'd out her glittering stores; the canvas smooth,
With glowing life protuberant, to the view
Embodied rose; the statue seem'd to breathe,
And soften into flesh beneath the touch
Of forming art, imagination-flush'd. 140

All is the gift of industry; whate'er
Exalts, embellishes, and renders life
Delightful. Pensive Winter, cheer'd by him,
Sits at the social fire, and happy hears
Th' excluded tempest idly rave along; 145
His harden'd fingers deck the gaudy spring;
Without him, Summer were an arid waste;
Nor to th' autumnal months could thus transmit
Those full, mature, immeasurable stores,
That, waving round, recall my wand'ring song. 150

Soon as the morning trembles through the sky,
And unperceiv'd unfolds the spreading day;
Before the ripened field the reapers stand,
In fair array; each by the lass he loves,
To bear the rougher part, and mitigate,
By nameless gentle offices, her toil.

At once they stoop, and swell the lusty sheaves;
While through their cheerful band the rural talk,
The rural scandal, and the rural jest,
Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time, 160
And steal unfelt the sultry hours away.
Behind the master walks, builds up the shocks;
And, conscious, glancing oft on ev'ry side
His sated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.
The gleaners spread around, and here and there, 165
Spike after spike, their scanty harvest pick.
Be not too narrow, husbandmen! but fling
From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,
The liberal handful. Think, oh! grateful think
How good the God of harvest is to you;
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields;
While these unhappy partners of your kind
Wide hover round you like the fowls of heaven,
And ask their humble dole. The various turns
Of fortune ponder; that your sons may want
What now, with hard reluctance faint, ye give.

The lovely young Lavinia once had friends;
And Fortune smil'd deceitful on her birth;
For, in her helpless years depriv'd of all,
Of every stay, save innocence and Heaven, 180
She, with her widowed mother, feeble, old
And poor, liv'd in a cottage, far retir'd
Among the windings of a woody vale;
By solitude and deep-surrounding shades,
But more by bashful modesty, conceal'd. 185
Together, thus, they shunn'd the cruel scorn
Which virtue, sunk to poverty, would meet
From giddy passion and low-minded pride;
Almost on Nature's common bounty fed,
Like the gay birds that sung them to repose, 190

Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.
Her form was fresher than the morning rose,
When the dew wets its leaves; unstain'd and pure,
As is the lily, or the mountain snow.
The modest virtues mingled in her eyes, 195
Still on the ground dejected, darting all
Their humid beams into the blooming flowers:
Or when the mourntul tale her mother told,
Of what her faithless fortune promis'd once,
Thrill'd in her thought, they, like the dewy star 200
Of evening, shone in tears. A native grace
Sat fair-proportion'd on her polish'd limbs,
Veil'd in a simple robe, their best attire,
Beyond the pomp of dress; for loveliness
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament, 205
But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.
Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self,
Recluse amid the close embow'ring woods.
As in the hollow breast of Appenine,
Beneath the shelter of encircling hills, 210
A myrtle rises, far from human eye,
And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild;
So flourish'd blooming, and unseen by all,
The sweet Lavinia; till, at length, compell'd
By strong necessity's supreme command, 215
With smiling patience in her looks, she went
To glean Palemon's fields. The pride of swains
Palemon was, the gen'rous and the rich;
Who led the rural life in all its joy
And elegance, such as Arcadian song 220
Transmits from ancient uncorrupted times;
When tyrant custom had not shackled man,
But free to follow nature was the mode.
He then, his fancy with autumnal scenes
Amusing, chanc'd beside his reaper-train

To walk, when poor Lavinia drew his eye,
Unconscious of her power, and turning quick
With unaffected blushes from his gaze:
He saw her charming, but he saw not half
The charms her down-cast modesty conceal'd. 230
That very moment, love and chaste desire
Sprung in his bosom, to himself unknown;
For still the world prevail'd, and its dread laugh,
Which scarce the firm philosopher can scorn,
Should his heart own a gleaner in the field: 235
And thus in secret to himself he sigh'd.

"What pity! that so delicate a form,
By beauty kindled, where enlivening sense
And more than vulgar goodness seem to dwell,
Should be devoted to the rude embrace 240
Of some indecent clown! She looks, methinks,
Of old Acasto's line; and to my mind
Recalls that patron of my happy life,
From whom my liberal fortune took its rise;
Now to the dust gone down; his houses, lands, 255
And once fair-spreading family, dissolv'd.
'Tis said that in some lone obscure retreat,
Urg'd by remem'brance sad and decent pride,
Far from those scenes which knew their better days,
His aged widow and his daughter live, 250
Whom yet my fruitless search could never find.
Romantic wish! would this the daughter were!"

When, strict enquiring, from herself he found
She was the same, the daughter of his friend,
Of bountiful Acasto; who can speak 255
The mingled passions that surpris'd his heart,
And thro' his nerves in shiv'ring transport ran?
Then blaz'd his smother'd flame, avow'd and bold:

And as he view'd her, ardent, o'er and o'er,
Love, gratitude and pity, wept at once. 260
Confus'd and frighten'd at his sudden tears,
Her rising beauties flush'd a higher bloom,
As thus Palemon, passionate and just,
Pour'd out the pious rapture of his soul.

"And art thou then Acasto's dear remains? 265
She whom my restless gratitude has sought
So long in vain! O heavens! the very same;
The softened image of my noble friend;
Alive his every look, his every feature,
More elegantly touch'd. Sweeter than Spring! 270
Thou sole surviving blossom from the root
That nourish'd up my fortune! say, ah where,
In what sequestered desart, hast thou drawn
The kindest aspect of delighted heaven?
Into such beauty spread, and blown so fair; 275
Though poverty's cold wind, and crushing rain,
Beat keen and heavy on thy tender years!
O let me now into a richer soil
Transplant thee safe! where vernal suns, and showers,
Diffuse their warmest, largest influence; 280
And of my garden be the pride and joy!
Ill it befits thee, oh! it ill befits
Acasto's daughter, his, whose open stores,
Though vast, were little to his ampler heart,
The father of a country, thus to pick 285
The very refuse of those harvest-fields,
Which from his bounteous friendship I enjoy.
Then throw that shameful pittance from thy hand,
But ill applied to such a rugged task;
The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine; 290
If to the various blessings which thy house

Has on me lavish'd, thou wilt add that bliss,
That dearest bliss, the power of blessing thee!"

Here ceas'd the youth; yet still his speaking eye
Express'd the sacred triumph of his soul, 295
With conscious virtue, gratitude and love,
Above the vulgar joy divinely rais'd.
Nor waited he reply. Won by the charm
Of goodness irresistible, and all
In sweet disorder lost, she blush'd consent. 300
The news immediate to her mother brought,
While, pierc'd with anxious thought, she pin'd away
The lonely moments for Lavinia's fate.
Amaz'd, and scarce believing what she heard,
Joy seiz'd her wither'd veins, and one bright gleam
Of setting life shone on her evening hours:
Not less enraptur'd than the happy pair;
Who flourish'd long in tender bliss, and rear'd
A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,
And good, the grace of all the county round. 310

Defeating oft the labours of the year,
The sultry south collects a potent blast.
At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir
Their trembling tops; and a still murmur runs
Along the soft inclining fields of corn. 315
But as the ærial tempest fuller swells,
And in one mighty stream, invisible,
Immense, the whole excited atmosphere,
Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world;
Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours 320
A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves.
High beat, the circling mountains eddy in
From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,
And send it in a torrent down the vale.

Expos'd, and naked, to its utmost rage, 325
Thro' all the sea of harvest rolling round,
The billowy plain floats wide; nor can evade,
Tho' pliant to the blast, its seizing force;
Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff
Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain, 330
Swept from the black horizon, broad descends
In one continuous flood. Still over head
The mingling tempest waves its gloom, and still
The deluge deepens; till the fields around
Lie sunk, and flatted, in the sordid wave. 335
Sudden, the ditches swell, the meadows swim;
Red, from the hills, innumerable streams
Tumultuous roar, and high above its banks
The river lift; before whose rushing tide,
Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages, and swains,
Roll mingled down; all that the winds had spar'd
In one wild moment ruin'd; the big hopes,
And well earn'd treasures of the painful year.
Fled to some eminence, the husbandman
Helpless beholds the miserable wreck 345
Driving along; his drowning ox at once
Descending, with his labours scatter'd round,
He seees; and instant o'er his shiv'ring thought
Comes Winter unprovided, and a train
Of clamant children dear. Ye masters, then, 350
Be mindful of the rough laborious hand,
That sinks you soft in elegance and ease;
Be mindful of those limbs, in russet clad,
Whose toil to yours is warmth, and graceful pride;
And oh, be mindful of that sparing board, 355
Which covers yours, with luxury profuse,
Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice!
Nor cruelly demand what the deep rains,
And all-involving winds have swept away.

Here the rude clamour of the sportsman's joy, 360
The gun fast-thund'ring, and the winded horn,
Would tempt the muse to sing the rural game:
How, in his mid-career, the spaniel struck,
Stiff, by the tainted gale, with open nose,
Outstretch'd, and finely sensible, draws full, 365
Fearful, and cautious, on the latent prey;
As in the sun the circling covey bask
Their varied plumes, and watchful ev'ry way,
Through the rough stubble turn the secret eye.
Caught in the meshy snare, in vain they beat 370
Their idle wings, entangled more and more:
Nor on the surges of the boundless air,
Though borne triumphant, are they safe; the gun,
Glanc'd just and sudden from the fowler's eye,
O'ertakes their sounding pinions; and again, 375
Immediate, brings them from the tow'ring wing
Dead to the ground; or drives them wide dispers'd,
Wounded, and wheeling various, down the wind.

These are not subjects for the peaceful muse,
Nor will she stain with such her spotless song; 380
Then most delighted, when she social sees
The whole mix'd animal creation round
Alive and happy. 'Tis not joy to her,
This falsely-cheerful barb'rous game of death;
This rage of pleasure, which the restless youth 385
Awakes, impatient, with the gleaming morn;
When beasts of prey retire, that all night long,
Urg'd by necessity, had rang'd the dark,
As if their conscious ravage shunn'd the light,
Asham'd. Not so the steady tyrant, man, 390
Who with the thoughtless insolence of pow'r,
Inflam'd, beyond the most infuriate wrath
Of the worst monster that e'er roam'd the waste,

For sport alone pursues the cruel chace,
Amid the beamings of the gentle days. 295
Upbraid, ye rav'ning tribes, our wanton rage,
For hunger kindles you, and lawless want;
But lavish fed, in nature's bounty roll'd,
To joy at anguish, and delight in blood,
Is what your horrid bosoms never knew. 400

Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare!
Scar'd from the corn, and now to some lone seat
Retir'd: the rushy fen; the ragged furze,
Stretch'd o'er the stony heath; the stubble chapt;
The thistly lawn; the thick entangled broom; 405
Of the same friendly hue, the wither'd fern;
The fallow ground laid open to the sun,
Concoctive; and the nodding sandy bank,
Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain brook.
Vain is her best precaution; though she sits 310
Conceal'd, with folding ears; unsleeping eyes,
By nature rais'd to take th' horizon in;
And head couch'd close betwixt her hairy feet,
In act to spring away. The scented dew
Betrays her early labyrinth; and deep, 415
In scatter'd sullen op'nings, far behind,
With ev'ry breeze she hears the coming storm.
But nearer, and more frequent, as it loads
The sighing gale, she springs amaz'd, and all
The savage soul of game is up at once: 420
The pack full-op'ning, various; the shrill horn
Resounded from the hills; the neighing steed,
Wild for the chace; and the loud hunter's shout;
O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
Mix'd in mad tumult, and discordant joy. 425

The stag too, singled from the herd, where long

He rang'd, the branching monarch of the shades,
Before the tempest drives. At first in speed,
He, sprightly, puts his faith; and rous'd by fear,
Gives all his swift aerial soul to flight; 430
Against the breeze he darts, that way the more
To leave the less'ning murd'rous cry behind:
Deception short! though fleeter than the winds
Blown o'er the keen-air'd mountain by the north,
He bursts the thickets, glances through the glades,
And plunges deep into the wildest wood;
If slow, yet sure, adhesive to the track
Hot-steaming, up behind him come again
Th' inhuman rout, and from the shady depth
Expel him, circling through his ev'ry shift. 440
He sweeps the forest oft; and sobbing sees
The glades, mild op'ning to the golden day;
Where, in kind contest, with his butting friends
He wont to struggle, or his loves enjoy.
Oft in the full-descending flood he tries 445
To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides:
Oft seeks the herd; the watchful herd, alarm'd,
With selfish care avoid a brother's woe.
What shall he do? His once so vivid nerves,
So full of buoyant spirit, now no more 450
Inspire the course; but fainting breathless toil,
Sick, seizes on his heart: he stands at bay;
And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
The big round tears run down his dappled face;
He groans in anguish; while the growling pack, 455
Blood-happy, hang at his fair jutting chest,
And mark his beauteous checker'd sides with gore.

Of this enough. But if the sylvan youth,
Whose fervent blood boils into violence,
Must have the chace; behold, despising flight,

The rous'd-up lion, resolute, and slow,
Advancing full on the protended spear,
And coward-band, that circling wheel aloof.
Slunk from the cavern, and the troubled wood,
See the grim wolf; on him his shaggy foe 465
Vindictive fix, and let the ruffian die:
Or, growling horrid, as the brindled boar
Grins fell destruction, to the monster's heart
Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm.

These Britain knows not; give, ye Britons, then
Your sportive fury, pityless, to pour
Loose on the nightly robber of the fold:
Him, from his craggy winding haunts unearth'd,
Let all the thunder of the chase pursue.
Throw the broad ditch behind you; o'er the hedge
High bound, resistless; nor the deep morass
Refuse, but through the shaking wilderness
Pick your nice way; into the perilous flood
Bear fearless, of the raging instinct full;
And as you ride the torrent, to the banks 480
Your triumph sound sonorous, running round,
From rock to rock, in circling echoes tost;
Then scale the mountains to their woody tops;
Rush down the dang'rous steep; and o'er the lawn,
In fancy swallowing up the space between, 485
Pour all your speed into the rapid game.
For happy he! who tops the wheeling chace;
Has ev'ry maze evolv'd, and ev'ry guile
Disclos'd; who knows the merits of the pack;
Who saw the villain seiz'd, and dying hard, 490
Without complaint, though by an hundred mouths
Relentless torn: O glorious he, beyond
His daring peers! when the retreating horn
Calls them to ghostly halls of grey renown,

With woodland honours grac'd; the fox's fur, 495
Depending decent from the roof; and spread
Round the drear walls, with antic figures fierce,
The stag's large front; he then is loudest heard,
When the night staggers with severer toils,
With feats Thessalian centaurs never knew, 500
And their repeated wonders shake the dome.

But first the fuel'd chimney blazes wide;
The tankards foam; and the strong table groans
Beneath the smoaking sirloin, stretch'd immense
From side to side; in which, with desp'rate knife,
They deep incision make, and talk the while
Of England's glory, ne'er to be defac'd
While hence they borrow vigour: or amain
Into the pasty plung'd, at intervals,
If stomach keen can intervals allow, 510
Relating all the glories of the chace.
Then sated hunger bids his brother thirst
Produce the mighty bowl; the mighty bowl,
Swell'd high with fiery juice, steams lib'ral round
A potent gale, delicious, as the breath 515
Of Maia to the love-sick shepherdess,
On violets diffus'd, while soft she hears
Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.
Nor wanting is the brown october, drawn,
Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat 520
Of thirty years; and now his honest front
Flames in the light refulgent, not afraid
E'en with the vineyard's best produce to vie.
To cheat the thirsty moments, whist a while
Walks his dull round, beneath a cloud of smoke, 525
Wreath'd, fragrant, from the pipe; or the quick dice,
In thunder leaping from the box, awake

The sounding gammon; while romp-loving miss
Is haul'd about, in gallantry robust.

At last, these puling idlenesses laid 530
Aside, frequent and full, the dry divan
Close in firm circle, and set ardent in
For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,
Nor sober shift, is to the puking wretch
Indulg'd apart; but earnest brimming bowls 535
Lave every soul, the table floating round,
And pavement, faithless to the fuddled foot.
Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk
Vociferous, at once from twenty tongues,
Reels fast from theme to theme; from horses, hounds,
To church or mistress, politics or ghosts;
In endless mazes, intricate, perplex'd.
Meantime, with sudden interruption, loud,
Th' impatient catch bursts from the joyous heart:
That moment touch'd is every kindred soul; 545
And, opening in a full-mouth'd cry of joy,
The laugh, the slap, the jocund curse, go round;
While, from their slumbers shook, the kennel'd hounds
Mix in the music of the day again.
As when the tempest, that has vex'd the deep 550
The dark night long, with fainter murmurs falls:
So gradual sinks their mirth. Their feeble tongues,
Unable to take up the cumb'rous word,
Lie quite dissolv'd. Before their maudlin eyes,
Seen dim and blue, the double tapers dance, 556
Like the sun wading through the misty sky.
Then, sliding soft, they drop. Confused, above,
Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,
As if the table e'en itself was drunk,
Lie a wet broken scene; and wide below
Is heap'd the social slaughter; where, astride,

The lubber power in filthy triumph sits,
Slumbrous, inclining still from side to side,
And steeps them drench'd in potent sleep till morn.
Perhaps some doctor, of tremendous paunch, 565
Awful and deep, a black abyss of drink,
Outlives them all; and from his buried flock
Retiring, full of rumination sad,
Laments the weakness of these latter times.

But if the rougher sex by this fierce sport 570
Is hurried wild, let not such horrid joy
E'er stain the bosom of the British fair.
Far be the spirit of the chace from them!
Uncomely courage, unbeseeming skill;
To spring the fence, to rein the prancing steed; 575
The cap, the whip, the masculine attire,
In which they roughen to the sense, and all
The winning softness of their sex is lost.
In them 'tis graceful to dissolve at woe;
With every motion, every word, to wave 580
Quick o'er the kindling cheek, the ready blush;
And from the smallest violence to shrink
Unequal, then the loveliest in their fears;
And by this silent adulation, soft,
To their protection more engaging man. 585
O may their eyes no miserable sight,
Save weeping lovers, see! a nobler game,
Through love's enchanting wiles pursued, yet fled,
In chace ambiguous. May their tender limbs
Float in the loose simplicity of dress! 590
And fashioned all to harmony, alone
Know they to seize the captivated soul,
In rapture warbled from love-breathing lips;
To teach the lute to languish; with smooth step,
Disclosing motion in its every charm, 595

To swim along, and swell the mazy dance;
To train the foliage o'er the snowy lawn;
To guide the pencil, turn the tuneful page;
To lend new flavour to the fruitful year,
And heighten nature's dainties; in their race 600
To rear their graces into second life;
To give society its highest taste;
Well-order'd home man's best delight to make;
And by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
With ev'ry gentle care-eluding art, 605
To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
And sweeten all the toils of human life:
This be the female dignity, and praise.

Ye swains! now hasten to the hazel bank;
Where, down yon dale, the wildly-winding brook 610
Falls hoarse from steep to steep. In close array,
Fit for the thickets and the tangling shrub,
Ye virgins come! For you their latest song
The woodlands raise; the clust'ring nuts for you
The lover finds amid the secret shade; 615
And, where they burnish on the topmost bough,
With active vigour crushes down the tree;
Or shakes them ripe from the resigning husk,
A glossy show'r, and of an ardent brown,
As are the ringlets of Melinda's hair: 620
Melinda! form'd with every grace complete,
Yet these neglecting, above beauty wise,
And far transcending such a vulgar praise.

Hence from the busy joy-resounding fields,
In cheerful error, let us tread the maze 625
Of Autumn, unconfin'd; and taste, reviv'd,
The breath of orchard big with bending fruit.
Obedient to the breeze and beating ray,

From the deep-loaded bough a mellow show'r
Incessant melts away. The juicy pear 630
Lies, in a soft profusion scatter'd round.
A various sweetness swells the gentle race;
By nature's all-refining hand prepar'd;
Of temper'd sun, and water, earth, and air,
In ever-changing composition mix'd. 635
Such, falling frequent through the chiller night,
The fragrant stores, the wide projected heaps
Of apples, which the lusty-handed year,
Innum'rous, o'er the blushing orchard shakes.
A various spirit, fresh, delicious, keen, 640
Dwells in their gelid pores; and, active, points
The piercing cyder for the thirsty tongue:
Thy native theme, and boon inspirer too,
Phillips, Pomona's bard, the second thou
Who nobly durst, in rhyme unfetter'd verse, 645
With British freedom sing the British song:
How, from Silurian vats, high-sparkling wines
Foam in transparent floods; some strong, to cheer
The wintry revels of the lab'ring hind;
And tasteful some, to cool the summer hours. 650

In this glad season, while his sweetest beams
The sun sheds equal o'er the meeken'd day;
O lose me in the green delightful walks
Of, Dodington, thy seat, serene, and plain;
Where simple nature reigns; and ev'ry view, 655
Diffusive, spreads the pure Dorsetian downs,
In boundless prospect; yonder shagg'd with wood,
Here rich with harvest, and there white with flocks!
Mean-time the grandeur of thy lofty dome,
Far splendid, seizes on the ravish'd eye. 660
New beauties rise with each revolving day;
New columns swell; and still the fresh spring finds

New plants to quicken, and new groves to green.
Full of thy genius all! the muses' seat:
Where in the secret bower, and winding walk, 665
For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.
Here wand'ring oft, fir'd with the restless thirst
Of thy applause, I solitary court
Th' inspiring breeze, and meditate the book
Of Nature, ever open; aiming thence, 670
Warm from the heart, to learn the moral song.
Here, as I steal along the sunny wall,
Where Autumn basks, with fruit empurpled deep,
My pleasing theme continual prompts my thought;
Presents the downy peach; the shining plumb; 675
The ruddy, fragrant nectarine; and dark
Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig.
The vine too here her curling tendrils shoots;
Hangs out her clusters, glowing, to the south,
And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky. 680

Turn we a moment Fancy's rapid flight
To vigorous soils, and climes of fair extent;
Where, by the potent sun elated high,
The vineyard swells refulgent on the day;
Spreads o'er the vale, or up the mountain climbs,
Profuse; and drinks amid the sunny rocks,
From cliff to cliff encreas'd, the heighten'd blaze.
Low bend the weighty boughs; the clusters clear,
Half through the foliage seen, or ardent flame,
Or shine transparent; while perfection breathes 690
White o'er the turgent film the living dew.
As thus they brighten with exalted juice,
Touch'd into flavour by the mingling ray;
The rural youth and virgins, o'er the field,
Each fond for each to cull th' autumnal prime, 695
Exulting rove, and speak the vintage nigh.

Then comes the crushing swain; the country floats,
And foams unbounded with the mashy flood;
That, by degrees fermented and refined,
Round the rais'd nations pours the cup of joy: 700
The claret smooth, red as the lip we press
In sparkling fancy, while we drain the bowl;
The mellow tasted burgundy; and, quick
As is the wit it gives, the gay champaign.

Now, by the cool declining year condens'd, 705
Descend the copious exhalations, check'd
As up the middle sky unseen they stole,
And roll the doubling fogs around the hill.
No more the mountain, horrid, vast, sublime,
Who pours a sweep of rivers from his sides, 710
And high between contending kingdoms rears
The rocky long division, fills the view
With great variety; but in a night
Of gathering vapour, from the baffled sense
Sinks, dark and dreary. Thence expanding far, 715
The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain.
Vanish the woods; the dim-seen river seems
Sullen and slow to roll the misty wave.
E'en in the height of noon oppress'd, the sun
Sheds, weak and blunt, his wide-refracted ray; 729
Whence glaring oft, with many a broaden'd orb,
He frights the nations. Indistinct on earth,
Seen through the turbid air, beyond the life
Objects appear; and, wilder'd, o'er the waste
The shepherd stalks gigantic; till at last, 725
Wreath'd dun around, in deeper circles still
Successive closing, sits the general fog
Unbounded o'er the world; and mingling thick,
A formless grey confusion covers all.
As when of old, (so sung the Hebrew bard) 730

Light, uncollected, through the chaos urg'd
Its infant way; nor order yet had drawn
His lovely train from out the dubious gloom.

These roving mists, that constant now begin
To smoke along the hilly country, these, 735
With weighty rains, and melted Alpine snows,
The mountain-cisterns fill, those ample stores
Of water, scoop'd among the hollow rocks;
Whence gush the streams, the ceaseless fountains play,
And their unfailing wealth the rivers draw. 740
Some sages say, that, where the num'rous wave
For ever lashes the resounding shore,
Drill'd through the sandy stratum, ev'ry way,
The waters with the sandy stratum rise;
Amid whose angles infinitely strain'd, 745
They joyful leave their jaggy salts behind,
And clear and sweeten, as they soak along.
Nor stops the restless fluid, mounting still,
Though oft amidst th' irriguous vale it springs;
But to the mountain courted by the sand, 750
That leads it darkling on in faithful maze,
Far from the parent-main it boils again
Fresh into day; and all the glitt'ring hill
Is bright with spouting rills. But hence this vain
Amusive dream! why should the waters love 755
To take so far a journey to the hills,
When the sweet valleys offer to their toil
Inviting quiet, and a nearer bed?
Or if, by blind ambition led astray,
They must aspire, why should they sudden stop 760
Among the broken mountain's rushy dells,
And, ere they gain its highest peak, desert
Th' attractive sand that charm'd their course so long?
Besides, the hard agglomerating salts,

The spoil of ages, would impervious choke 765
Their secret channels; or, by slow degrees,
High as the hills protrude the swelling vales;
Old ocean too, suck'd through the porous globe,
Had long e'er now forsook his horrid bed,
And brought Deucalion's wat'ry times again. 770

Say then, where lurk the vast eternal springs,
That, like creating nature, lie conceal'd
From mortal eye, yet with their lavish stores
Refresh the globe, and all its joyous tribes?
O thou pervading genius, giv'n to man, 775
To trace the secrets of the dark abyss,
O lay the mountains bare, and wide display
Their hidden structure to th' astonish'd view!
Strip from the branching Alps their piny load;
The huge incumbrance of horrific woods 780
From Asian Taurus, from Imaus stretch'd
Athwart the roving Tartar's sullen bounds!
Give op'ning Hemus to my searching eye,
And high Olympus, pouring many a stream!
O from the sounding summits of the north 785
The Dofrine hills, through Scandinavia roll'd
To farthest Lapland and the frozen main;
From lofty Caucasus, far seen by those
Who in the Caspian and black Euxine toil;
From cold Riphean rocks, which the wild Russ 790
Believes the stony girdle * of the world;
And all the dreadful mountains wrapt in storm,
Whence wide Siberia draws her lonely floods;

* The Muscovites call the Riphean mountains Welike Camenypoys, that is, the great stony girdle; because they suppose them to encompass the whole earth.

O sweep th' eternal snows! Hung o'er the deep,
That ever works beneath his sounding base, 795
Bid Atlas, propping heav'n, as poets feign,
His subterranean wonders spread! unveil
The miny caverns, blazing on the day,
Of Abyssinia's cloud-compelling cliffs,
And of the bending mountains of the moon!* 800
O'ertopping all these giant sons of earth,
Let the dire Andes, from the radiant line
Stretch'd to the stormy seas that thunder round
The southern pole, their hideous deeps unfold!
Amazing scene! Behold! the glooms disclose! 805
I see the rivers in their infant beds!
Deep, deep I hear them, lab'ring to get free!
I see the leaning strata, artful rang'd;
The gaping fissures to receive the rains,
The melting snows, and ever-dripping fogs. 810
Strow'd bibulous above I see the sands,
The pebbly gravel next, the layers then
Of mingled moulds, of more retentive earths,
The gutter'd rocks and mazy-running clefts;
That, while the stealing moisture they transmit, 815
Retard its motion, and forbid its waste.
Beneath th' incessant weeping of these drains,
I see the rocky siphons stretch'd immense,
The mighty reservoirs, of harden'd chalk,
Or stiff compacted clay, capacious form'd. 820
O'erflowing thence, the congregated stores,
The crystal treasures of the liquid world,
Through the stirr'd sands a bubbling passage burst;
And welling out, around the middle steep,
Or from the bottoms of the bosom'd hills, 825

* A range of mountains in Africa, that surround almost all Monomotapa.

In pure effusion flow. United, thus,
Th' exhaling sun, the vapour-burden'd air,
The gelid mountains, that, to rain condens'd,
These vapours in continual current draw,
And send them, o'er the fair-divided earth, 830
In bounteous rivers, to the deep again,
A social commerce hold, and firm support
The full-adjusted harmony of things.

When Autumn scatters his departing gleams,
Warn'd of approaching Winter, gather'd, play 835
The swallow-people; and toss'd wide around,
O'er the calm sky, in convolution swift,
The feather'd eddy floats: rejoicing once,
Ere to their wintry slumbers they retire;
In clusters clung, beneath the mouldring bank, 840
And where, unpierc'd by frost, the cavern sweats;
Or rather into warmer climes convey'd,
With other kindred birds of season, there
They twitter cheerful, till the vernal months
Invite them welcome back: for, thronging now, 845
Innum'rous wings are in commotion all.

Where the Rhine loses his majestic force
In Belgian plains, won from the raging deep,
By diligence amazing, and the strong
Unconquerable hand of liberty, 850
The stork-assembly meets; for many a day,
Consulting deep and various, ere they take
Their arduous voyage through the liquid sky.
And now their rout design'd, their leaders chose,
Their tribes adjusted, clean'd their vig'rous wings;
And many a circle, many a short essay,
Wheel'd round and round, in congregation full

The figur'd flight ascends; and, riding high
Th' aerial billows, mixes with the clouds.

Or where the northern ocean, in vast whirls, 860
Boils round the naked melancholy isles
Of farthest Thule, and th' Atlantic surge
Pours in among the stormy Hebrides;
Who can recount what transmigations there
Are annual made, what nations come and go, 865
And how the living clouds on clouds arise?
Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air,
And rude-resounding shore are one wild cry.

Here the plain harmless native his small flock,
And herd diminutive of many hues, 870
Tends on the little island's verdant swell,
The shepherd's sea-girt reign; or, to the rocks
Dire-clinging, gathers his ovarious food;
Or sweeps the fishy shore; or treasures up
The plumage, rising full, to form the bed 875
Of luxury. And here a while the muse,
High hov'ring o'er the broad cerulean scene,
Sees Caledonia, in romantic view:
Her airy mountains, from the waving main,
Invested with a keen diffusive sky, 880
Breathing the soul acute; her forests huge,
Incult, robust, and tall, by nature's hand
Planted of old; her azure lakes between,
Pour'd out extensive, and of wat'ry wealth
Full; winding, deep, and green, her fertile vales; 885
With many a cool translucent brimming flood
Wash'd lovely, from the Tweed (pure parent stream,
Whose past'ral banks first heard my Doric reed,
With, silvan Jed, thy tributary brook)
To where the north-inflated tempest foams 890

O'er Orca's or Betubium's highest peak:
Nurse of a people, in misfortune's school
Train'd up to hardy deeds; soon visited
By learning, when before the gothic rage
She took her western flight. A manly race, 895
Of unsubmitting spirit, wise, and brave;
Who still through bleeding ages struggled hard,
(As well unhappy Wallace can attest,
Great patriot hero! ill-requited chief!)
To hold a gen'rous undiminish'd state; 900
Too much in vain! Hence of unequal bounds
Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
O'er ev'ry land, for ev'ry land their life
Has flow'd profuse, their piercing genius plann'd,
And swell'd the pomp of peace their faithful toil; 905
As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
Bright over Europe bursts the boreal morn.

Oh! is there not some patriot, in whose pow'r
That best, that godlike luxury is plac'd,
Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn, 910
Through late posterity? some, large of soul,
To cheer dejected industry, to give
A double harvest to the pining swain,
And teach the lab'ring hand the sweets of toil?
How, by the finest art, the native robe 915
To weave; how, white as hyperborean snow,
To form the lucid lawn; with vent'rous oar
How to dash wide the billow; nor look on,
Shamefully passive, while Batavian fleets
Defraud us of the glitt'ring finny swarms 920
That heave our friths, and crowd upon our shores;
How all-enliv'ning trade to rouse, and wing
The prosp'rous sail, from ev'ry growing port,
Uninjur'd, round the sea-encircled globe;

And thus, in soul united as in name, 925
Bid Britain reign the mistress of the deep?

Yes, there are such. And full on thee, Argyle,
Her hope, her stay, her darling and her boast,
From her first patriots and her heroes sprung,
Thy fond imploring country turns her eye; 930
In thee, with all a mother's triumph, sees
Her every virtue, every grace combined;
Her genius, wisdom, her engaging turn,
Her pride of honour, and her courage, tried,
Calm and intrepid, in the very throat 935
Of sulph'rous war, on Tenier's dreadful field!
Nor less the palm of peace enwreathes thy brow:
For, powerful as thy sword, from thy rich tongue
Persuasion flows, and wins the high debate;
While mix'd in thee combine the charm of youth, 940
The force of manhood, and the depth of age.
Thee, Forbes, too, whom every worth attends,
As truth sincere, as weeping friendship kind,
Thee, truly generous, and in silence great,
Thy country feels, through her reviving arts, 945
Plann'd by thy wisdom, by thy soul inform'd;
And seldom has she known a friend like thee.

But see! the fading many-colour'd woods,
Shade deepening over shade, the country round
Embrown; a crowded umbrage, dusk and dun, 950
Of every hue, from wan declining green
To sooty dark. These now the lonesome muse,
Low-whispering, lead into their leaf-strewn walks,
And give the season in its latest view.

Mean time, light-shadowing all, a sober calm 955
Fleeces unbounded ether; whose least wave

Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
The gentle current: while, illumined wide,
The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
And though their lucid veil his softened force 960
Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time
For those whom wisdom and whom nature charm,
To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
And soar above this little scene of things;
To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet; 965
To soothe the throbbing passions into peace;
And woo lone quiet in her silent walks.

Thus solitary, and in pensive guise,
Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
And through the sadden'd grove, where scarce is heard
One dying strain to cheer the woodman's toil.
Haply some widowed songster pours his plaint,
Far, in faint warblings through the tawny copse;
While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late 975
Swell'd all the music of the swarming shades,
Robb'd of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock;
With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
And nought save chattering discord in their note. 980
O let not, aim'd from some inhuman eye,
The gun, the music of the coming year
Destroy; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
Lay the weak tribes, a miserable prey,
In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground! 985

The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
A gentler mood inspires; for now the leaf
Incessant rustles from the mournful grove,
Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,

And slowly circles through the waving air; 990
But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams;
Till, choak'd and matted with the dreary shower,
The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak. 995
Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields;
And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
Their sunny robes resign. E'en what remain'd
Of stronger fruits, falls from the naked tree;
And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around 1000
The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

He comes, he comes! in every breeze the power
Of philosophic melancholy comes!
His near approach the sudden starting tear,
The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air, 1005
The softened feature, and the beating heart,
Pierc'd deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes!
Inflames imagination; through the breast
Infuses every tenderness; and far 1010
Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.
As fast the correspondent passions rise, 1015
As varied, and as high; devotion rais'd
To rapture, and divine astonishment;
The love of nature unconfin'd, and, chief,
Of human race; the large ambitious wish
To make them blest; the sigh for suffering worth
Lost in obscurity; the noble scorn
Of tyrant pride; the fearless great resolve;
The wonder which the dying patriot draws,

Inspiring glory through remotest time;
Th' awakened throb for virtue and for fame; 1025
The sympathies of love and friendship dear;
With all the social offspring of the heart.

O bear me then to vast embowering shades,
To twilight groves, and visionary vales;
To weeping grottoes, and prophetic glooms; 1030
Where angel-forms athwart the solemn dusk
Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep, along;
And voices more than human, through the void
Deep-sounding, seize th' enthusiastic ear!

Or is this gloom too much? Then lead, ye powers
That o'er the garden and the rural seat
Preside, which, shining through the cheerful land
In countless numbers, blest Britannia sees;
O lead me to the wide-extended walks,
The fair majestic paradise of Stowe!* 1040
Not Persian Cyrus on Ionia's shore
E'er saw such sylvan scenes; such various art
By genius fired, such ardent genius tam'd
By cool judicious art; that in the strife,
All-beauteous nature fears to be outdone. 1045
And there, O Pitt, thy country's early boast!
There let me sit beneath the sheltered slopes,
Or in that temple,† where in future times
Thou well shalt merit a distinguish'd name;
And, with thy converse blest, catch the last smiles
Of Autumn beaming o'er the yellow woods.
While there with thee th' inchanted round I walk,
The regulated wild, gay fancy then

* The seat of the Lord Viscount Cobham.
† The Temple of Virtue in Stowe-Gardens.

Will tread in thought the groves of attic land;
Will from thy standard taste refine her own, 1055
Correct her pencil to the purest truth
Of nature, or, the unimpassion'd shades
Forsaking, raise it to the human mind.
Or if hereafter she, with juster hand,
Shall draw the tragic scene, instruct her thou, 1060
To mark the varied movements of the heart,
What ev'ry decent character requires,
And ev'ry passion speaks: O through her strain
Breathe thy pathetic eloquence! that moulds
Th' attentive senate, charms, persuades, exalts, 1065
Of honest zeal th' indignant lightning throws,
And shakes corruption on her venal throne.
While thus we talk, and through Elysian vales
Delighted rove, perhaps a sigh escapes:
What pity, Cobham, thou thy verdant files 1070
Of order'd trees should here inglorious range,
Instead of squadrons flaming o'er the field,
And long embattled hosts! when the proud foe,
The faithless vain disturber of mankind,
Insulting Gaul, has rous'd the world to war; 1075
When keen, once more, within their bounds to press
Those polish'd robbers, those ambitious slaves,
The British youth would hail thy wise command,
Thy temper'd ardour, and thy vet'ran skill.

The western sun withdraws the shorten'd day; 1080
And humid ev'ning, gliding o'er the sky,
In her chill progress, to the ground, condens'd,
The vapours throws. Where creeping waters ooze,
Where marshes stagnate, and where rivers wind,
Cluster the rolling fogs, and swim along 1085
The dusky-mantled lawn. Mean-while the moon
Full orb'd, and breaking through the scatter'd clouds,

Shews her broad visage in the crimson'd east.
Turn'd to the sun direct, her spotted disk,
Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,
And caverns deep, as optic tube descries,
A smaller earth, gives us his blaze again,
Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.
Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime. 1095
Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
O'er the sky'd mountain to the shadowy vale,
While rocks and floods reflect the quiv'ring gleam,
The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
Of silver radiance, trembling round the world. 1100

But when half blotted from the sky, her light,
Fainting, permits the starry fires to burn
With keener lustre through the depth of heav'n;
Or near extinct her deaden'd orb appears,
And scarce appears, of sickly beamless white; 1105
Oft in this season, silent from the north
A blaze of meteors shoots: ensweeping first
The lower skies, they all at once converge
High to the crown of heav'n, and all at once
Relapsing quick, as quickly reascend, 1110
And mix, and thwart, extinguish, and renew,
All ether coursing in a maze of light.

From look to look, contagious through the crowd,
The panic runs, and into wondrous shapes
Th' appearance throws: armies in meet array, 1115
Throng'd with aerial spears, and steeds of fire;
Till the long lines of full extended war
In bleeding fight commixt, the sanguine flood
Rolls a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heav'n.
As thus they scan the visionary scene, 1120

On all sides swells the superstitious din,
Incontinent; and busy frenzy talks
Of blood and battle; cities overturned,
And late at night in swallowing earthquake sunk,
Or hideous wrapt in fierce ascending flame; 1125
Of sallow famine, inundation, storm;
Of pestilence, and every great distress;
Empires subvers'd, when ruling fate has struck
Th' unalterable hour; even nature's self
Is deemed to totter on the brink of time. 1130
Not so the man of philosophic eye,
And inspect sage; the waving brightness he
Curious surveys, inquisitive to know
The causes and materials, yet unfix'd,
Of this appearance, beautiful and new. 1135

Now black and deep the night begins to fall,
A shade immense. Sunk in the quenching gloom,
Magnificent and vast, are heaven and earth.
Order confounded lies; all beauty void;
Distinction lost; and gay variety 1140
One universal blot: such the fair power
Of light, to kindle and create the whole.
Drear is the state of the benighted wretch,
Who then, bewilder'd, wanders through the dark,
Full of pale fancies, and chimeras huge; 1145
Nor visited by one directive ray,
From cottage streaming, or from airy hall.
Perhaps, impatient as he stumbles on,
Struck from the root of slimy rushes, blue,
The wild-fire scatters round, or gathered trails 1150
A length of flame deceitful o'er the moss;
Whither decoyed by the fantastic blaze,
Now lost and now renewed, he sinks absorpt,
Rider and horse, amid the miry gulf:

While still, from day to day, his pining wife 1155
And plaintive children his return await,
In wild conjecture lost. At other times,
Sent by the better genius of the night,
Innoxious, gleaming on the horse's mane
The meteor sits; and shows the narrow path, 1160
That winding leads through pits of death, or else
Instructs him how to take the dangerous ford.

The lengthened night elapsed, the morning shines
Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
Unfolding fair the last autumnal day. 1165
And now the mounting sun dispels the fog;
The rigid hoar-frost melts before his beam;
And hung on every spray, on every blade
Of grass, the myriad dew-drops twinkle round.

Ah! see, where, robbed and murdered, in that pit,
Lies the still-heaving hive! at evening snatch'd,
Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,
And fix'd o'er sulphur; while, not dreaming ill,
The happy people in their waxen cells
Sat, tending public cares, and planning schemes 1175
Of temperance, for winter poor, rejoiced
To mark, full-flowing round, their copious stores.
Sudden the dark oppressive steam ascends;
And, used to milder scents, the tender race,
By thousands, tumble from their honey'd domes, 1180
Convolv'd, and agonizing in the dust.
And was it then for this you roam'd the spring,
Intent from flower to flower? for this you toil'd,
Ceaseless, the burning summer heats away?
For this in Autumn search'd the burning waste, 1185
Not lost one sunny gleam? for this sad fate?
O man, tyrannic lord! how long, how long,

Shall prostrate nature groan beneath your rage,
Awaiting renovation? When oblig'd,
Must you destroy? Of their ambrosial food 1190
Can you not borrow; and, in just return,
Afford them shelter from the wintry winds;
Or, as the sharp year pinches, with their own
Again regale them on some smiling day?
See where the stony bottom of their town 1195
Looks desolate, and wild! with here and there
A helpless number, who the ruin'd state
Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death.
Thus a proud city, populous and rich,
Full of the works of peace, and high in joy, 1200
At theatre or feast, or sunk in sleep,
(As late, Palermo, was thy fate) is seiz'd
By some dread earthquake, and convulsive hurl'd
Sheer from the black foundation, stench-involv'd,
Into a gulph of blue sulphureous flame. 1205

Hence ev'ry harsher sight! for now the day,
O'er heav'n and earth diffus'd, grows warm, and high,
Infinite splendour! wide investing all.
How still the breeze! save what the filmy threads
Of dew evaporate brushes from the plain. 1210
How clear the cloudless sky! how deeply ting'd
With a peculiar blue! th' ethereal arch
How swell'd immense! amid whose azure thron'd,
The radiant sun how gay! how calm, below
The gilded earth! the harvest-treasures all 1215
Now gather'd in, beyond the rage of storms,
Sure to the swain; the circling fence shut up;
And instant Winter's utmost rage defied.
While, loose to festive joy, the country round
Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth, 1220
Shook to the wind their cares. The toil-strung youth,

By the quick sense of music taught alone,
Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.
Her ev'ry charm abroad, the village-toast,
Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich, 1225
Darts not unmeaning looks; and, where her eye
Points an approving smile, with double force,
The cudgel rattles, and the wrestler twines.
Age too shines out; and, garrulous, recounts
The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice; nor think
That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
Begins again the never-ceasing round.

Oh knew he but his happiness, of men
The happiest he! who far from public rage,
Deep in the vale, with a choice few retir'd, 1235
Drinks the pure pleasures of the rural life.
What though the dome be wanting, whose proud gate,
Each morning, vomits out the sneaking crowd
Of flatt'rers false, and in their turn abus'd?
Vile intercoucse! What though the glitt'ring robe, 1240
Of ev'ry hue reflected light can give,
Or floating loose, or stiff with mazy gold,
The pride and gaze of fools, oppress him not?
What though, from utmost land and sea purvey'd,
For him each rarer tributary life 1245
Bleeds not, and his insatiate table heaps
With luxury and death? What though his bowl
Flames not with costly juice; nor sunk in beds,
Oft of gay care, he tosses out the night,
Or melts the thoughtless hour in idle state? 1250
What though he knows not those fantastic joys,
That still amuse the wanton, still deceive?
A face of pleasure, but a heart of pain;
Their hollow moments undelighted all!
Sure peace is his; a solid life, estrang'd 1255

To disappointment, and fallacious hope:
Rich in content, in nature's bounty rich,
In herbs and fruits; whatever greens the Spring,
When heav'n descends in show'rs; or bends the bough
When Summer reddens, and when Autumn beams;
Or in the wintry glebe whatever lies
Conceal'd, and fattens with the richest sap:
These are not wanting; nor the milky drove,
Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale;
Nor bleating mountains; nor the chide of streams,
And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere
Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,
Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay;
Nor ought besides of prospect, grove, or song,
Dim grottoes, gleaming lakes, and fountains clear.
Here too dwells simple truth; plain innocence;
Unsullied beauty; sound unbroken youth,
Patient of labour, with a little pleas'd;
Health ever blooming; unambitious toil;
Calm contemplation, and poetic ease. 1275

Let others brave the flood in quest of gain,
And beat, for joyless months, the gloomy wave.
Let such as deem it glory to destroy,
Rush into blood, the sack of cities seek;
Unpierc'd, exulting in the widow's wail, 1280
The virgin's shriek, and infant's trembling cry.
Let some, far distant from their native soil,
Urg'd, or by want or harden'd avarice,
Find other lands beneath another sun.
Let this through cities work his eager way, 1285
By legal outrage and establish'd guile,
The social sense extinct; and that ferment
Mad into tumult the seditious herd,
Or melt them down to slavery. Let these

Insnare the wretched in the toils of law, 1290
Fomenting discord, and perplexing right,
An iron race! and those, of fairer front,
But equal inhumanity, in courts,
Delusive pomp, and dark cabals delight;
Wreathe the deep bow, diffuse the lying smile, 1295
And tread the weary labyrinth of state.
While he, from all the stormy passions free
That wrestless men involve, hears, and but hears,
At distance safe, the human tempest roar,
Wrapt close in conscious peace. The fall of kings,
The rage of nations, and the crush of states,
Move not the man, who, from the world escap'd,
In still retreats, and flow'ry solitudes,
To nature's voice attends, from month to month,
And day to day, through the revolving year; 1305
Admiring, sees her in her ev'ry shape;
Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart;
Takes what she lib'ral gives, nor thinks of more.
He, when young Spring protrudes the bursting gems,
Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale
Into his freshen'd soul; her genial hours
He full enjoys; and not a beauty blows,
And not an op'ning blossom breathes, in vain.
In Summer he, beneath the living shade,
Such as o'er frigid Tempe wont to wave, 1315
Or Hemus cool, reads what the muse, of these
Perhaps, has in immortal numbers sung;
Or what she dictates writes; and oft, an eye
Shot round, rejoices in the vig'rous year.
When Autumn's yellow lustre gilds the world, 1320
And tempts the sickled swain into the field,
Seiz'd by the gen'ral joy, his heart distends
With gentle throes; and through the tepid gleams
Deep musing, then he best exerts his song.

E'en Winter wild to him is full of bliss; 1325
The mighty tempest, and the hoary waste,
Abrupt and deep, stretch'd o'er the buried earth,
Awake to solemn thought. At night the skies,
Disclosed and kindled by refining frost,
Pour every lustre on th' exalted eye. 1330
A friend, a book, the stealing hours secure,
And mark them down for wisdom. With swift wing,
O'er land and sea imagination roams;
Or truth, divinely breaking on his mind,
Elates his being, and unfolds his powers; 1335
Or in his breast heroic virtue burns.
The touch of kindred too and love he feels;
The modest eye, whose beams on his alone
Ecstatic shine; the little strong embrace
Of prattling children, twin'd around his neck, 1340
And emulous to please him, calling forth
The fond parental soul. Nor purpose gay,
Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns;
For happiness, and true philosophy,
Are of the social still and smiling kind. 1345
This is the life which those who fret in guilt,
And guilty cities, never knew; the life
Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt,
When angels dwelt, and God himself, with man.

O nature! all-sufficient! over all!
Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works!
Snatch me to heaven; thy rolling wonders there,
World beyond world, in infinite extent
Profusely scatter'd o'er the blue immense,
Show me; their motions, periods, and their laws,
Give me to scan; through the disclosing deep
Light my blind way; the mineral strata there;
Thrust blooming thence, the vegetable world;

O'er that the rising system, more complex,
Of animals; and higher still, the mind, 1360
The varied scene of quick-compounded thought,
And where the mixing passions endless shift;
These ever open to my ravished eye;
A search, the flight of time can ne'er exhaust.
But if to that unequal; if the blood, 1365
In sluggish streams about my heart, forbid
That best ambition; under closing shades,
Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook,
And whisper to my dreams. From thee begin,
Dwell all on thee, with thee conclude my song;
And let me never, never stray from thee! 1371

WINTER.

THE ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Address to the Earl of Wilmington. First approach of Winter. According to the natural course of the season, various storms described. Rain. Wind Snow. The driving of the snows: A man perishing among them; whence reflections on the wants and miseries of human life. The wolves descending from the Alps and Appenines. A winter-evening described; as spent by philosophers; by the country people; in the city. Frost. A view of Winter within the polar circle. A thaw. The whole concluding with moral reflections on a future state.

WINTER.

SEE, Winter comes, to rule the varied year,
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train ;
Vapours, and clouds, and storms. Be these my theme,
These! that exalt the soul to solemn thought,
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred glooms! 5
Congenial horrors, hail! with frequent foot,
Pleas'd have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nurs'd by careless solitude I liv'd,
And sung of nature with unceasing joy,
Pleas'd have I wander'd thro' your rough domain; 10
Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst;
Or seen the deep fermenting tempest brew'd
In the grim evening sky. Thus pass'd the time,
Till through the lucid chambers of the south, 15
Look'd out the joyous spring, look'd out, and smil'd.

To thee, the patron of her first essay,
The muse, O Wilmington! renews her song.
Since has she rounded the revolving year;
Skimm'd the gay spring; on eagle pinions borne, 20
Attempted through the summer blaze to rise

Then swept o'er Autumn with a shadowy gale;
And now among the wintry clouds again,
Roll'd in the doubling storm, she tries to soar;
To swell her note with all the rushing winds; 25
To suit her sounding cadence to the floods;
As is her theme, her numbers wildly great:
Thrice happy! could she fill thy judging ear
With bold description, and with manly thought.
Nor art thou skill'd in awful schemes alone, 30
And how to make a mighty people thrive;
But equal goodness, sound integrity,
A firm unshaken uncorrupted soul,
Amid a sliding age, and burning strong,
Not vainly blazing for thy country's weal, 35
A steady spirit, regularly free;
These, each exalting each, the statesman light
Into the patriot; these, the public hope
And eye to thee converting, bid the muse
Record what envy dares not flatt'ry call. 40

Now when the cheerless empire of the sky
To Capricorn the Centaur archer yields,
And fierce Aquarius stains th' inverted year;
Hung o'er the farthest verge of heav'n, the sun
Scarce spreads through ether the dejected day. 45
Faint are his gleams, and ineffectual shoot
His struggling rays, in horizontal lines,
Through the thick air; as cloth'd in cloudy storm,
Weak, wan, and broad, he skirts the southern sky;
And, soon descending, to the long dark night, 50
Wide shading all, the prostrate world resigns.
Nor is the night unwish'd; while vital heat,
Light, life, and joy, the dubious day forsake.
Mean time, in sable cincture, shadows vast,

Deep ting'd and damp, and congregated clouds, 55
And all the vapoury turbulence of heaven,
Involve the face of things. Thus Winter falls,
A heavy gloom, oppressive, o'er the world,
Through nature shedding influence malign,
And rouses up the seeds of dark disease. 60
The soul of man dies in him, loathing life,
And black with more than melancholy views.
The cattle droop; and o'er the furrowed land,
Fresh from the plough, the dun discoloured flocks,
Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root. 65
Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;
And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
And fractur'd mountains wild, the brawling brook,
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan, 70
Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.
Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
Wrapt in black glooms. First joyless rains obscure
Drive through the mingling skies with vapour foul;
Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods 75
That grumbling wave below. Th' unsightly plain
Lies a brown deluge; as the low-bent clouds
Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted still,
Combine, and deepening into night, shut up
The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven, 80
Each to his home, retire; save those that love
To take their pastime in the troubled air,
Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
The cattle from th' untasted fields return,
And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls, 85
Or ruminate in the contiguous shade.
Thither the household feathery people crowd;
The crested cock, with all his female train,

Pensive, and dripping; while the cottage hind
Hangs o'er th' enlivening blaze, and taleful there 90
Recounts his simple frolic : much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
Without, and rattles on his humble roof.

Wide o'er the brim with many a torrent swell'd,
And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread,
At last the rous'd up river pours along:
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes,
From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,
Tumbling through rocks abrupt, and sounding far;
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads, 100
Calm, sluggish, silent; till again, constrain'd
Between two meeting hills, it bursts away,
Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;
There, gathering triple force, rapid and deep,
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.

Nature! great parent! whose unceasing hand
Rolls round the seasons of the changeful year,
How mighty, how majestic, are thy works!
With what a pleasing dread they swell the soul,
That sees astonish'd, and astonish'd sings! 110
Ye, too, ye winds, that now begin to blow
With boist'rous sweep! I raise my voice to you.
Where are your stores, ye powerful beings! say,
Where your aerial magazines reserved,
To swell the brooding terrors of the storm? 115
In what far distant region of the sky,
Hush'd in deep silence, sleep ye when 'tis calm?

When from the pallid sky the sun descends,
With many a spot, that o'er his glaring orb
Uncertain wanders, stain'd; red fiery streaks 120

Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds
Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
Which master to obey: while rising slow,
Blank in the leaden-colour'd east, the moon
Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns. 125
Seen through the turbid fluctuating air,
The stars obtuse emit a shiver'd ray;
Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,
And long behind them trail the whit'ning blaze.
Snatch'd in short eddies, plays the wither'd leaf; 130
And on the flood the dancing feather floats.
With broaden'd nostrils to the sky up turn'd,
The conscious heiffer snuffs the stormy gale.
E'en as the matron, at her nightly task,
With pensive labour draws the flaxen thread, 155
The wasted taper and the crackling flame
Foretell the blast. But chief the plumy race,
The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
Retiring from the downs, where all day long
They pick'd their scanty fare, a black'ning train 100
Of clam'rous rooks thick urge their weary flight,
And seek the closing shelter of the grove.
Assiduous, in his bow'r, the wailing owl
Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land.
Loud shrieks the soaring hern; and with wild wing
The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
Ocean, unequal press'd, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave, 150
And forest-rustling mountains, comes a voice,
That solemn sounding bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurls the whole precipitated air
Down, in a torrent. On the passive main 155

Descends th' ethereal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discolour'd deep.
Through the black night that sits immense around,
Lash'd into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn: 160
Mean-time the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swell'd, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchor'd navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds, across the howling waste 165
Of mighty waters: now the inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,
The wintry Baltic thund'ring o'er their heads.
Emerging thence again, before the breath 170
Of full-exerted heav'n they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts; if some sharp rock,
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.

Nor less at land the loosen'd tempest reigns. 175
The mountain thunders; and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark wayfaring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast. 180
Low waves the rooted forest, vex'd, and sheds
What of its tarnish'd honours yet remain;
Dash'd down, and scatter'd, by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling through the dissipated grove, 185
The whirling tempest raves along the plain;
And on the cottage thatch'd, or lordly roof,
Keen-fast'ning, shakes them to the solid base.
Sleep frighted flies; and round the rocking dome,

For entrance eager, howls the savage blast. 190
Then too, they say, through all the burthened air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That, utter'd by the demon of the night,
Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.

Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds, commix'd
With stars swift gliding, sweep along the sky.
All nature reels. Till nature's King, who oft
Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
And on the wings of the careering wind
Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm; 200
Then straight air, sea and earth, are hush'd at once.

As yet is midnight deep. The weary clouds,
Slow-meeting, mingle into solid gloom.
Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,
Let me associate with the serious night,
And contemplation, her sedate compeer;
Let me shake off th' intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling senses all aside.

Where now, ye lying vanities of life,
Ye ever tempting, ever cheating train,
Where are ye now? and what is your amount?
Vexation, disappointment, and remorse.
Sad, sickening thought! and yet deluded man,
A scene of crude disjointed visions past,
And broken slumbers, rises still resolved,
With new-flush'd hopes, to run the giddy round.

Father of light and life! thou good supreme!
O teach me what is good! teach me thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity and vice,
From every low pursuit! and feed my soul 220

With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure;
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!

The keener tempests rise; and fuming dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend; in whose capacious womb 225
A vapoury deluge lies, to snow congeal'd.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along;
And the sky saddens with the gather'd storm.
Through the hush'd air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin wavering; till at last the flakes 230
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
Put on their winter robe, of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low, the woods 230
Bow their hoar head; and, e'er the languid sun
Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, heep hid, and chill,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man. Drooping, the labourer-ox 240
Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tam'd by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone, 245
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
Wisely regardful of th' embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half-afraid, he first 250
Against the window beats; then brisk alights
On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all the smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is;

Till more familiar grown, the table-crumbs 255
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks, 260
Urg'd on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the bleak heav'n, and next the glist'ning earth,
With looks of dumb despair; then, sad dispers'd,
Dig for the wither'd herb through heaps of snow.

Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind,
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
With food at will; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict; for from the bellowing east,
In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
Sweeps up the burden of whole wintry plains 270
At one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
Hid in the hollow of two neighb'ring hills,
The billowy tempest whelms; till, upward urg'd,
The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipt with a wreath high-curling in the sky. 275

As thus the snows arise; and foul, and fierce,
All Winter drives along the darken'd air;
In his own loose-revolving fields, the swain
Disaster'd stands; sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown joyless brow; and other scenes, 280
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain:
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray:
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps, 285
Stung with the thoughts of home; the thoughts of home

Rush on his nerves, and call their vigour forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul!
What black despair, what horror fills his heart! 290
When for the dusky spot, which fancy feign'd
His tufted cottage rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track, and blest abode of man;
While round him night resistless closes fast, 295
And ev'ry tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of cover'd pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the pow'r of frost; 300
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smooth'd up with snow; and, what is land, unknown,
What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils. 305
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mix'd with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man, 310
His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.
In vain for him th' officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing, and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire, 315
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On ev'ry nerve
The deadly Winter seizes; shuts up sense;
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold, 320
Lays him along the snows, a stiffen'd corse,
Stretch'd out, and bleaching in the northern blast.

Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, pow'r, and affluence surround;
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste; 325
Ah, little think they, while they dance along,
How many feel, this very moment, death,
And all the sad variety of pain!
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame; how many bleed, 330
By shameful variance betwixt man and man;
How many pine in want, and dungeon glooms;
Shut from the common air, and common use
Of their own limbs; how many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread 335
Of misery; sore pierc'd by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty; how many shake
With all the fiercer tortures of the mind,
Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remorse; 340
Whence tumbled headlong from the height of life,
They furnish matter for the tragic muse.
E'en in the vale, where wisdom loves to dwell,
With friendship, peace, and contemplation join'd,
How many, rack'd with honest passions, droop 345
In deep retir'd distress; how many stand
Around the death-bed of their dearest friends,
And point the parting anguish. Thought fond man
Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
That one incessant struggle render life, 350
One scene of toil, of suff'ring, and of fate,
Vice in his high career would stand appall'd,
And heedless rambling impulse learn to think;
The conscious heart of charity would warm,
And her wide wish benevolence dilate; 355
The social tear would rise, the social sigh;

And into clear perfection, gradual bliss,
Refining still, the social passions work.

And here can I forget the gen'rous band,*
Who, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail?
Unpitied, and unheard, where mis'ry moans;
Where sickness pines; where thirst and hunger burn,
And poor misfortune feels the lash of vice.
While in the land of liberty, the land 365
Whose ev'ry street and public meeting glow
With open freedom, little tyrants rag'd;
Snatch'd the lean morsel from the starving mouth;
Tore from cold wintry limbs the tatter'd weed;
E'en robb'd them of the last of comforts, sleep; 370
The free-born Briton to the dungeon chain'd,
Or, as the lust of cruelty prevail'd,
At pleasure mark'd him with inglorious stripes;
And crush'd out lives, by secret barb'rous ways,
That for their country would have toil'd, or bled. 375
O great design! if executed well,
With patient care, and wisdom-temper'd zeal.
Ye sons of mercy! yet resume the search;
Drag forth the legal monsters into light,
Wrench from their hands oppression's iron rod, 380
And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
Much still untouch'd remains; in this dark age,
Much is the patriot's weeding hand requir'd.
The toils of law (what dark insidious men
Have cumbrous added to perplex the truth, 385
And lengthen simple justice into trade,)
How glorious were the day that saw these broke,
And ev'ry man within the reach of right!

* The Jail Committee in the year 1729.

By wintry famine rous'd, from all the tract
Of horrid mountains which the shining Alps, 390
And wavy Appenines, and Pyrenees,
Branch out stupendous into distant lands;
Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave!
Burning for blood! bony, and gaunt, and grim!
Assembling wolves in raging troops descend; 395
And, pouring o'er the country, bear along,
Keen as the north wind sweeps the glossy snow.
All is their prize. They fasten on the steed,
Press him to earth, and pierce his mighty heart.
Nor can the bull his awful front defend, 400
Or shake the murd'ring savages away.
Rapacious, at the mother's throat they fly,
And tear the screaming infant from her breast.
The godlike face of man avails him nought.
E'en beauty, force divine! at whose bright glance 405
The gen'rous lion stands in soften'd gaze,
Here bleeds, a hapless undistinguish'd prey.
But if, appriz'd of the severe attack,
The country be shut up, lur'd by the scent,
On church-yards drear (inhuman to relate!) 410
The disappointed prowlers fall, and dig
The shrouded body from the grave; o'er which,
Mix'd with foul shades, and frighted ghosts, they howl,

Among those hilly regions, where embrac'd
In peaceful vales the happy Grisons dwell; 415
Oft, rushing sudden from the loaded cliffs,
Mountains of snow their gath'ring terrors roll.
From steep to steep, loud-thund'ring down they come,
A wintry waste in dire commotion all;
And herds, and flocks, and travellers, and swains,
And sometimes whole brigades of marching troops,

Or hamlets sleeping in the dead of night,
Are deep beneath the smoth'ring ruin whelm'd.

Now, all amid the rigours of the year,
In the wild depth of Winter, while without 425
The ceaseless winds blow ice, be my retreat
Between the groaning forest and the shore,
Beat by the boundless multitude of waves,
A rural, shelter'd, solitary scene;
Where ruddy fire and beaming tapers join, 430
To cheer the gloom. There studious let me sit,
And hold high converse with the mighty dead;
Sages of ancient time, as gods rever'd,
As gods beneficent, who blest mankind
With arts, with arms, and humaniz'd a world. 435
Rous'd at th' inspiring thought, I throw aside
The long liv'd volume; and, deep-musing, hail
The sacred shades, that slowly rising pass
Before my wond'ring eyes. First, Socrates,
Who, firmly good in a corrupted state, 440
Against the rage of tyrants single stood,
Invincible! calm reason's holy law,
That voice of God within th' attentive mind,
Obeying, fearless, or in life, or death:
Great moral teacher! wisest of mankind! 445
Solon the next, who built his common-weal
On equity's wide base; by tender laws
A lively people curbing, yet undamp'd
Preserving still that quick peculiar fire,
Whence in the laurell'd field of finer arts, 450
And of bold freedom, they unequall'd shone,
The pride of smiling Greece, and human-kind.
Lycurgus then, who bow'd beneath the force
Of strictest discipline, severely wise,
All human passions. Following him, I see,

As at Thermopylæ he glorious fell,
The firm devoted chief,* who prov'd by deeds
The hardest lesson which the other taught.
Then Aristides lifts his honest front;
Spotless of heart, to whom th' unflattering voice 460
Of freedom gave the noblest name of just;
In pure majestic poverty rever'd;
Who, even his glory to his country's weal
Submitting, swell'd a haughty †rival's fame.
Rear'd by his care, of softer ray appears 465
Cimon, sweet-soul'd; whose genius, rising strong,
Shook off the load of young debauch; abroad
The scourge of Persian pride, at home the friend
Of ev'ry worth and ev'ry splendid art;
Modest, and simple, in the pomp of wealth. 470
Then the last worthies of declining Greece,
Late call'd to glory, in unequal times,
Pensive, appear. The fair Corinthian boast,
Timoleon, happy temper! mild, and firm,
Who wept the brother while the tyrant bled. 475
And, equal to the best, the Theban pair,‡
Whose virtues, in heroic concord join'd,
Their country rais'd to freedom, empire, fame.
He too, with whom Athenian honour sunk,
And left a mass of sordid lees behind, 480
Phocion the good; in public life severe,
To virtue still inexorably firm;
But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,
Sweet peace and happy wisdom smooth'd his brow,
Not friendship softer was, nor love more kind. 485
And he, the last of old Lycurgus' sons,
The gen'rous victim to that vain attempt,

* Leonidas. † Themistocles
‡ Pelopidas and Epaminondas.

To save a rotten state, Agis, who saw
E'en Sparta's self to servile av'rice sunk.
The two Achaian heroes close the train; 490
Aratus, who a while relum'd the soul
Of fondly ling'ring liberty in Greece;
And he, her darling, as her latest hope,
The gallant Philopœmen; who to arms
Turn'd the luxurious pomp he could not cure; 495
Or toiling in his farm, a simple swain;
Or, bold and skilful, thund'ring in the field.

Of rougher front, a mighty people come!
A race of heroes! in those virtuous times
Which knew no stain, save that with partial flame
Their dearest country they too fondly lov'd:
Her better founder first, the light of Rome,
Numa, who soften'd her rapacious sons:
Servius the king, who laid the solid base
On which o'er earth the vast republic spread. 505
Then the great consuls, venerable, rise.
The public father* who the private quell'd,
As on the dread tribunal sternly sad.
He, whom his thankless country could not lose,
Camillus, only vengeful to her foes. 510
Fabricius, scorner of all-conqu'ring gold;
And Cincinnatus, awful from the plough.
Thy willing victim,† Carthage, bursting loose
From all that pleading nature could oppose,
From a whole city's tears, by rigid faith 515
Imperious call'd, and honour's dire command.
Scipio, the gentle chief, humanely brave,
Who soon the race of spotless glory ran,
And, warm in youth, to the poetic shade

* Marcus Junius Brutus. † Regulus.

With friendship and philosophy retir'd. 520
Tully, whose powerful eloquence a while
Restrain'd the rapid fate of rushing Rome.
Unconquer'd Cato, virtuous in extreme.
And thou, unhappy Brutus, kind of heart,
Whose steady arm, by awful virtue urg'd, 525
Lifted the Roman steel against thy friend.
Thousands besides the tribute of a verse
Demand; but who can count the stars of heav'n?
Who sing their influence on this lower world?

Behold, who yonder comes! in sober state, 530
Fair, mild, and strong, as is a vernal sun:
'Tis Phœbus' self, or else the Mantuan swain!
Great Homer too appears, of daring wing,
Parent of song! and equal by his side,
The British muse; join'd hand in hand they walk,
Darkling, full up the middle steep to fame.
Nor absent are those shades, whose skilful touch
Pathetic drew th' impassion'd heart, and charm'd
Transported Athens with the moral scene:
Nor those who, tuneful, wak'd th' enchanting lyre.

First of your kind! society divine!
Still visit thus my nights, for you reserv'd,
And mount my soaring soul to thoughts like yours.
Silence, thou lonely pow'r! the door be thine;
See on the hallow'd hour that none intrude, 545
Save a few chosen friends, who sometimes deign
To bless my humble roof, with sense refin'd,
Learning digested well, exalted faith,
Unstudied wit, and humour ever gay.
Or from the muses' hill will Pope descend, 550
To raise the sacred hour, to bid it smile,
And with the social spirit warm the heart:

For though not sweeter his own Homer sings,
Yet is his life the more endearing song.

Where art thou, Hammond? thou the darling pride,
The friend and lover of the tuneful throng!
Ah why, dear youth, in all the blooming prime
Of vernal genius, where disclosing fast
Each active worth, each manly virtue lay,
Why wert thou ravish'd from our hope so soon? 560
What now avails that noble thirst of fame,
Which stung thy fervent breast? that treasur'd store
Of knowledge, early gain'd? that eager zeal
To serve thy country, glowing in the band
Of youthful patriots, who sustain her name? 565
What now, alas! that life-diffusing charm
Of sprightly wit? that rapture for the muse,
That heart of friendship, and that soul of joy,
Which bade with softest light thy virtues smile?
Ah! only shew'd to check our fond pursuits, 570
And teach our humble hopes that life is vain!

Thus in some deep retirement would I pass
The winter-glooms, with friends of pliant soul,
Or blithe, or solemn, as the theme inspir'd:
With them would search if nature's boundless frame
Was call'd, late-rising from the void of night,
Or sprung eternal from th' eternal mind;
Its life, its laws, its progress, and its end.
Hence larger prospects of the beauteous whole
Would, gradual, open on our op'ning minds; 580
And each diffusive harmony unite
In full perfection to th' astonish'd eye.
Then would we try to scan the moral world;
Which, though to us it seems embroil'd, moves on
In higher order; fitted, and impell'd,

By wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
In gen'ral good. The sage historic muse
Should next conduct us through the deeps of time:
Shew us how empire grew, declin'd, and fell,
In scatter'd states; what makes the nations smile, 590
Improves their soil, and gives them double suns;
And why they pine beneath the brightest skies,
In nature's richest lap. As thus we talk'd,
Our hearts would burn within us, would inhale
That portion of divinity, that ray 595
Of purest heav'n, which lights the public soul
Of patriots, and of heroes. But if doom'd,
In pow'rless humble fortune, to repress
These ardent risings of the kindling soul;
Then, e'en superior to ambition, we 600
Would learn the private virtues; how to glide
Through shades and plains, along the smoothest stream
Of rural life: or snatch'd away by hope,
Through the dim spaces of futurity,
With earnest eye anticipate those scenes 405
Of happiness, and wonder; where the mind,
In endless growth and infinite ascent,
Rises from state to state, and world to world.
But when with these the serious thought is foil'd,
We, shifting for relief, would play the shapes 610
Of frolic fancy; and incessant form
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train
Of fleet ideas, never join'd before,
Whence lively wit excites to gay surprise;
Or folly-painting humour, grave himself, 615
Calls laughter forth, deep-shaking ev'ry nerve.

Mean-time the village rouses up the fire;
While well attested, and as well believ'd,
Heard solemn, goes the goblin story round;

Till superstitious horror creeps o'er all. 920
Or, frequent in the sounding hall, they wake
The rural gambol. Rustic mirth goes round;
The simple joke that takes the shepherd's heart,
Easily pleas'd; the long loud laugh, sincere;
The kiss, snatch'd hasty from the sidelong maid, 625
On purpose guardless, or pretending sleep;
The leap, the slap, the haul; and, shook to notes
Of native music, the respondent dance.
Thus jocund fleets with them the winter-night.

The city swarms intense. The public haunt, 630
Full of each theme, and warm with mixt discourse,
Hums indistinct. The sons of riot flow
Down the loose stream of false enchanted joy,
To swift destruction. On the rankled soul
The gaming fury falls; and in one gulf 635
Of total ruin, honour, virtue, peace,
Friends, families, and fortune, headlong sink.
Up springs the dance along the lighted dome,
Mix'd, and evolv'd, a thousand sprightly ways.
The glitt'ring court effuses ev'ry pomp; 640
The circle deepens: beam'd from gaudy robes,
Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves:
While, a gay insect in his summer-shine,
The fop, light flutt'ring, spreads his mealy wings. 645

Dread o'er the scene, the ghost of Hamlet stalks;
Othello rages; poor Monimia mourns;
And Belvidera pours her soul in love.
Terror alarms the breast; the comely tear
Steals o'er the cheek: or else the comic muse 650
Holds to the world a picture of itself,
And raises sly the fair impartial laugh.

Sometimes she lifts her strain, and paints the scenes
Of beauteous life; whate'er can deck mankind,
Or charm the heart, in generous Bevil* show'd. 655

O thou, whose wisdom, solid, yet refin'd,
Whose patriot virtues, and consummate skill
To touch the finer springs that move the world,
Join'd to whate'er the graces can bestow,
And all Apollo's animating fire, 660
Give thee, with pleasing dignity, to shine,
At once the guardian, ornament, and joy
Of polish'd life; permit the rural muse,
O Chesterfield, to grace with thee her song!
Ere to the shades again she humbly flies, 665
Indulge her fond ambition, in thy train,
(For every muse has in thy train a place)
To mark thy various full-accomplish'd mind;
To mark that spirit, which, with British scorn,
Rejects th' allurements of corrupted power; 970
That elegant politeness, which excels,
E'en in the judgment of presumptuous France,
The boasted manners of her shining court;
That wit, the vivid energy of sense,
The truth of nature, which, with attic point, 675
And kind well-temper'd satire, smoothly keen,
Steals through the soul, and without pain corrects.
Or, rising thence with yet a brighter flame,
O let me hail thee on some glorious day,
When to the listening senate, ardent, crowd 680
Britannia's sons, to hear her pleaded cause.
Then dress'd by thee more amiably fair,
Truth the soft robe of mild persuasion wears:

* A character in the Conscious Lovers, written by Sir Richard Steele.

Thou to assenting reason giv'st again
Her own enlighten'd thoughts; call'd from the heart,
Th obedient passions on thy voice attend;
And e'en reluctant party feels a while
Thy gracious pow'r: as through the varied maze
Of eloquence, now smooth, now quick, now strong,
Profound and clear, you roll the copious flood. 890

To thy lov'd haunt return, my happy muse:
For now, behold, the joyous winter days,
Frosty, succeed; and through the blue serene,
For sight too fine, th' ethereal nitre flies;
Killing infectious damps, and the spent air 895
Storing afresh with elemental life.
Close crowds the shining atmosphere; and binds
Our strengthen'd bodies in its cold embrace,
Constringent; feeds, and animates our blood;
Refines our spirits, through the new-strung nerves,
In swifter sallies darting to the brain;
Where sits the soul, intense, collected, cool,
Bright as the skies, and as the season keen.
All nature feels the renovating force
Of winter, only to the thoughtless eye 905
In ruin seen. The frost-concocted glebe
Draws in abundant vegetable soul
And gathers vigour for the coming year.
A stronger glow sits on the lively cheek
Of ruddy fire: and luculent along 910
The purer rivers flow; their sullen deeps,
Transparent, open to the shepherd's gaze,
And murmur hoarser at the fixing frost.

What art thou, frost? and whence are thy keen stores
Deriv'd, thou secret all-invading pow'r, 915
Whom e'en th' illusive fluid cannot fly?

Is not thy potent energy unseen,
Myriads of little salts, or hook'd, or shap'd
Like double wedges, and diffus'd immense
Through water, earth, and ether? Hence at eve, 720
Steam'd eager from the red horizon round,
With the fierce rage of Winter deep suffus'd,
An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool
Breathes a blue film, and in its mid career
Arrests the bick'ring stream. The loosen'd ice, 725
Let down the flood, and half dissolv'd by day,
Rustles no more; but to the sedgy bank
Fast grows, or gathers round the pointed stone,
A crystal pavement, by the breath of heav'n
Cemented firm; till, seiz'd from shore to shore, 730
The whole imprison'd river growls below.
Loud rings the frozen earth, and hard reflects
A double noise; while, at his ev'ning watch,
The village dog deters the nightly thief;
The heifer lows; the distant water-fall 735
Swells in the breeze; and, with the hasty tread
Of traveller, the hollow-sounding plain
Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,
Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
Shines out intensely keen; and, all one cope 740
Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
From pole to pole the rigid influence falls,
Through the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
And seizes nature fast. It freezes on;
Till morn, late-rising o'er the drooping world, 745
Lifts her pale eye unjoyous. Then appears
The various labour of the silent night:
Prone from the dripping eave, and dumb cascade,
Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
The pendent icicle; the frost-work fair, 750
Where transient hues, and fancied figures rise;

Wide-spouted o'er the hill, the frozen brook,
A livid tract, cold gleaming on the morn;
The forest bent beneath the plumy wave;
And, by the frost refin'd, the whiter snow, 755
Incrusted hard, and sounding to the tread
Of early shepherd, as he pensive seeks
His pining flock, or from the mountain top,
Pleas'd with the slip'ry surface, swift descends.

On blithsome frolics bent, the youthful swains, 760
While ev'ry work of man is laid at rest,
Fond o'er the river crowd, in various sport
And revelry dissolv'd; where mixing glad,
Happiest of all the train! the raptur'd boy,
Lashes the whirling top. Or, where the Rhine 765
Branch'd out in many a long canal extends,
From ev'ry province swarming, void of care,
Batavia rushes forth; and as they sweep,
On sounding skates, a thousand diff'rent ways,
In circling poise, swift as the winds, along, 770
The then gay land is madden'd all to joy.
Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow,
Pour a new pomp. Eager, on rapid sleds,
Their vig'rous youth in bold contention wheel
The long-resounding course. Mean-time, to raise
The manly strife, with highly blooming charms,
Flush'd by the season, Scandinavia's dames,
Or Russia's buxom daughters, glow around.

Pure, quick, and sportful, is the wholesome day;
But soon elaps'd. The horizontal sun, 780
Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon:
And, ineffectual, strikes the gelid cliff:
His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
Nor feels the feeble touch. Perhaps the vale

Relents a while to the reflected ray; 785
Or from the forest falls the cluster'd snow,
Myriads of gems, that in the waving gleam
Gay-twinkle as they scatter. Thick around
Thunders the sport of those, who with the gun,
And dog impatient bounding at the shot, 790
Worse than the season, desolate the fields;
And, adding to the ruins of the year,
Distress the footed or the feather'd game.

But what is this? Our infant Winter sinks,
Divested of his grandeur, should our eye 795
Astonish'd shoot into the frigid zone;
Where, for relentless months, continual night
Holds o'er the glitt'ring waste her starry reign.

There, through the prison of unbounded wilds,
Barr'd by the hand of nature from escape, 800
Wide roams the Russian exile. Nought around
Strikes his sad eye, but deserts lost in snow;
And heavy-loaded groves; and solid floods,
That stretch, athwart the solitary vast,
Their icy horrors to the frozen main; 805
And cheerless towns far distant, never bless'd,
Save when its annual course the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay,*
With news of human-kind. Yet there life glows;
Yet cherish'd there, beneath the shining waste, 810
The furry nations harbour: tipp'd with jet,
Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press;
Sables, of glossy black; and dark-embrown'd,
Or beauteous freak'd with many a mingled hue,
Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts. 815
There, warm together press'd, the trooping deer

* The old name for China.

Sleep on the new-fall'n snows; and, scarce his head
Rais'd o'er the heapy wreath, the branching elk
Lies slumb'ring sullen in the white abyss.
The ruthless hunter wants nor dogs nor toils, 820
Nor with the dread of sounding bows he drives
The fearful flying race; with pond'rous clubs,
As weak against the mountain heaps they push
Their beating breast in vain, and piteous bray,
He lays them quiv'ring on th' ensanguin'd snows, 825
And with loud shouts rejoicing bears them home.
There through the piny forest half-absorpt,
Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear,
With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn;
Slow-pac'd, and sourer as the storms increase, 830
He makes his bed beneath th' inclement drift,
And with stern patience, scorning weak complaint,
Hardens his heart against assailing want.

Wide o'er the spacious regions of the north,
That see Bootes urge his tardy wain, 835
A boist'rous race, by frosty Caurus* pierc'd,
Who little pleasure know and fear no pain,
Prolific swarm. They once relum'd the flame
Of lost mankind in polish'd slav'ry sunk,
Drove martial horde on horde,† with dreadful sweep
Resistless rushing o'er th' enfeebled south,
And gave the vanquish'd world another form.
Not such the sons of Lapland; wisely they
Despise th' insensate barb'rous trade of war;
They ask no more than simple nature gives, 845
They love their mountains and enjoy their storms.
No false desires, no pride-created wants,

* The north-west wind.
† The wandering Scythian clans.

Disturb the peaceful current of their time;
And through the restless ever-tortur'd maze
Of pleasure or ambition, bid it rage. 850
Their rein-deer form their riches. These their tents,
Their robes, their beds, and all their homely wealth
Supply, their wholesome fare, and cheerful cups.
Obsequious at their call, the docile tribe
Yield to the sled their necks, and whirl them swift
O'er hill and dale, heap'd into one expanse
Of marbled snow, as far as eye can sweep
With a blue crust of ice unbounded glaz'd.
By dancing meteors then, that ceaseless shake
A waving blaze refracted o'er the heav'ns, 860
And vivid moons, and stars that keener play
With double lustre from the glossy waste,
E'en in the depth of polar night, they find
A wondrous day: enough to light the chase,
Or guide their daring steps to Finland fairs. 865
Wish'd Spring returns; and from the hazy south,
While dim Aurora slowly moves before,
The welcome sun, just verging up at first,
By small degrees extends the swelling curve;
Till seen at last for gay rejoicing months, 870
Still round and round, his spiral course he winds,
And has he nearly dips his flaming orb,
Wheels up again, and reascends the sky.
In that glad season, from the lakes and floods,
Where pure * Niemi's fairy mountains rise, 875

* M. de Maupertuis, in his book on the figure of the Earth, after having described the beautiful lake and mountain of Niemi in Lapland, says, "From this height we had opportunity several times to see those vapours rise from the lake which the people of the country call Haltios, and which they deem to be

And fring'd with roses Tenglio† rolls his stream,
They draw the copious fry. With these, at eve,
They cheerful-loaded to their tents repair;
Where, all day long in useful cares employ'd,
Their kind unblemish'd wives the fire prepare. 880
Thrice happy race! by poverty secur'd
From legal plunder and rapacious pow'r:
In whom fell int'rest never yet has sown
The seeds of vice: whose spotless swains ne'er knew
Injurious deed, nor, blasted by the breath 885
Of faithless love, their blooming daughters woe.

Still pressing on, beyond Tornea's lake,
And Hecla flaming through a waste of snow,
And farthest Greenland, to the pole itself,
Where, failing gradual, life at length goes out, 890
The muse expands her solitary flight;
And, hov'ring o'er the wild stupendous scene,
Beholds new seas beneath another sky.*
Thron'd in his palace of cerulean ice,
Here Winter holds his unrejoicing court;
And through his airy hall the loud misrule
Of driving tempest is for ever heard:
Here the grim tyrant meditates his wrath;
Here arms his winds with all-subduing frost;

the guardian spirits of the mountains. We had been frighted with stories of bears that haunted this place, but saw none. It seemed rather a place of resort for fairies and genii, than bears."

* The same author observes, "I was surprised to see upon the banks of the river (the Tenglio) roses of as lively a red as any that are in our gardens."

† The other hemisphere.

Moulds his fierce hail, and treasures up his snows, 900
With which he now oppresses half the globe.

Thence winding eastward to the Tartar's coast,
She sweeps the howling margin of the main;
Where, undissolving, from the first of time,
Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky; 905
And icy mountains high on mountains pil'd,
Seem to the shiv'ring sailor from afar,
Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds.
Projected huge and horrid o'er the surge,
Alps frown on Alps; or rushing hideous down, 910
As if old Chaos was again returned,
Wide-rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.
Ocean itself no longer can resist
The binding fury; but, in all its rage
Of tempest, taken by the boundless frost, 915
Is many a fathom to the bottom chain'd,
And bid to roar no more; a bleak expanse,
Shagg'd o'er with wavy rocks, chearless and void
Of every life, that from the dreary months
Flies conscious southward. Miserable they, 920
Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,
Take their last look of the descending sun!
While, full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
The long long night, incumbent o'er their heads,
Falls horrible. Such was the * Briton's fate, 925
As with first prow, (what have not Britons dar'd!)
He for the passage sought, attempted since
So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
By jealous nature with eternal bars.
In these fell regions, in Arzina caught, 930

* Sir Hugh Willoughby, sent by Queen Elizabeth to discover the north-east passage.

And to the stony deep his idle ship
Immediate seal'd, he, with his hapless crew,
Each full exerted at his several task,
Froze into statues ; to the cordage glu'd
The sailor, and the pilot to the helm. 935

Hard by these shores, where scarce his freezing stream
Rolls the wild Oby, live the last of men ;
And half enliven'd by the distant sun,
That rears and ripens man as well as plants,
Here human nature wears its rudest form. 940
Deep from the piercing season sunk in caves,
Here by dull fires, and with unjoyous cheer,
They waste the tedious gloom. Immers'd in furs,
Doze the gross race. Nor sprightly jest, nor song,
Nor tenderness, they know ; nor aught of life, 945
Beyond the kindred bears that stalk without.
Till morn at length, her roses drooping all,
Sheds a long twilight brightening o'er their fields,
And calls the quivered savage to the chace.

What cannot active government perform, 950
New-moulding man? Wide-stretching from these [shores,
A people, savage from remotest time,
A huge neglected empire, one vast mind
By Heaven inspir'd, from Gothic darkness call'd.
Immortal Peter, first of monarchs ! He 955
His stubborn country tam'd, her rocks, her fens,
Her floods, her seas, her ill-submitting sons ;
And while the fierce barbarian he subdued,
To more exalted soul he rais'd the man.
Ye shades of ancient heroes ! ye who toil'd 960
Through long successive ages, to build up
A labouring plan of state, behold at once
The wonder done ! behold the matchless prince,

Who left his native throne, where reign'd till then
A mighty shadow of unreal power; 965
Who greatly spurned the slothful pomp of courts;
And roaming ev'ry land, in ev'ry port,
His sceptre laid aside, with glorious hand
Unwearied plying the mechanic tool,
Gather'd the seeds of trade, of useful arts, 970
Of civil wisdom, and of martial skill.
Charg'd with the stores of Europe, home he goes!
Then cities rise amid th' illumin'd waste;
O'er joyless desarts smiles the rural reign;
Far-distant flood to flood is social join'd;
Th' astonish'd Euxine hears the Baltic roar;
Proud navies ride on seas that never foam'd
With daring keel before; and armies stretch
Each way their dazzling files, repressing here
The frantic Alexander of the north, 980
And awing there stern Othman's shrinking sons.
Sloth flies the land, and ignorance, and vice,
Of old dishonour proud: it glows around,
Taught by the royal hand that rous'd the whole,
One scene of arts, of arms, of rising trade; 985
For what his wisdom plann'd, and power enforc'd,
More potent still, his great example show'd.

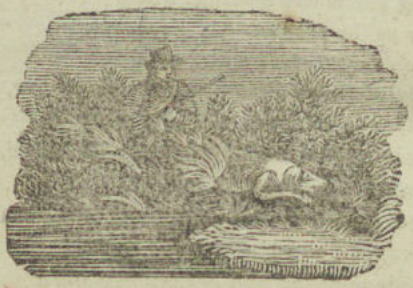
Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point,
Blow hollow-blustering from the south. Subdu'd,
The frost resolves into a trickling thaw. 990
Spotted, the mountains shine; loose sleet descends,
And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
O'er rocks and woods, in broad brown cataracts,
A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once; 995
And, where they rush, the wide resounding plain
Is left one slimy waste. Those sullen seas,

That wash'd th' ungenial pole, will rest no more
Beneath the shackles of the mighty north;
But, rousing all their waves, resistless heave. 1000
And hark! the lengthening roar continuous runs
Athwart the rifted deep: at once it bursts,
And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
Ill fares the bark with trembling wretches charged,
That, tost amid the floating fragments, moors 1005
Beneath the shelter of an icy isle,
While night o'erwhelms the sea, and horror looks
More horrible. Can human force endure
Th' assembled mischiefs that besiege them round?
Heart-gnawing hunger, fainting weariness, 1010
The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
Now ceasing, now renew'd with louder rage,
And in dire echoes bellowing round the main.
More to embroil the deep, Leviathan
And his unwieldy train, in dreadful sport, 1015
Tempest the loosened brine, while through the gloom,
Far, from the bleak inhospitable shore,
Loading the winds, is heard the hungry howl
Of famish'd monsters, there awaiting wrecks.
Yet Providence, that ever-waking eye, 1020
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
Of mortals lost to hope, and lights them safe
Through all this dreary labyrinth of fate.

'Tis done! dread Winter spreads his latest glooms
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquered year. 1025
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!
How dumb the tuneful! Horror wide extends
His desolate domain. Behold, fond man!
See here thy pictur'd life; pass some few years,
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,

And pale concluding Winter comes at last,
And shuts the scene. Ah! whither now are fled
Those dreams of greatness? those unsolid hopes
Of happiness? those longings after fame? 1035
Those restless cares? those busy bustling days?
Those gay-spent, festive nights? those veering thoughts
Lost between good and ill, that shar'd thy life?
All now are vanish'd! Virtue sole survives,
Immortal never-failing friend of man, 1040
His guide to happiness on high. And see!
'Tis come, the glorious morn! the second birth
Of heav'n and earth! awak'ning nature hears
The new-creating word, and starts to life,
In ev'ry heighten'd form, from pain and death 1045
For ever free. The great eternal scheme
Involving all, and in a perfect whole
Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,
To reason's eye refin'd clears up apace.
Ye vainly wise! ye blind presumptuous! now, 1050
Confounded in the dust, adore that pow'r,
And wisdom oft arraign'd: see now the cause,
Why unassuming worth in secret liv'd,
And died neglected: why the good man's share
In life was gall and bitterness of soul: 1055
Why the lone widow and her orphans pin'd
In starving solitude; while luxury,
In palaces, lay straining her low thought,
To form unreal wants: why heav'n-born truth,
And moderation fair, wore the red marks 1060
Of superstition's scourge: why licens'd pain,
That cruel spoiler, that embosom'd foe,
Imbitter'd all our bliss. Ye good distress'd!
Ye noble few! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up a while;

And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deem'd evil, is no more:
The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all.



A

HYMN.

THESE, as they change, Almighty Father! these
Are but the varied God. The rolling year
Is full of thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
Thy beauty walks, thy tenderness and love.
Wide flush the fields; the soft'ning air is balm; 5
Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
And ev'ry sense, and ev'ry heart is joy.
Then comes thy glory in the Summer months,
With light and heat refulgent. Then thy sun
Shoots full perfection through the swelling year; 10
And oft thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks;
And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
By brooks and groves, in hollow-whisp'ring gales.
Thy bounty shines in Autumn unconfin'd,
And spreads a common feast for all that lives. 15
In Winter awful thou! with clouds and storms
Around thee thrown, tempest o'er tempest roll'd,
Majestic darkness! on the whirlwind's wing,
Riding sublime, thou bid'st the world adore,
And humblest nature with thy northern blast. 20

Mysterious round! what skill, what force divine,
Deep-felt, in these appear! a simple train,
Yet so delightful mix'd, with such kind art,
Such beauty and beneficence combined;
Shade, unperceiv'd, so softening into shade; 25
And all so forming an harmonious whole;
That, as they still succeed, they ravish still.
But wandering oft, with brute unconscious gaze,
Man marks not thee, marks not the mighty hand,
That, ever busy, wheels the silent spheres; 30
Works in the secret deep; shoots steaming thence
The fair profusion that o'erspreads the Spring;
Flings from the sun direct the flaming day;
Feeds every creature; hurls the tempest forth;
And, as on earth this grateful change revolves, 35
With transport touches all the springs of life.

Nature, attend! join, every living soul,
Beneath the spacious temple of the sky,
In adoration join; and, ardent, raise
One general song! To him, ye vocal gales, 40
Breathe soft, whose spirit in your freshness breathes:
O talk of him in solitary glooms,
Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely waving pine
Fills the brown shade with a religious awe.
And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar, 45
Who shake th' astonish'd world, lift high to heaven
Th' impetuous song, and say from whom you rage.
His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills;
And let me catch it as I muse along.
Ye headlong torrents, rapid and profound; 50
Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze
Along the vale; and thou majestic main,
A secret world of wonders in thyself,
Sound his stupendous praise; whose greater voice

574

Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall. 55
Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
In mingled clouds, to him whose sun exalts,
Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints.
Ye forests bend, ye harvests wave, to him;
Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart, 60
As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.
Ye that keep watch in heaven, as earth asleep
Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,
Ye constellations, while your angels strike
Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre. 65
Great source of day! best image here below
Of thy creator, ever pouring wide,
From world to world, the vital ocean round,
On nature write with every beam his praise.
The thunder rolls: be hush'd the prostrate world; 70
While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
Bleat out afresh, ye hills: ye mossy rocks,
Retain the sound: the broad responsive low,
Ye vallies, raise; for the great Shepherd reigns,
And his unsuffering kingdom yet will come. 75
Ye woodlands all, awake; a boundless song
Burst from the groves! and when the restless day,
Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
Sweetest of birds, sweet Philomela, charm
The list'ning shades, and teach the night his praise. 80
Ye chief, for whom the whole creation smiles,
At once the head, the heart, and tongue of all,
Crown the great hymn! in swarming cities vast,
Assembled men, to the deep organ join
The long-resounding voice, oft breaking clear, 85
At solemn pauses, through the swelling bass;
And, as each mingling flame increases each,
In one united ardour rise to heaven.
Or, if you rather chuse the rural shade,

And find a fane in ev'ry sacred grove; 90
There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre,
Still sing the God of Seasons, as they roll.
For me, when I forget the darling theme,
Whether the blossom blows, the Summer ray 95
Russets the plain, inspiring Autumn gleams;
Or Winter rises in the black'ning east;
Be my tongue mute, may fancy paint no more,
And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat!

Should fate command me to the farthest verge 100
Of the green earth, to distant barb'rous climes,
Rivers unknown to song; where first the sun
Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
Flames on th' Atlantic isles; 'tis nought to me:
Since God is ever present, ever felt, 105
In the void waste as in the city full;
And where he vital breathes there must be joy.
When e'en at last the solemn hour shall come,
And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
I cheerful will obey; there, with new pow'rs, 110
Will rising wonders sing: I cannot go
Where universal love not smiles around,
Sustaining all yon orbs, and all their suns;
From seeming evil still educing good,
And better thence again, and better still, 115
In infinite progression. But I lose
Myself in him, in light ineffable;
Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise.

THE END.

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