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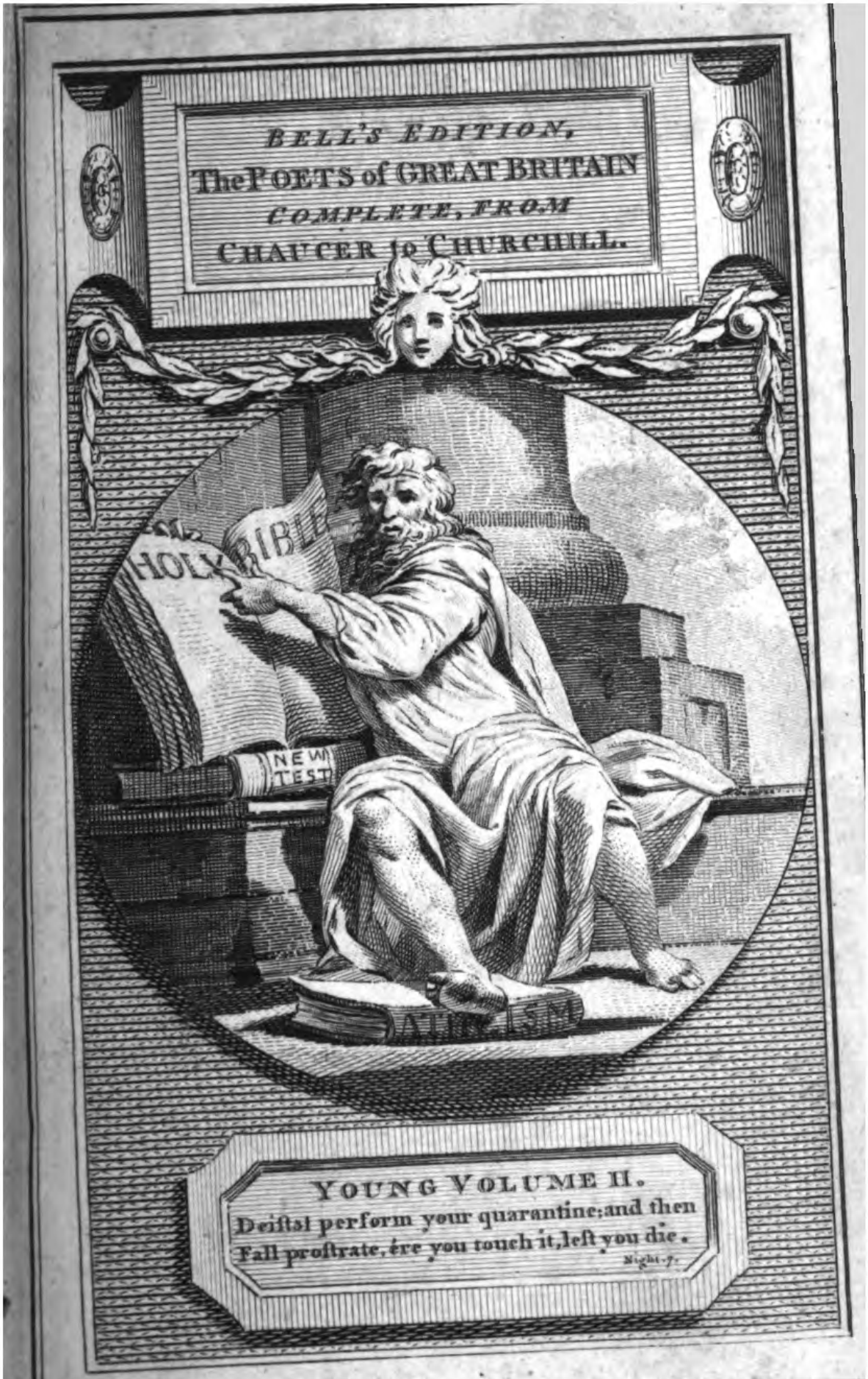

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange Strand London Nov.r 1.st 177

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

DR. EDWARD YOUNG,

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

When flatter'd crimes of a licentious age
Reproach our silence, and demand our rage;
When purchas'd follies, from each distant land,
Like arts, improve in Britain's skilful hand;
When the Law shews her teeth, but dares not bite,
And South-sea treasures are not brought to light;
When Churchmen Scripture for the Classicks quit,
Polite apostates from God's grace to wit;
When men grow great from their revenue spent,
And fly from bailiffs into parliament;
When dying sinners, to blot out their score,
Bequeath the Church the leavings of a whore;
To chafe our spleen, when themes like these increase,
Shall panegyrick reign, and censure cease?——
Shall authors smile on such illustrious days,
And satirize with nothing——but their praise? SAT. I.

Bell's *second edition.*

VOL. II.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1784.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

VOL. II.

CONTAINING HIS

COMPLAINT:

OR,

NIGHT-THOUGHTS

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

Sunt lacrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt. VIRG.

Thro' many a field of moral and divine
The Muſe has ſtray'd, and much of ſorrow ſeen.——
O'er friends deceas'd full heartily ſhe wept;
Of love divine the wonders ſhe diſplay'd;
Prov'd Man immortal; ſhew'd the ſource of joy;
The grand tribunal rais'd; aſſign'd the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to cloſe the whole,
The moral Muſe has ſhadow'd out a ſketch,
Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael ſtroke,
Of moſt our weakneſs needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or proſpect of the ſkies. NIGHT IX.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Preſs, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1784.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VII.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

PART II.

Containing the

Nature, Proof, and Importance, of Immortality.

PREFACE.

As we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue, and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange; it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be: yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase at this day; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it, if that opinion, which is advanced in the Preface to the preceding Night, be just. It is there supposed, that all our Infidels, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize, are betrayed into their deplorable errour by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom:

and the more I consider this point, the more I am persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a futurity is a strange errour, yet it is an errour into which bad men may naturally be distressed; for it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? there are but two in Nature; but two within the compass of human thought; and these are,—That either God will not or cannot punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes; and since Omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish, is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish as long as wicked men exist. In nonexistence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, nonexistence is their strongest wish: and strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner almost incredible. And since on this member of their alternative there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horrour of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages it is, accordingly, pursued at large, and some arguments for immortality, new at least to me,

are ventured on in them. There also the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrours of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen, for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of Heathen antiquity: what pity it is they are not sincere! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them, to consider with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by those whom they so much admire? What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their Heathen worthies Socrates ('t is well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed; yet this great master of temper was angry, and angry at his last hour; and angry with his friend; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment; angry for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising? what could be the cause? The cause was for his honour; it was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious regard for immortality: for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, "Where "he should deposit his remains?" it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition that he could be so mean as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

This fact, well considered, would make our Infidels with-

draw their admiration from Socrates, or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illustrious example, to share his glory; and, consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candour and impartiality, which is all I desire, and that for their sakes; for I am persuaded that an unprejudiced Infidel must necessarily receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7. 1744.

The Contents.

HEAV'N gives the needful, but neglected call.
What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,
To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?

Deaths ſtand, like Mercuries, in ev'ry way,
And kindly point us to our journey's end. 5
Pope, who couldſt make immortals! art thou dead?
I give thee joy; nor will I take my leave,
So ſoon to follow. Man but dives in death,
Dives from the ſun, in fairer day to riſe,
The grave his ſubterranean road to bliſs. 10
Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it ſo;
Thro' various parts our glorious ſtory runs;
Time gives the preface, endleſs age unrolls
The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.
This earth and ſkies * already have proclaim'd. 15
The world 's a prophecy of worlds to come,
And who what God foretels (who ſpeaks in things
Still louder than in words) ſhall dare deny?
If Nature's arguments appear too weak,
Turn a new leaf, and ſtronger read in man. 20
If man ſleeps on, untaught by what he ſees,
Can he prove infidel to what he feels?
He, whoſe blind thought futurity denies,
Unconſcious bears, Bellerophon! like thee,
His own indictment; he condemns himſelf; 25
Who reads his boſom, reads immortal life;
Or Nature there, impoſing on her ſons,
Has written fables: man was made a lie.
Why diſcontent for ever harbour'd there?
Incurable conſumption of our peace!

* Night the Sixth.

Resolve me why the cottager and king,
He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he
Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,
Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,
Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh, 35
In fate so distant, in complaint so near?
Is it that things terrestrial cann't content:
Deep in rich pasture will thy flocks complain?
Not so; but to their master is deny'd
To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease 40
In this, not his own place, this foreign field,
Where Nature fodders him with other food
Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,
Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,
Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd.
Is Heav'n then kinder to thy flocks than thee? 46
Not so; thy pasture richer, but remote;
In part remote; for that remoter part
Man bleats from instinct, tho', perhaps, debauch'd
By sense, his reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause. 50
The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes!
His grief is but his grandeur in disguise,
And discontent is immortality.
Shall sons of Ether, shall the blood of Heav'n,
Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here, 55
With brutal acquiescence in the mire?
Lorenzo! no; they shall be nobly pain'd;
The glorious foreigners, distress'd, shall sigh

On thrones, and thou congratulate the ſigh.
Man's miſery declares him born for bliſs; 60
His anxious heart aſſerts the truth I ſing,
And gives the ſceptick in his head the lie.
Our heads, our hearts, our paſſions, and our pow'rs,
Speak the ſame language; call us to the ſkies:
Unripen'd theſe, in this inclement clime, 65
Scarce riſe above conjecture and miſtake;
And for this land of trifles thoſe, too ſtrong,
Tumultuous riſe, and tempeſt human life.
What prize on earth can pay us for the ſtorm?
Meet objects for our paſſions Heav'n ordain'd, 70
Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
No fault but in defect. Bleſs'd Heav'n! avert
A bounded ardour for unbounded bliſs!
O for a bliſs unbounded! far beneath
A ſoul immortal is a mortal joy. 75
Nor are our pow'rs to periſh immature;
But, after feeble effort here, beneath
A brighter ſun, and in a nobler ſoil,
Tranſplanted from this ſublunary bed,
Shall flouriſh fair, and put forth all their bloom. 80
Reaſon progreſſive, inſtinct is complete:
Swift Inſtinct leaps; ſlow Reaſon feebly climbs.
Brutes ſoon their zenith reach; their little all
Flows in at once; in ages they no more
Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy. 85
Were man to live coëval with the ſun,

The patriarch pupil would be learning ſtill,
Yet, dying, leave his leſſon half-unlearn'd,
Men periſh in advance, as if the ſun
Should ſet ere noon, in eaſtern oceans drown'd; 90
If fit with dim illuſtrious to compare,
The ſun's meridian with the ſoul of man.
To man, why, ſtepdame Nature! ſo ſevere?
Why thrown aſide thy maſterpiece half-wrought,
While meaner efforts thy laſt hand enjoy? 95
Or if, abortively, poor man muſt die,
Nor reach what reach he might, why die in dread?
Why curs'd with foreſight? wiſe to miſery?
Why of his proud prerogative the prey?
Why leſs preeminent in rank than pain? 100
His immortality alone can tell,
Full ample fund to balance all amiſs,
And turn the ſcale in favour of the juſt!
His immortality alone can ſolve
That darkeſt of enigmas, human hope, 105
Of all the darkeſt, if at death we die.
Hope, eager Hope, the aſſaſſin of our joy,
All preſent bleſſings treading under foot,
Is ſcarce a milder tyrant than Deſpair.
With no paſt toils content, ſtill planning new, 110
Hope turns us o'er to Death alone for eaſe.
Poſſeſſion why more taſteleſs than purſuit?
Why is a wiſh far dearer than a crown?
That wiſh accompliſh'd, why the grave of bliſs?

Becauſe in the great future bury'd deep, 115
Beyond our plans of empire and renown,
Lies all that man with ardour ſhould purſue;
And he who made him bent him to the right.
Man's heart th' Almighty to the future ſets,
By ſecret and inviolable ſprings, 120
And makes his hope his ſublunary joy,
Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry ſtill;
"More, more!" the glutton cries: for ſomething new
So rages appetite. If man cann't mount
He will deſcend. He ſtarves on the poſſeſs'd: 125
Hence the world's maſter, from Ambition's ſpire,
In Caprea plung'd, and div'd beneath the brute.
In that rank ſty why wallow'd Empire's ſon
Supreme? becauſe he could no higher fly:
His riot was Ambition in deſpair. 130
Old Rome conſulted birds: Lorenzo! thou
With more ſucceſs the flight of Hope ſurvey.
Of reſtleſs Hope, for ever on the wing.
High perch'd o'er ev'ry thought that falcon ſits,
To fly at all that riſes in her ſight; 135
And never ſtooping, but to mount again
Next moment, ſhe betrays her aim's miſtake,
And owns her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.
There ſhould it fail us, (it muſt fail us there,
If being fails) more mournful riddles riſe, 140
And virtue vies with hope in myſtery.
Why virtue? where its praiſe, its being, fled?

Virtue is true ſelf-intereſt purſu'd:
What true ſelf-intereſt of quite-mortal man!
To cloſe with all that makes him happy here. 145
If vice (as ſometimes) is our friend on earth,
Then vice is virtue; 't is our ſov'reign good.
In ſelf-applauſe is virtue's golden prize?
No ſelf-applauſe attends it on thy ſcheme.
Whence ſelf-applauſe? from conſcience of the right;
And what is right but means of happineſs? 151
No means of happineſs when virtue yields;
That baſis failing, falls the building too,
And lays in ruin ev'ry virtuous joy.
The rigid guardian of a blameleſs heart, 155
So long rever'd, ſo long reputed wiſe,
Is weak, with rank knight-errantries o'errun.
Why beats thy boſom with illuſtrious dreams
Of ſelf-expoſure, laudable, and great?
Of gallant enterpriſe, and glorious death? 160
Die for thy country?—thou romantick fool!
Seize, ſeize the plank thyſelf, and let her ſink.
Thy country! what to thee?—the Godhead, what?
(I ſpeak with awe!) tho' he ſhould bid thee bleed,
If, with thy blood, thy final hope is ſpilt? 165
Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow:
Be deaf; preſerve thy being; diſobey.
Nor is it diſobedience. Know, Lorenzo!
Whate'er th' Almighty's ſubſequent command,
His firſt command is this:—"Man, love thyſelf."

In this alone free agents are not free. 171
Exiſtence is the baſis, bliſs the prize;
If virtue coſts exiſtence, 't is a crime,
Bold violation of our law ſupreme,
Black ſuicide, tho' nations, which conſult 175
Their gain at thy expenſe, reſound applauſe.
Since virtue's recompence is doubtful here,
If man dies wholly, well may we demand
Why is man ſuffer'd to be good in vain?
Why to be good in vain is man enjoin'd? 180
Why to be good in vain is man betray'd?
Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breaſt,
By ſweet complacencies from virtue felt?
Why whiſpers Nature lies on Virtue's part;
Or if blind Inſtinct (which aſſumes the name 185
Of ſacred Conſcience) plays the fool in man,
Why Reaſon made accomplice in the cheat?
Why are the wiſeſt loudeſt in her praiſe?
Can man by reaſon's beam be led aſtray?
Or, at his peril, imitate his God? 190
Since virtue ſometimes ruins us on earth,
Or both are true, or man ſurvives the grave.
Or man ſurvives the grave, or own, Lorenzo,
Thy boaſt ſupreme a wild abſurdity.
Dauntleſs thy ſpirit, cowards are thy ſcorn. 195
Grant man immortal, and thy ſcorn is juſt.
The man immortal, rationally brave,
Dares ruſh on death—becauſe he cannot die:

But if man loſes all when life is loſt,
He lives a coward, or a fool expires. 200
A daring infidel, (and ſuch there are,
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
Or pure heroical defect of thought)
Of all earth's madmen moſt deſerves a chain.
When to the grave we follow the renown'd 205
For valour, virtue, ſcience, all we love,
And all we praiſe; for worth whoſe noontide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher ſtyle,
Mends our ideas of ethereal pow'rs,
Dream we that luſtre of the moral world 210
Goes out in ſtench, and rottenneſs the cloſe?
Why was he wiſe to know, and warm to praiſe,
And ſtrenuous to tranſcribe, in human life,
The Mind almighty? Could it be that Fate,
Juſt when the lineaments began to ſhine, 215
And dawn the Deity, ſhould ſnatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out, and give
The ſkies alarm, leſt angels too might die?
If human ſouls, why not angelick too,
Extinguiſh'd, and a ſolitary God, 220
O'er ghaſtly ruin, frowning from his throne?
Shall we this moment gaze on God in man,
The next loſe man for ever in the duſt?
From duſt we diſengage, or man miſtakes,
And there, where leaſt his judgment fears a flaw, 225
Wiſdom and worth how boldly he commends!

Wiſdom and worth are ſacred names; rever'd
Where not embrac'd; applauded! deify'd!
Why not compaſſion'd too? If ſpirits die,
Both are calamities, inflicted both 230
To make us but more wretched. Wiſdom's eye
Acute, for what? to ſpy more miſeries;
And worth ſo recompens'd, new points their ſtings.
Or man ſurmounts the grave, or gain is loſs,
And worth exalted humbles us the more. 235
Thou wilt not patronize a ſcheme that makes
Weakneſs and vice the refuge of mankind.
"Has virtue then no joys?"--Yes, joys dear bought.
Talk ne'er ſo long, in this imperfect ſtate
Virtue and vice are at eternal war. 240
Virtue 's a combat; and who fights for nought,
Or for precarious, or for ſmall reward?
Who virtue's ſelf-reward ſo loud reſound,
Would take degrees angelick here below,
And virtue, while they compliment, betray 245
By feeble motives and unfaithful guards.
The crown, th' unfading crown, her ſoul inſpires:
'Tis that, and that alone, can countervail
The body's treach'ries and the world's aſſaults.
On earth's poor pay our famiſh'd virtue dies: 250
Truth inconteſtable! in ſpite of all
A Bayle has preach'd, or a V——e believ'd.
In man the more we dive, the more we ſee
Heav'n's ſignet ſtamping an immortal make.

Dive to the bottom of his ſoul, the baſe 255
Suſtaining all, what find we? knowledge, love.
As light and heat, eſſential to the ſun,
Theſe to the ſoul: and why, if ſouls expire?
How little lovely here? how little known?
Small knowledge we dig up with endleſs toil, 260
And love unfeign'd may purchaſe perfect hate.
Why ſtarv'd, on earth, our angel-appetites,
While brutal are indulg'd their fulſome fill?
Were then capacities divine conferr'd,
As a mock-diadem, in ſavage ſport, 265
Rank inſult of our pompous poverty,
Which reaps but pain from ſeeming claims ſo fair?
In future age lies no redreſs? and ſhuts
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If ſo, for what ſtrange ends were mortals made! 270
The worſt to wallow, and the beſt to weep;
The man who merits moſt muſt moſt complain:
Can we conceive a diſregard in Heav'n
What the worſt perpetrate or beſt endure?
This cannot be. To love and know, in man 275
Is boundleſs appetite, and boundleſs pow'r;
And theſe demonſtrate boundleſs objects too.
Objects, pow'rs, appetites, Heav'n ſuits in all,
Nor, Nature through, e'er violates this ſweet
Eternal concord on her tuneful ſtring. 280
Is man the ſole exception from her laws?
Eternity ſtruck off from human hope,

(I ſpeak with truth, but veneration too)
Man is a monſter, the reproach of Heav'n,
A ſtain, a dark impenetrable cloud 285
On Nature's beauteous aſpect, and deforms
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.
If ſuch is man's allotment, what is heav'n?
Or own the ſoul immortal, or blaſpheme.
Or own the ſoul immortal, or invert 290
All order. Go, Mock-majeſty! go, Man!
And bow to thy ſuperiours of the ſtall,
Thro' ev'ry ſcene of ſenſe ſuperiour far:
They graze the turf untill'd, they drink the ſtream
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unimbitter'd 295
With doubts, fears, fruitleſs hopes, regrets, deſpairs,
Mankind's peculiar! Reaſon's precious dower!
No foreign clime they ranſack for their robes,
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar;
Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd; 300
They find a paradiſe in ev'ry field,
On boughs forbidden where no curſes hang:
Their ill no more than ſtrikes the ſenſe, unſtretch'd
By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:
When the worſt comes, it comes unfear'd; one ſtroke
Begins and ends their wo: they die but once; 306
Bleſs'd, incommunicable privilege! for which
Proud man, who rules the globe and reads the ſtars,
Philoſopher or hero, ſighs in vain.
Account for this prerogative in brutes, 310

No day, no glimpſe of day, to ſolve the knot,
But what beams on it from eternity.
O ſole and ſweet ſolution! that unties
The difficult, and ſoftens the ſevere;
The cloud on Nature's beauteous face diſpels; 315
Reſtores bright order; caſts the brute beneath,
And reinthrones us in ſupremacy
Of joy, ev'n here. Admit immortal life,
And virtue is knight errantry no more;
Each virtue brings in hand a golden dower, 320
Far richer in reverſion: hope exults,
And tho' much bitter in our cup is thrown,
Predominates, and gives the taſte of heav'n.
O wherefore is the Deity ſo kind?
Aſtoniſhing beyond aſtoniſhment! 325
Heav'n our reward—for heav'n enjoy'd below.
Still unſubdu'd thy ſtubborn heart?—for there
The traitor lurks who doubts the truth I ſing.
Reaſon is guiltleſs: will alone rebels.
What, in that ſtubborn heart, if I ſhould find 330
New unexpected witneſſes againſt thee?
Ambition, Pleaſure, and the Love of gain!
Canſt thou ſuſpect that theſe, which make the ſoul
The ſlave of earth, ſhould own her heir of heav'n?
Canſt thou ſuſpect what makes us diſbelieve 335
Our immortality ſhould prove it ſure?
Firſt, then, Ambition ſummon to the bar.
Ambition's ſhame, extravagance, diſguſt,

And inextinguiſhable nature, ſpeak:
Each much depoſes; hear them in their turn. 340
Thy ſoul, how paſſionately fond of fame!
How anxious that fond paſſion to conceal!
We bluſh, detected in deſigns on praiſe,
Tho' for beſt deeds, and from the beſt of men;
And why? becauſe immortal. Art divine 345
Has made the body tutor to the ſoul;
Heav'n kindly gives our blood a moral flow,
Bids it aſcend the glowing cheek, and there
Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim
Which ſtoops to court a character from man, 350
While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, ſit
Far more than man, with endleſs praiſe and blame.
Ambition's boundleſs appetite outſpeaks
The verdict of its ſhame. When ſouls take fire
At high preſumptions of their own deſert, 355
One age is poor applauſe: the mighty ſhout,
The thunder by the living few begun,
Late Time muſt echo, worlds unborn reſound.
We wiſh our names eternally to live;
Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human thought,
Had not our natures been eternal too. 361
Inſtinct points out an int'reſt in hereafter,
But our blind reaſon ſees not where it lies,
Or, ſeeing, gives the ſubſtance for the ſhade.
Fame is the ſhade of immortality, 365
And in itſelf a ſhadow: ſoon as caught

Contemn'd, it ſhrinks to nothing in the graſp.
Conſult th' ambitious, 't is ambition's cure.
"And is this all?" cry'd Cæſar, at his height,
Diſguſted. This third proof Ambition brings 370
Of immortality. The firſt in fame,
Obſerve him near, your envy will abate:
Sham'd at the diſproportion vaſt between
The paſſion and the purchaſe, he will ſigh
At ſuch ſucceſs, and bluſh at his renown. 375
And why? becauſe far richer prize invites
His heart; far more illuſtrious glory calls;
It calls in whiſpers, yet the deafeſt hear.
And can Ambition a fourth proof ſupply?
It can, and ſtronger than the former three, 380
Yet quite o'erlook'd by ſome reputed wiſe.
Tho' diſappointments in ambition pain,
And tho' ſucceſs diſguſts, yet ſtill, Lorenzo!
In vain we ſtrive to pluck it from our hearts,
By Nature planted for the nobleſt ends. 385
Abſurd the fam'd advice to Pyrrhus giv'n,
More prais'd than ponder'd; ſpecious, but unſound:
Sooner that hero's ſword the world had quell'd,
Than reaſon his ambition. Man muſt ſoar;
An obſtinate activity within, 390
An inſuppreſſive ſpring will toſs him up
In ſpite of Fortune's load. Not kings alone,
Each villager has his ambition too.
No ſultan prouder than his fetter'd ſlave.

Slaves build their little Babylons of ſtraw, 395
Echo the proud Aſſyrian in their hearts,
And cry,—"Behold the wonders of my might!"
And why? becauſe immortal as their lord;
And ſouls immortal muſt for ever heave
At ſomething great; the glitter or the gold; 400
The praiſe of mortals, or the praiſe of Heav'n.
Nor abſolutely vain is human praiſe,
When human is ſupported by divine.
I'll introduce Lorenzo to himſelf;
Pleaſure and Pride (bad maſters!) ſhare our hearts.
As love of pleaſure is ordain'd to guard 406
And feed our bodies, and extend our race,
The love of praiſe is planted to protect
And propagate the glories of the mind.
What is it, but the love of praiſe, inſpires, 410
Matures, refines, embelliſhes, exalts,
Earth's happineſs? from that the delicate,
The grand, the marvellous, of civil life,
Want and convenience, underworkers, lay
The baſis on which love of glory builds. 415
Nor is thy life, O Virtue! leſs in debt
To praiſe, thy ſecret-ſtimulating friend.
Were men not proud, what merit ſhould we miſs!
Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.
Praiſe is the ſalt that ſeaſons right to man, 420
And whets his appetite for moral good.
Thirſt of applauſe is Virtue's ſecond guard,

Reaſon her firſt; but reaſon wants an aid;
Our private reaſon is a flatterer;
Thirſt of applauſe calls publick judgment in 425
To poiſe our own, to keep an even ſcale,
And give endanger'd Virtue fairer play.
Here a fifth proof ariſes, ſtronger ſtill.
Why this ſo nice conſtruction of our hearts?
Theſe delicate moralities of ſenſe, 430
This conſtitutional reſerve of aid
To ſuccour Virtue when our reaſon fails,
If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
And oft' the mark of injuries on earth,
When labour'd to maturity (its bill 435
Of diſciplines and pains unpaid) muſt die?
Why freighted rich to daſh againſt a rock?
Were man to periſh when moſt fit to live,
O how miſpent were all theſe ſtratagems,
By ſkill divine inwoven in our frame? 440
Where are Heav'n's holineſs and mercy fled?
Laughs Heav'n, at once, at virtue and at man?
If not, why that diſcourag'd, this deſtroy'd?
Thus far Ambition: what ſays Avarice? 444
This her chief maxim, which has long been thine:
"The wiſe and wealthy are the ſame."—I grant it.
To ſtore up treaſure, with inceſſant toil,
This is man's province, this his higheſt praiſe:
To this great end keen Inſtinct ſtings him on:
To guide that inſtinct, Reaſon! is thy charge; 450

'Tis thine to tell us where true treasure lies;
But Reason, failing to discharge her trust,
Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,
A blunder follows, and blind Industry,
Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course, 455
(The course where stakes of more than gold are won)
O'erloading with the cares of distant age
The jaded spirits of the present hour,
Provides for an eternity below.
"Thou shalt not covet," is a wise command, 460
But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys.
Look farther, the command stands quite revers'd,
And av'rice is a virtue most divine.
Is faith a refuge for our happiness?
Most sure; and is it not for reason too? 465
Nothing this world unriddles but the next,
Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain?
From inextinguishable life in man:
Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the skies,
Had wanted wing to fly so far in guilt. 470
Sour grapes, I grant, ambition, avarice;
Yet still their root is immortality:
These its wild growths, so bitter and so base,
(Pain and reproach!) religion can reclaim,
Refine, exalt, throw down their pois'nous lee, 475
And make them sparkle in the bowl of bliss.
See, the third witness laughs at bliss remote,
And falsely promises an Eden here:

Truth ſhe ſhall ſpeak for once, tho' prone to lie,
A common cheat, and Pleaſure is her name. 480
To Pleaſure never was Lorenzo deaf;
Then hear her now, now firſt thy real friend.
Since Nature made us not more fond than proud
Of happineſs, (whence hypocrites in joy!
Makers of mirth! artificers of ſmiles!) 485
Why ſhould the joy moſt poignant ſenſe affords
Burn us with bluſhes, and rebuke our pride?—
Thoſe heav'n-born bluſhes tell us man deſcends,
Ev'n in the zenith of his earthly bliſs:
Should reaſon take her infidel repoſe, 490
This honeſt inſtinct ſpeaks our lineage high;
This inſtinct calls on darkneſs to conceal
Our rapturous relation to the ſtalls.
Our glory covers us with noble ſhame,
And he that 's unconfounded is unmann'd. 495
The man that bluſhes is not quite a brute.
Thus far with thee, Lorenzo! will I cloſe,
Pleaſure is good, and man for pleaſure made;
But pleaſure full of glory as of joy;
Pleaſure which neither bluſhes nor expires. 500
The witneſſes are heard, the cauſe is o'er;
Let Conſcience file the ſentence in her court:
Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey,
Thus ſeal'd by Truth th' authentick record runs.
" Know all; know Infidels,—unapt to know!
" 'Tis immortality your nature ſolves; 505
" 'Tis immortality deciphers man,

" And opens all the myſt'ries of his make:
" Without it half his inſtincts are a riddle;
" Without it all his virtues are a dream: 510
" His very crimes atteſt his dignity;
" His ſateleſs thirſt of pleaſure, gold, and fame,
" Declares him born for bleſſings infinite.
" What leſs than infinite makes unabſurd
" Paſſions, which all on earth but more inflames?
" Fierce paſſions, ſo miſmeaſur'd to this ſcene, 516
" Stretch'd out, like eagles' wings beyond our neſt,
" Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
" For earth too large, preſage a nobler flight,
" And evidence our title to the ſkies." 520

Ye gentle Theologues of calmer kind!
Whoſe conſtitution dictates to your pen,
Who, cold yourſelves, think ardour comes from hell!
Think not our paſſions from corruption ſprung,
Tho' to corruption now they lend their wings: 525
That is their miſtreſs, not their mother. All
(And juſtly) reaſon deem divine: I ſee,
I feel a grandeur in the paſſions too,
Which ſpeaks their high deſcent and glorious end;
Which ſpeaks them rays of an eternal fire: 530
In paradiſe itſelf they burnt as ſtrong
Ere Adam fell, tho' wiſer in their aim.
Like the proud Eaſtern, ſtruck by Providence,
What tho' our paſſions are run mad, and ſtoop,
With low terreſtrial appetite, to graze 535

On trash, on toys, dethron'd from high desire?
Yet still, thro' their disgrace, no feeble ray
Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell:
But these (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd)
When reason moderates the rein aright, 540
Shall reascend, remount their former sphere,
Where once they soar'd illustrious, ere seduc'd,
By wanton Eve's debauch, to stroll on earth,
And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their frenzy lasts; their frenzy fails
To disappoint one providential end 545
For which Heav'n blew up ardour in our hearts.
Were Reason silent, boundless Passion speaks
A future scene of boundless objects too,
And brings glad tidings of eternal day. 550
Eternal day! 't is that enlightens all,
And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it sure.
Consider man as an immortal being,
Intelligible all, and all is great;
A crystalline transparency prevails, 555
And strikes full lustre thro' the human sphere:
Consider man as mortal, all is dark
And wretched; Reason weeps at the servey.

The learn'd Lorenzo cries, "And let her weep;
"Weak modern Reason: ancient times were wise,
"Authority, that venerable guide, 561
"Stands on my part; the fam'd Athenian Porch
"(And who for wisdom so renown'd as they?)

"Deny'd this immortality to man."
I grant it; but affirm they prov'd it too. 565
A riddle this!—Have patience; I'll explain.
What noble vanities, what moral flights,
Glitt'ring thro' their romantick wisdom's page,
Make us, at once, despise them and admire?
Fable is flat to these high season'd Sires; 570
They leave th' extravagance of song below.
"Flesh shall not feel, or, feeling, shall enjoy
"The dagger or the rack; to them alike
"A bed of roses or the burning bull."
In men exploding all beyond the grave, 575
Strange doctrine this! as doctrine it was strange,
But not as prophecy; for such it prov'd,
And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd:
They feign'd a firmness Christians need not feign.
The Christian truly triumph'd in the flame; 580
The Stoick saw, in double wonder lost,
Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,
To find the bold adventures of his thought
Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.
Whence, then, those thoughts? those tow'ring thoughts, that flew 585
Such monstrous heights?—From instinct and from pride.
The glorious instinct of a deathless soul,
Confus'dly conscious of her dignity,
Suggested truths they could not understand.
In Lust's dominion, and in Passion's storm, 590

Truth's ſyſtem broken, ſcatter'd fragments lay,
As light in chaos, glimm'ring thro' the gloom:
Smit with the pomp of lofty ſentiments,
Pleas'd Pride proclaim'd what Reaſon diſbeliev'd.
Pride, like the delphick prieſteſs, with a ſwell 595
Rav'd nonſenſe, deſtin'd to be future ſenſe,
When life immortal, in full day, ſhould ſhine,
And Death's dark ſhadows fly the Goſpel ſun.
They ſpoke what nothing but immortal ſouls
Could ſpeak; and thus the truth they queſtion'd prov'd.
Can then abſurdities, as well as crimes, 601
Speak man immortal? All things ſpeak him ſo.
Much has been urg'd; and doſt thou call for more?
Call, and with endleſs queſtions be diſtreſs'd,
All unreſolvable, if earth is all. 605
"Why life a moment, infinite deſire?
"Our wiſh eternity, our home the grave?
"Heav'n's promiſe dormant lies in human hope;
"Who wiſhes life immortal proves it too.
"Why happineſs purſu'd, tho' never found? 610
"Man's thirſt of happineſs declares it is,
"(For Nature never gravitates to nought)
"That thirſt unquench'd declares it is not here.
"My Lucia, thy Clariſſa, call to thought;
"Why cordial friendſhip riveted ſo deep, 615
"As hearts to pierce at firſt, at parting rend,
"If friend and friendſhip vaniſh in an hour?
"Is not this torment in the maſk of joy?

" Why by reflection marr'd the joys of ſenſe?
" Why paſt and future preying on our hearts, 620
" And putting all our preſent joys to death?
" Why labours reaſon? inſtinct were as well;
" Inſtinct far better: what can chuſe can err.
" O how infallible the thoughtleſs brute!
" 'Twere well his Holineſs were half as ſure. 625
" Reaſon with inclination why at war?
" Why ſenſe of guilt? why conſcience up in arms?"
Conſcience of guilt is prophecy of pain,
And boſom counſel to decline the blow.
Reaſon with inclination ne'er had jarr'd, 630
If nothing future paid forbearance here.
Thus on—theſe, and a thouſand pleas uncall'd,
All promiſe, ſome enſure a ſecond ſcene,
Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far
Than all things elſe moſt certain; were it falſe, 635
What truth on earth ſo precious as the lie?
This world it gives us, let what will enſue;
This world it gives in that high cordial, hope;
The future of the preſent is the ſoul.
How this life groans when ſever'd from the next?
Poor mutilated wretch that diſbelieves! 641
By dark diſtruſt his being cut in two,
In both parts periſhes; life void of joy,
Sad prelude of eternity in pain!
Couldſt thou perſuade me the next life could fail
Our ardent wiſhes, how ſhould I pour out 646

My bleeding heart in anguish, new as deep!
Oh! with what thoughts thy hope, and my despair,
Abhorr'd Annihilation! blasts the soul,
And wide extends the bounds of human wo! 650
Could I believe Lorenzo's system true,
In this black channel would my ravings run.
" Grief from the future borrow'd peace, erewhile.
" The future vanish'd! and the present pain'd!
" Strange import of unprecedented ill! 655
" Fall how profound! like Lucifer's the fall!
" Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!
" From where fond Hope built her pavilion high,
" The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once
" To-night! to nothing! darker still than night. 660
" If 't was a dream, why wake me my worst foe,
" Lorenzo! boastful of the name of friend!
" O for delusion! O for errour still!
" Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant
" A thinking being in a world like this, 665
" Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite,
" More curs'd than at the fall!—The sun goes out!
" The thorns shoot up! what thorns in ev'ry thought!
" Why sense of better! it imbitters worse.
" Why sense? why life? if but to sigh, then sink
" To what I was! twice nothing! and much wo! 671
" Wo from Heav'n's bounties! wo from what was
" To flatter most, high intellectual pow'rs. [wont
" Thought, virtue, knowledge! blessings, by thy scheme
" All poison'd into pains. First, knowledge, once

" My ſoul's ambition, now her greateſt dread. 676
" To know myſelf true wiſdom ?— No; to ſhun
" That ſhocking ſcience, parent of Deſpair!
" Avert thy mirror; if I ſee I die.
" Know my Creator? climb his bleſs'd abode 680
" By painful ſpeculation, pierce the vail,
" Dive in his nature, read his attributes,
" And gaze in admiration—on a foe,
" Obtruding life, withholding happineſs!
" From the full rivers that ſurround his throne, 685
" Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;
" Man gaſping for one drop, that he might ceaſe
" To curſe his birth, nor envy reptiles more!
" Ye ſable Clouds! ye darkeſt Shades of night!
" Hide him, for ever hide him, from my thought,
" Once all my comfort, ſource and ſoul of joy! 691
" Now leagu'd with furies, and with thee*, againſt me.
" Know his achievements? ſtudy his renown?
" Contemplate this amazing univerſe,
" Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete! 695
" For what? 'mid miracles of nobler name
" To find one miracle of miſery?
" To find the being which alone can know,
" And praiſe his works a blemiſh on his praiſe!
" Thro' Nature's ample range, in thought, to ſtroll,
" And ſtart at man, the ſingle mourner there, 701
" Breathing high hope! chain'd down to pangs and [death!

* Lorenzo.

" Knowing is ſuff'ring : and ſhall Virtue ſhare
" The ſigh of Knowledge ?—Virtue ſhares the ſigh.
" By ſtraining up the ſteep of excellent, 705
" By battles fought, and from temptation won,
" What gains ſhe but the pang of ſeeing worth,
" Angelick worth, ſoon ſhuffled in the dark
" With ev'ry vice, and ſwept to brutal duſt ?
" Merit is madneſs, virtue is a crime, 710
" A crime to reaſon, if it coſts us pain
" Unpaid : what pain, amidſt a thouſand more,
" To think the moſt abandon'd, after days
" Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death
" As ſoft a pillow, nor make fouler clay ! 715
" Duty, religion,—theſe, our duty done,
" Imply reward. Religion is miſtake.
" Duty !—there 's none, but to repel the cheat.
" Ye Cheats ! away : ye daughters of my pride,
" Who feign yourſelves the fav'rites of the ſkies,
" Ye tow'ring Hopes ! abortive energies ! 721
" That toſs and ſtruggle in my lying breaſt,
" To ſcale the ſkies, and build preſumptions there,
" As I were heir of an eternity.
" Vain, vain ambitions ! trouble me no more. 725
" Why travel far in queſt of ſure defeat ?
" As bounded as my being be my wiſh.
" All is inverted, wiſdom is a fool.
" Senſe ! take the reign ; blind Paſſion ! drive us on ;
" And, Ignorance ! befriend us on our way ; 730

" Ye new, but trueſt patrons of our peace!
" Yes; give the pulſe full empire; live the brute,
" Since as the brute we die: the ſum of man,
" Of godlike man! to revel and to rot.
" But not on equal terms with other brutes; 735
" Their revels a more poignant reliſh yield,
" And ſafer too; they never poiſons chuſe.
" Inſtinct than reaſon makes more wholeſome meals,
" And ſends all-marring Murmur far away.
" For ſenſual life they beſt philoſophize, 740
" Theirs that ſerene the ſages ſought in vain:
" 'Tis man alone expoſtulates with Heav'n;
" His all the pow'r, and all the cauſe to mourn.
" Shall human eyes alone diſſolve in tears?
" And bleed in anguiſh none but human hearts?
" The wide-ſtretch'd realm of intellectual wo, 746
" Surpaſſing ſenſual far, is all our own.
" In life ſo fatally diſtinguiſh'd, why
" Caſt in one lot, confounded, lump'd in death?
" Ere yet in being was mankind in guilt? 750
" Why thunder'd this peculiar clauſe againſt us,
" All-mortal, and all-wretched!—Have the ſkies
" Reaſons of ſtate their ſubjects may not ſcan,
" Nor humbly reaſon when they ſorely ſigh?
" All-mortal and all-wretched!—'Tis too much,
" Unparallell'd in Nature: 't is too much, 756
" On being unrequeſted at thy hands,
" Omnipotent! for I ſee nought but pow'r.

" And why ſee that? why thought! To toil and eat,
" Then make our bed in darkneſs, needs no thought.
" What ſuperfluities are reas'ning ſouls! 761
" Oh give eternity, or thought deſtroy.
" But without thought our curſe were half unfelt;
" Its blunted edge would ſpare the throbbing heart,
" And therefore 't is beſtow'd. I thank thee, Reaſon!
" For aiding life's too ſmall calamities, 766
" And giving being to the dread of death.
" Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much
" For me to treſpaſs on the brutal rights?
" Too much for Heav'n to make one emmet more?
" Too much for Chaos to permit my maſs 771
" A longer ſtay with eſſences unwrought,
" Unfaſhion'd, untormented into man?
" Wretched preferment to this round of pains!
" Wretched capacity of frenſy, thought! 775
" Wretched capacity of dying, life!
" Life, thought, worth, wiſdom, all (O foul revolt!)
" Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.
" Death then has chang'd its nature too. O Death!
" Come to my boſom, thou beſt gift of Heav'n! 780
" Beſt friend of man! ſince man is man no more.
" Why in this throny wilderneſs ſo long,
" Since there 's no promis'd land's ambroſial bow'r
" To pay me with its honey for my ſtings?
" If needful to the ſelfiſh ſchemes of Heav'n 785

" To ſting us ſore, why mock'd our miſery?
" Why this ſo ſumptuous inſult o'er our heads?
" Why this illuſtrious canopy diſplay'd?
" Why ſo magnificently lodg'd Deſpair?
" At ſtated periods, ſure-returning, roll 790
" Theſe glorious orbs, that mortals may compute
" Their length of labours and of pains, nor loſe
" Their miſery's full meaſure?—Smiles with flow'rs
" And fruits, promiſcuous, ever teeming earth,
" That man may languiſh in luxurious ſcenes, 795
" And in an Eden mourn his wither'd joys?
" Claim earth and ſkies man's admiration, due
" For ſuch delights! bleſs'd Animals! too wiſe
" To wonder, and too happy to complain!
" Our doom decreed demands a mournful ſcene:
" Why not a dungeon dark for the condemn'd? 801
" Why not the dragon's ſubterranean den
" For man to howl in? why not his abode
" Of the ſame diſmal colour with his fate?
" A Thebes, a Babylon, at vaſt expenſe 805
" Of time, toil, treaſure, art, for owls and adders
" As congruous, as for man this loſty dome,
" Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high [deſire,
" If, from her humble chamber in the duſt,
" While proud thoughts ſwells, and high deſire inflames,
" The poor worm calls us for her inmates there, 811
" And round us Death's inexorable hand
" Draws the dark curtain cloſe, undrawn no more.

" Undrawn no more!--Behind the cloud of death,
" Once, I beheld a ſun, a ſun which gilt 815
" That ſable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold.
" How the grave's alter'd! fathomleſs as hell!
" A real hell to thoſe who dream'd of heav'n,
" Annihilation! how it yawns before me!
" Next moment I may drop from thought, from ſenſe,
" The privilege of angels and of worms, 821
" An outcaſt from exiſtence! and this ſpirit,
" This all-pervading, this all-conſcious ſoul,
" This particle of energy divine,
" Which travels Nature, flies from ſtar to ſtar, 825
" And viſits gods, and emulates their pow'rs,
" For ever is extinguiſh'd. Horrour! death!
" Death of that death I fearleſs once ſurvey'd!—
" When horrour univerſal ſhall deſcend,
" And heav'n's dark concave urn all human race,
" On that enormous, unrefunding tomb, 831
" How juſt this verſe! this monumental ſigh!"
' Beneath the lumber of demoliſh'd worlds,
' Deep in the rubbiſh of the gen'ral wreck,
' Swept ignominious to the common maſs 835
' Of matter, never dignify'd with life,
' Here lie proud rationals; the ſons of Heav'n!
' The lords of earth! the property of worms!
' Beings of yeſterday, and not to-morrow!
' Who liv'd in terrour, and in pangs expir'd! 840
' All gone to rot in chaos, or to make

'Their happy tranſit into blocks or brutes,
'Nor longer ſully their Creator's name.'
Lorenzo! hear, pauſe, ponder, and pronounce.
Juſt is this hiſtory? If ſuch is man, 845
Mankind's hiſtorian, tho' divine, might weep.
And dares Lorenzo ſmile!—I know thee proud;
For once let pride befriend thee; Pride looks pale
At ſuch a ſcene, and ſighs for ſomething more.
Amid thy boaſts, preſumptions, and diſplays, 850
And art thou then a ſhadow? leſs than ſhade?
A nothing? leſs than nothing? To have been,
And not to be, is lower than unborn.
Art thou ambitious? why then make the worm
Thine equal? Runs thy taſte of pleaſure high? 855
Why patronize ſure death of ev'ry joy?
Charm riches! why chuſe begg'ry in the grave,
Of ev'ry hope a bankrupt! and for ever?
Ambition, Pleaſure, Avarice, perſuade thee
To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth, 860
They lately prov'd *, thy ſoul's ſupreme deſire.
What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?
Great Nature's maſter appetite deſtroy'd,
Is endleſs life and happineſs deſpis'd:
Or both wiſh'd here, where neither can be found;
Such man's perverſe, eternal war with heav'n! 866
Dar'ſt thou perſiſt? and is there nought on earth
But a long train of tranſitory forms,

* In the Sixth Night.

Rising and breaking millions in an hour?
Bubbles of a fantastick deity blown up 870
In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd?
Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!
Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race?
Kind is fell Lucifer compar'd to thee.
Oh! spare this waste of being half-divine, 875
And vindicate th' economy of Heav'n.
Heav'n is all love, all joy in giving joy;
It never had created but to bless;
And shall it then strike off the list of life
A being bless'd, or worthy so to be? 880
Heav'n starts at an annihilating God.
Is that all Nature starts at thy desire?
Art such a clod to wish thyself all clay?
What is that dreadful wish?—the dying groan
Of Nature, murder'd by the blackest guilt. 885
What deadly poison has thy nature drank?
To nature undebauch'd, no shock so great.
Nature's first wish is endless happiness;
Annihilation is an after-thought,
A monstrous wish, unborn till virtue dies. 890
And, oh! what depth of horrour lies enclos'd!
For nonexistence no man ever wish'd,
But first he wish'd the Deity destroy'd.
If so, what words are dark enough to draw
Thy picture true? the darkest are too fair. 895
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour

Of desperation, by what fury's aid,
In what infernal posture of the soul,
All hell invited, and all hell in joy
At such a birth, a birth so near of kin, 900
Did thy foul fancy whelp so black a scheme
Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,
And deities begun, reduc'd to dust?

There 's nought (thou say'st) but one eternal flux
Of feeble essences, tumultuous driv'n 905
Thro' time's rough billows into night's abyss.
Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,
Is there no rock on which man's tossing thought
Can rest from terrour, dare his fate survey,
And boldly think it something to be born? 910
Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,
Is there no central, all-sustaining base,
All-realizing, all-connecting pow'r,
Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,
And force Destruction to refund her spoil? 915
Command the grave restore her taken prey?
Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield?
And earth and ocean pay their debt of man,
True to the grand deposit trusted there?
Is there no potentate, whose outstretch'd arm, 920
When rip'ning time calls forth th' appointed hour,
Pluck'd from foul Devastation's famish'd maw,
Binds present, past, and future, to his throne?
His throne how glorious! thus divinely grac'd

By germinating beings cluſt'ring round! 925
A garland worthy the Divinity!
A throne by Heav'n's omnipotence in ſmiles,
Built (like a Pharos tow'ring in the waves)
Amidſt immenſe effuſions of his love!
An ocean of communicated bliſs! 930
An all-prolifick, all-preſerving God!
This were a God indeed.—And ſuch is man,
As here preſum'd; he riſes from his fall.
Think'ſt thou Omnipotence a naked root,
Each bloſſom fair of Deity deſtroy'd? 935
Nothing is dead; nay, nothing ſleeps; each ſoul,
That ever animated human clay,
Now wakes, is on the wing: and where, O where,
Will the ſwarm ſettle?—When the trumpet's call,
As ſounding braſs, collects us, round heav'n's throne
Conglob'd, we baſk in everlaſting day, 940
(Paternal ſplendour!) and adhere for ever.
Had not the ſoul this outlet to the ſkies,
In this vaſt veſſel of the univerſe
How ſhould we gaſp, as in an empty void! 945
How in the pangs of famiſh'd hope expire!
How bright my proſpect ſhines! how gloomy thine!
A trembling world! and a devouring God!
Earth but the ſhambles of Omnipotence!
Heav'n's face all ſtain'd with cauſeleſs maſſacres 950
Of countleſs millions, born to feel the pang
Of being loſt. Lorenzo! can it be?

This bids us ſhudder at the thoughts of life.
Who would be born to ſuch a phantom world,
Where nought ſubſtantial but our miſery? 955
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our diſtreſs.
So ſoon to periſh and revive no more?
The greater ſuch a joy, the more it pains.
A world ſo far from great (and yet how great
It ſhines to thee!) there 's nothing real in it; 960
Being a ſhadow; conſciouſneſs a dream:
A dream how dreadful! univerſal blank
Before it and behind! poor man a ſpark
From nonexiſtence ſtruck by wrath divine,
Glitt'ring a moment, nor that moment ſure, 965
'Midſt upper, nether, and ſurrounding night,
His ſad, ſure, ſudden, and eternal tomb!
Lorenzo! doſt thou feel theſe arguments?
Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?
How haſt thou dar'd the Deity dethrone? 970
How dar'd indict him of a world like this?
If ſuch the world creation was a crime;
For what is crime but cauſe of miſery?
Retract, Blaſphemer! and unriddle this,
Of endleſs arguments above, below, 975
Without us, and within, the ſhort reſult—
"If man 's immortal, there 's a God in heav'n."
But wherefore ſuch redundancy? ſuch waſte
Of argument? one ſets my ſoul at reſt;
One obvious, and at hand, and, oh!—at heart. 980

So juſt the ſkies, Philander's life ſo pain'd,
His heart ſo pure, that or ſucceeding ſcenes
Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born.
"What an old tale is this!" Lorenzo cries.—
I grant this argument is old; but truth 985
No years impair; and had not this been true,
Thou never hadſt deſpis'd it for its age.
Truth is immortal as thy ſoul, and fable
As fleeting as thy joys. Be wiſe, nor make
Heav'n's higheſt bleſſing vengeance. O be wiſe! 990
Nor make a curſe of immortality.
Say, know'ſt thou what it is, or what thou art?
Know'ſt thou th' importance of a ſoul immortal?
Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
Amazing pomp! redouble this amaze; 995
Ten thouſand add; add twice ten thouſand more;
Then weigh the whole; one ſoul outweighs them all,
And calls th' aſtoniſhing magnificence
Of unintelligent creation poor.
For this believe not me; no man believe; 1000
Truſt not in words, but deeds; and deeds no leſs
Than thoſe of the Supreme, nor his a few:
Conſult them all; conſulted, all proclaim
Thy ſoul's importance. Tremble at thyſelf,
For whom Omnipotence has wak'd ſo long; 1005
Has wak'd, and work'd, for ages; from the birth
Of Nature to this unbelieving hour.
In this ſmall province of his vaſt domain

(All Nature bow while I pronounce his name!)
What has God done, and not for this sole end, 1010
To rescue souls from death? The soul's high price
Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.
The soul's high price is the creation's key,
Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
The genuine cause of ev'ry deed divine: 1015
That is the chain of ages which maintains
Their obvious correspondence, and unites
Most distant periods in one bless'd design:
That is the mighty hinge on which have turn'd
All revolutions, whether we regard 1020
The nat'ral, civil, or religious, world,
The former two but servants to the third:
To that their duty done, they both expire,
Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown'd,
And angels ask, "Where once they shone so fair?"
To lift us from this abject to sublime; 1026
This flux to permanent; this dark to-day;
This foul to pure; this turbid to serene;
This mean to mighty!—for this glorious end
Th' Almighty, rising, his long sabbath broke! 1030
The world was made, was ruin'd, was restor'd;
Laws from the skies were publish'd, were repeal'd;
On earth kings, kingdoms, rose; kings, kingdoms, fell;
Fam'd sages lighted up the Pagan world;
Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance 1035
Thro' distant age; saints travell'd, martyrs bled;

By wonders ſacred Nature ſtood controll'd;
The living were tranſlated; dead were rais'd;
Angels, and more than angels, came from heav'n;
And, oh! for this deſcended lower ſtill; 1040
Guilt was hell's gloom; aſtoniſh'd at his gueſt,
For one ſhort moment Lucifer ador'd.
Lorenzo! and wilt thou do leſs?—For this
That hallow'd page, fools ſcoff at, was inſpir'd,
Of all theſe truths thrice-venerable code! 1045
Deiſts! perform your quarantine, and then
Fall proſtrate ere you touch it, leſt you die.
Nor leſs intenſely bent infernal pow'rs
To mar, than thoſe of light this end to gain.
O what a ſcene is here!—Lorenzo! wake! 1050
Riſe to the thought; exert, expand thy ſoul
To take the vaſt idea; it denies
All elſe the name of great. Two warring worlds,
Not Europe againſt Afric; warring worlds!
Of more than mortal! mounted on the wing! 1055
On ardent wings of energy and zeal,
High-hov'ring o'er this little brand of ſtrife!
This ſublunary ball.—But ſtrife, for what?
In their own cauſe conflicting? no; in thine,
In man's. His ſingle int'reſt blows the flame; 1060
His the ſole ſtake; his fate the trumpet ſounds
Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!
Tumultuous ſwarms of deities in arms!
Force force oppoſing, till the waves run high,

And tempeſt Nature's univerſal ſphere. 1065
Such oppoſites eternal, ſtedfaſt, ſtern,
Such foes implacable are good and ill; [them.
Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between
Think not this fiction. "There was war in heav'n."
From heav'n's high cryſtal mountain, where it hung,
Th' Almighty's outſtretch'd arm took down his bow,
And ſhot his indignation at the deep: 1072
Rethunder'd Hell, and darted all her fires.—
And ſeems the ſtake of little moment ſtill?
And ſlumbers man, who ſingly caus'd the ſtorm? 1075
He ſleeps.—And art thou ſhock'd at myſteries?
The greateſt thou. How dreadful to reflect
What ardour, care, and counſel, mortals cauſe
In breaſts divine! how little in their own!
Where'er I turn, how new proofs pour upon me!
How happily this wondrous view ſupports 1081
My former argument! how ſtrongly ſtrikes
Immortal life's full demonſtration here!
Why this exertion? why this ſtrange regard
From heav'n's Omnipotent indulg'd to man?— 1085
Becauſe in man the glorious, dreadful pow'r,
Extremely to be pain'd, or bleſs'd for ever.
Duration gives importance, ſwells the price.
An angel, if a creature of a day,
What would he be? a trifle of no weight; 1090
Or ſtand or fall, no matter which, he 's gone.
Becauſe immortal, therefore is indulg'd

This ſtrange regard of deities to duſt.
Hence Heav'n looks down on earth with all her eyes;
Hence the ſoul's mighty moment in her ſight; 1095
Hence ev'ry ſoul has partizans above,
And ev'ry thought a critick in the ſkies:
Hence clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,
And ev'ry guard a paſſion for his charge;
Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine 1100
Has held high counſel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds thoſe gracious counſels hid;
Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
And Providence came forth to meet mankind:
In various modes of emphaſis and awe 1105
He ſpoke his will, and trembling Nature heard;
He ſpoke it loud, in thunder, and in ſtorm:
Witneſs thou, Sinai! whoſe cloud-cover'd height,
And ſhaken baſis, own'd the preſent God:
Witneſs, ye Billows! whoſe returning tide, 1110
Breaking the chain that faſten'd it in air,
Swept Egypt and her menaces to hell:
Witneſs, ye Flames! th' Aſſyrian tyrant blew
To ſev'nfold rage, as impotent as ſtrong:
And thou, Earth! witneſs, whoſe expanding jaws
Clos'd o'er Preſumption's ſacrilegious ſons *; 1115
Has not each element, in turn, ſubſcrib'd
The ſoul's high price, and ſworn it to the wiſe?
Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, ſtrove

* Korah, &c.

To ſtrike this truth thro' adamantine man; 1120
If not all adamant, Lorenzo! hear;
All is deluſion; Nature is wrapt up
In tenfold night, from Reaſon's keeneſt eye:
There 's no conſiſtence, meaning, plan, or end,
In all beneath the ſun, in all above, 1125
(As far as man can penetrate) or heav'n
Is an immenſe, ineſtimable prize:
Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.—
And ſhall each toy be ſtill a match for heav'n,
And full equivalent for groans below? 1130
Who would not give a trifle to prevent
What he would give a thouſand worlds to cure?
Lorenzo! thou haſt ſeen (if thine to ſee)
All Nature and her God (by Nature's courſe,
And Nature's courſe controll'd) declare for me. 1135
The ſkies above proclaim "immortal man!"
And "man immortal!" all below reſounds.
The world 's a ſyſtem of theology,
Read by the greateſt ſtrangers to the ſchools;
If honeſt, learn'd; and ſages o'er a plough. 1140
Is not, Lorenzo! then, impos'd on thee
This hard alternative, or to renounce
Thy reaſon and thy ſenſe, or to believe?
What then is unbelief? 't is an exploit,
A ſtrenuous enterpriſe; to gain it man 1145
Muſt burſt thro' ev'ry bar of common ſenſe,
Of common ſhame, magnanimouſly wrong;

And what rewards the ſturdy combatant?
His prize repentance; infamy his crown.
But wherefore infamy?—for want of faith 1150
Down the ſteep precipice of wrong he ſlides;
There 's nothing to ſupport him in the right.
Faith in the future wanting is, at leaſt
In embryo, ev'ry weakneſs, ev'ry guilt,
And ſtrong temptation ripens it to birth. 1155
If this life's gain invites him to the deed,
Why not his country ſold, his father ſlain?
'Tis virtue to purſue our good ſupreme,
And his ſupreme, his only good, is here.
Ambition, av'rice, by the wiſe diſdain'd, 1160
Is perfect wiſdom while mankind are fools,
And think a turf or tombſtone covers all:
Theſe find employment, and provide for ſenſe
A richer paſture and a larger range;
And ſenſe, by right divine, aſcends the throne. 1165
When virtue's prize and proſpect are no more,
Virtue no more we think the will of Heav'n.
Would Heav'n quite beggar Virtue if belov'd?
"Has Virtue charms?"—I grant her heav'nly fair;
But if unportion'd, all will Int'reſt wed, 1170
Tho' that our admiration, this our choice.
The virtues grow on immortality;
That root deſtroy'd, they wither and expire.
A Deity believ'd will nought avail;
Rewards and puniſhments make God ador'd, 1175

And hopes and fears give Conſcience all her pow'r.
As in the dying parent dies the child,
Virtue with immortality expires.
Who tells me he denies his ſoul immortal,
Whate'er his boaſt, has told me he 's a knave. 1180
His duty 't is to love himſelf alone,
Nor care tho' mankind periſh if he ſmiles.
Who thinks ere long the man ſhall wholly die,
Is dead already; nought but brute ſurvives.
And are there ſuch?—Such candidates there are
For more than death; for utter loſs of being, 1186
Being, the baſis of the Deity!
Aſk you the cauſe?—the cauſe they will not tell;
Nor need they. Oh the ſorceries of ſenſe!
They work this transformation on the ſoul, 1190
Diſmount her like the ſerpent at the fall,
Diſmount her from her native wing (which ſoar'd
Erewhile ethereal heights) and throw her down
To lick the duſt, and crawl in ſuch a thought.
Is it in words to paint you? O ye Fall'n! 1195
Fall'n from the wings of reaſon and of hope!
Erect in ſtature, prone in appetite!
Patrons of pleaſure, poſting into pain!
Lovers of argument, averſe to ſenſe!
Boaſters of liberty, faſt-bound in chains! 1200
Lords of the wide creation, and the ſhame!
More ſenſeleſs than th' irrationals you ſcorn!
More baſe than thoſe you rule! than thoſe you pity,

Far more undone! O ye moſt infamous
Of beings, from ſuperiour dignity! 1205
Deepeſt in wo from means of boundleſs bliſs!
Ye curs'd by bleſſings infinite! becauſe
Moſt highly favour'd, moſt profoundly loſt!
Ye motley maſs of contradiction ſtrong!
And are you, too, convinc'd your ſouls fly off 1210
In exhalation ſoft, and die in air,
From the full flood of evidence againſt you?
In the coarſe drudgeries and ſinks of ſenſe,
Your ſouls have quite worn out the make of Heav'n,
By vice new-caſt, and creatures of your own; 1215
But tho' you can deform, you cann't deſtroy:
To curſe, not uncreate, is all your pow'r.
Lorenzo! this black brotherhood renounce;
Renounce St. Evremond, and read St. Paul.
Ere rapt by miracle, by reaſon wing'd, 1220
His mounting mind made long abode in heav'n.
This is free-thinking, unconfin'd to parts,
To ſend the ſoul, on curious travel bent,
Thro' all the provinces of human thought;
To dart her flight thro' the whole ſphere of man;
Of this vaſt univerſe to make the tour; 1225
In each receſs of ſpace and time at home,
Familiar with their wonders; diving deep;
And, like a prince of boundleſs int'reſts there,
Still moſt ambitious of the moſt remote; 1230
To look on truth unbroken and entire;

Truth in the ſyſtem, the full orb; where truths
By truths enlighten'd and ſuſtain'd, afford
An arch-like, ſtrong foundation, to ſupport
Th' incumbent weight of abſolute, complete 1235
Conviction: here, the more we preſs, we ſtand
More firm: who moſt examine, moſt believe.
Parts, like half-ſentences, confound; the whole
Conveys the ſenſe, and God is underſtood;
Who not in fragments writes to human race: 1240
Read his whole volume, Sceptick! then reply.
This, this is thinking free, a thought that graſps
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.
Turn up thine eye, ſurvey this midnight ſcene;
What are earth's kingdoms to yon' boundleſs orbs,
Of human ſouls, one day, the deſtin'd range? 1246
And what yon' boundleſs orbs to godlike man?
Thoſe num'rous worlds that throng the firmament,
And aſk more ſpace in heav'n, can roll at large
In man's capacious thought, and ſtill leave room 1250
For ampler orbs, for new creations there.
Can ſuch a ſoul contract itſelf, to gripe
A point of no dimenſion, of no weight?
It can; it does: the world is ſuch a point;
And of that point how ſmall a part enſlaves! 1255
How ſmall a part—of nothing, ſhall I ſay?
Why not?—Friends our chief treaſure! how they drop!
Lucia, Narciſſa fair, Philander, gone!
The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has op'd

A triple mouth, and in an awful voice 1260
Loud calls my ſoul, and utters all I ſing.
How the world falls to pieces round about us,
And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!
What ſays this tranſportation of my friends?
It bids me love the place where now they dwell, 1265
And ſcorn this wretched ſpot they leave ſo poor.
Eternity's vaſt ocean lies before thee;
There, there, Lorenzo! thy Clariſſa ſails.
Give thy mind ſea room; keep it wide of earth,
That rock of ſouls immortal; cut thy cord; 1270
Weigh anchor; ſpread thy ſails; call ev'ry wind;
Eye thy Great Poleſtar; make the land of Life.
Two kinds of life has double-natur'd man,
And two of death; the laſt far more ſevere.
Life animal is nurtur'd by the ſun, 1275
Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams:
Life rational ſubſiſts on higher food,
Triumphant in his beams who made the day:
When we leave that ſun, and are left by this,
(The fate of all who die in ſtubborn guilt) 1280
'Tis utter darkneſs; ſtrictly double death.
We ſink by no judicial ſtroke of Heav'n,
But Nature's courſe, as ſure as plumbets fall.
Since God or man muſt alter ere they meet,
(Since light and darkneſs blend not in one ſphere)
'Tis manifeſt, Lorenzo! who muſt change. 1286
If then that double death ſhould prove thy lot,

Blame not the bowels of the Deity;
Man ſhall be bleſs'd as far as man permits.
Not man alone, all rationals Heav'n arms 1290
With an illuſtrious, but tremendous pow'r,
To counteract its own moſt gracious ends,
And this of ſtrict neceſſity, not choice;
That pow'r deny'd, men, angels, were no more
But paſſive engines, void of praiſe or blame. 1295
A nature rational implies the pow'r
Of being bleſs'd or wretched as we pleaſe,
Elſe idle Reaſon would have nought to do,
And he that would be barr'd capacity
Of pain, courts incapacity of bliſs. 1300
Heav'n wills our happineſs, allows our doom;
Invites us ardently, but not compels:
Heav'n but perſuades, almighty man decrees.
Man is the maker of immortal fates.
Man falls by man, if finally he falls; 1305
And fall he muſt, who learns from death alone
The dreadful ſecret,—that he lives for ever.
Why this to thee?—thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
Of ſecond life? but wherefore doubtful ſtill?
Eternal life is Nature's ardent wiſh: 1310
What ardently we wiſh we ſoon believe:
Thy tardy faith declares that wiſh deſtroy'd:
What has deſtroy'd it?—ſhall I tell thee what?
When fear'd the future, 't is no longer wiſh'd;
And when unwiſh'd, we ſtrive to diſbelieve. 1315

"Thus infidelity our guilt betrays."
Nor that the ſole detection! Bluſh, Lorenzo!
Bluſh for hypocriſy, if not for guilt.
The future fear'd?—An infidel, and fear?
Fear what? a dream? a fable?—How thy dread, 1320
Unwilling evidence, and therefore ſtrong,
Affords my cauſe an undeſign'd ſupport?
How diſbelief affirms what it denies!
"It, unawares, aſſerts immortal life."—
Surpriſing! infidelity turns out 1325
A creed and a confeſſion of our ſins.
Apoſtates thus are orthodox divines.
O Lorenzo! with Lorenzo claſh no more,
Nor longer a tranſparent vizor wear.
Think'ſt thou Religion only has her maſk? 1330
Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites,
Pretend the worſt, and, at the bottom, fail.
When viſited by thought (thought will intrude)
Like him they ſerve, they tremble, and believe.
Is there hypocriſy ſo foul as this? 1335
So fatal to the welfare of the world?
What deteſtation, what contempt, their due!
And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their eſcape
That Chriſtian candour they ſtrive hard to ſcorn.
If not for that aſylum, they might find 1340
A hell on earth, nor 'ſcape a worſe below.
With inſolence and impotence of thought,
Inſtead of racking fancy to refute,
Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.—

But ſhall I dare confeſs the dire reſult? 1345
Can thy proud reaſon brook ſo black a brand?
From purer manners to ſublimer faith,
Is Nature's unavoidable aſcent.
An honeſt Deiſt, where the Goſpel ſhines,
Matur'd to nobler, in the Chriſtian ends. 1350
When that bleſs'd change arrives, e'en caſt aſide
This ſong ſuperfluous: life immortal ſtrikes
Conviction in a flood of light divine.
A Chriſtian dwells, like Uriel *, in the ſun;
Meridian evidence puts doubt to flight, 1355
And ardent hope anticipates the ſkies.
Of that bright ſun, Lorenzo! f le the ſphere:
'Tis eaſy; it invites thee; it de ends
From heav'n to woo and waft thee whence it came.
Read and revere the ſacred page, a page 1360
Where triumphs immortality; a page
Which not the whole creation could produce;
Which not the conflagration ſhall deſtroy:
'Tis printed in the mind of gods for ever,
In Nature's ruins not one letter loſt. 1365
In proud diſdain of what e'en gods adore,
Doſt ſmile?—Poor wretch! thy guardian angel weeps.
Angels and men aſſent to what I ſing;
Wits ſmile, and thank me for my midnight dream.
How vicious hearts fume frenzy to the brain! 1370
Parts puſh us on to pride, and pride to ſhame:

* Milton.

Part Infidelity is Wit's cockade,
To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,
By loss of being dreadfully secure.
Lorenzo! if thy doctrine wins the day, 1375
And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field;
If this is all, if earth a final scene,
Take heed; stand fast: be sure to be a knave;
A knave in grain! ne'er deviate to the right.
Shouldst thou be good—how infinite thy loss! 1380
Guilt only makes annihilation gain.
Bless'd scheme! which life deprives of comfort, death
Of hope, and which vice only recommends.
If so, where, Infidels! your bait thrown out
To catch weak converts? where your lofty boast
Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man? 1386
Annihilation! I confess in these.

What can reclaim you? dare I hope profound
Philosophers the converts of a song?
Yet know its title * flatters you, not me; 1390
Your's be the praise to make my title good;
Mine to bless Heav'n, and triumph in your praise.
But since so pestilential your disease,
Tho' sov'reign is the med'cine I prescribe,
As yet I'll neither triumph nor despair, 1395
But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake
Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise:
For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,
E'er wish (and wish in vain!) that souls could die?

* The Infidel Reclaimed.

What ne'er can die, oh! grant to live, and crown
The wish, and aim, and labour, of the skies; 1400
Increase, and enter on the joys of heav'n:
Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,
Receive an imprimatur from above,
While angels shout—An Infidel Reclaim'd! 1405
To close, Lorenzo! Spite of all my pains,
Still seems it strange that thou shouldst live for ever?
Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all?
This is a miracle, and that no more.
Who gave beginning can exclude an end. 1410
Deny thou art, then doubt if thou shalt be.
A miracle with miracles enclos'd
Is man! and starts his faith at what is strange!
What less than wonders from the wonderful?
What less than miracles from God can flow? 1415
Admit a God—that mystery supreme!
That cause uncaus'd! all other wonders cease:
Nothing is marvellous for him to do:
Deny him—all is mystery besides;
Millions of mysteries! each darker far 1420
Than that thy wisdom would unwisely shun.
If weak thy faith, why chuse the harder side?
We nothing know but what is marvellous;
Yet what is marvellous we cann't believe,
So weak our reason, and so great our God, 1425
What most surprises in the sacred page,
Or full as strange, or stranger, must be true.
Faith is not reason's labour, but repose.

To faith and virtue why ſo backward, man?
From hence;—the preſent ſtrongly ſtrikes us all,
The future faintly: can we then be men? 1430
If men, Lorenzo! the reverſe is right:
Reaſon is man's peculiar; ſenſe the brute's.
The preſent is the ſcanty realm of Senſe;
The future Reaſon's empire unconfin'd; 1435
On that expending all her godlike pow'r,
She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs there;
There builds her bleſſings! there expects her praiſe;
And nothing aſks of Fortune or of men.
And what is Reaſon? be ſhe thus defin'd; 1440
Reaſon is upright ſtature in the ſoul.
Oh! be a man,—and ſtrive to be a god.
"For what? (thou ſay'ſt) to damp the joys of life?"
No; to give heart and ſubſtance to thy joys.
That tyrant, Hope, mark how ſhe domineers; 1445
She bids us quit realities for dreams,
Safety and peace for hazard and alarm.
That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the ſoul,
She bids Ambition quit its taken prize,
Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it ſits 1450
Tho' bearing crowns, to ſpring at diſtant game,
And plunge in toils and dangers—for repoſe.
If hope precarious, and of things, when gain'd,
Of little moment, and as little ſtay,
Can ſweeten toils and dangers into joys, 1455
What then that hope which nothing can defeat,

Our leave unaſk'd? rich hope of boundleſs bliſs!
Bliſs paſt man's pow'r to paint it, time's to cloſe!
This hope is earth's moſt eſtimable prize;
This is man's portion, while no more than man:
Hope, of all paſſions, moſt befriends us here; 1461
Paſſions of prouder name befriend us leſs.
Joy has her tears, and Tranſport has her death:
Hope, like a cordial, innocent, tho' ſtrong,
Man's heart, at once, inſpirits and ſerenes. 1465
Nor makes him pay his wiſdom for his joys:
'Tis all our preſent ſtate can ſafely bear,
Health to the frame! and vigour to the mind!
A joy attemper'd! a chaſtis'd delight!
Like the fair ſummer ev'ning, mild, and ſweet! 1470
'Tis man's full cup, his paradiſe below!
A bleſs'd hereafter, then, or hop'd or gain'd,
Is all,—our whole of happineſs: full proof
I choſe no trivial or inglorious theme.
And know, ye Foes to ſong! (well-meaning men, 1475
Tho' quite forgotten * half your Bible's praiſe!)
Important truths, in ſpite of verſe, may pleaſe:
Grave minds you praiſe, nor can you praiſe too much.
If there is weight in an eternity,
Let the grave liſten,—and be graver ſtill. 1480

* The poetical parts of it.

End of Night Seventh.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VIII.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY:

OR, THE

MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

In which are considered

THE LOVE OF THIS LIFE; THE AMBITION AND PLEASURE, WITH THE WIT AND WISDOM, OF THE WORLD.

And has all Nature, then, espous'd my part?
Have I brib'd Heav'n and Earth to plead against thee?
And is thy soul immortal?—What remains?
All, all, Lorenzo!—make immortal bless'd.
Unbless'd immortals!—what can shock us more? 5
And yet Lorenzo still affects the world;
There stows his treasure; thence his title draws,
Man of the world! (for such wouldst thou be call'd)
And art thou proud of that inglorious style?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it was, 10
In ancient days, and Christian,—in an age
When men were men, and not asham'd of Heav'n,
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,
Fain would I rebaptize thee, and confer 15
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.

Thy fond attachments, fatal and inflam'd,
Point out my path, and dictate to my ſong.
To thee the world how fair! how ſtrongly ſtrikes
Ambition! and gay Pleaſure ſtronger ſtill! 20
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt that lays
Thy virtue dead! be theſe my triple theme;
Nor ſhall thy wit or wiſdom be forgot.
Common the theme, not ſo the ſong, if ſhe
My ſong invokes, Urania! deigns to ſmile. 25
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,
If ſhe diſſolves, the man of earth, at once,
Starts from his trance, and ſighs for other ſcenes;
Scenes where theſe ſparks of night, theſe ſtars, ſhall ſhine
Unnumber'd ſuns (for all things, as they are, 30
The bleſs'd behold) and, in one glory, pour
Their blended blaze on man's aſtoniſh'd ſight;
A blaze—the leaſt illuſtrious object there.
Lorenzo! ſince eternal is at hand,
To ſwallow time's ambitions, as the vaſt 35
Leviathan the bubbles vain that ride
High on the foaming billow, what avail
High titles, high deſcent, attainments high,
If unattain'd our higheſt? O Lorenzo!
What lofty thoughts, theſe elements above, 40
What tow'ring hopes, what ſallies from the ſun,
What grand ſurveys of deſtiny divine,
And pompous preſage of unfathom'd fate,
Should roll in boſoms where a ſpirit burns,

Bound for eternity! in bosoms read 45
By him, who foibles in archangels sees!
On human hearts he bends a jealous eye,
And marks, and in heav'n's register enrolls,
The rise and progress of each option there;
Sacred to Doomsday! that the page unfolds, 50
And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.
And what an option, O Lorenzo! thine?
This world! and this, unrivall'd by the skies!
A world where lust of pleasure, grandeur, gold,
Three demons that divide its realms between them, 55
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball,
Till, with the giddy circle sick and tir'd,
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
Such is the world Lorenzo sets above 60
That glorious promise angels were esteem'd
Too mean to bring; a promise their Ador'd
Descended to communicate, and press,
By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.
Such is the world Lorenzo's wisdom woos, 65
And on its thorny pillow seeks repose;
A pillow which, like opiates ill-prepar'd,
Intoxicates, but not composes; fills
The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest: 70
What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams of joy!
How frail men, things! how momentary both!

Fantaſtick chaſe of ſhadows hunting ſhades!
The gay, the buſy, equal, tho' unlike;
Equal in wiſdom, differently wiſe! 75
Thro' flow'ry meadows, and thro' dreary waſtes,
One buſtling, and one dancing, into death.
There 's not a day but, to the man of thought,
Betrays ſome ſecret that throws new reproach
On life, and makes him ſeek of ſeeing more. 80
The ſcenes of bus'neſs tell us—"What are men;"
The ſcenes of pleaſure—"What is all beſide:"
There others we deſpiſe; and here ourſelves.
Amid diſguſt eternal dwells delight?
'Tis approbation ſtrikes the ſtring of joy. 85
What wondrous prize has kindled this career,
Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the duſt,
On life's gay ſtage, one inch above the grave?
The proud run up and down in queſt of eyes;
The ſenſual in purſuit of ſomething worſe; 90
The grave of gold: the politick of pow'r;
And all of other butterflies as vain!
As eddies draw things frivolous and light,
How is man's heart by vanity drawn in!
On the ſwift circle of returning toys 95
Whirl'd, ſtraw-like, round and round, and then in-
Where gay deluſion darkens to deſpair! [gulf'd
"This is a beaten track."—Is this a track
Should not be beaten? never beat enough,
Till enough learn'd the truths it would inſpire. 100

Shall Truth be ſilent, becauſe Folly frowns?
Turn the world's hiſtory, what find we there
But Fortune's ſports, or Nature's cruel claims,
Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,
And endleſs inhumanities on man? 105
Fame's trumpet ſeldom ſounds, but, like the knell,
It brings bad tidings: how it hourly blows
Man's miſadventures round the liſt'ning world!
Man is the tale of narrative old Time;
Sad tale, which high as Paradiſe begins; 110
As if, the toil of travel to delude,
From ſtage to ſtage, in his eternal round,
The Days, his daughters, as they ſpin our hours
On Fortune's wheel, where, accident unthought,
Oft' in a moment ſnaps life's ſtrongeſt thread, 115
Each, in her turn, ſome tragick ſtory tells,
With now and then a wretched farce between,
And fills his chronicle with human woes.

Time's daughters, true as thoſe of men, deceive us;
Not one but puts ſome cheat on all mankind, 120
While in their father's boſom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes, and promiſe much
Of amiable, but hold him not o'erwiſe
Who dares to truſt them, and laugh round the year,
At ſtill-confiding, ſtill-confounded, man, 125
Confiding tho' confounded: hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,
And ever looking for the never-ſeen.

Life to the laſt, like harden'd felons, lies,
Nor owns itſelf a cheat till it expires: 130
Its little joys go out by one and one,
And leave poor man at length in perfect night,
Night darker than what now involves the pole.
O thou, who doſt permit theſe ills to fall
For gracious ends, and wouldſt that man ſhould mourn!
O thou, whoſe hands this goodly fabrick fram'd, 136
Who know'ſt it beſt, and wouldſt that man ſhould know!
What is this ſublunary world? a vapour;
A vapour all it holds; itſelf a vapour;
From the damp bed of Chaos, by thy beam 140
Exhal'd, ordain'd to ſwim its deſtin'd hour
In ambient air, then melt and diſappear.
Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom;
As mortal, tho' leſs tranſient, than her ſons;
Yet they dote on her as the world and they, 145
Were both eternal, ſolid, thou a dream.
They dote on what? immortal views apart,
A region of outſides! a land of ſhadows!
A fruitful field of flow'ry promiſes!
A wilderneſs of joys! perplex'd with doubts, 150
And ſharp with thorns! a troubled ocean, ſpread
With bold adventurers, their all on board;
No ſecond hope, if here their fortune frowns;
Frown ſoon it muſt. Of various rates they ſail,
Of enſigns various; all alike in this, 155
All reſtleſs, anxious, toſs'd with hopes and fears

In calmeſt ſkies; obnoxious all to ſtorm,
And ſtormy the moſt gen'ral blaſt of life:
All bound for happineſs; yet few provide
The chart of Knowledge, pointing where it lies, 160
Or Virtue's helm, to ſhape the courſe deſign'd:
All, more or leſs, capricious Fate lament,
Now lifted by the tide, and now reſorb'd,
And farther from their wiſhes than before:
All, more or leſs, againſt each other daſh, 165
To mutual hurt, by guſts of paſſion, driv'n,
And ſuff'ring more from folly than from Fate.

Ocean! thou dreadful and tumultuous home
Of dangers, at eternal war with man!
Death's capital, where moſt he domineers, 170
With all his choſen terrours frowning round,
(Tho' lately feaſted high at Albion's coſt *)
Wide-op'ning, and loud-roaring ſtill for more!
Too faithful mirror! how doſt thou reflect
The melancholy face of human life! 175
The ſtrong reſemblance tempts me farther ſtill:
And, haply, Britain may be deeper ſtruck
By moral truth, in ſuch a mirror ſeen,
Which Nature holds for ever at her eye.

Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope, 180
When young, with ſanguine cheer, and ſtreamers gay,
We cut our cable, lanch into the world,
And fondly dream each wind and ſtar our friend:
All in ſome darling enterprize embark'd;

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

But where is he can fathom its event! 185
Amid a multitude of artleſs hands,
Ruin's ſure perquiſite! her lawful prize!
Some ſteer aright, but the black blaſt blows hard,
And puffs them wide of hope: with hearts of proof,
Full againſt wind and tide, ſome win their way, 190
And when ſtrong Effort has deſerv'd the port,
And tugg'd it into view, 't is won! 't is loſt!
Tho' ſtrong their oar, ſtill ſtronger is their fate:
They ſtrike! and, while they triumph, they expire,
In ſtreſs of weather moſt, ſome ſink outright; 195
O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows cloſe;
To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
Others a ſhort memorial leave behind,
Like a flag floating, when the bark 's ingulf'd;
It floats a moment, and is ſeen no more. 200
One Cæſar lives; a thouſand are forgot,
How few, beneath auſpicious planets born,
(Darlings of Providence! fond Fate's elect!)
With ſwelling ſails make good the promis'd port,
With all their wiſhes freighted! yet ev'n theſe, 205
Freighted with all their wiſhes, ſoon complain;
Free from misfortune, not from Nature free,
They ſtill are men; and when is man ſecure?
As fatal time as ſtorm! the ruſh of years
Beats down their ſtrength; their numberleſs eſcapes
In ruin end. And now their proud ſucceſs 211
But plants new terrours on the victor's brow:

What pain to quit the world, juſt made their own,
Their neſt ſo deeply down'd, and built ſo high!
Too low they build who build beneath the ſtars. 215
Wo then apart (if wo apart can be
From mortal man) and Fortune at our nod,
The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and auguſt!
What are they?—The moſt happy (ſtrange to ſay)
Convince me moſt of human miſery. 220
What are they? ſmiling wretches of to-morrow!
More wretched then than e'er their ſlave can be,
Their treach'rous bleſſings, at the day of need,
Like other faithleſs friends, unmaſk, and ſting:
Then what provoking indigence in wealth! 225
What aggravated impotence in pow'r!
High titles, then, what inſult of their pain!
If that ſole anchor, equal to the waves,
Immortal Hope! defies not the rude ſtorm,
Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage, 230
And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.
Is this a ſketch of what thy ſoul admires?
"But here (thou ſay'ſt) the miſeries of life
"Are huddled in a group: a more diſtinct 234
"Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news."
Look on life's ſtages; they ſpeak plainer ſtill;
The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou ſigh.
Look on thy lovely boy; in him behold
The beſt that can befall the beſt on earth;
The boy has virtue by his mother's ſide: 240

Yes, on Florello look: a father's heart
Is tender, tho' the man's is made of ſtone:
The truth, thro' ſuch a medium ſeen, may make
Impreſſion deep, and fondneſs prove thy friend.
  Florello! lately caſt on this rude coaſt 245
A helpleſs infant, now a heedleſs child.
To poor Clariſſa's throes thy care ſucceeds;
Care full of love, and yet ſevere as hate!
O'er thy ſoul's joy how oft' thy fondneſs frowns!
Needful auſterities his will reſtrain, 250
As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.
As yet his reaſon cannot go alone,
But aſks a ſterner nurſe to lead it on.
His little heart is often terrify'd;
The bluſh of morning, in his cheek, turns pale; 255
Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye,
His harmleſs eye! and drowns an angel there.
Ah! what avails his innocence? the taſk
Enjoin'd muſt diſcipline his early pow'rs;
He learns to ſigh ere he is known to ſin; 260
Guiltleſs, and ſad! a wretch before the fall!
How cruel this! more cruel to forbear.
Our nature ſuch, with neceſſary pains
We purchaſe proſpects of precarious peace:
Tho' not a father, this might ſteal a ſigh. 265
  Suppoſe him diſciplin'd aright (if not,
'Twill ſink our poor account to poorer ſtill)
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,

He leaps enclosure, bounds into the world;
The world is taken, after ten years' toil, 270
Like ancient Troy, and all its joys his own.
Alas! the world's a tutor more severe,
Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains;
Unteaching all his virtuous Nature taught,
Or books (fair Virtue's advocates!) inspir'd. 275
For who receives him into publick life?
Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
(Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight)
And in their hospitable arms enclose; 280
Men who think nought so strong of the romance,
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend;
Men that act up to Reason's golden rule,
All weakness of affection quite subdu'd;
Men that would blush at being thought sincere, 285
And feign, for glory, the few faults they want;
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well,
As if to them Vice shone her own reward.
Lorenzo! canst thou bear a shocking sight?
Such, for Florello's sake, 't will now appear. 190
See the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace,
All soft sensation in the throng rubb'd off;
All their keen purpose in politeness sheath'd;
His friends eternal—during interest; 296

His foes implacable—when worth their while;
At war with ev'ry welfare but their own;
As wise as Lucifer, and half as good;
And by whom none, but Lucifer, can gain— 300
Naked thro' these, (so common Fate ordains)
Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
Stung out of all most amiable in life,
Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles unfeign'd;
Affection, as his species wide-diffus'd, 305
Noble presumptions to mankind's renown,
Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.
These claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
Will cost him many a sigh, till time and pains,
From the slow mistress of this school Experience,
And her assistant, pausing pale Distrust, 311
Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth
Thro' serpentine obliquities of life,
And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
And happy! if the clue shall come so cheap; 315
For while we learn to fence with publick guilt,
Full oft' we feel its foul contagion too,
If less than heav'nly virtue is our guard.
Thus a strange kind of curs'd necessity
Brings down the sterling temper of his soul, 320
By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
Below call'd Wisdom; sinks him into safety,
And brands him into credit with the world,
Where spacious titles dignify disgrace,

And Nature's injuries are arts of life; 325
Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes,
And heav'nly talents make infernal hearts,
That unsurmountable extreme of guilt!
Poor Machiavel! who labour'd hard his plan,
Forgot that Genius need not go to school; 330
Forgot that man, without a tutor wise,
His plan had practis'd long before 't was writ.
The world 's all titlepage, there 's no contents.
The world 's all face. The man who shews his heart
Is hooted for his nudities, and scorn'd. 335
A man I knew who liv'd upon a smile,
And well it fed him; he look'd plump and fair,
While rankest venom foam'd thro' ev'ry vein.
Lorenzo! what I tell thee take not ill!
Living, he fawn'd on ev'ry fool alive; 340
And, dying, curs'd the friend on whom he liv'd.
To such proficients thou art half a saint.
In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)
How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
Studious their nests to feather in a trice, 345
With all the necromanticks of their art,
Playing the game of faces on each other,
Making court sweetmeats of their latent gall,
In foolish hope to steal each other's trust;
Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd, 350
And sometimes both (let earth rejoice) undone!
Their parts we doubt not, but be that their shame.

Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
Stoop to mean wiles that would disgrace a fool,
And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve?
For who can thank the man he cannot see? 356
Why so much cover? it defeats itself.
Ye that know all things! know ye not men's hearts
Are therefore known because they are conceal'd?
For why conceal'd?—the cause they need not tell.
I give him joy that 's awkward at a lie; 361
Whose feeble nature Truth keeps still in awe;
His incapacity is his renown.
'Tis great, 't is manly to disdain disguise;
It shews our spirit, or it proves our strength. 365
Thou say'st 't is needful: is it therefore right?
Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace
To strain at an excuse: and wouldst thou then
Escape that cruel need? thou may'st with ease;
Think no post needful that demands a knave. 370
When late our Civil helm was shifting hands,
So P —— thought: think better if you can.
But this how rare! the publick path of life
Is dirty:—yet allow that dirt its due,
It makes the noble mind more noble still. 375
The world's no neuter; it will wound or save;
Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
You say the world, well-known, will make a man —
The world, well-known, will give our hearts to Heav'n,
Or make us demons, long before we die. 380

To ſhew how fair the world, thy miſtreſs, ſhines,
Take either part, ſure ills attend the choice;
Sure, tho' not equal, detriment enſues.
Not Virtue's ſelf is deify'd on earth;
Virtue has her relapſes, conflicts, foes; 385
Foes that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
Virtue has her peculiar ſet of pains.
True friends to virtue laſt, and leaſt complain;
But if they ſigh, can others hope to ſmile?
If Wiſdom has her miſeries to mourn, 390
How can poor Folly lead a happy life?
And if both ſuffer, what has earth to boaſt,
Where he moſt happy who the leaſt laments?
Where much, much patience, the moſt envy'd ſtate,
And ſome forgiveneſs, needs, the beſt of friends?
For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher, 396
Of neither ſhall he find the ſhadow here.

The world's ſworn advocate, without a fee,
Lorenzo, ſmartly with a ſmile, replies;
"Thus far thy ſong is right, and all muſt own 400
"Virtue has her peculiar ſet of pains:—
"And joys peculiar who to Vice denies?
"If vice it is with Nature to comply:
"If pride and ſenſe are ſo predominant,
"To check, not overcome them, makes a ſaint, 405
"Can Nature in a plainer voice proclaim
"Pleaſure and glory the chief good of man?"
Can pride and ſenſuality rejoice?

From purity of thought all pleasure springs,
And from an humble spirit all our peace. 410
Ambition, Pleasure! let us talk of these;
Of these the Porch and Academy talk'd;
Of these each following age had much to say,
Yet unexhausted, still the needful theme.
Who talks of these, to mankind all at once 415
He talks; for where the saint from either free?
Are these thy refuge?—No; these rush upon thee,
Thy vitals seize, and, vulture-like, devour:
I'll try if I can pluck thee from thy rock,
Prometheus! from this barren ball of earth, 420
If reason can unchain thee, thou art free.

And first, thy Caucasus, Ambition, calls;
Mountain of torments! eminence of woes!
Of courted woes! and courted thro' mistake!
'Tis not ambition charms thee; 't is a cheat 425
Will make thee start, as H——— at his Moor.
Dost grasp at greatness? first know what it is.
Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies?
Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
By Fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng, 430
Is glory lodg'd: 't is lodg'd in the reverse;
In that which joins, in that which equals all,
The monarch and his slave,—"a deathless soul,
"Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
"A Father God, and brothers in the skies;" 435
Elder, indeed, in time, but less remote

In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man.
Why greater what can fall than what can rise?
If ſtill delirious, now, Lorenzo! go, 439
And, with thy full-blown brothers of the world,
Throw ſcorn around thee; caſt it on thy ſlaves,
Thy ſlaves and equals. How ſcorn caſt on them
Rebounds on thee! If man is mean, as man,
Art thou a god! if Fortune makes him ſo,
Beware the conſequence: a maxim that 445
Which draws a monſtrous picture of mankind,
Where in the drapery the man is loſt;
Externals flutt'ring, and the ſoul forgot.
Thy greateſt glory, when diſpos'd to boaſt,
Boaſt that aloud in which thy ſervants ſhare. 450
We wiſely ſtrip the ſteed we mean to buy.
Judge we, in their caparisons, of men?
It nought avails thee where, but what, thou art.
All the diſtinctions of this little life
Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man. 455
When thro' Death's ſtreights earth's ſubtle ſerpents [creep,
Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
They leave their party-colour'd robe behind,
All that now glitters, while they rear aloft 460
Their brazen creſts, and hiſs at us below.
Of Fortune's ſucus ſtrip them, yet alive,
Strip them of body too; nay, cloſer ſtill,
Away with all but moral in their minds,

And let what then remains impoſe their name, 465
Pronounce them weak or worthy, great or mean.
How mean that ſnuff of glory Fortune lights,
And Death puts out! Doſt thou demand a teſt,
A teſt, at once, infallible and ſhort,
Of real greatneſs? that man greatly lives, 470
Whate'er his fate or fame, who greatly dies;
High-fluſh'd with hope where heroes ſhall deſpair.
If this a true criterion, many courts,
Illuſtrious, might afford but few grandees.
Th' Almighty, from his throne, on earth ſurveys
Nought greater than an honeſt, humble heart; 476
An humble heart, his reſidence! pronounc'd
His ſecond ſeat, and rival to the ſkies.
The private path, the ſecret acts of men,
If noble, far the nobleſt of our lives! 480
How far above Lorenzo's glory ſits
Th' illuſtrious maſter of a name unknown?
Whoſe worth unrivall'd, and unwitneſs'd, loves
Life's ſacred ſhades, where gods converſe with men;
And peace, beyond the world's conceptions, ſmiles!
As thou, (now dark) before we part, ſhalt ſee. 486
But thy great ſoul this ſkulking glory ſcorns:
Lorenzo 's ſick, but when Lorenzo 's ſeen,
And when he ſhrugs at publick bus'neſs lies.
Deny'd the publick eye, the publick voice, 490
As if he liv'd on others' breath, he dies.
Fain would he make the world his pedeſtal,

Mankind the gazers, the ſole figure he.
Knows he that mankind praiſe againſt their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can? 495
Knows he that faithleſs Fame her whiſper has,
As well as trumpet? that his vanity
Is ſo much tickled from not hearing all?
Knows this all-knower that from itch of praiſe,
Or from an itch more ſordid, when he ſhines. 500
Taking his country by five hundred ears,
Senates at once admire him and deſpiſe,
With modeſt laughter lining loud applauſe,
Which makes the ſmile more mortal to his fame?
His fame which, (like the mighty Cæſar) crown'd
With laurels, in full ſenate greatly falls, 506
By ſeeming friends, that honour and deſtroy.
We riſe in glory as we ſink in pride.
Where boaſting ends, there dignity begins;
And yet, miſtaken beyond all miſtake, 510
The blind Lorenzo 's proud—of being proud,
And dreams himſelf aſcending in his fall.
An eminence, tho' fancy'd, turns the brain;
All vice wants hellebore; but of all vice
Pride loudeſt calls, and for the largeſt bowl; 515
Becauſe, unlike all other vice, it flies,
In fact, the point in fancy moſt purſu'd.
Who court applauſe oblige the world in this,
They gratify man's paſſion to refuſe.
Superiour honour, when aſſum'd, is loſt: 520

Ev'n good men turn banditti, and rejoice,
Like Kouli-Kan, in plunder of the proud.
Tho' ſomewhat diſconcerted, ſteady ſtill
To the world's cauſe, with half a face of joy,
Lorenzo cries,—" Be then Ambition caſt; 525
" Ambition's dearer far ſtands unimpeach'd,
" Gay Pleaſure! proud Ambition is her ſlave;
" For her he ſoars at great, and hazards ill;
" For her he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes, 529
" And paves his way, with crowns, to reach her ſmile.
" Who can reſiſt her charms?"—Or ſhould? Lorenzo!
What mortal ſhall reſiſt where angels yield?
Pleaſure's the miſtreſs of ethereal pow'rs;
For her contend the rival gods above;
Pleaſure's the miſtreſs of the world below, 535
And well it is for man that Pleaſure charms;
How would all ſtagnate but for Pleaſure's ray!
How would the frozen ſtream of action ceaſe!
What is the pulſe of this ſo buſy world?
The love of pleaſure: that, thro' ev'ry vein, 540
Throws motion, warmth, and ſhuts out death from life.
Tho' various are the tempers of mankind,
Pleaſure's gay family holds all in chains.
Some moſt affect the black, and ſome the fair;
Some honeſt pleaſure court, and ſome obſcene. 545
Pleaſures obſcene are various, as the throng
Of paſſions that can err in human hearts,
Miſtake their objects, or tranſgreſs their bounds.

Think you there's but one whoredom? whoredom all,
But when our reason licenses delight. 550
Dost doubt Lorenzo? thou shall doubt no more.
Thy father chides thy gallantries, yet hugs
An ugly, common, harlot in the dark,
A rank adulterer with others' gold;
And that hag, Vengeance, in a corner charms. 555
Hatred her brothel has, as well as Love,
Where horrid epicures debauch in blood.
Whate'er the motive, Pleasure is the mark:
For her the black assassin draws his sword;
For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp, 560
To which no single sacrifice may fall;
For her the saint abstains, the miser starves;
The Stoick proud, for Pleasure, pleasure scorn'd;
For her, Affliction's daughters grief indulge,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears; 565
For her guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy,
And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death.
Thus universal her despotick pow'r.
And as her empire wide, her praise is just.
Patron of Pleasure! Doter on delight! 570
I am thy rival; pleasure I profess;
Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy song.
Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name;
I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low:
Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flow'r; 575
And honest Epicurus' foes were fools.

But this ſounds harſh, and gives the wiſe offence,
If o'erſtrain'd wiſdom ſtill retains the name.
How knits Auſterity her cloudy brow,
And blames, as bold and hazardous, the praiſe 580
Of pleaſure, to mankind, unprais'd, too dear!
Ye modern Stoicks! hear my ſoft reply;
Their ſenſes men will truſt: we cann't impoſe,
Or, if we could, is impoſition right?
Own honey ſweet; but, owning, add this ſting, 585
"When mix'd with poiſon it is deadly too."
Truth never was indebted to a lie.
Is nought but virtue to be prais'd as good?
Why then is health preferr'd before diſeaſe?
What Nature loves is good, without our leave; 590
And where no future drawback cries, "Beware,"
Pleaſure, tho' not from virtue, ſhould prevail:
'Tis balm to life, and gratitude to Heav'n.
How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!
The love of Pleaſure is man's eldeſt-born, 595
Born in his cradle, living to his tomb.
Wiſdom, her younger ſiſter, tho' more grave,
Was meant to miniſter, and not to mar,
Imperial Pleaſure, queen of human hearts.
Lorenzo! thou, her Majeſty's renown'd, 600
Tho' uncoift counſel, learned in the world!
Who think'ſt thyſelf a Murray, with diſdain
May'ſt look on me: yet, my Demoſthenes!
Canſt thou plead Pleaſure's cauſe as well as I?

Know'ſt thou her nature, purpoſe, parentage? 605
Attend my ſong, and thou ſhalt know them all;
And know thyſelf; and know thyſelf to be
(Strange truth!) the moſt abſtemious man alive.
Tell not Caliſta, ſhe will laugh thee dead,
Or ſend thee to her hermitage with L——. 610
Abſurd preſumption! thou, who never knew'ſt
A ſerious thought! ſhalt thou dare dream of joy?
No man e'er found a happy life by chance,
Or yawn'd it into being with a wiſh;
Or with the ſnout of grov'lling Appetite 615
E'er ſmelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
An art it is, and muſt be learn'd; and learn'd
With unremitting effort, or be loſt,
And leaves us perfect blockheads in our bliſs.
The clouds may drop down titles and eſtates; 620
Wealth may ſeek us; but wiſdom muſt be ſought;
Sought before all; but (how unlike all elſe
We ſeek on earth!) 't is never ſought in vain. [ſee:
First, Pleaſure's birth, riſe, ſtrength, and grandeur,
Brought forth by Wiſdom, nurs'd by Diſcipline, 625
By Patience taught, by Perſeverance crown'd,
She rears her head majeſtick; round her throne,
Erected in the boſom of the juſt,
Each virtue, lifted, forms her manly guard.
For what are virtues? (formidable name!) 630
What but the fountain or defence of joy?
Why then commanded? need mankind commands,

At once to merit and to make their bliss?—
Great Legiſlator! ſcarce ſo great as kind!
If men are rational, and love delight, 635
Thy gracious law but flatters human choice:
In the tranſgreſſion lies the penalty;
And they the moſt indulge who moſt obey.
Of Pleaſure, next, the final cauſe explore:
Its mighty purpoſe, its important end. 640
Not to turn human brutal, but to build
Divine on human, Pleaſure came from heav'n:
In aid to reaſon was the goddeſs ſent,
To call up all its ſtrength by ſuch a charm.
Pleaſure, firſt, ſuccours virtue; in return, 645
Virtue gives Pleaſure an eternal reign.
What but the pleaſure of food, friendſhip, faith,
Supports life nat'ral, civil, and divine?
'Tis from the pleaſure of repaſt we live;
'Tis from the pleaſure of applauſe we pleaſe; 650
'Tis from the pleaſure of belief we pray:
(All pray'r would ceaſe, if unbeliev'd the prize)
It ſerves ourſelves, our ſpecies, and our God;
And to ſerve more is paſt the ſphere of man.
Glide then for ever Pleaſure's ſacred ſtream! 655
Thro' Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
And foſters ev'ry growth of happy life;
Makes a new Eden where it flows,—but ſuch
As muſt be loſt, Lorenzo! by thy fall.
"What mean I by thy fall?"—Thou 'lt ſhortly ſee,

While Pleasure's nature is at large display'd, 661
Already sung her origin and ends.
Those glorious ends by kind, or by degree,
When Pleasure violates, 't is then a vice,
And vengeance too; it hastens into pain. 665
From due refreshment life, health, reason, joy;
From wild excess, pain, grief, distraction, death;
Heav'n's justice this proclaims, and that her love.
What greater evil can I wish my foe,
Than his full draught of pleasure from a cask 670
Unbroach'd by just authority, ungaug'd
By temperance, by reason unrefin'd?
A thousand demons lurk within the lee.
Heav'n, others, and ourselves! uninjur'd these,
Drink deep; the deeper then the more divine: 675
Angels are angels from indulgence there.
'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god.
Dost think thyself a god from other joys?
A victim rather! shortly sure to bleed. 679
The wrong must mourn. Can Heav'n's appointments [fail?
Can man outwit Omnipotence? strike out
A self-wrought happiness unmeant by him
Who made us, and the world we would enjoy?
Who forms an instrument, ordains from whence
Its dissonance or harmony shall rise. 685
Heav'n bid the soul this mortal frame inspire;
Bid Virtue's ray divine inspire the soul
With unprecarious flows of vital joy;

And without breathing man as well might hope
For life, as, without piety, for peace. 690
"Is virtue then and piety the ſame?"—
No; piety is more; 't is virtue's ſource,
Mother of ev'ry worth, as that of joy.
Men of the world this doctrine ill digeſt;
They ſmile at piety, yet boaſt aloud 695
Good-will to men, nor know they ſtrive to part
What Nature joins, and thus confute themſelves.
With piety begins all good on earth;
'Tis the firſt-born of Rationality,
Conſcience, her firſt law broken wounded lies; 700
Enfeebled, lifeleſs, impotent to good,
A feign'd affection bounds her utmoſt pow'r.
Some we cann't love, but for th' Almighty's ſake:
A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man.
Some ſiniſter intent taints all he does, 705
And in his kindeſt actions he's unkind.
On piety humanity is built,
And on humanity much happineſs;
And yet ſtill more on piety itſelf.
A ſoul in commerce with her God is heav'n, 710
Feels not the tumults and the ſhocks of life,
The whirls of paſſions, and the ſtrokes of heart.
A Deity believ'd is joy begun;
A Deity ador'd is joy advanc'd;
A Deity belov'd is joy matur'd. 715
Each branch of piety delight inſpires;

Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
O'er death's dark gulf, and all its horrour hides:
Praiſe, the ſweet exhalation of our joy,
That joy exalts, and makes it ſweeter ſtill: 720
Pray'r ardent opens heav'n, lets down a ſtream
Of glory on the conſecrated hour
Of man, in audience with the Deity.
Who worſhips the Great God, that inſtant joins
The firſt in heav'n, and ſets his foot on hell. 725
Lorenzo! when waſt thou at church before?
Thou think'ſt the ſervice long; but is it juſt?
Tho' juſt, unwelcome. Thou hadſt rather tread
Unhallow'd ground: the Muſe, to win thine ear,
Muſt take an air leſs ſolemn. She complies. 730
Good Conſcience! at the ſound the world retires;
Verſe diſaffects it, and Lorenzo ſmiles;
Yet has ſhe her ſeraglio full of charms,
And ſuch as age ſhall heighten, not impair.
Art thou dejected? is thy mind o'ercaſt? 735
Amid her fair ones thou the faireſt chuſe
To chaſe thy gloom.—"Go, fix ſome weighty truth;
"Chain down ſome paſſion; do ſome gen'rous good;
"Teach Ignorance to ſee, or Grief to ſmile;
"Correct thy friend; befriend thy greateſt foe; 740
"Or with warm heart and confidence divine,
"Spring up, and lay ſtrong hold on Him who made
Thy gloom is ſcatter'd, ſprightly ſpirits flow, [thee."
Tho' wither'd is thy vine, and harp unſtrung.

Doſt call the bowl, the viol, and the dance, 745
Loud mirth, mad laughter? Wretched comforters!
Phyſicians! more than half of thy diſeaſe.
Laughter, tho' never cenſur'd yet as ſin,
(Pardon a thought that only ſeems ſevere)
Is half-immoral: is it much indulg'd? 750
By venting ſpleen, or diſſipating thought,
It ſhews a ſcorner, or it makes a fool,
And ſins, as hurting others, or ourſelves.
'Tis pride, or emptineſs, applies the ſtraw
That tickles little minds to mirth effuſe; 755
Of grief approaching the portentous ſign!
The houſe of laughter makes a houſe of wo.
A man triumphant is a monſtrous ſight;
A man dejected is a ſight as mean.
What cauſe for triumph where ſuch ills abound? 760
What for dejection where preſides a pow'r
Who call'd us into being to be bleſs'd?
So grieve, as conſcious grief may riſe to joy;
So joy, as conſcious joy to grief may fall.
Moſt true a wiſe man never will be ſad; 765
But neither will ſonorous, bubbling mirth,
A ſhallow ſtream of happineſs betray;
Too happy to be ſportive he 's ſerene.

Yet wouldſt thou laugh, (but at thy own expenſe)
This counſel ſtrange ſhould I preſume to give— 770
"Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay."
There truths abound of ſov'reign aid to peace:

Ah ! do not prize them leſs becauſe inſpir'd,
As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.
If not inſpir'd, that pregnant page had ſtood, 775
Time's treaſure! and the wonder of the wiſe!
Thou think'ſt, perhaps, thy ſoul alone at ſtake:
Alas!—ſhould men miſtake thee for a fool,—
What man of taſte for genius, wiſdom, truth,
Tho' tender of thy fame, could interpoſe? 780
Believe me ſenſe, here, acts a double part,
And the true critick is a Chriſtian too.
  But theſe, thou think'ſt, are gloomy paths to joy.
True joy in ſunſhine ne'er was found at firſt.
They firſt themſelves offend who greatly pleaſe, 785
And travel only gives us ſound repoſe.
Heav'n ſells all pleaſure: effort is the price.
The joys of conqueſt are the joys of man;
And Glory the victorious laurel ſpreads
O'er Pleaſure's pure, perpetual, placid ſtream. 790
  There is a time when toil muſt be preferr'd,
Or joy, by miſtim'd fondneſs, is undone.
A man of pleaſure is a man of pains.
Thou wilt not take the trouble to be bleſs'd.
Falſe joys, indeed, are born from want of thought:
From thought's full bent and energy the true; 796
And that demands a mind in equal poize,
Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.
Much joy not only ſpeaks ſmall happineſs,
But happineſs that ſhortly muſt expire. 800

Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, ſtand?
And, in a tempeſt, can reflection live?
Can joy, like thine, ſecure itſelf an hour?
Can joy, like thine, meet accident unſhock'd?
Or ope the door to honeſt poverty? 805
Or talk with threat'ning Death, and not turn pale?
In ſuch a world, and ſuch a nature, theſe
Are needful fundamentals of delight:
Theſe fundamentals give delight indeed;
Delight, pure, delicate, and durable; 810
Delight unſhaken, maſculine, divine;
A conſtant and a ſound, but ſerious joy.
Is Joy the daughter of Severity?
It is:—yet far my doctrine from ſevere.
"Rejoice for ever:" it becomes a man; 815
Exalts, and ſets him nearer to the gods.
"Rejoice for ever," Nature cries; "Rejoice,"
And drinks to man in her nectareous cup,
Mix'd up of delicates for ev'ry ſenſe;
To the great Founder of the bounteous feaſt 820
Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praiſe;
And he that will not pledge her is a churl.
Ill firmly to ſupport, good fully taſte,
Is the whole ſcience of felicity:
Yet ſparing pledge; her bowl is not the beſt 825
Mankind can boaſt—"A rational repaſt,
"Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,
"A military diſcipline of thought,

"To foil temptation in the doubtful field,
"And ever-waking ardour for the right." 830
'Tis these first give, then guard, a cheerful heart.
Nought that is right think little, well aware
What Reason bids, God bids; by his command
How aggrandiz'd the smallest thing we do!
Thus nothing is insipid to the wise; 835
To thee insipid all but what is mad,
Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.
"Mad! (thou reply'st with indignation fir'd)
"Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,
"I follow Nature."—Follow Nature still, 840
But look it be thine own. Is Conscience then
No part of Nature? is she not supreme?
Thou regicide! O raise her from the dead!
Then follow Nature, and resemble God.
When, spite of conscience, pleasure is pursu'd, 845
Man's nature is unnaturally pleas'd;
And what 's unnatural is painful too
At intervals, and must disgust ev'n thee!
The fact thou know'st; but not perhaps the cause.
Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid: 850
Heav'n mix'd her with our make, and twisted close
Her sacred int'rests with the strings of life:
Who breaks her awful mandate shocks himself,
His better self: and is it greater pain
Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine? 855
And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.

If one muſt ſuffer, which ſhould leaſt be ſpar'd?
The pains of mind ſurpaſs the pains of ſenſe:
Aſk, then, the Gout, what torment is in guilt.
The joys of ſenſe to mental joys are mean: 860
Senſe on the preſent only feeds; the ſoul
On paſt and future forages for joy:
'Tis her's, by retroſpect, thro' time to range,
And forward time's great ſequel to ſurvey.
Could human courts take vengeance on the mind,
Axes might ruſt, and racks and gibbets fall. 866
Guard then thy mind, and leave the reſt to Fate.

Lorenzo! wilt thou never be a man?
The man is dead who for the body lives,
Lur'd by the beating of his pulſe, to liſt 870
With ev'ry luſt that wars againſt his peace,
And ſets him quite at variance with himſelf.
Thyſelf firſt know, then love: a ſelf there is,
Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms:
A ſelf there is as fond of ev'ry vice, 875
While ev'ry virtue wounds it to the heart;
Humility degrades it, Juſtice robs,
Bleſs'd Bounty beggars it, fair Truth betrays,
And godlike Magnanimity deſtroys.
This ſelf, when rival to the former, ſcorn; 880
When not in competition, kindly treat,
Defend it, feed it:—but when Virtue bids,
Toſs it or to the fowls or to the flames.

And why? 't is love of pleasure bids thee bleed:
Comply, or own self-love extinct, or blind. 885
For what is vice? Self-love in a mistake:
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And virtue what? 't is Self-love in her wits,
Quite skilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good sense is love of that dread pow'r
From whom herself, and all she can enjoy. 891
Other self-love is but disguis'd self-hate,
More mortal than the malice of our foes;
A self-hate now scarce felt, then felt full sore,
When being curs'd, extinction loud-implor'd, 895
And ev'ry thing preferr'd to what we are.
Yet this self-love Lorenzo makes his choice,
And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.
How is his want of happiness betray'd
By disaffection to the present hour! 900
Imagination wanders far afield;
The future pleases: why? the present pains —
"But that 's a secret."—Yes, which all men know,
And know from thee, discover'd unawares.
Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll 905
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause,
What is it?—'Tis the cradle of the soul,
From instinct sent, to rock her in disease,
Which her physician, Reason, will not cure.
A poor expedient! yet thy best; and while 910
It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.

Such are Lorenzo's wretched remedies!
The weak have remedies, the wiſe have joys.
Superiour wiſdom is ſuperiour bliſs.
And what ſure mark diſtinguiſhes the wiſe? 915
Conſiſtent wiſdom ever wills the ſame;
Thy fickle wiſh is ever on the wing.
Sick of herſelf is Folly's character,
As Wiſdom's is a modeſt ſelf-applauſe.
A change of evils is thy good ſupreme, 920
Nor but in motion canſt thou find thy reſt.
Man's greateſt ſtrength is ſhewn in ſtanding ſtill.
The firſt ſure ſymptom of a mind in health
Is reſt of heart, and pleaſure felt at home,
Falſe Pleaſure from abroad her joys imports; 925
Rich from within, and ſelf-ſuſtain'd, the true.
The true is fix'd and ſolid as a rock;
Slipp'ry the falſe, and toſſing as the wave,
This a wild wanderer on earth, like Cain;
That like the fabled, ſelf-enamour'd boy, 930
Home-contemplation her ſupreme delight:
She dreads an interruption from without,
Smit with her own condition, and the more
Intenſe ſhe gazes, ſtill it charms the more.
No man is happy till he thinks on earth 935
There breathes not a more happy than himſelf:
Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all;
And love o'erflowing makes an angel here,
Such angels all entitled to repoſe
On him who governs Fate. Tho' tempeſt frowns, 940

Tho' Nature ſhakes, how ſoft to lean on Heav'n!
To lean on him on whom archangels lean!
With inward eyes, and ſilent as the grave,
They ſtand collecting ev'ry beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight; 945
For all their thoughts, like angels, ſeen of old
In Iſrael's dream, come from, and go to heav'n;
Hence are they ſtudious of ſequeſter'd ſcenes,
While noiſe and diſſipation comfort thee.
Were all men happy revellings would ceaſe, 950
That opiate for inquietude within.
Lorenzo! never man was truly bleſs'd,
But it compos'd and gave him ſuch a caſt,
As Folly might miſtake for want of joy:
A caſt unlike the triumph of the proud; 955
A modeſt aſpect and a ſmile at heart.
O for a joy from thy Philander ſpring!
A ſpring perennial, riſing in the breaſt,
And permanent as pure! no turbid ſtream
Of rapt'rous exultation, ſwelling high, 960
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour awhile,
Then ſink at once, and leave us in the mire.
What does the man who tranſient joy prefers?
What but prefer the bubbles to the ſtream?
Vain are all ſudden ſallies of delight, 965
Convulſions of a weak diſtemper'd joy.
Joy 's a fix'd ſtate; a tenure, not a ſtart.
Bliſs there is none but unprecarious bliſs:

That is the gem; ſell all, and purchaſe that.
Why go a-begging to contingencies, 970
Not gain'd with eaſe, nor ſafely lov'd, if gain'd?
At good fortuitous draw back, and pauſe;
Suſpect it; what thou canſt enſure enjoy;
And nought but what thou giv'ſt thyſelf is ſure.
Reaſon perpetuates joy that reaſon gives, 975
And makes it as immortal as herſelf:
To mortals nought immortal but their worth.
Worth, conſcious Worth! ſhould abſolutely reign,
And other joys aſk leave for their approach,
Nor unexamin'd ever leave obtain. 980
Thou art all anarchy; a mob of joys
Wage war, and periſh in inteſtine broils;
Not the leaſt promiſe of internal peace!
No boſom-comfort! or unborrow'd bliſs!
Thy thoughts are vagabonds; all outward-bound 985
'Midſands, and rocks, and ſtorms, to cruiſe for pleaſure;
If gain'd, dear-bought; and better miſs'd than gain'd.
Much pain muſt expiate what much pain procur'd.
Fancy and ſenſe, from an infected ſhore,
Thy cargo bring, and peſtilence the prize. 990
Then ſuch thy thirſt, (inſatiable thirſt
By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more)
Fancy ſtill cruiſes, when poor Senſe is tir'd.
Imagination is the Paphian ſhop
Where feeble Happineſs, like Vulcan, lame, 995
Bids foul ideas, in their dark receſs,

And hot as hell, (which kindled the black fires)
With wanton art thoſe fatal arrows form,
Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame:
Wouldſt thou receive them, other thoughts there are
On angel-wing, deſcending from above, 1001
Which theſe, with art divine, would counterwork,
And form celeſtial armour for thy peace.
In this is ſeen Imagination's guilt;
But who can count her follies? ſhe betrays thee, 1005
To think in grandeur there is ſomething great.
For works of curious art, and ancient fame,
Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd,
And foreign climes muſt cater for thy taſte.
Hence what diſaſter!—Tho' the price was paid,
That perſecuting prieſt, the Turk of Rome, 1011
Whoſe foot, (ye Gods!) tho' cloven, muſt be kiſs'd,
Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian ſhore;
(Such is the fate of honeſt Proteſtants!)
And poor Magnificence is ſtarv'd to death. 1015
Hence juſt reſentment, indignation, ire!—
Be pacify'd; if outward things are great,
'Tis magnanimity great things to ſcorn;
Pompous expenſes, and parades auguſt,
And courts, that inſalubrious ſoil to peace. 1020
True happineſs ne'er enter'd at an eye;
True happineſs reſides in things unſeen.
No ſmiles of Fortune ever bleſs'd the bad,
Nor can her frowns rob Innocence of joys;

That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor: 1025
So tell his Holineſs, and be reveng'd.
Pleaſure, we both agree, is man's chief good;
Our only conteſt what deſerves the name.
Give Pleaſure's name to nought but what has paſs'd
Th' authentick ſeal of Reaſon (which, like Yorke,
Demurs on what it paſſes) and defies 1030
The tooth of Time; when paſt a pleaſure ſtill;
Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes
Our future, while it forms our preſent joy. 1035
Some joys the future overcaſt, and ſome
Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
Some joys endear eternity, ſome give
Abhorr'd Annihilation dreadful charms.
Are rival joys contending for thy choice? 1040
Conſult thy whole exiſtence, and be ſafe;
That oracle will put all doubt to flight.
Short is the leſſon, tho' my lecture long;
Be good—and let Heav'n anſwer for the reſt.
Yet, with a ſigh o'er all mankind, I grant, 1045
In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
The good man has his clouds that intervene;
Clouds that obſcure his ſublunary day,
But never conquer: ev'n the beſt muſt own,
Patience and reſignation are the pillars 1050
Of human peace on earth: the pillars theſe,
But thoſe of Seth not more remote from thee,

Till this heroick lesson thou hast learn'd,
To frown at pleasure, and to smile in pain.
Fir'd at the prospect of unclouded bliss, 1055
Heav'n in reversion, like the sun, as yet
Beneath th' horizon, cheers us in this world;
It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,
The glorious dawn of our eternal day.
" This (says Lorenzo) is a fair harangue; 1060
" But can harangues blow back strong Nature's stream,
" Or stem the tide Heav'n pushes thro' our veins,
" Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
" And lays his labour level with the world?" 1064
Themselves men make their comment on mankind,
And think nought is but what they find at home:
Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.
Nothing romantick has the Muse prescrib'd;
Above *, Lorenzo saw the man of earth,
The mortal man, and wretched was the sight. 1070
To balance that, to comfort and exalt,
Now see the man immortal; him, I mean,
Who lives as such; whose heart, full bent on heav'n,
Leans all that way, his bias to the stars,
The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
His lustre more, tho' bright, without a foil. 1076
Observe his awful portrait, and admire?
Nor stop at wonder; imitate, and live.
Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing less than angel can exceed, 1080

* In a former Night.

A man on earth devoted to the ſkies;
Like ſhips in ſeas, while in, above the world.
With aſpect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him ſeated on a mount ſerene,
Above the fogs of ſenſe, and paſſion's ſtorm: 1085
All the black cares and tumults of this life,
Like harmleſs thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
Earth's genuine ſons, the ſceptred and the ſlave,
A mingled mob! a wand'ring herd he ſees, 1090
Bewilder'd in the vale; in all unlike!
His full reverſe in all! what higher praiſe?
What ſtronger demonſtration of the right?
The preſent all their care, the future his.
When publick welfare calls, or private want, 1095
They give to Fame; his bounty he conceals.
Their virtues varniſh Nature, his exalt.
Mankind's eſteem they court, and he his own.
Theirs the wild chaſe of falſe felicities;
His the compos'd poſſeſſion of the true. 1100
Alike throughout is his conſiſtent peace,
All of one colour, and an even thread;
While party colour'd ſhreds of happineſs,
With hideous gaps between, patch up for them
A madman's robe; each puff of Fortune blows 1105
The tatters by, and ſhews their nakedneſs.
He ſees with other eyes than theirs: where they
Behold a ſun, he ſpies a Deity.

What makes them only ſmile makes him adore.
Where they ſee mountains, he but atoms ſees. 1110
An empire, in his balance, weighs a grain.
They things terreſtrial worſhip as divine;
His hopes immortal, blow them by as duſt
That dims his ſight, and ſhortens his ſurvey,
Which longs, in infinite, to loſe all bound. 1115
Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)
He lays aſide to find his dignity;
No dignity they find in aught beſides.
They triumph in externals, (which conceal
Man's real glory) proud of an eclipſe; 1120
Himſelf too much he prizes to be proud,
And nothing thinks ſo great in man as man.
Too dear he holds his int'reſt to neglect
Another's welfare, or his right invade;
Their int'reſt, like a lion, lives on prey. 1125
They kindle at the ſhadow of a wrong;
Wrong he ſuſtains with temper, looks on Heav'n,
Nor ſtoops to think his injurer his foe.
Nought but what wounds his virtue wounds his peace.
A cover'd heart their character defends; 1130
A cover'd heart denies him half his praiſe.
With nakedneſs his innocence agrees,
While their broad foliage teſtifies their fall.
Their no-joys end where his full feaſt begins;
His joys create, theirs murder, future bliſs. 1135
To triumph in exiſtence his alone;

And his alone triumphantly to think
His true existence is not yet begun.
His glorious course was yesterday complete;
Death then was welcome; yet life still is sweet. 1140
But nothing charms Lorenzo like the firm
Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise!
They yield to pleasure, tho' they danger brave,
And shew no fortitude but in the field;
If there they shew it, 't is for glory shewn, 1145
Nor will that cordial always man their hearts.
A cordial his sustains that cannot fail:
By pleasure unsubdu'd, unbroke by pain,
He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts;
All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls, 1150
And when he falls writes *Vici* on his shield.
From magnanimity all fear above;
From nobler recompence above applause,
Which owes to man's short outlook all its charms.
Backward to credit what he never felt, 1155
Lorenzo cries,—"Where shines this miracle?
"From what root rises this immortal man?"
A root that grows not in Lorenzo's ground:
The root dissect, nor wonder at the flow'r.
He follows Nature, (not like thee *) and shews us
An uninverted system of a man. 1161
His appetite wears Reason's golden chain,
And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.

* See Night the Eighth, ver. 838.

His paſſion, like an eagle well-reclaim'd,
Is taught to fly at nought but infinite. 1165
Patient his hope, unanxious is his care,
His caution fearleſs, and his grief (if grief
The gods ordain) a ſtranger to deſpair.
And why?—becauſe affection, more than meet,
His wiſdom leaves not diſengag'd from heav'n. 1170
Thoſe ſecondary goods that ſmile on earth
He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
They moſt the world enjoy who leaſt admire.
His underſtanding 'ſcapes the common cloud
Of fumes ariſing from a boiling breaſt. 1175
His head is clear, becauſe his heart is cool,
By worldly competitions uninflam'd.
The mod'rate movements of his ſoul admit
Diſtinct ideas, and matur'd debate,
An eye impartial, and an even ſcale; 1180
Whence judgment ſound, and unrepenting choice.
Thus, in a double ſenſe, the good are wiſe;
On its own dunghill wiſer than the world.
What, then, the world? it muſt be doubly weak.
Strange truth! as ſoon would they believe their creed.
Yet thus it is, nor otherwiſe can be, 1186
So far from aught romantick what I ſing.
Bliſs has no being, virtue has no ſtrength,
But from the proſpect of immortal life.
Who think earth all, or (what weighs juſt the ſame)
Who care no further, muſt prize what it yields, 1191
Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.

Who thinks earth nothing cann't its charms admire;
He cann't a foe, tho' moſt malignant, hate,
Becauſe that hate would prove his greater foe. 1195
'Tis hard for them (yet who-ſo loudly boaſt
Good-will to men?) to love their deareſt friend;
For may not he invade their good ſupreme,
Where the leaſt jealouſy turns love to gall?
All ſhines to them, that for a ſeaſon ſhines: 1200
Each act, each thought, he queſtions; "What its weight,
"Its colour what, a thouſand ages hence?" ——
And what it there appears he deems it now;
Hence pure are the receſſes of his ſoul.
The godlike man has nothing to conceal; 1205
His virtue conſtitutionally deep,
Has Habit's firmneſs, and Affection's flame:
Angels, ally'd, deſcend to feed the fire,
And death, which others ſlays, makes him a god.
And now, Lorenzo! bigot of this world! 1210
Wont to diſdain poor bigots caught by Heav'n!
Stand by thy ſcorn, and be reduc'd to nought!
For what art thou?—Thou Boaſter! while thy glare,
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere wordly worth,
Like a broad miſt, at diſtance, ſtrikes us moſt, 1215
And, like a miſt, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and riſes nearer to the ſkies,
By promiſe now, and by poſſeſſion, ſoon
(Too ſoon, too much, it cannot be) his own. 1220

From this thy just annihilation rise,
Lorenzo! rise to something, by reply.
The world, thy client, listens, and expects,
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.
Canst thou be silent? no; for wit is thine, 1225
And Wit talks most when least she has to say,
And Reason interrupts not her career.
She'll say— That mists above the mountains rise,
And with a thousand pleasantries amuse;
She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust, 1230
And fly conviction in the dust she rais'd.
Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!
'Tis precious as the vehicle of sense,
But as its substitute a dire disease.
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world, 1235
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.
Wisdom is rare, Lorenzo! wit abounds;
Passion can give it, sometimes wine inspires
The lucky flash; and madness rarely fails.
Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs, 1240
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.
For thy renown 't were well was this the worst;
Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,
See Dulness, blund'ring on vivacities,
Shakes her sage head at the calamity 1245
Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.
But Wisdom, awful Wisdom! which inspects,

Diſcerns, compares, weighs, ſeparates, infers,
Seizes the right, and holds it to the laſt,
How rare! in ſenates, ſynods, ſought in vain; 1250
Or if there found, 't is ſacred to the few;
While a lewd proſtitute to multitudes,
Frequent as fatal, Wit. In civil life
Wit makes an enterprifer, ſenſe a man.
Wit hates authority, commotion loves, 1255
And thinks herſelf the lightning of the ſtorm.
In ſtates 't is dang'rous; in religion death.
Shall Wit turn Chriſtian when the dull believe?
Senſe is our helmet, wit is but the plume;
The plume expoſes, 't is our helmet ſaves. 1260
Senſe is the di'mond, weighty, ſolid, ſound;
When cut by wit it caſts a brighter beam;
Yet wit apart, it is a diamond ſtill.
Wit, widow'd of good ſenſe, is worſe than nought;
It hoiſts more ſail to run againſt a rock. 1265
Thus a half-Cheſterfield is quite a fool,
Whom dull fools ſcorn, and bleſs their want of wit.
How ruinous the rock I warn thee ſhun,
Where Sirens ſit to ſing thee to thy fate!
A joy in which our reaſon bears no part, 1270
Is but a ſorrow, tickling ere it ſtings.
Let not the cooings of the world allure thee;
Which of her lovers ever found her true?
Happy! of this bad world who little know:—
And yet we much muſt know her to be ſafe. 1275

To know the world, not love her, is thy point:
She gives but little, nor that little long.
There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,
A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
Our thoughtless agitation's idle child, 1280
That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,
Leaving the soul more vapid than before;
An animal ovation! such as holds
No commerce with our reason, but subsists
On juices, thro' the well-ton'd tubes well strain'd;
A nice machine! scarce ever tun'd aright; 1286
And when it jars—thy Sirens sing no more;
Thy dance is done; the demi-god is thrown
(Short apotheosis!) beneath the man,
In coward gloom immers'd, or fell despair. 1290
Art thou yet dull enough despair to dread,
And startle at destruction? if thou art,
Accept a buckler, take it to the field;
(A field of battle is this mortal life!)
When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart, 1295
A single sentence proof against the world.
"Soul, body, fortune! ev'ry good pertains
"To one of these; but prize not all alike;
"The goods of Fortune to thy body's health,
"Body to soul, and soul submit to God." 1300
Wouldst thou build lasting happiness? do this:
Th' inverted pyramid can never stand.
Is this truth doubtful? it outshines the sun;

Nay, the ſun ſhines not but to ſhew us this,
The ſingle leſſon of mankind on earth: 1305
And yet—yet what? No news! mankind is mad;
Such mighty numbers lift againſt the right,
(And what can't numbers, when betwitch'd, achieve!)
They talk themſelves to ſomething like belief
That all earth's joys are theirs: as Athens' fool
Grinn'd from the port on ev'ry ſail his own. 1311
They grin, but wherefore? and how long the laugh?
Half ignorance their mirth, and half a lie.
To cheat the world, and cheat themſelves, they ſmile:
Hard either taſk! the moſt abandon'd own 1315
That others, if abandon'd, are undone:
Then for themſelves, the moment Reaſon wakes,
(And Providence denies it long repoſe)
O how laborious is their gayety!
They ſcarce can ſwallow their ebullient ſpleen, 1320
Scarce muſter patience to ſupport the farce,
And pump ſad laughter till the curtain falls.
Scarce, did I ſay? ſome cannot ſit it out;
Oft' their own daring hands the curtain draw,
And ſhew us what their joy by their deſpair. 1325
The clotted hair! gor'd breaſt! blaſpheming eye!
Its impious fury ſtill alive in death!
Shut, ſhut the ſhocking ſcene.—But Heav'n denies
A cover to ſuch guilt, and ſo ſhould man.
Look round, Lorenzo! ſee the reeking blade, 1330
Th' envenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;
The ſtrangling cord, and ſuffocating ſtream;

The loathſome rottenneſs, and foul decays,
From raging riot (ſlower ſuicides!)
And pride in theſe more execrable ſtill! 1355
How horrid all to thought —but horrours theſe
That vouch the truth, and aid my feeble ſong.
From vice, ſenſe, fancy, no man can be bleſs'd:
Bliſs is too great to lodge within an hour:
When an immortal being aims at bliſs, 1340
Duration is eſſential to the name.
O for a joy from reaſon! joy from that
Which makes man man, and, exercis'd aright,
Will make him more: a bounteous joy! that gives
And promiſes: that weaves with art divine, 1345
The richeſt proſpect into preſent peace:
A joy ambitious! joy in common held
With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:
A joy high-privileg'd from chance, time, death!
A joy which death ſhall double, judgment crown!
Crown'd higher, and ſtill higher, at each ſtage, 1350
Thro' bleſs'd eternity's long day, yet ſtill
Not more remote from ſorrow than from him
Whoſe laviſh hand, whoſe love ſtupendous, pours
So much of Deity on guilty duſt. 1355
There, O my Lucia! may I meet thee there,
Where not thy preſence can improve my bliſs!
Affects not this the ſages of the world?
Can nought affect them, but what fools them too?
Eternity depending on an hour, 1360
Makes ſerious thought man's wiſdom, joy, and praiſe.

Nor need you blush (tho' sometimes your designs
May shun the light) at your designs on heav'n;
Sole point! where overbashful is your blame. 1364
Are you not wise?—you know you are: yet hear
One truth, amid your num'rous schemes misplaid,
Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen;
"Our schemes to plan by this world or the next,
"Is the sole diff'rence between wise and fool."
All worthy men will weigh you in this scale; 1370
What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light?
Is their esteem alone not worth your care?
Accept my simple scheme of common sense,
Thus save your fame, and make two worlds your own.
The world replies not;—but the world persists,
And puts the cause off to the longest day, 1376
Planning evasions for the day of doom:
So far, at that rehearing, from redress,
They then turn witnesses against themselves.
Hear that, Lorenzo! nor be wise to-morrow. 1380
Haste, haste! a man, by nature, is in haste;
For who shall answer for another hour?
'Tis highly prudent to make one sure friend,
And that thou canst not do this side the skies.
Ye sons of Earth! (nor willing to be more!) 1385
Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths
(Truths which, at church, you might have heard in [prose)
Has ventur'd into light, well-pleas'd the verse
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain, 1390

And crown her with your welfare, not your praiſe.
But praiſe ſhe need not fear: I ſee my fate,
And headlong leap, like Curtius, down the gulf.
Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
Muſt die, and die unwept; O thou minute, 1395
Devoted page! go forth among thy foes;
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death: mankind, incens'd,
Denies thee long to live; nor ſhalt thou reſt
When thou art dead, in Stygian ſhades arraign'd
By Lucifer, as traitor to his throne, 1401
And bold blaſphemer of his friend,—the World;
The world, whoſe legions coſt him ſlender pay,
And volunteers around his banner ſwarm,
Prudent as Pruſſia in her zeal for Gaul. 1405
"Are all then fools?" Lorenzo cries.—Yes, all
But ſuch as hold this doctrine, (new to thee)
"The mother of true wiſdom is the will,"
The nobleſt intellect a fool without it.
World-wiſdom much has done, and more may do,
In arts and ſciences, in wars and peace; 1411
But art and ſcience, like thy wealth, will leave thee,
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
This is the moſt indulgence can afford,—
"Thy wiſdom all can do but—make thee wiſe."
Nor think this cenſure is ſevere on thee;
Satan, thy maſter, I dare call a dunce. 1417

End of Night Eighth.

THE CONSOLATION.

NIGHT IX. AND LAST.

Containing, among other things,

I. A MORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.
II. A NIGHT-ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

Humbly inſcribed to

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE,

One of his Majeſty's principal Secretaries of State.

-----Fatis contraria fata rependens Virg.

As when a traveller, a long day paſt
In painful ſearch of what he cannot find,
At night's approach, content with the next cot,
There ruminates awhile his labour loſt,
Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords, 5
And chants his ſonnet to deceive the time,
Till the due ſeaſon calls him to repoſe;
Thus I, long-travell'd in the ways of men,
And dancing, with the reſt, the giddy maze,
Where Diſappointment ſmiles at Hope's career, 10
Warn'd by the languor of life's ev'ning ray,
At length have hous'd me in an humble ſhed,
Where, future wand'ring baniſh'd from my thought,
And waiting, patient, the ſweet hour of reſt,

I chaſe the moments with a ſerious ſong. 15
Song ſooths our pains, and age has pains to ſooth.
When age, care, crime, and friends, embrac'd at heart,
Torn from my bleeding breaſt, and death's dark ſhade,
Which hovers o'er me, quench th' ethereal fire,
Canſt thou, O Night! indulge one labour more? 20
One labour more indulge! then ſleep, my ſtrain!
Till, haply, wak'd by Raphael's golden lyre,
Where night, death, age, care, crime, and ſorrow, [ceaſe,
To bear a part in everlaſting lays;
Tho' far, far higher ſet, in aim, I truſt, 25
Symphonious to this humble prelude here.
Has not the Muſe aſſerted pleaſures pure,
Like thoſe above, exploding other joys?
Weigh what was urg'd, Lorenzo! fairly weigh,
And tell me, haſt thou cauſe to triumph ſtill? 30
I think thou wilt forbear a boaſt ſo bold:
But if, beneath the favour of miſtake,
Thy ſmiles ſincere, not more ſincere can be
Lorenzo's ſmile, than my compaſſion for him.
The ſick in body call for aid; the ſick 35
In mind are covetous of more diſeaſe,
And when at worſt they dream themſelves quite well.
To know ourſelves diſeas'd is half our cure.
When Nature's bluſh by cuſtom is wip'd off,
And conſcience deaden'd by repeated ſtrokes, 40
Has into manners naturaliz'd our crimes,

The curſe of curſes is our curſe to love,
To triumph in the blackneſs of our guilt,
(As Indians glory in the deepeſt jet)
And throw aſide our ſenſes with our peace. 45
But grant no guilt, no ſhame, no leaſt alloy;
Grant joy, and glory quite unſully'd ſhone;
Yet ſtill it ill deſerves Lorenzo's heart.
No joy, no glory, glitters in thy ſight,
But, thro' the thin partition of an hour, 50
I ſee its ſables wove by Deſtiny,
And that in ſorrow bury'd, this in ſhame,
While howling furies ring the doleful knell,
And Conſcience, now ſo ſoft thou ſcarce canſt hear
Her whiſper, echoes her eternal peal. 55
Where the prime actors of the laſt year's ſcene,
Their port ſo proud, their buſkin, and their plume?
How many ſleep, who kept the world awake
With luſtre and with noiſe! Has Death proclaim'd
A truce, and hung his ſated lance on high? 60
'Tis brandiſh'd ſtill, nor ſhall the preſent year
Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
Or ſpread, of feeble life, a thinner fall.
But needleſs monuments to wake the thought;
Life's gayeſt ſcenes ſpeak man's mortality, 65
Tho' in a ſtyle more florid, full as plain
As mauſoleums, pyramids, and tombs.
What are our nobleſt ornaments, but Deaths
Turn'd flatterers of Life in paint or marble,

The well-ſtain'd canvaſs, or the featur'd ſtone? 70
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the ſcene.
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.
"Profeſs'd diverſions! cannot theſe eſcape?"—
Far from it: theſe preſent us with a ſhroud,
And talk of death, like garlands o'er a grave. 75
As ſome bold plunderers for bury'd wealth,
We ranſack tombs for paſtime; from the duſt
Call up the ſleeping hero; bid him tread
The ſcene for our amuſement. How like gods
We ſit, and, wrapt in immortality, 80
Shed gen'rous tears on wretches born to die,
Their fate deploring, to forget our own!
What all the pomps and triumphs of our lives
But legacies in bloſſom? Our lean ſoil,
Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities, 85
From friends interr'd beneath a rich manure!
Like other worms we banquet on the dead;
Like other worms, ſhall we crawl on, nor know
Our preſent frailties or approaching fate?
Lorenzo! ſuch the glories of the world! 90
What is the world itſelf? Thy world—a grave.
Where is the duſt that has not been alive?
The ſpade, the plough, diſturb our anceſtors.
From human mould we reap our daily bread.
The globe around earth's hollow ſurface ſhakes, 95
And is the cieling of her ſleeping ſons.
O'er devaſtation we blind revels keep:

Whole bury'd towns ſupport the dancer's heel.
The moiſt of human frame the ſun exhales;
Winds ſcatter thro' the mighty void the dry: 100
Earth repoſſeſſes part of what ſhe gave,
And the freed ſpirit mounts on wings of fire:
Each element partakes our ſcatter'd ſpoils.
As Nature wide our ruins ſpread. Man's death
Inhabits all things but the thought of man. 105
Nor man alone; his breathing buſt expires;
His tomb is mortal: empires die: where now
The Roman? Greek? they ſtalk, an empty name!
Yet few regard them in this uſeful light,
Tho' half our learning is their epitaph. 110
When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
That loves to wander in thy ſunleſs realms,
O Death! I ſtretch my view, what viſions riſe!
What triumphs! toils imperial! arts divine!
In wither'd laurels glide before my ſight! 115
What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd high
With human agitation, roll along
In unſubſtantial images of air!
The melancholy ghoſts of dead Renown,
Whiſp'ring faint echoes of the world's applauſe, 120
With penitential aſpect, as they paſs,
All point at earth, and hiſs at human pride,
The wiſdom of the wiſe, and prancings of the great.
But, O Lorenzo! far the reſt above,
Of ghaſtly nature, and enormous ſize. 125

One form aſſaults my ſight, and chills my blood,
And ſhakes my frame. Of one departed World
I ſee the mighty ſhadow: oozy wreath
And diſmal ſeaweed crown her: o'er her urn
Reclin'd, ſhe weeps her deſolated realms, 130
And bloated ſons, and, weeping, propheſies
Another's diſſolution, ſoon, in flames:
But, like Caſſandra, propheſies in vain;
In vain to many; not I truſt to thee.

For, know'ſt thou not, or art thou loath to know,
The great decree, the counſel of the Skies? 136
Deluge and Conflagration, dreadful pow'rs!
Prime miniſters of vengeance? chain'd in caves
Diſtinct, apart, the giant furies roar;
Apart, or ſuch their horrid rage for ruin, 140
In mutual conflict would they riſe, and wage
Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.
But not for this ordain'd their boundleſs rage.
When Heav'n's inferiour inſtruments of wrath,
War, famine, peſtilence, are found too weak 145
To ſcourge a world for her enormous crimes,
Theſe are let looſe alternate: down they ruſh,
Swift and tempeſtuous, from th' eternal throne,
With irreſiſtible commiſſion arm'd,
The world, in vain corrected, to deſtroy, 150
And eaſe creation of the ſhocking ſcene.

Seeſt thou, Lorenzo! what depends on man?
The fate of Nature, as for man her birth.

Earth's actors change earth's tranſitory ſcenes,
And make creation groan with human guilt. 155
How muſt it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd.
But not of waters! At the deſtin'd hour,
By the loud trumpet ſummon'd to the charge,
See all the formidable ſons of fire,
Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play 160
Their various engines; all at once diſgorge
Their blazing magazines, and take, by ſtorm,
This poor terreſtrial citadel of man.

Amazing period! when each mountain-height
Outburns Veſuvius; rocks eternal pour 165
Their melted maſs, as rivers once they pour'd;
Stars ruſh, and final Ruin fiercely drives
Her ploughſhare o'er creation!—while aloft,
More than aſtoniſhment! if more can be!
Far other firmament than e'er was ſeen, 170
Than e'er was thought by man! far other ſtars!
Stars animate, that govern theſe of fire;
Far other ſun!—a ſun, O how unlike
The Babe at Bethle'm! how unlike the Man
That groan'd on Calvary!—yet he it is; 175
That man of ſorrows! O how chang'd! what pomp!
In grandeur terrible all heav'n deſcends!
And gods ambitious triumph in his train.
A ſwift archangel, with his golden wing,
As blots and clouds that darken and diſgrace 180
The ſcene divine, ſweeps ſtars and ſuns aſide.

And now, all drofs remov'd, heav'n's own pure day,
Full on the confines of our ether flames.
While (dreadful contraft!) far, how far beneath!
Hell, burfting, belches forth her blazing feas, 185
And ftorms fulphureous, her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.
Lorenzo! welcome to this fcene, the laft
In Nature's courfe, the firft in Wifdom's thought.
This ftrikes, if aught can ftrike thee; this awakes 190
The moft fupine; this fnatches man from death.
Roufe, roufe, Lorenzo! then, and follow me,
Where truth, the moft momentous man can hear,
Loud calls my foul, and ardour wings her flight.
I find my infpiration in my theme: 195
The grandeur of my fubject is my Mufe.

At midnight, when mankind is wrapp'd in peace,
And worldly Fancy feeds on Golden dreams,
To give more dread to man's moft dreadful hour;
At midnight, 't is prefum'd, this pomp will burft 200
From tenfold darknefs fudden as the fpark
From fmitten fteel; from nitrous grain the blaze.
Man, ftarting from his couch, fhall fleep no more!
The day is broke, which never more fhall clofe!
Above, around, beneath, amazement all! 205
Terrour and glory join'd in their extremes!
Our God in grandeur, and our world on fire!
All Nature ftruggling in the pangs of death!
Doft thou not hear her? doft thou not deplore

Her ſtrong convulſions, and her final groan? 210
Where are we now? Ah me! the ground is gone
On which we ſtood. Lorenzo! while thou may'ſt
Provide more firm ſupport, or ſink for ever!
Where? how? from whence? Vain hope! it is too late!
Where, where, for ſhelter, ſhall the guilty fly, 215
When conſternation turns the good man pale?

Great day! for which all other days were made;
For which earth roſe from chaos, man from earth,
And an eternity, the date of gods,
Deſcended on poor earth-created man! 220
Great day of dread, deciſion, and deſpair!
At thought of thee each ſublunary wiſh
Lets go its eager graſp, and drops the world,
And catches at each reed of hope in heav'n.
At thought of thee!—and art thou abſent then? 225
Lorenzo! no; 't is here; it is begun:—
Already is begun the grand aſſize,
In thee, in all: deputed Conſcience ſcales
The dread tribunal, and foreſtals our doom;
Foreſtals, and, by foreſtalling, proves it ſure. 230
Why on himſelf ſhould man void judgment paſs?
Is idle Nature laughing at her ſons?
Who Conſcience ſent her ſentence will ſupport,
And God above aſſert that god in man.

Thrice happy they! that enter now the court 235
Heav'n opens in their boſoms: but how rare,
Ah me! that magnanimity, how rare!

What hero like the man who ſtands himſelf,
Who dares to meet his naked heart alone,
Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings, 240
Reſolv'd to ſilence future murmurs there?
The coward flies, and, flying, is undone.
(Art thou a coward? no:) the coward flies;
Thinks, but thinks ſlightly; aſks, but fears to know:
Aſks "What is truth?" with Pilate, and retires; 245
Diſſolves the court, and mingles with the throng:
Aſylum ſad! from reaſon, hope, and heav'n!
Shall all but man look out with ardent eye
For that great day which was ordain'd for man?
O day of conſummation! mark ſupreme 250
(If men are wiſe) of human thought! nor leaſt
Or in the ſight of angels or their King!
Angels, whoſe radiant circles, height o'er height,
Order o'er order, riſing, blaze o'er blaze,
As in a theatre, ſurround this ſcene, 255
Intent on man, and anxious for his fate.
Angels look out for thee; for thee their Lord,
To vindicate his glory; and for thee
Creation univerſal calls aloud
To diſinvolve the moral world and give 260
To Nature's renovation brighter charms.
Shall man alone, whoſe fate, whoſe final fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought?
I think of nothing elſe; I ſee! I feel it!
All Nature, like an earthquake, trembling round! 265

All Deities, like ſummer's ſwarms, on wing!
All baſking in the full meridian blaze!
I ſee the Judge enthron'd! the flaming guard!
The volume open'd! open'd ev'ry heart!
A ſunbeam pointing out each ſecret thought! 270
No patron! interceſſor none! now paſt
The ſweet, the clement, mediatorial hour!
For guilt no plea! to pain no pauſe! no bound!
Inexorable all! and all extreme!
Nor man alone; the foe of God and man, 275
From his dark den, blaſpheming, drags his chain,
And rears his brazen front, with thunder ſcarr'd,
Receives his ſentence, and begins his hell.
All vengeance paſt, now, ſeems abundant grace.
Like meteors in a ſtormy ſky, how roll 280
His baleful eyes! he curſes whom he dreads,
And deems it the firſt moment of his fall.
'Tis preſent to my thought!—and yet where is it?
Angels cann't tell me? angels cannot gueſs
The period, from created beings lock'd 285
In darkneſs; but the proceſs and the place
Are leſs obſcure; for theſe may man inquire.
Say, thou great cloſe of human hopes and fears!
Great key of hearts! great finiſher of fates!
Great end! and great beginning! ſay, where art thou?
Art thou in time, nor in eternity? 291
Nor in eternity nor time I find thee:
Theſe as two monarchs, on their borders meet,
(Monarchs of all elaps'd or unarriv'd!)

As in debate, how beſt their pow'rs ally'd 295
May ſwell the grandeur, or diſcharge the wrath
Of him, whom both their Monarchies obey.
Time, this faſt fabrick for him built (and doom'd
With him to fall) now burſting o'er his head,
His lamp, the ſun, extinguiſh'd, from beneath 300
The frown of hideous darkneſs calls his ſons
From their long ſlumber, from earth's heaving womb
To ſecond birth! contemporary throng!
Rous'd at one call, upſtarted from one bed,
Preſs'd in one crowd, appall'd with one amaze, 305
He turns them o'er, Eternity! to thee:
Then (as a king depos'd diſdains to live)
He falls on his own ſithe, nor falls alone;
His greateſt foe falls with him; Time, and he
Who murder'd all Time's offspring, Death, expire.
Time was! Eternity now reigns alone! 311
Awful Eternity! offended queen!
And her reſentment to mankind how juſt!
With kind intent, ſoliciting acceſs,
How often has ſhe knock'd at human hearts! 315
Rich to repay their hoſpitality,
How often call'd! and with the voice of God!
Yet bore repulſe, excluded as a cheat!
A dream! while fouleſt foes found welcome there!
A dream, a cheat, now all things but her ſmile. 320
For, lo! her twice ten thouſand gates thrown wide,
And thrice from Indus to the frozen pole,

With banners ſtreaming as the comet's blaze,
And clarions louder than the deep in ſtorms,
Sonorous as immortal breath can blow, 325
Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and pow'rs,
Of light, of darkneſs, in a middle field,
Wide as creation! populous as wide!
A neutral region! there to mark th' event
Of that great drama, whoſe preceding ſcenes 330
Detain'd them cloſe ſpectators, thro' a length
Of ages, rip'ning to this grand reſult;
Ages as yet unnumber'd but by God,
Who now, pronouncing ſentence, vindicates
The rights of virtue, and his own renown. 335
Eternity, the various ſentence paſt,
Aſſigns the ſever'd throng diſtinct abodes,
Sulphureous or ambroſial. What enſues?
The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
Which makes a hell of hell, a heav'n of heav'n. 340
The goddeſs, with determin'd aſpect, turns
Her adamantine key's enormous ſize
Thro' deſtiny's inextricable wards,
Deep driving ev'ry bolt on both their fates;
Then from the cryſtal battlements of heav'n 345
Down, down ſhe hurls it thro' the dark profound,
Ten thouſand thouſand fathom, there to ruſt,
And ne'er unlock her reſolution more.
The deep reſounds, and Hell, thro' all her glooms,
Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar. 350

O how unlike the chorus of the ſkies!
O how unlike thoſe ſhouts of joy that ſhake
The whole ethereal! how the concave rings!
Nor ſtrange! when deities their voice exalt;
And louder far than when creation roſe, 355
To ſee Creation's godlike aim and end
So well accompliſh'd! ſo divinely clos'd!
To ſee the mighty Dramatiſt's laſt act
(As meet) in glory riſing o'er the reſt.
No fancy'd God; a God, indeed, deſcends, 360
To ſolve all knots; to ſtrike the moral home;
To throw full day on darkeſt ſcenes of time;
To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.
Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praiſe,
The charm'd ſpectators thunder their applauſe, 365
And the vaſt void beyond applauſe reſounds.
What then am I?—
Amidſt applauding worlds,
And worlds celeſtial, is there found on earth
A peeviſh, diſſonant, rebellious ſtring, 370
Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?
Cenſure on thee, Lorenzo! I ſuſpend,
And turn it on myſelf; how greatly due!
All, all is right, by God ordain'd or done;
And who but God reſum'd the friends he gave? 375
And have I been complaining then ſo long?
Complaining of his favours, pain, and death?

Who without Pain's advice would e'er be good?
Who without Death but would be good in vain?
Pain is to ſave from Pain; all puniſhment 380
To make for peace; and death to ſave from death;
And ſecond death, to guard immortal life;
To rouſe the careleſs, the preſumptuous awe,
And turn the tide of ſouls another way;
By the ſame tenderneſs divine ordain'd 385
That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man
A fairer Eden, endleſs, in the ſkies.
Heav'n gives us friends to bleſs the preſent ſcene,
Reſumes them to prepare us for the next.
All evils natural are moral goods; 390
All diſcipline indulgence, on the whole.
None are unhappy: all have cauſe to ſmile,
But ſuch as to themſelves that cauſe deny.
Our faults are at the bottom of our pains:
Errour in acts, or judgment, is the ſource 395
Of endleſs ſighs, We ſin, or we miſtake,
And Nature tax, when falſe opinion ſtings.
Let impious grief be baniſh'd, joy indulg'd,
But chiefly then when Grief puts in her claim.
Joy from the joyous frequently betrays, 400
Oft' lives in vanity, and dies in wo.
Joy amidſt ills corroborates, exalts;
'Tis joy and conqueſt; joy and virtue too.
A noble fortitude in ills delights
Heav'n, earth, ourſelves; 't is duty, glory, peace. 405

Affliction is the good man's ſhining ſcene,
Proſperity conceals his brighteſt ray.
As night to ſtars, wo luſtre gives to man.
Heroes in battle, pilots in the ſtorm,
And virtue in calamities, admire. 410
The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;
And evergreen that ſtands the northern blaſt,
And bloſſoms in the rigour of our fate.
'Tis a prime part of happineſs to know
How much unhappineſs muſt prove our lot; 415
A part which few poſſeſs! I 'll pay life's tax,
Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
Nor think it miſery to be a man;
Who thinks it is ſhall never be a god.
Some ills we wiſh for when we wiſh to live. 420
Whatſpoke proud paſſion?--"Wiſh my being loſt*?"
Preſumptuous! blaſphemous! abſurd! and falſe!
The triumph of my ſoul is,—that I am;
And therefore that I may be—what? Lorenzo!
Look inward, and look deep: and deeper ſtill; 425
Unfathomably deep our treaſure runs,
In golden veins, thro' all eternity!
Ages, and ages, and ſucceeding ſtill
New ages, where the phantom of an hour,
Which courts, each night, dull ſlumber for repair,
Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praiſe, 431
And fly thro' infinite, and all unlock,

* Referring to the Firſt Night.

And (if deſerv'd) by Heav'n's redundant love,
Made half-adorable, itſelf adore,
And find, in adoration, endleſs joy! 435
Where thou, not maſter of a moment here,
Frail as the flow'r, and fleeting as the gale,
May'ſt boaſt a whole eternity, enrich'd
With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.
Since Adam fell, no mortal, uninſpir'd, 440
Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever ſhall,
How kind is God, how great (if good) is man.
No man too largely from Heav'n's love can hope,
If what is hop'd he labours to ſecure. 444
Ills!—there are none: All-gracious! none from [thee?
From man full many! Num'rous is the race
Of blackeſt ills, and thoſe immortal too,
Begot by madneſs on fair Liberty,
Heav'n's daughter, hell-debauch'd! her hand alone
Unlocks deſtruction to the ſons of men, 450
Faſt barr'd by thine: high-wall'd with adamant,
Guarded with terrours reaching to this world,
And cover'd with the thunders of thy law,
Whoſe threats are mercies, whoſe injunctions guides,
Aſſiſting, not reſtraining, Reaſon's choice; 455
Whoſe ſanctions, unavoidable reſults
From Nature's courſe, indulgently reveal'd,
If unreveal'd more dang'rous, nor leſs ſure.
Thus an indulgent father warns his ſons,
"Do this, fly that;"—nor always tells the cauſe; 460

Pleas'd to reward, as duty to his will,
A conduct needful to their own repose.
Great God of wonders! (if, thy love survey'd,
Aught else the name of wonderful retains)
What rocks are these on which to build our trust? 465
Thy ways admit no blemish; none I find;
Or this alone,—"That none is to be found:"
Not one to soften Censure's hardy crime;
Not one to palliate peevish Grief's complaint,
Who, like a demon, murm'ring from the dust, 470
Dares into judgment call her judge.—Supreme!
For all I bless thee; most for the severe;
Her death *—my own at hand—the fiery gulf,
That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent!
It thunders;—but it thunders to preserve; 475
It strengthens what it strikes; its wholesome dread
Averts the dreaded pain: its hideous groans
Join heav'n's sweet hallelujahs in thy praise,
Great source of good alone! how kind in all!
In vengeance kind! Pain, death, gehenna, save. 480
Thus, in thy world material, mighty Mind!
Not that alone which solaces and shines,
The rough and gloomy, challenges our praise.
The winter is as needful as the spring;
The thunder as the sun. A stagnate mass 485
Of vapours breeds as pestilential air:
Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze
To Nature's health, than purifying storms.

* Lucia.

The dread volcano miniſters to good;
Its ſmother'd flames might undermine the world. 490
Loud Ætnas fulminate in love to man:
Comets good omens are when duly ſcann'd;
And, in their uſe, eclipſes learn to ſhine.
Man is reſponſible for ills receiv'd;
Thoſe we call wretched are a choſen band, 495
Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace.
Amid my liſt of bleſſings infinite
Stand this the foremoſt, "That my heart has bled."
'Tis Heav'n's laſt effort of good-will to man.
When pain cann't bleſs, Heav'n quits us in deſpair. 500
Who fails to grieve, when juſt occaſion calls,
Or grieves too much, deſerves not to be bleſs'd,
Inhuman or effeminate, his heart.
Reaſon abſolves the grief which reaſon ends.
May Heav'n ne'er truſt my friend with happineſs, 505
Till it has taught him how to bear it well
By previous pain, and made it ſafe to ſmile!
Such ſmiles are mine, and ſuch may they remain,
Nor hazard their extinction from exceſs.
My change of heart a change of ſtyle demands; 510
The Conſolation cancels the Complaint,
And makes a convert of my guilty ſong.
As when o'er-labour'd, and inclin'd to breathe,
A panting traveller ſome riſing ground,
Some ſmall aſcent, has gain'd, he turns him round, 515
And meaſures with his eye the various vale,

The fields, woods, meads, and rivers, he has paſt,
And, ſatiate of his journey, thinks of home.
Endear'd by diſtance, nor affects more toil;
Thus I, tho' ſmall, indeed, is that aſcent 520
The Muſe has gain'd, review the paths ſhe trod,
Various, extenſive, beaten but by few;
And, conſcious of her prudence in repoſe,
Pauſe, and with pleaſure meditate an end,
Tho' ſtill remote; ſo fruitful is my theme. 525
Thro' many a field of moral and divine
The Muſe has ſtray'd, and much of ſorrow ſeen
In human ways, and much of falſe and vain,
Which none who travel this bad road can miſs.
O'er friends deceas'd full heartily ſhe wept; 530
Of love divine the wonders ſhe diſplay'd;
Prov'd man immortal; ſhew'd the ſource of joy;
The grand tribunal rais'd; aſſign'd the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to cloſe the whole,
The moral Muſe has ſhadow'd out a ſketch, 535
Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael ſtroke,
Of moſt our weakneſs needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or proſpect of the ſkies. 539
What then remains? much! much! a mighty debt
To be diſcharg'd. Theſe Thoughts, O Night! are thine;
From thee they came, like lovers' ſecret ſighs,
While others ſlept. So Cynthia, (poets feign)
In ſhadows veil'd, ſoft ſliding from her ſphere,

Her ſhepherd cheer'd, of her enamour'd leſs 545
Than I of thee.—And art thou ſtill unſung,
Beneath whoſe brow, and by whoſe aid, I ſing?
Immortal Silence! where ſhall I begin?
Where end? or how ſteal muſick from the ſpheres
To ſooth their goddeſs? 550
O majeſtick Night!
Nature's great anceſtor! Day's elder-born!
And fated to ſurvive the tranſient ſun!
By mortals and immortals ſeen with awe!
A ſtarry crown thy raven brow adorns, 555
An azure zone thy waiſt; clouds, in heav'n's loom
Wrought thro' varieties of ſhape and ſhade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form, and, heav'n thro'out,
Voluminouſly pour thy pompous train: 560
Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's moſt auguſt,
Inſpiring aſpect!) claim a grateful verſe,
And, like a ſable curtain, ſtarr'd with gold,
Drawn o'er my labours paſt, ſhall cloſe the ſcene.
And what, O Man! ſo worthy to be ſung? 565
What more prepares us for the ſongs of heav'n?
Creation of archangels is the theme!
What to be ſung ſo needful, what ſo well
Celeſtial joys prepare us to ſuſtain?
The ſoul of man, His face deſign'd to ſee 570
Who gave theſe wonders to be ſeen by man,
Has here a previous ſcene of objects great

On which to dwell, to ſtretch to that expanſe
Of thought, to riſe to that exalted height
Of admiration, to contract that awe, 575
And give her whole capacities that ſtrength
Which beſt may qualify for final joy.
The more our ſpirits are enlarg'd on earth,
The deeper draught ſhall they receive of heav'n. 579
Heav'n's King! whoſe face unveil'd conſummates
Redundant bliſs! which fills that mighty void [bliſs,
The whole creation leaves in human hearts!
Thou! who didſt touch the lip of Jeſſe's ſon,
Rapt in ſweet contemplation of theſe fires,
And ſet his harp in concert with the ſpheres, 585
While of thy works material the Supreme
I dare attempt, aſſiſt my daring ſong:
Looſe me from earth's encloſure; from the ſun's
Contracted circle ſet my heart at large;
Eliminate my ſpirit, give it range 590
Thro' provinces of thought yet unexplor'd;
Teach me, by this ſtupendous ſcaffolding,
Creation's golden ſteps, to climb to thee:
Teach me with art great Nature to control,
And ſpread a luſtre o'er the ſhades of night. 595
Feel I thy kind aſſent? and ſhall the ſun
Be ſeen at midnight riſing in my ſong?
Lorenzo! come, and warm thee; thou whoſe heart,
Whoſe little heart, is moor'd within a nook
Of this obſcure terreſtrial, anchor weigh; 600
Another ocean calls, a nobler port;

I am thy pilot, I thy prosp'rous gale:
Gainful thy voyage thro' yon' azure main,
Main without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore,
And whence thou may'st import eternal wealth, 605
And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold,
Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?
Thou stranger to the world! thy tour begin;
Thy tour thro' Nature's universal orb.
Nature delineates her whole chart at large 610
On soaring souls, that sail among the spheres;
And man how purblind, if unknown the whole!
Who circles spacious earth, then travels here,
Shall own he never was from home before!
Come, my Prometheus*! from thy pointed rock 615
Of false ambition, if unchain'd, we'll mount;
We'll innocently steal celestial fire,
And kindle our devotion at the stars,
A theft that shall not chain, but set thee free.
Above our atmosphere's intestine wars, 620
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail;
Above the northern nests of feather'd snows,
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the caves
Where infant tempests wait their growing wings, 625
And tune their tender voices to that roar,
Which soon perhaps shall shake a guilty world;
Above misconstru'd omens of the sky,

* Night the Eighth.

Far-travell'd comets' calculated blaze,
Elance thy thought, and think of more than man:
Thy ſoul, till now contracted, wither'd, ſhrunk, 631
Blighted by blaſts of earth's unwholeſome air,
Will bloſſom here; ſpread all her faculties
To theſe bright ardours; ev'ry pow'r unfold,
And riſe into ſublimities of thought. 635
Stars teach as well as ſhine. At Nature's birth
Thus their commiſſion ran,—"Be kind to man."
Where art thou poor benighted Traveller!
The ſtars will light thee, tho' the moon ſhould fail.
Where art thou, more benighted! more aſtray! 640
In ways immoral? the ſtars call thee back,
And, if obey'd their counſel, ſet thee right.
This proſpect vaſt, what is it?—Weigh'd aright
'Tis Nature's ſyſtem of divinity,
And ev'ry ſtudent of the night inſpires. 645
'Tis elder Scripture, writ by God's own hand;
Scripture authentick! uncorrupt by man.
Lorenzo! with my radius (the rich gift
Of thought nocturnal!) I'll point out to thee
Its various leſſons; ſome that may ſurpriſe 650
An unadept in myſteries of Night;
Little, perhaps, expected in her ſchool,
Nor thought to grow on planet or on ſtar.
Bulls, lions, ſcorpions, monſters, here we feign,
Ourſelves more monſtrous, not to ſee what here 655
Exiſts indeed,—a lecture to mankind.

What read we here?—th' exiſtence of a God?
Yes; and of other beings man above;
Natives of ether! ſons of higher climes!
And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more, 660
Eternity is written in the ſkies.
And whoſe eternity?—Lorenzo! thine;
Mankind's eternity. Nor faith alone,
Virtue grows here; here ſprings the ſov'reign cure
Of almoſt ev'ry vice, but chiefly thine, 665
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure deſire.
Lorenzo! thou canſt wake at midnight too,
Tho' not on morals bent. Ambition, Pleaſure!
Thoſe tyrants! for thee ſo lately fought *,
Afford their haraſs'd ſlaves but ſlender reſt. 670
Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,
And the ſun's noontide blaze prime dawn of day.
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,
Commencing one of our antipodes!
In thy nocturnal rove one moment halt, 675
'Twixt ſtage and ſtage of riot and cabal,
And lift thine eye, (if bold an eye to lift,
If bold to meet the face of injur'd Heav'n)
To yonder ſtars: for other ends they ſhine
Than to light revellers from ſhame to ſhame, 680
And thus be made accomplices in guilt.
Why from yon' arch, that infinite of ſpace,
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,

* Night the Eighth.

Which ſet the living firmament on fire
At the firſt glance, in ſuch an overwhelm 685
Of wonderful on man's aſtoniſh'd ſight
Ruſhes Omnipotence?—To curb our pride,
Our reaſon rouſe, and lead it to that Pow'r,
Whoſe love lets down theſe ſilver chains of light;
To draw up man's ambition to himſelf, 690
And bind our chaſte affections to his throne.
Thus the three virtues, leaſt alive on earth,
And welcom'd on heav'n's coaſt with moſt applauſe,
An humble, pure, and heav'nly-minded heart,
Are here inſpir'd;—and canſt thou gaze too long?
Nor ſtands thy wrath depriv'd of its reproof, 696
Or unupbraided by this radiant choir.
The planets of each ſyſtem repreſent
Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails;
Sweet interchange of rays, receiv'd, return'd, 700
Enlight'ning and enlighten'd! all, at once,
Attracting and attracted! patriot-like,
None ſins againſt the welfare of the whole;
But their reciprocal, unſelfiſh aid,
Affords an emblem of millennial love. 705
Nothing in nature, much leſs conſcious being,
Was e'er created ſolely for itſelf.
Thus man his ſov'reign duty learns in this
Material picture of benevolence.
And know, of all our ſupercilious race, 710
Thou moſt inflammable! thou waſp of men

Man's angry heart, inſpected, would be found
As rightly ſet as are the ſtarry ſpheres:
'Tis Nature's ſtructure, broke by ſtubborn will,
Breeds all that unceleſtial diſcord there. 715
Wilt thou not feel the bias Nature gave?
Canſt thou deſcend from converſe with the ſkies,
And ſeize thy brother's throat?—For what?—a clod?
An inch of earth? The planets cry, "Forbear."
They chaſe our double darkneſs, Nature's gloom,
And (kinder ſtill!) our intellectual night. 721
And ſee, Day's amiable ſiſter ſends
Her invitation in the ſofteſt rays
Of mitigated luſtre; courts thy ſight,
Which ſuffers from her tyrant brother's blaze. 725
Night grants thee the full freedom of the ſkies,
Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye;
With gain and joy ſhe bribes thee to be wiſe.
Night opes the nobleſt ſcenes, and ſheds an awe
Which gives thoſe venerable ſcenes full weight, 730
And deep reception in th' entender'd heart,
While light peeps thro' the darkneſs like a ſpy,
And darkneſs ſhews its grandeur by the light.
Nor is the profit greater than the joy,
If human hearts at glorious objects glow, 735
And admiration can inſpire delight.
What ſpeak I more than I this moment feel?
With pleaſing ſtupor firſt the ſoul is ſtruck
(Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wiſe!)

Then into tranſport ſtarting from her trance, 740
With love and admiration how ſhe glows!
This gorgeous apparatus! this diſplay!
This oſtentation of creative pow'r!
This theatre!—what eye can take it in?
By what divine enchantment was it rais'd, 745
For minds of the firſt magnitude to lanch
In endleſs ſpeculation, and adore?
One ſun by day, by night ten thouſand ſhine,
And light us deep into the Deity;
How boundleſs in magnificence and might! 750
O what a confluence of ethereal fires,
From urns unnumber'd, down the ſteep of heav'n,
Streams to a point and centres in my ſight!
Nor tarries there; I feel it at my heart:
My heart at once it humbles and exalts; 755
Lays it in duſt, and calls it to the ſkies.
Who ſees it unexalted, or unaw'd?
Who ſees it, and can ſtop at what is ſeen?
Material offſpring of Omnipotence!
Inanimate, all-animating birth! 760
Work worthy him who made it! worthy praiſe!
All praiſe! praiſe more than human! nor deny'd
Thy praiſe divine!—But tho' man, drown'd in ſleep,
Withholds his homage, not alone I wake;
Bright legions ſwarm unſeen, and ſing unheard 765
By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,
In this his univerſal temple hung

With luſtres, with innumerable lights,
That ſhed religion on the ſoul; at once
The temple and the preacher! O how loud 770
It calls devotion! genuine growth of Night!
Devotion! daughter of Aſtronomy!
An undevout aſtronomer is mad.
True; all things ſpeak a God; but in the ſmall
Men trace out him; in great he ſeizes man; 775
Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills
With new inquiries, 'mid aſſociates new.
Tell me, ye Stars! ye Planets! tell me, all
Ye ſtarr'd and planeted Inhabitants! what is it?
What are theſe ſons of wonder? Say, proud Arch, 780
(Within whoſe azure palaces they dwell)
Built with divine ambition! in diſdain
Of limit built! built in the taſte of heav'n!
Vaſt concave! ample dome! waſt thou deſign'd
A meet apartment for the Deity?— 785
Not ſo; that thought alone thy ſtate impairs,
Thy lofty ſinks, and ſhallows thy profound,
And ſtrengthens thy diffuſive; dwarfs the whole,
And makes an univerſe an Orrery.
But when I drop mine eye, and look on man, 790
Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is reſtor'd,
O Nature! wide flies off th' expanding round:
As when whole magazines, at once, are fir'd,
The ſmitten air is hollow'd by the blow,
The vaſt diſploſion diſſipates the clouds, 795

Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies;
Thus (but far more) th' expanding round flies off,
And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,
Might teem with new creation; reinflam'd,
Thy luminaries triumph, and assume 800
Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange
Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,
Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods,
From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in sense:
For sure to sense they truly are divine, 805
And half-absolv'd idolatry from guilt,
Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was
In those who put forth all they had of man
Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher,
But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd, and thought
What was their highest must be their ador'd. 810

But they how weak who could no higher mount?
And are there, then, Lorenzo! those to whom
Unseen, and unexistent are the same!
And if incomprehensible is join'd, 815
Who dare pronounce it madness to believe?
Why has the mighty Builder thrown aside
All measure in his work? stretch'd out his line
So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole?
Then (as he took delight in wide extremes) 820
Deep in the bosom of his universe
Dropp'd down that reas'ning mite, that insect, man,
To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene?——

That man might ne'er preſume to plead amazement
For diſbelief of wonders in himſelf. 825
Shall God be leſs miraculous than what
His hand has form'd? ſhall myſteries deſcend
From unmyſterious? things more elevate
Be more familiar? uncreated lie
More obvious than created to the graſp 830
Of human thought? The more of wonderful
Is heard in him, the more we ſhould aſſent.
Could we conceive him, God he could not be;
Or he not God, or we could not be men.
A God alone can comprehend a God: 835
Man's diſtance how immenſe! On ſuch a theme,
Know this, Lorenzo! (ſeem it ne'er ſo ſtrange)
Nothing can ſatisfy but what confounds;
Nothing but what aſtoniſhes is true.
The ſcene thou ſeeſt atteſts the truth I ſing, 840
And ev'ry ſtar ſheds light upon thy creed.
Theſe ſtars, this furniture, this coſt of Heav'n,
If but reported, thou hadſt ne'er believ'd;
But thine eye tells thee the romance is true.
The grand of Nature is th' Almighty's oath 845
In Reaſon's court, to ſilence Unbelief.

How my mind, op'ning at this ſcene, imbibes
The moral emanations of the ſkies,
While nought, perhaps, Lorenzo leſs admires!
Has the Great Sov'reign ſent ten thouſand worlds
To tell us he reſides above them all 851

In glory's unapproachable receſs?
And dare earth's bold inhabitants deny
The ſumptuous, the magnifick, embaſſy
A moment's audience? Turn we, nor will hear 855
From whom they come, or what they would impart
For man's emolument, ſole cauſe that ſtoops
Their grandeur to man's eye? Lorenzo! rouſe;
Let thought, awaken'd, take the lightning's wing,
And glance from eaſt to weſt, from pole to pole. 860
Who ſees but is confounded, or convinc'd?
Renounces reaſon, or a God adores?
Mankind was ſent into the world to ſee:
Sight gives the ſcience needful to their peace;
That obvious ſcience aſks ſmall learning's aid. 865
Wouldſt thou on metaphyſick pinions ſoar?
Or wound thy patience amid logick thorns?
Or travel hiſtory's enormous round?
Nature no ſuch hard taſk enjoins: ſhe gave
A make to man directive of his thought; 870
A make ſet upright, pointing to the ſtars,
As who ſhall ſay, "Read thy chief leſſon there."
Too late to read this manuſcript of heav'n,
When, like a parchment-ſcroll, ſhrunk up by flames,
It folds Lorenzo's leſſon from his ſight. 875
Leſſon how various! not the God alone,
I ſee his miniſters; I ſee, diffus'd
In radiant orders, eſſences ſublime,
Of various offices, of various plume,

In heav'nly liveries diſtinctly clad, 880
Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
Or all commix'd: they ſtand, with wings outſpread,
Liſt'ning to catch the maſter's leaſt command,
And fly thro' nature ere the moment ends;
Numbers innumerable!—Well conceiv'd 885
By Pagan and by Chriſtian! O'er each ſphere
Preſides an angel to direct its courſe,
And feed, or fan, its flames, or to diſcharge
Other high truſts unknown: for who can ſee
Such pomp of matter, and imagine mind, 890
For which alone inanimate was made,
More ſparingly diſpens'd? that nobler ſon,
Far liker the great Sire!—'Tis thus the ſkies
Inform us of ſuperiours numberleſs,
As much, in excellence, above mankind, 895
As above earth, in magnitude, the ſpheres.
Theſe, as a cloud of witneſſes, hang o'er us.
In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds.
Perhaps a thouſand demi-gods deſcend
On ev'ry beam we ſee to walk with men. 900
Awful reflection! ſtrong reſtraint from ill!
Yet here our virtue finds ſtill ſtronger aid
From theſe ethereal glories ſenſe ſurveys.
Something, like magick, ſtrikes from this blue vault:
With juſt attention is it view'd? we feel 905
A ſudden ſuccour, unimplor'd, unthought.
Nature herſelf does half the work of man.

Seas, rivers, mountains, foreſts, deſerts, rocks,
The promontory's height, the depth profound
Of ſubterranean excavated grots, 910
Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide,
From Nature's ſtructure, or the ſcoop of time;
If ample of dimenſion, vaſt of ſize,
Ev'n theſe an aggrandizing impulſe give;
Of ſolemn thought enthuſiaſtick heights 915
Ev'n theſe infuſe.—But what of vaſt in theſe?
Nothing—or we muſt own the ſkies forgot.
Much leſs in art.—Vain Art! thou pigmy pow'r!
How doſt thou ſwell, and ſtrut, with human pride,
To ſhew thy littleneſs! What childiſh toys, 920
Thy wat'ry columns ſquirted to the clouds!
Thy baſon'd rivers and impriſon'd ſeas!
Thy mountains moulded into forms of men!
Thy hundred gated Capitals! or thoſe
Where three days' travel left us much to ride; 925
Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
Arches triumphal, theatres immenſe,
Or nodding gardens pendent in mid air!
Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way!
Yet theſe affect us in no common kind: 930
What then the force of ſuch ſuperiour ſcenes?
Enter a temple, it will ſtrike an awe:
What awe from this the Deity has built?
A good man ſeen, tho' ſilent, counſel gives:
The touch'd ſpectator wiſhes to be wiſe. 935

In a bright mirror his own hands have made,
Here we ſee ſomething like the face of God.
Seems it not then enough to ſay, Lorenzo,
To man abandon'd, "Haſt thou ſeen the ſkies?"
And yet ſo thwarted Nature's kind deſign 940
By daring man, he makes her ſacred awe
(That guard from ill) his ſhelter, his temptation
To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
Celeſtial Art's intent. The trembling ſtars
See crimes gigantick, ſtalking thro' the gloom 945
With front erect, that hide their head by day,
And making night ſtill darker by their deeds.
Slumb'ring in covert, till the ſhades deſcend,
Rapine and Murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.
The miſer earths his treaſure, and the thief, 950
Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn.
Now plots and foul Conſpiracies awake,
And, muffling up their horrours from the moon,
Havock and devaſtation they prepare,
And kingdoms tott'ring in the field of blood. 955
Now ſons of riot in mid-revel rage.
What ſhall I do?—ſuppreſs it? or proclaim?—
Why ſleeps the thunder? Now, Lorenzo! now
His beſt friend's couch the rank adulterer
Aſcends ſecure, and laughs at gods and men. 960
Prepoſt'rous madmen, void of fear or ſhame,
Lay their crimes bare to theſe chaſte eyes of Heav'n,
Yet ſhrink and ſhudder at a mortal's ſight.

Were moon and ſtars for villains only made
To guide, yet ſcreen them, with tenebrious light?
No; they were made to faſhion the ſublime 966
Of human hearts, and wiſer make the wiſe.
Thoſe ends were anſwer'd once, when mortals liv'd
Of ſtronger wing, of aquiline aſcent,
In theory ſublime. O how unlike 970
Thoſe vermine of the night, this moment ſung,
Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!
Thoſe ancient ſages, human ſtars! they met
Their brothers of the ſkies at midnight hour,
Their counſel aſk'd, and what they aſk'd obey'd.
The Stagirite, and Plato, he who drank 976
The poiſon'd bowl, and he of Tuſculum,
With him of Corduba (immortal names!)
In theſe unbounded and Elyſian walks,
An area fit for gods and godlike men, 980
They took their nightly round, thro' radiant paths,
By ſeraphs trode; inſtructed, chiefly, thus,
To tread in their bright footſteps here below,
To walk in worth ſtill brighter than the ſkies.
There they contracted their contempt of earth; 985
Of hopes eternal kindled there the fire;
There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew
(Great viſitants!) more intimate with God,
More worth to men, more joyous to themſelves.
Thro' various virtues they, with ardour, ran 990
The zodiack of their learn'd illuſtrious lives.

In Christian hearts O for a Pagan zeal!
A needful, but opprobrious pray'r! as much
Our ardour less, as greater is our light.
How monstrous this in morals! Scarce more strange
Would this phenomenon in nature strike, 995
A sun that froze her, or a star that warm'd.
What taught these heroes of the moral world?
To these thou giv'st thy praise, give credit too.
These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee,
And Pagan tutors are thy taste:—they taught 1000
That narrow views betray to misery;
That wise it is to comprehend the whole;
That virtue rose from Nature, ponder'd well,
The single base of virtue built to heav'n; 1005
That God and Nature our attention claim;
That Nature is the glass reflecting God,
As by the sea reflected is the sun,
Too glorious to be gaz'd on in his sphere;
That mind immortal loves immortal aims; 1010
That boundless mind affects a boundless space;
That vast surveys, and the sublime of things,
The soul assimilate, and make her great;
That therefore Heav'n her glories, as a fund
Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man. 1015
Such are their doctrines; such the Night inspir'd.
And what more true? what truth of greater weight?
The soul of man was made to walk the skies,
Delightful outlet of her prison here!

There, disincumber'd from her chains, the ties 1020
Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;
There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
In full proportion let loose all her pow'rs,
And, undeluded, grasp at something great.
Nor as a stranger does she wander there, 1025
But, wonderful herself, thro' wonder strays;
Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own;
Dives deep in their economy divine,
Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
And, like a master, judges not amiss. 1030
Hence greatly pleas'd, and justly proud, the soul
Grows conscious of her birth celestial; breathes
More life, more vigour, in her native air,
And feels herself at home among the stars,
And, feeling, emulates her country's praise. 1035
What call we then the firmament, Lorenzo?—
As earth the body, since the skies sustain
The soul with food that gives immortal life,
Call it the noble pasture of the mind,
Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults,
And riots thro' the luxuries of thought. 1041
Call it the garden of the Deity,
Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth
Of fruit ambrosial, moral fruit to man.
Call it the breastplate of the true High-priest, 1045
Ardent with gems oracular, that give,

In points of highest moment, right response;
And ill-neglected, if we prize our peace.
  Thus have we found a true astrology;
Thus have we found a new and noble sense, 1050
In which alone stars govern human fates.
O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall
Bloodshed, and havock, on embattled realms,
And rescu'd monarchs from so black a guilt!
Bourbon! this wish how gen'rous in a foe! 1055
Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,
And stick thy deathless name among the stars,
For mighty conquests on a needle's point?
Instead of forging chains for foreigners,
Bastile thy tutor; grandeur all thy aim? 1060
As yet thou know'st not what it is. How great,
How glorious, then, appears the mind of man,
When in it all the stars and planets roll!
And what it seems it is. Great objects make
Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge; 1065
Those still more godlike as these more divine.
  And more divine than these thou canst not see.
Dazzled, o'erpow'r'd, with the delicious draught
Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel
From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!
An Eden this! a Paradise unlost! 1071
I meet the Deity in ev'ry view,
And tremble at my nakedness before him!
O that I could but reach the tree of life!

For here it grows unguarded from our taste; 1075
No flaming sword denies our entrance here:
Would man but gather, he might live for ever.
Lorenzo! much of moral hast thou seen:
Of curious arts art thou more fond? then mark
The mathematick glories of the skies, 1080
In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.
Lorenzo's boasted builders, Chance and Fate,
Are left to finish his aërial towers;
Wisdom and Choice their well-known characters
Here deep impress, and claim it for their own. 1085
Tho' splendid all, no splendour void of use.
Use rivals beauty, art contends with pow'r;
No wanton waste amid effuse expense,
The great Economist adjusting all
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise, 1090
How rich the prospect! and for ever new:
And newest to the man that views it most;
For newer still in infinite succeeds.
Then these aërial racers, O how swift!
How the shaft loiters from the strongest string! 1095
Spirit alone can distance the career.
Orb above orb ascending without end!
Circle in circle, without end, enclos'd!
Wheel within wheel, Ezekiel! like to thine!
Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream; 1100
Tho' seen, we labour to believe it true!
What involution! what extent! what swarms
Of worlds, that laugh at earth! immensely great!

Immenſely diſtant from each other's ſpheres!
What, then, the wondrous ſpace thro' which they roll?
At once it quite ingulfs all human thought; 1106
'Tis Comprehenſion's abſolute defeat.
Nor think thou ſeeſt a wild diſorder here:
Thro' this illuſtrious chaos to the ſight,
Arrangement neat, and chaſteſt order, reign. 1110
The path preſcrib'd, inviolably kept,
Upbraids the lawleſs ſallies of mankind.
Worlds ever thwarting never interfere:
What knots are ty'd! how ſoon are they diſſolv'd,
And ſet the ſeeming marry'd planets free! 1115
They rove for ever, without errour rove;
Confuſion unconfus'd! nor leſs admire
This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!
In motion all! yet what profound repoſe!
What fervid action, yet no noiſe! as aw'd 1120
To ſilence by the preſence of their Lord;
Or huſh'd, by his command, in love to man,
And bid let fall ſoft beams on human reſt,
Reſtleſs themſelves. On yon' cerulean plain,
In exultation to their God and thine, 1125
They dance, they ſing eternal jubilee,
Eternal celebration of his praiſe.
But ſince their ſong arrives not at our ear,
Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the ſight
Fair hieroglyphick of his peerleſs pow'r. 1130
Mark how the labyrinthian turns they take,

The circles intricate, and myſtick maze,
Weave the grand cipher of Omnipotence;
To gods how great! how legible to man!
Leaves ſo much wonder greater wonder ſtill? 1135
Where are the pillars that ſupport the ſkies?
What more than Atlantean ſhoulder props
Th'incumbent load? what magick, what ſtrange art,
In fluid air theſe pond'rous orbs ſuſtains?
Who would not think them hung in golden chains?—
And ſo they are; in the high will of Heav'n, 1141
Which fixes all; makes adamant of air,
Or air of adamant; makes all of nought,
Or nought of all, if ſuch the dread decree.
Imagine from their deep foundations torn 1145
The moſt gigantick ſons of earth, the broad
And tow'ring Alps, all toſs'd into the ſea;
And, light as down, or volatile as air,
Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
In time and meaſure exquiſite; while all 1150
The winds, in emulation of the ſpheres,
Tune their ſonorous inſtruments aloft,
The concert ſwell, and animate the ball.
Would this appear amazing? what then worlds
In a far thinner element ſuſtain'd, 1155
And acting the ſame part with greater ſkill,
More rapid movement, and for nobleſt ends?
More obvious ends to paſs, are not theſe ſtars
The ſeats majeſtick, proud imperial thrones,
On which angelick delegates of heav'n, 1160

At certain periods, as the Sov'reign nods,
Discharge high trusts of vengeance or of love,
To clothe in outward grandeur grand design,
And acts most solemn still more solemnize?
Ye Citizens of air! what ardent thanks, 1165
What full effusion of the grateful heart,
Is due from man, indulg'd in such a sight!
A sight so noble! and a sight so kind!
It drops new truths at ev'ry new survey!
Feels not Lorenzo something stir within 1170
That sweeps away all period? As these spheres
Measure duration, they no less inspire
The godlike hope of ages without end.
The boundless space, thro' which these rovers take
Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought 1175
Of boundless time. Thus by kind Nature's skill,
To man unlabour'd, that important guest,
Eternity, finds entrance at the sight;
And an eternity for man ordain'd,
Or these his destin'd midnight counsellors, 1180
The stars, had never whisper'd it to man.
Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons:
Could she then kindle the most ardent wish
To disappoint it?—That is blasphemy.
Thus of thy creed a second article, 1185
Momentous as th' existence of a God.
Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought,
And thou may'st read thy soul immortal here.

Here, then, Lorenzo! on thefe glories dwell,
Nor want the gilt, illuminated roof, 1190
That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
Affemblies?—this is one divinely bright;
Here, unendanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
Range thro' the faireft, and the Sultan fcorn.
He, wife as thou, no Crefcent holds fo fair 1195
As that which on his turbant awes a world,
And thinks the moon is proud to copy him.
Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,
A mind fuperiour to the charms of pow'r.
Thou muffled in delufions of this life! 1200
Can yonder moon turn Ocean in his bed
From fide to fide in conftant ebb and flow,
And purify from ftench his wat'ry realms,
And fails her moral influence? wants fhe pow'r
To turn Lorenzo's ftubborn tide of thought 1205
From ftagnating on earth's infected fhore,
And purge from nuifance his corrupted heart?
Fails her attraction when it draws to heav'n?
Nay, and to what thou valu'ft more, earth's joy?
Minds elevate, and panting for unfeen, 1210
And defecate from fenfe, alone obtain
Full relifh of exiftence undeflow'r'd,
The life of life, the zeft of worldly blifs;
All elfe on earth amounts---to what? to this,
"Bad to be fuffer'd, bleffings to be left:" 1215
Earth's richeft inventory boafts no more.

Of higher ſcenes be then the call obey'd.
O let me gaze!—of gazing there's no end.
O let me think!—thought, too, is wilder'd here;
In midway flight ſmagination tires; 1220
Yet ſoon reprunes her wing to ſoar anew,
Her point unable to forbear or gain;
So great the pleaſure, ſo profound the plan!
A banquet this where men and angels meet,
Eat the ſame manna, mingle earth and heav'n. 1225
How diſtant ſome of theſe nocturnal ſuns!
So diſtant, (ſays the ſage) 't were not abſurd
To doubt if beams, ſet out at Nature's birth,
Are yet arriv'd at this ſo foreign world,
Tho' nothing half ſo rapid as their flight. 1230
An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
And roll for ever. Who can ſatiate ſight
In ſuch a ſcene? in ſuch an ocean wide
Of deep aſtoniſhment? where depth, height, breadth,
Are loſt in their extremes; and where to count 1235
The thick-ſown glories in this field of fire,
Perhaps a ſeraph's computation fails.
Now go, Ambition! boaſt thy boundleſs might
In conqueſt o'er the tenth part of a grain.
And yet Lorenzo calls for miracles, 1240
To give his tott'ring faith a ſolid baſe.
Why call for leſs than is already thine?
Thou art no novice in theology;
What is a miracle?—'t is a reproach,

'Tis an implicit ſatire on mankind, 1245
And while it ſatisfies it cenſures too.
To common-ſenſe great Nature's courſe proclaims
A Deity. When mankind falls aſleep,
A miracle is ſent as an alarm
To wake the world, and prove him o'er again. 1250
By recent argument, but not more ſtrong.
Say which imports more plenitude of pow'r,
Or Nature's laws to fix, or to repeal?
To make a ſun, or ſtop his mid career?
To countermand his orders, and ſend back 1255
The flaming courier to the frighted Eaſt,
Warm'd and aſtoniſh'd at his ev'ning ray;
Or bid the moon, as with her journey tir'd,
In Ajalon's ſoft flow'ry vale repoſe?
Great things are theſe; ſtill greater to create. 1260
From Adam's bow'r look down thro' the whole train
Of miracles;—reſiſtleſs is their pow'r?
They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind,
Than this, call'd unmiraculous ſurvey,
If duly weigh'd, if rationally ſeen, 1265
If ſeen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
Sees nought but ſpangles here; the fool no more.
Say'ſt thou, "The courſe of Nature governs all?"
The courſe of Nature is the art of God.
The miracles thou call'ſt for this atteſt; 1270
For ſay, could Nature Nature's courſe control?

But, miracles apart, who ſees him not
Nature's Controller, Author, Guide, and End?
Who turns his eye on Nature's midnight face,
But muſt inquire--"What hand behind theſcene, 1275
"What arm Almighty, put theſe wheeling globes
"In motion, and wound up the vaſt machine?
"Who rounded in his palm theſe ſpacious orbs?
"Who bowl'd them flaming thro' the dark profound,
"Num'rous as glitt'ring gems of morning-dew, 1280
"Or ſparks from pópulous cities in a blaze,
"And ſet the boſom of Old Night on fire,
"Peopled her deſert, and made Horrour ſmile?"
Or if the military ſtyle delights thee, 1284
(For ſtars have fought their battles, leagu'd with man)
"Who marſhals this bright hoſt? enrols their names,
"Appoints their poſt, their marches, and returns,
"Punctual, at ſtated periods? who diſbands
"Theſe vet'ran troops, their final duty done,
"If e'er diſbanded?"—He whoſe potent word, 1290
Like the loud trumpet, levy'd firſt their pow'rs
In Night's inglorious empire, where they ſlept
In beds of darkneſs; arm'd them with fierce flames;
Arrang'd, and diſciplin'd, and cloth'd in gold,
And call'd them out of Chaos to the field, 1295
Where now they war with Vice and Unbelief.
O let us join this army! joining theſe
Will give us hearts intrepid at that hour
When brighter flames ſhall cut a darker night;

When these strong demonstrations of a God 1300
Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,
And one eternal curtain cover all!
Struck at that thought, as new-awak'd, I lift
A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars
To man still more propitious, and their aid 1305
(Tho' guiltless of idolatry) implore,
Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.
O ye Dividers of my time! ye bright
Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,
In your fair kalendar distinctly mark'd! 1310
Since that authentick, radiant register,
Tho' man inspects it not, stands good against him;
Since you and years roll on, tho' man stands still,
Teach me my days to number, and apply
My trembling heart to wisdom, now beyond 1315
All shadow of excuse for fooling on.
Age smooths our path to prudence; sweeps aside
The snares keen appetite and passion spread
To catch stray souls; and wo to that gray head
Whose folly would undo what age has done! 1320
Aid, then, aid, all ye Stars!—Much rather thou,
Great Artist! thou whose finger set aright
This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,
Tho' intervolv'd, exact, and pointing out
Life's rapid and irrevocable flight, 1325
With such an index fair as none can miss
Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is clos'd;

Open mine eye, dread Deity! to read
The tacit doctrine of thy works; to ſee
Things as they are, unalter'd thro' the glaſs 1330
Of worldly wiſhes. Time, eternity!
('Tis theſe miſmeaſur'd ruin all mankind)
Set them before me; let me lay them both
In equal ſcale, and learn their various weight.
Let time appear a moment, as it is, 1335
And let eternity's full orb, at once,
Turn on my ſoul, and ſtrike it into heav'n.
When ſhall I ſee far more than charms me now,
Gaze on creation's model in thy breaſt
Unveil'd, nor wonder at the tranſcript more? 1340
When this vile, foreign duſt, which ſmothers all
That travel earth's deep vale, ſhall I ſhake off?
When ſhall my ſoul her incarnation quit,
And, readopted to thy bleſs'd embrace,
Obtain her apotheoſis in thee? 1345
Doſt think Lorenzo, this is wand'ring wide?
No; 't is directly ſtriking at the mark
To wake thy dead devotion * was my point;
And how I bleſs Night's conſecrating ſhades,
Which to a temple turn an univerſe, 1350
Fill us with great ideas, full of heav'n,
And antidote the peſtilential earth!
In ev'ry ſtorm that either frowns or falls,
What an aſylum has the ſoul in pray'r!

* Ver. 610.

And what a fane is this in which to pray! 1355
And what a God muſt dwell in ſuch a fane!
O what a genius muſt inform the ſkies!
And is Lorenzo's ſalamander-heart
Cold and untouch'd, amid theſe ſacred fires?
O ye nocturnal Sparks! ye glowing Embers, 1360
On heav'n's broad hearth! who burn, or burn no more,
Who blaze, or die, as great Jehovah's breath
Or blows you or forbears, aſſiſt my ſong;
Pour your whole influence; exerciſe his heart,
So long poſſeſs'd, and bring him back to man. 1365
And is Lorenzo a demurrer ſtill?
Pride in thy parts provokes thee to conteſt
Truths which, conteſted, put thy parts to ſhame:
Nor ſhame they more Lorenzo's head than heart,
A faithleſs heart, how deſpicably ſmall! 1370
Too ſtrait aught great or gen'rous to receive!
Fill'd with an atom! fill'd and foul'd with ſelf!
And ſelf-miſtaken! ſelf, that laſts an hour!
Inſtincts and paſſions of the nobler kind
Lie ſuffocated there, or they alone, 1375
Reaſon apart, would wake high hope, and open,
To raviſh'd thought, that intellectual ſphere,
Where Order, Wiſdom, Goodneſs, Providence,
Their endleſs miracles of love diſplay,
And promiſe all the truly great deſire. 1380
The mind that would be happy muſt be great;
Great in its wiſhes, great in its ſurveys.

Extended views a narrow mind extend,
Pufh out its corrugate, expanfive make,
Which, ere long, more than planets fhall embrace.
A man of compafs makes a man of worth. 1386
Divine contemplate, and become divine.
As man was made for glory and for blifs,
All littlenefs is in approach to wo.
Open thy bofom, fet thy wifhes wide, 1390
And let in manhood; let in happinefs;
Admit the boundlefs theatre of thought
From nothing, up to God, which makes a man.
Take God from Nature, nothing great is left;
Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing fees; 1395
Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.
Emerge from thy profound; erect thine eye;
See thy diftrefs! how clofe art thou befieg'd!
Befieg'd by Nature, the proud fceptick's foe!
Enclos'd by thefe innumerable worlds. 1400
Sparkling conviction on the darkeft mind,
As in a golden net of Providence,
How art thou caught, fure captive of belief!
From this thy blefs'd captivity what art,
What blafphemy to reafon, fets thee free! 1405
This fcene is Heav'n's indulgent violence;
Canft thou bear up againft this tide of glory?
What is earth bofom'd in thefe ambient orbs,
But faith in God impos'd, and prefs'd on man?
Dar'ft thou ftill litigate thy defp'rate caufe, 1410

Spite of these num'rous, awful witnesses,
And doubt the deposition of the skies?
O how laborious is thy way to ruin!
Laborious? 't is impracticable quite:
To sink beyond a doubt in this debate, 1415
With all its weight of wisdom and of will,
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
Some wish they did, but no man disbelieves.
God is a spirit; spirit cannot strike
These gross material organs; God by man 1420
As much is seen as man a God can see
In these astonishing exploits of pow'r.
What order, beauty, motion, distance, size!
Concertion of design, how exquisite!
How complicate in their divine police! 1425
Apt means! great ends! consent to general good!—
Each attribute of these material gods,
So long (and that with specious pleas) ador'd,
A sep'rate conquest gains o'er rebel thought,
And leads in triumph the whole mind of man. 1430
Lorenzo! this may seem harangue to thee;
Such all is apt to seem that thwarts our will,
And dost thou then demand a simple proof
Of this great master moral of the skies,
Unskill'd, or disinclin'd, to read it there? 1435
Since 't is the basis, and all drops without it,
Take it in one compact, unbroken chain;
Such proof insists on an attentive ear,

'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,
And for thy notice ſtruggle with the world. 1440
Retire;—the world ſhut out;—thy thoughts call
Imagination's airy wing repreſs;— [home;—
Lock up thy ſenſes;—let no paſſion ſtir;—
Wake all to Reaſon;—let her reign alone;—
Then in thy ſoul's deep ſilence, and the depth 1445
Of Nature's ſilence, midnight, thus inquire,
As I have done, and ſhall inquire no more.
In Nature's channel thus the queſtions run.
"What am I? and from whence?—I nothing know
"But that I am; and ſince I am, conclude 1450
"Something eternal: had there e'er been nought,
"Nought ſtill had been: eternal there muſt be.—
"But what eternal? Why not human race?
"And Adam's anceſtors without an end?—
"That's hard to be conceiv'd, ſince ev'ry link 1455
"Of that long-chain'd ſucceſſion is ſo frail.
"Can ev'ry part depend, and not the whole?
"Yet grant it true, new difficulties riſe;
"I'm ſtill quite out at ſea, nor ſee the ſhore. 1459
"Whence earth, and theſe bright orbs?---Eternal
"Grant matter was eternal, ſtill theſe orbs [too?---
"Would want ſome other father;---much deſign
"Is ſeen in all their motions, all their makes.
"Deſign implies intelligence and art; 1464
"That cann't be from themſelves---or man: that art
"Man ſcarce can comprehend, could men beſtow?

" And nothing greater yet allow'd than man.---
" Who motion, foreign to the ſmalleſt grain,
" Shot thro' vaſt maſſes of enormous weight ?
" Who bid brute matter's reſtive lump aſſume 1470
" Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly ?
" Has matter innate motion ? then each atom,
" Aſſerting its indiſputable right
" To dance, would form an univerſe of duſt : 1474
" Has matter none? then whence theſe glorious forms
" And boundleſs flights from ſhapeleſs and repos'd?
" Has matter more than motion ? has it thought,
" Judgment, and genius ? is it deeply learn'd
" In mathematicks ? has it fram'd ſuch laws, 1479
" Which but to gueſs a Newton made immortal ?--
" If ſo, how each ſage atom laughs at me,
" Who think a clod inferiour to a man !
" If art to form, and counſel to conduct,
" And that with greater far than human ſkill,
" Reſides not in each block,---a Godhead reigns,---
" Grant, then, inviſible, eternal Mind; 1486
" That granted, all is ſolv'd :---but granting that,
" Draw I not o'er me a ſtill darker cloud ?
" Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive ?
" A being without origin or end !--- 1490
" Hail, human Liberty ! there is no God--
" Yet why ! on either ſcheme that knot ſubſiſts;
" Subſiſt it muſt in God or human race ;
" If in the laſt, how many knots beſide,

"Indissoluble all?---why chuse it there 1495
"Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?
"Reject it where, that chosen, all the rest,
"Dispers'd, leave Reason's whole horizon clear?
"This is not Reason's dictate; Reason says,
"Close with the side where one grain turns the scale,
"What vast preponderance is here! can Reason 1501
"With louder voice exclaim---Believe a God?
"And reason heard, is the sole mark of man.
"What things impossible must man think true
"On any other system? and how strange 1505
"To disbelieve thro' mere credulity!"
If in this chain Lorenzo finds no flaw,
Let it for ever bind him to belief.
And where the link in which a flaw he finds?
And if a God there is, that God how great! 1510
How great that pow'r whose providential care
Thro' these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray!
Of Nature universal threads the whole!
And hangs creation, like a precious gem,
Tho' little on the footstool of his throne! 1515
That little gem how large! A weight let fall
From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach
This distant earth, Say, then, Lorenzo? where,
Where ends this mighty building? where begin
The suburbs of creation? where the wall, 1520
Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
Of nonexistence, Nothing's strange abode!

Say at what point of ſpace Jehovah dropp'd
His ſlacken'd line, and laid his balance by;
Weigh'd worlds, and meaſur'd infinite no more? 1525
Where rears his terminating pillar high
Its extramundane head? and ſays to gods,
In characters illuſtrious as the ſun,
" I ſtand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce
" The work accompliſh'd: the creation clos'd: 1530
" Shout, all ye Gods! nor ſhout, ye Gods, alone;
" Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
" That reſts, or rolls; ye Heights and Depths, reſound!
" Reſound! reſound! ye Depths and Heights, reſound!"
Hard are thoſe queſtions!--anſwer harder ſtill. 1535
Is this the ſole exploit, the ſingle birth,
The ſolitary ſon of Pow'r Divine?
Or has th' Almighty Father with a breath
Impregnated the womb of diſtant Space?
Has he not bid, in various provinces, 1540
Brother-creations the dark bowels burſt
Of Night primeval, barren now no more?
And he the central ſun, tranſpiercing all
Thoſe giant-generations which diſport,
And dance as motes, in his meridian ray, 1545
That ray withdrawn, benighted, or abſorb'd
In that abyſs of horrour whence they ſprung;
While Chaos triumphs, repoſſeſt of all
Rival Creation raviſh'd from his throne?
Chaos! of Nature both the womb and grave; 1550

Think'ſt thou my ſcheme, Lorenzo, ſpreads too [wide?
Is this extravagant?---No! this is juſt;
Juſt in conjecture, tho' 't were falſe in fact.
If 't is an errour, 't is an errour ſprung
From noble root, high thought of the Moſt High. 1555
But wherefore errour? who can prove it ſuch?---
He that can ſet Omnipotence a bound.
Can man conceive beyond what God can do?
Nothing but quite impoſſible is hard.
He ſummons into being, with like eaſe, 1560
A whole creation, and a ſingle grain.
Speaks he the word? a thouſand worlds are born!
A thouſand worlds? there 's ſpace for millions more;
And in what ſpace can his great fiat fail?
Condemn me not, cold Critick! but indulge 1565
The warm imagination: why condemn?
Why not indulge ſuch thoughts as ſwell our hearts
With fuller admiration of that Pow'r
Who gives our hearts with ſuch high thoughts to ſwell?
Why not indulge in his augmented praiſe? 1570
Darts not his glory, a ſtill brighter ray,
The leſs is left to Chaos and the realms
Of hideous Night, where Fancy ſtrays aghaſt,
And, tho' moſt talkative, makes no report?
Still ſeems my thought enormous? think again;---
Experience ſelf ſhall aid thy lame belief. 1576
Glaſſes, (that revelation to the ſight!)
Have they not led us in the deep diſcloſe

Of fine-ſpun Nature, exquiſitely ſmall,
And, tho' demonſtrated, ſtill ill-conceiv'd? 1580
If then on the reverſe the mind would mount
In magnitude, what mind can mount too far,
To keep the balance, and creation poiſe;
Defect alone can err on ſuch a theme:
What is too great, if we the cauſe ſurvey? 1585
Stupendous Architect! thou, thou art all!
My ſoul flies up and down in thoughts of thee,
And finds herſelf but at the centre ſtill!
I Am thy name! exiſtence all thine own!
Creation 's nothing, flatter'd much if ſtyl'd 1590
"The thin, the fleeting atmoſphere of God."
O for the voice—of what? of whom?---what voice
Can anſwer to my wants, in ſuch aſcent
As dares to deem one univerſe too ſmall?
Tell me, Lorenzo! (for now fancy glows, 1595
Fir'd in the vortex of almighty pow'r)
Is not this home creation, in the map
Of univerſal Nature, as a ſpeck,
Like fair Britannia, in our little ball;
Exceeding fair, and glorious, for its ſize, 1600
But, elſewhere, far outmeaſur'd, far outſhone?
In fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)
Canſt thou not figure it, an iſle, almoſt
Too ſmall for notice in the vaſt of being;
Sever'd by mighty ſeas of unbuilt ſpace 1605
From other realms; from ample continents

Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
Lefs northern, lefs remote from Deity,
Glowing beneath the line of the Supreme,
Where fouls in excellence make hafte, put forth
Luxuriant growths, nor the late autumn wait 1611
Of human worth, but ripen foon to gods?
Yet why drown Fancy in fuch depths as thefe?
Return, prefumptuous Rover! and confefs
The bounds of man, nor blame them, as too fmall.
Enjoy we not full fcope in what is feen? 1616
Full ample the dominions of the fun!
Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,
The matchlefs monarch from his flaming throne,
Lavifh of luftre, throws his beams about him, 1620
Farther and fafter than a thought can fly,
And feeds his planets with eternal fires!
This Heliopolis, by greater far
Than the proud tyrant of the Nile was built,
And he alone who built it can deftroy. 1625
Beyond this city why ftrays human thought?
One wonderful enough for man to know!
One infinite enough for man to range!
One firmament enough for man to read!
O what voluminous inftruction here! 1630
What page of wifdom is deny'd him? none,
If learning his chief leffon makes him wife.
Nor is inftruction here our only gain;
There dwells a noble pathos in the fkies,

Which warms our paſſions, proſelytes our hearts.
How eloquently ſhines the glowing pole! 1636
With what authority it gives its charge,
Remonſtrating great truths in ſtyle ſublime,
Tho' ſilent, loud! heard earth around; above
The planets heard; and not unheard in hell; 1640
Hell has her wonder, tho' too proud to praiſe.
Is earth then more infernal? has ſhe thoſe
Who neither praiſe (Lorenzo!) nor admire?
Lorenzo's admiration, preengag'd,
Ne'er aſk'd the moon one queſtion; never held 1645
Leaſt correſpondence with a ſingle ſtar;
Ne'er rear'd an altar to the Queen of heav'n
Walking in brightneſs, or her train ador'd.
Their ſublunary rivals have long ſince
Engroſs'd his whole devotion; ſtars malign, 1650
Which made the fond aſtronomer run mad,
Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart;
Cauſe him to ſacrifice his fame and peace
To momentary madneſs, call'd Delight:
Idolater more groſs than ever kiſs'd 1655
The lifted hand to Luna, or pour'd out
The blood to Jove!—O thou, to whom belongs
All ſacrifice! O thou great Jove unfeign'd!
Divine Inſtructer! thy firſt volume this
For man's peruſal; all in capitals! 1660
In moon and ſtars (heav'n's golden alphabet!)
Emblaz'd to ſeize the ſight, who runs may read;

Who reads can underſtand. 'Tis unconfin'd
To Chriſtian land or Jewry; fairly writ,
In language univerſal to mankind; 1665
A language lofty to the learn'd, yet plain
To thoſe that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
Or from his huſk ſtrike out the bounding grain:
A language worthy the great Mind that ſpeaks!
Preface and comment to the ſacred page! 1670
Which oft' refers its reader to the ſkies,
As preſuppoſing his firſt leſſon there,
And Scripture 'ſelf a fragment, that unread.
Stupendous book of wiſdom to the wiſe!
Stupendous book! and open'd, Night! by thee. 1675
By thee much open'd, I confeſs, O Night!
Yet more I wiſh, but how ſhall I prevail?
Say, gentle Night! whoſe modeſt, maiden beams,
Give us a new creation, and preſent
The world's great picture ſoften'd to the ſight; 1680
Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent ſtill,
Say thou, whoſe mild dominion's ſilver key
Unlocks our hemiſphere, and ſets to view
Worlds beyond number, worlds conceal'd by day
Behind the proud and envious ſtar of noon! 1685
Canſt thou not draw a deeper ſcene,—and ſhew
The Mighty Potentate to whom belong
Theſe rich regalia, pompouſly diſplay'd
To kindle that high hope? Like him of Uz,
I gaze around, I ſearch on ev'ry ſide— 1690

O for a glimpſe of him my ſoul adores!
As the chas'd hart, amid the deſert waſte,
Pants for the living ſtream, for him who made her
So pants the thirſty ſoul amid the blank
Of ſublunary joys. Say, Goddeſs! where? 1695
Where blazes his bright court? where burns his throne?
Thou know'ſt, for thou art near him; by thee, round
His grand pavilion, ſacred Fame reports
The ſable curtain drawn. If not, can none
Of thy fair daughter-train, ſo ſwift of wing, 1700
Who travel far, diſcover where he dwells?
A ſtar his dwelling pointed out below.
Ye Pleiades! Arcturus! Mazaroth!
And thou, Orion! of ſtill keener eye!
Say ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves, 1705
And bring them out of tempeſt into port!
On which hand muſt I bend my courſe to find him?
Theſe courtiers keep the ſecret of their King;
I wake whole nights in vain to ſteal it from them.
I wake, and, waking, climb Night's radiant ſcale
From ſphere to ſphere, the ſteps by Nature ſet 1711
For man's aſcent, at once to tempt and aid;
To tempt his eye, and aid his tow'ring thought,
Till it arrives at the great goal of all.
In ardent Contemplation's rapid car, 1715
From earth, as from my barrier, I ſet out.
How ſwift I mount! diminiſh'd earth recedes:
I paſs the moon; and, from her farther ſide,

Pierce heav'n's blue curtain; ſtrike into remote;
Where, with his lifted tube, the ſubtle ſage 1720
His artificial airy journey takes,
And to celeſtial lengthens human ſight.
I pauſe at ev'ry planet on my road,
And aſk for him who gives their orbs to roll,
Their foreheads fair to ſhine. From Saturn's ring,
In which of earths an army might be loſt, 1726
With the bold comet take my bolder flight,
Amid thoſe ſov'reign glories of the ſkies,
Of independent, native luſtre proud;
The ſouls of ſyſtems! and the lords of life, 1730
Thro' their wide empires!—What behold I now?
A wilderneſs of wonder burning round,
Where larger ſuns inhabit higher ſpheres;
Perhaps the villas of deſcending gods;
Nor halt I here; my toil is but begun; 1735
'Tis but the threſhold of the Deity;
Or, far beneath it, I am grov'lling ſtill,
Nor is it ſtrange; I built on a miſtake:
The grandeur of his works, whence Folly ſought
For aid, to Reaſon ſets his glory higher; 1740
Who built thus high for worms (mere worm to him)
O where, Lorenzo! muſt the builder dwell?
Pauſe, then, and, for a moment, here reſpire—
If human thought can keep its ſtation here.
Where am I?—where is earth?—nay, where art thou,
O Sun?---Is the ſun turn'd recluſe?---and are 1746

His boasted expeditions short to mine?—
To mine how short! On Nature's Alps I stand,
And see a thousand firmaments beneath!
A thousand systems! as a thousand grains! 1750
So much a stranger, and so late arriv'd,
How can man's curious spirit not inquire
What are the natives of this world sublime,
Of this so foreign, unterrestrial sphere,
Where mortal, untranslated, never stray'd? 1755
"O ye, as distant from my little home
" As swiftest sunbeams in an age can fly!
" Far from my native element I roam,
" In quest of new and wonderful to man.
" What province this, of his immense domain, 1760
" Whom all obeys? or mortals here, or gods?
" Ye Bord'rers on the coasts of Bliss! what are you?
" A colony from heav'n? or only rais'd,
" By frequent visit from heav'n's neighb'ring realms,
" To secondary gods, and half divine?— 1765
" Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,
" Far other life you live, far other tongue
" You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
" Than man. How various are the works of God!
" But say, what thought? Is Reason here enthron'd,
" And absolute? or Sense in arms against her? 1770
" Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd?
" Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
" And had your Eden an abstemious Eve?

" Our Eve's fair daughters prove their pedigree, 1775
" And ask their Adams---" Who would not be wise?"
" Or if your mother fell, are you redeem'd?
" And if redeem'd---is your Redeemer scorn'd?
" Is this your final residence? if not,
" Change you your scene translated, or by death?
" And if by death, what death?---Know you dis-
" ease, 1781
" Or horrid war?---With war, this fatal hour,
" Europa groans (so call we a small field
" Where kings run mad.) In our world, Death deputes
" Intemperance to do the work of Age, 1785
" And hanging up the quiver Nature gave him,
" As slow of execution, for dispatch
" Sends forth imperial butchers; bids them slay
" Their sheep, (the silly sheep they fleec'd before)
" And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal. 1790
" Sit all your executioners on thrones?
" With you can rage for plunder make a god?
" And bloodshed wash out ev'ry other stain?---
" But you perhaps cann't bleed: from matter gross
" Your spirits clean are delicately clad 1795
" In fine-spun ether, privileg'd to soar,
" Unloaded, uninfected. How unlike
" The lot of man! how few of human race
" By their own mud unmurder'd! how we wage
" Self-war eternal!—Is your painful day 1800
" Of hardy conflict o'er? or are you still

"Raw candidates at ſchool? and have you thoſe
"Who diſaffect reverſions, as with us?---
"But what are we? you never heard of man,
"Or earth, the bedlam of the univerſe! 1805
"Where Reaſon (undiſeas'd with you) runs mad,
"And nurſes Folly's children as her own,
"Fond of the fouleſt. In the ſacred mount
"Of Holineſs, where Reaſon is pronounc'd
"Infallible, and thunders like a god. 1810
"Ev'n there, by ſaints the demons are outdone;
"What theſe think wrong our ſaints refine to right,
"And kindly teach dull Hell her own black arts;
"Satan, inſtructed, o'er their morals ſmiles.---
"But this how ſtrange to you who know not man?
"Has the leaſt rumour of our race arriv'd? 1816
"Call'd here Elijah in his flaming car?
"Paſt by you the good Enoch, on his road
"To thoſe fair fields whence Lucifer was hurl'd;
"Who bruſh'd perhaps your ſphere in his deſcent,
"Stain'd your pure cryſtal ether, or let fall 1821
"A ſhort eclipſe from his portentous ſhade?
"O that the fiend had lodg'd on ſome broad orb
"Athwart his way, nor reach'd his preſent home,
"Then blacken'd earth, with footſteps foul'd in hell,
"Nor waſh'd in ocean, as from Rome he paſt 1826
"To Britain's iſle, too, too conſpicuous there."
But this is all digreſſion. Where is he
That o'er heav'n's battlements the felon hurl'd

To groans, and chains, and darkneſs? where is he
Who ſees creation's ſummit in a vale? 1830
He whom, while man is man, he cann't but ſeek,
And, if he finds, commences more than man?
O for a teleſcope his throne to reach!
Tell me, ye Learn'd on earth! or Bleſs'd above! 1835
Ye ſearching, ye Newtonian angels! tell
Where your Great Maſter's orb? his planets where?
Thoſe conſcious ſatellites, thoſe morning-ſtars,
Firſt-born of Deity! from central love,
By veneration moſt profound, thrown off; 1840
By ſweet attraction no leſs ſtrongly drawn;
Aw'd, and yet raptur'd; raptur'd, yet ſerene;
Paſt thought illuſtrious, but with borrow'd beams;
In ſtill approaching circles ſtill remote,
Revolving round the ſun's eternal Sire? 1845
Or ſent, in lines direct, on embaſſies
To nations---in what latitude?---beyond
Terreſtrial thought's horizon!---and on what
High errands ſent?---Here human effort ends,
And leaves me ſtill a ſtranger to his throne. 1850
Full well it might! I quite miſtook my road;
Born in an age more curious than devout,
More fond to fix the place of heav'n or hell,
Than ſtudious this to ſhun, or that ſecure.
'Tis not the curious but the pious path 1855
That Leads me to my point. Lorenzo! know,
Without or ſtar or angel for their guide,

Who worſhip God ſhall find him. Humble Love,
And not proud Reaſon, keeps the door of heav'n;
Love finds admiſſion where proud Science fails. 1860
Man's ſcience is the culture of his heart,
And not to loſe his plumbet in the depths
Of Nature, or the more profound of God:
Either to know is an attempt that ſets
The wiſeſt on a level with the fool. 1865
To fathom Nature (ill-attempted here!)
Paſt doubt is deep philoſophy above;
Higher degrees in bliſs archangels take,
As deeper learn'd, the deepeſt learning ſtill.
For what a thunder of omnipotence 1870
(So might I dare to ſpeak) is ſeen in all!
In man! in earth! in more amazing ſkies!
Teaching this leſſon Pride is loath to learn---
"Not deeply to diſcern, nor much to know,
"Mankind was born to wonder and adore." 1875
And is there cauſe for higher wonder ſtill
Than that which ſtruck us from our paſt ſurveys?
Yes; and for deeper adoration too.
From my late airy travel unconfin'd,
Have I learn'd nothing?---Yes, Lorenzo! this; 1880
Each of theſe ſtars is a religious houſe;
I ſaw their altars ſmoke, their incenſe riſe,
And heard hoſannas ring thro' ev'ry ſphere,
A ſeminary fraught with future gods.
Nature all o'er is conſecrated ground. 1885

Teeming with growths immortal and divine.
The great Proprietor's all-bounteous hand
Leaves nothing waſte, but ſows theſe fiery fields
With ſeeds of Reaſon, which to virtues riſe
Beneath his genial ray; and, if eſcap'd 1890
The peſtilential blaſts of ſtubborn will,
When grown mature are gather'd for the ſkies.
And is devotion thought too much on earth,
When beings, ſo ſuperiour, homage boaſt,
And triumph in proſtrations to the throne? 1895
But wherefore more of planets or of ſtars?
Ethereal journies, and, diſcover'd there,
Ten thouſand worlds, ten thouſand ways devout,
All Nature ſending incenſe to the throne,
Except the bold Lorenzos of our ſphere? 1900
Op'ning the ſolemn ſources of my ſoul,
Since I have pour'd, like feign'd Eridanus,
My flowing numbers o'er the flaming ſkies,
Nor ſee of fancy or of fact what more
Invites the Muſe—here turn we and review 1905
Our paſt nocturnal landſcape wide;—then ſay,
Say, then, Lorenzo! with what burſt of heart
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
Muſt man exclaim, adoring, and aghaſt?
"O what root! O what branch, is here! 1910
"O what a Father! what a family?
"Worlds! ſyſtems! and creations!—and creations,
"In one agglomerated cluſter, hung,

" Great Vine *! on thee, on thee the cluſter hangs,
" The filial cluſter! infinitely ſpread 1915
" In glowing globes, with various being fraught,
" And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.
" Or, ſhall I ſay (for who can ſay enough?)
" A conſtellation of ten thouſand gems, 1919
" (And, O! of what dimenſion! of what weight!)
" Set in one ſignet, flames on the right hand
" Of Majeſty Divine! the blazing ſeal,
" That deeply ſtamps, on all created mind,
" Indelible, his ſovereign attributes,
" Omnipotence and Love! that paſſing bound, 1925
" And this ſurpaſſing that. Nor ſtop we here
" For want of pow'r in God, but thought in man.
" Ev'n this acknowledg'd leaves us ſtill in debt;
" If greater aught, that greater all is thine,
" Dread Sire!—Accept this miniature of thee, 1930
" And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
" In which archangels might have fail'd unblam'd."
How ſuch ideas of th' Almighty's pow'r,
And ſuch ideas of the Almighty's plan,
(Ideas not abſurd) diſtend the thought 1935
Of feeble mortals! nor of them alone!
The fulneſs of the Deity breaks forth
In inconceivables to men and gods.
Think then, O think, nor ever drop the thought,
How low muſt man deſcend when gods adore! 1940

* John xv. 1.

Have I not then accomplish'd my proud boast?
Did I not tell thee "We would mount *, Lorenzo!
"And kindle our devotion at the stars?"
And have I fail'd? and did I flatter thee?
And art all adamant? and dost confute, 1945
All urg'd, with one irrefragable smile?
Lorenzo! mirth how miserable here!
Swear by the stars, by Him who made them swear,
Thy heart henceforth shall be as pure as they;
Then thou, like them, shalt shine; like them shall rise
From low to lofty, from obscure to bright, 1951
By due gradation, Nature's sacred law.
The stars from whence?—Ask Chaos—he can tell.
These bright temptations to idolatry
From darkness and confusion took their birth; 1955
Sons of Deformity! from fluid dregs
Tartarean first they rose to masses rude,
And then to spheres opaque; then dimly shone,
Then brighten'd; then blaz'd out in perfect day,
Nature delights in progress, in advance 1960
From worse to better; but when minds ascend,
Progress in part depends upon themselves.
Heav'n aids exertion. Greater makes the great.
The voluntary little lessens more.
O be a man! and thou shalt be a god! 1965
And half self-made!—ambition how divine!
O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone!
Still undevout? unkindled?—tho' high taught,

* Ver. 616.

School'd by the ſkies, and pupil of the ſtars,
Rank coward to the faſhionable world! 1970
Art thou aſham'd to bend thy knee to Heav'n?
Curs'd fume of pride, exhal'd from deepeſt hell!
Pride in religion is man's higheſt praiſe.
Bent on deſtruction! and in love with death!
Not all theſe luminaries, quench'd at once, 1975
Were half ſo ſad as one benighted mind,
Which gropes for happineſs, and meets deſpair.
How, like a widow in her weeds, the Night,
Amid her glimm'ring tapers, ſilent ſits!
How ſorrowful, how deſolate, ſhe weeps 1980
Perpetual dews, and ſaddens Nature's ſcene!
A ſcene more ſad ſin makes the darken'd ſoul,
All comfort kills, nor leaves one ſpark alive.
Tho' blind of heart, ſtill open is thine eye.
Why ſuch magnificence in all thou ſeeſt? 1985
Of matter's grandeur, know one end is this,
To tell the rational, who gazes on it,—
"Tho' that immenſely great, ſtill greater he
"Whoſe breaſt, capacious, can embrace and lodge,
"Unburden'd, Nature's univerſal ſcheme; 1990
"Can graſp creation with a ſingle thought;
"Creation graſp, and not exclude its Sire."—
To tell him farther—"It behoves him much
"To guard th' important yet depending fate
"Of being, brighter than a thouſand ſuns; 1995
"One ſingle ray of thought outſhines them all."—

And if man hears obedient, ſoon he 'll ſoar
Superiour heights, and on his purple wing,
His purple wing bedropp'd with eyes of gold,
Riſing, where thought is now deny'd to riſe, 2000
Look down triumphant on theſe dazzling ſpheres.
Why then perſiſt?—no mortal ever liv'd
But, dying, he pronounc'd (when words are true)
The whole that charms thee abſolutely vain;
Vain, and far worſe!—Think thou with dying men;
O condeſcend to think as angels think! 2006
O tolerate a chance for happineſs!
Our nature ſuch, ill choice enſures ill fate;
And hell had been, tho' there had been no God.
Doſt thou not know, my new Aſtronomer! 2010
Earth, turning from the ſun, brings night to man?
Man, turning from his God, brings endleſs night;
Where thou canſt read no morals, find no friend,
Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
How deep the darkneſs! and the groan how loud! 2015
And far, how far, from lambent are the flames!—
Such is Lorenzo's purchaſe! ſuch his praiſe!
The proud, the politick, Lorenzo's praiſe!
Tho' in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,
I've half read o'er the volume of the ſkies. 2020
For think not thou haſt heard all this from me;
My ſong but echoes what great Nature ſpeaks.
What has ſhe ſpoken? Thus the goddeſs ſpoke,
Thus ſpeaks for ever;—"Place, at Nature's head

" A Sov'reign which o'er all things rolls his eye, 2025
" Extends his wing, promulgates his commands,
" But, above all, diffuſes endleſs good,
" To whom, for ſure redreſs, the wrong'd may fly,
" The vile for mercy, and the pain'd for peace;
" By whom the various tenants of theſe ſpheres,
" Diverſify'd in fortunes, place, and pow'rs, 2031
" Rais'd in enjoyment, as in worth they riſe,
" Arrive at length (if worthy ſuch approach)
" At that bleſs'd fountain-head from which they [ſtream,
" Where conflict paſt redoubles preſent joy,
" And preſent joy looks forward on increaſe, 2036
" And that on more; no period! ev'ry ſtep
" A double boon! a promiſe and a bliſs."
How eaſy ſits this ſcheme on human hearts!
It ſuits their make, it ſooths their vaſt deſires; 2040
Paſſion is pleas'd, and Reaſon aſks no more:
'Tis rational! 't is great!---but what is thine?
It darkens! ſhocks! excruciates! and confounds!
Leaves us quite naked, both of help and hope,
Sinking from bad to worſe; few years the ſport
of Fortune, then the morſel of Deſpair. 2046

Say, then, Lorenzo! (for thou know'ſt it well)
What's vice?—mere want of compaſs in our thought.
Religion what?---the proof of common-ſenſe.
How art thou hooted where the leaſt prevails! 2050
Is it my fault if theſe truths call thee Fool?
And thou ſhalt never be miſcall'd by me,

Can neither Shame nor Terrour ſtand thy friend?
And art thou ſtill an inſect in the mire?
How like thy guardian angel have I flown, 2055
Snatch'd thee from earth, eſcorted thee thro' all
Th' ethereal armies, walk'd thee, like a god,
Thro' ſplendours of firſt magnitude, arrang'd
On either hand; clouds thrown beneath thy feet;
Cloſe-cruis'd on the bright paradiſe of God, 2060
And almoſt introduc'd thee to the throne!
And art thou ſtill carouſing, for delight,
Rank poiſon? firſt fermenting to mere froth,
And then ſubſiding into final gall?
To beings of ſublime, immortal make, 2065
How ſhocking is all joy whoſe end is ſure!
Such joy more ſhocking ſtill, the more it charms!
And doſt thou chuſe what ends ere well begun,
And infamous as ſhort? and doſt thou chuſe
(Thou to whoſe palate glory is ſo ſweet) 2070
To wade into perdition thro' contempt,
Not of poor bigots only, but thy own?
For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
And ſeen it bluſh beneath a boaſtful brow;
For by ſtrong Guilt's moſt violent aſſault, 2075
Conſcience is but diſabled, not deſtroy'd.
O thou moſt awful being! and moſt vain!
Thy will how frail! how glorious is thy pow'r;
Tho' dread Eternity has ſown her ſeeds
Of bliſs and wo in thy deſpotick breaſt; 2080

Tho' heav'n and hell depend upon thy choice,
A butterfly comes crofs, and both are fled.
Is this the picture of a rational?
This horrid image, fhall it be moft juft?
Lorenzo! no; it cannot,—fhall not be, 2085
If there is force in reafon, or in founds
Chanted beneath the glimpfes of the moon
A magick, at this planetary hour,
When flumber locks the gen'ral lip, and dreams,
Thro' fenfelefs mazes, hunt fouls uninfpir'd. 2090
Attend—the facred myfteries begin——
My folemn nightborn adjuration hear;
Hear, and I'll raife thy fpirit from the duft,
While the ftars gaze on this enchantment new;
Enchantment not infernal, but divine! 2095
" By Silence, Death's peculiar attribute;
" By Darknefs, Guilt's inevitable doom;
" By Darknefs and by Silence, fifters dread!
" That draw the curtain round Night's ebon throne,
" And raife ideas folemn as the fcene! 2100
" By Night, and all of awful Night prefents
" To thought or fenfe (of awful much to both,
" The goddefs brings!) By thefe her trembling fires
" Like Vefta's, ever-burning, and, like her's,
" Sacred to thoughts immaculate and pure! 2105
" By thefe bright orators that prove and praife,
" And prefs thee to revere the Deity,
" Perhaps, too, aid thee, when rever'd, awhile,

" To reach his throne, as ſtages of the ſoul 2109
" Thro' which, at different periods, ſhe ſhall paſs,
" refining gradual, for her final height,
" And purging off ſome droſs at ev'ry ſphere!
" By this dark pall thrown o'er the ſilent world!
" By the world's kings and kingdoms moſt renown'd,
" From ſhort Ambition's zenith ſet for ever, 2115
" Sad preſage to vain boaſters, now in bloom!
" By the long liſt of ſwift mortality,
" From Adam downward to this ev'ning knell,
" Which midnight waves in fancy's ſtartled eye, 2119
" And ſhocks her with an hundred centuries, [thought!
" Round Death's black banner throng'd in human
" By thouſands, now, reſigning their laſt breath,
" And calling thee—wert thou ſo wiſe to hear!
" By tombs o'er tombs ariſing, human earth
" Ejected, to make room for—human earth, 2125
" The monarch's terrour! and the ſexton's trade!
" By pompous obſequies that ſhun the day,
" The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,
" Which makes poor man's humiliation proud,
" Boaſt of our ruin! triumph of our duſt! 2130
" By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones,
" And the pale lamp that ſhews the ghaſtly dead,
" More ghaſtly thro' the thick incumbent gloom!
" By viſits (if there are) from darker ſcenes,
" The gliding ſpectre! and the groaning grove! 2135
" By groans, and graves, and miſeries that groan

"! For the grave's ſhelter! By deſponding men,
" Senſeleſs to pains of death from pangs of guilt!
" By Guilt's laſt audit! By yon' moon in blood,
" The rocking firmament, the falling ſtars, 2140
" And thunder's laſt diſcharge, great Nature's knell!
" By ſecond Chaos, and eternal Night,"—
Be wiſe—nor let Philander blame my charm;
But own not ill diſcharg'd my double debt,
Love to the living, duty to the dead. 2145
For know I 'm but executer; he left
This moral legacy; I make it o'er
By his command: Philander hear in me,
And Heav'n in both.—If deaf to theſe, oh! hear
Florello's tender voice; his weal depends 2150
On thy reſolve; it trembles at thy choice:
For his ſake—love thyſelf: example ſtrikes
All human hearts; a bad example more,
More ſtill a father's; that enſures his ruin.
As parent of his being, wouldſt thou prove 2155
Th' unnatural parent of his miſeries,
And make him curſe the being which thou gav'ſt?
Is this the bleſſing of ſo fond a father?
If careleſs of Lorenzo, ſpare, oh! ſpare
Florello's father, and Philander's friend! 2160
Florello's father ruin'd, ruins him;
And from Philander's friend the world expects
A conduct no diſhonour to the dead.
Let paſſion do what nobler motive ſhould;

Let love and emulation rise in aid 2165
To reason, and persuade thee to be—bless'd.
This seems not a request to be deny'd;
Yet (such the infatuation of mankind!)
'Tis the most hopeless man can make to man.
Shall I then rise in argument and warmth? 2170
And urge Philander's posthumous advice,
From topicks yet unbroach'd?——
But, oh! I faint! my spirits fail!—nor strange!
So long on wing, and in no middle clime!
To which my great Creator's glory call'd; 2175
And calls—but now in vain. Sleep's dewy wand
Has strok'd my drooping lips, and promises
My long arrear of rest: the downy god
(Wont to return with our returning peace)
Will pay, ere long, and bless me with repose. 2180
Haste, haste, sweet Stranger! from the peasant's cot,
The shipboy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,
Whence Sorrow never chas'd thee; with thee bring
Not hideous visions, as of late, but draughts
Delicious of well-tasted cordial rest, 2185
Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,
That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play
The various movements of this nice machine,
Which asks such frequent periods of repair.
When tir'd with vain rotations of the day 2190
Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn,
Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,

Or death quite breaks the ſpring, and motion ends:
When will it end with me?
——" Thou only know'ſt, 2195
" Thou, whoſe broad eye the future and the paſt
" Joins to the preſent, making one of three
" To moral thought! thou know'ſt, and thou alone,
" All-knowing!--all unknown! and yet well known!
" Near, tho' remote! and, tho' unfathom'd, felt!
" And, tho' inviſible, for ever ſeen! 2201
" And ſeen in all! the great and the minute:
" Each globe above, with its gigantick race,
" Each flow'r, each leaf, with its ſmall people ſwarm'd,
" (Thoſe puny vouchers of Omnipotence!) 2205
" To the firſt thought that aſks 'From whence?' declare
" Their common ſource: thou fountain, running o'er
" In rivers of communicated joy!
" Who gav'ſt us ſpeech for far, far humbler themes!
" Say by what name ſhall I preſume to call 2210
" Him I ſee burning in theſe countleſs ſuns,
" As Moſes in the buſh? Illuſtrious Mind!
" The whole creation leſs, far leſs, to thee,
" Than that to the creation's ample round, 2214
" How ſhall I name thee?—How my lab'ring ſoul
" Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!
" Great Syſtem of perfections! mighty Cauſe
" Of cauſes mighty! Cauſe uncaus'd! ſole root
" Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of God!
" Firſt Father of effects! that progeny 2220

" Of endleſs ſeries, where the golden chain's
" Laſt link admits a period who can tell?
" Father of all that is or heard or hears!
" Father of all that is or ſeen or ſees!
" Father of all that is or ſhall ariſe! 2225
" Father of this immeaſurable maſs
" Of matter multiform, or denſe or rare,
" Opaque or lucid, rapid or at reſt,
" Minute, or paſſing bound! in each extreme
" Of like amaze and myſtery to man. 2230
" Father of theſe bright millions of the night!
" Of which the leaſt full Godhead had proclaim'd,
" And thrown the gazer on his knee—Or, ſay,
" Is appellation higher ſtill thy choice?
" Father of matter's temporary lords! 2235
" Father of ſpirits! nobler offspring! ſparks
" Of high paternal glory, rich endow'd
" With various meaſures, and with various modes
" Of inſtinct, reaſon, intuition; beams
" More pale or bright from day divine, to break
" The dark of matter organiz'd (the ware 2241
" Of all created ſpirit) beams that riſe
" Each over other in ſuperiour light,
" Till the laſt ripens into luſtre ſtrong,
" Of next approach to Godhead. Father fond 2245
" (Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)
" Of intellectual beings! beings bleſs'd
" With pow'rs to pleaſe thee, not of paſſive ply

" To laws they know not; beings lodg'd in ſeats
" Of well-adapted joys, in different domes 2250
" Of this imperial palace for thy ſons;
" Of this proud, populous, well-policy'd,
" Tho' boundleſs habitation, plann'd by thee;
" Whoſe ſev'ral clans their ſev'ral climates ſuit,
" And tranſpoſition doubtleſs would deſtroy. 2255
" Or, oh! indulge, immortal King! indulge
" A title leſs auguſt, indeed, but more
" Endearing; ah! how ſweet in human ears!
" Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts!
" Father of immortality to man! 2260
" A theme that lately * ſet my ſoul on fire—
" And thou the next! yet equal! thou by whom
" That bleſſing was convey'd, far more! was bought,
" Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds 2264
" Were made, and one redeem'd! illuſtrious Light
" From light illuſtrious! thou, whoſe regal pow'r,
" Finite in time, but infinite in ſpace,
" On more than adamantine baſis fix'd,
" O'er more, far more, than diadems and thrones
" Inviolably reigns, the dread of gods! 2270
" And, oh! the friend of man! beneath whoſe foot,
" And by the mandate of whoſe awful nod,
" All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
" Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll
" Thro' the ſhort channels of expiring time, 2275

* Nights the Sixth and Seventh.

" Or ſhoreleſs ocean of eternity,
" Calm or tempeſtuous (as thy Spirit breathes)
" In abſolute ſubjection!---And, O thou!
" The glorious Third! diſtinct, not ſeparate!
" Beaming from both! with both incorporate, 2280
" And (ſtrange to tell!) incorporate with duſt!
" By condeſcenſion, as thy glory great,
" Inſhrin'd in man! of human hearts, if pure,
" Divine inhabitant! the tie divine
" Of heav'n with diſtant earth! by whom, I truſt,
" (If not inſpir'd) uncenſur'd this addreſs 2286
" To thee, to them---to whom?---myſteriouspow'r!
" Reveal'd---yet unreveal'd! darkneſs in light!
" Number in unity! our joy! our dread!
" The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin! 2290
" That animates all right, the triple ſun!
" Sun of the ſoul! her never-ſetting ſun!
" Triune, unutterable, unconceiv'd,
" Abſconding, yet demonſtrable. Great God!
" Greater than greateſt! better than the beſt! 2295
" Kinder than kindeſt! with ſoft Pity's eye,
" Or (ſtronger ſtill to ſpeak it) with thine own,
" From thy bright home, from that high firmament
" Where thou, from all eternity haſt dwelt;
" Beyond archangels' unaſſiſted ken, 2300
" From far above what mortals higheſt call,
" From Elevation's pinnacle, look down,
" Thro'---what? confounding interval! thro' all,

" And more, than lab'ring Fancy can conceive;
" Thro' radiant ranks of essences unknown; 2305
" Thro' hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd
" Round various banners of Omnipotence,
" With endless change of rapturous duties fir'd;
" Thro' wondrous beings' interposing swarms,
" All clust'ring at the call, to dwell in thee; 2310
" Thro' this wide waste of worlds! this vista vast,
" All sanded o'er with suns, suns turn'd to night
" Before thy feeblest beam---look down---down---
" On a poor breathing particle in dust, [down,
" Or, lower, an immortal in his crimes: 2315
" His crimes forgive! forgive his virtues too!
" Those smaller faults, half-converts to the right:
" Nor let me close these eyes, which never more
" May see the sun (tho' Night's descending scale
" Now weighs up Morn) unpity'd and unbless'd!
" In thy displeasure dwells eternal pain; 2321
" Pain, our aversion; pain, which strikes me now;
" And, since all pain is terrible to man,
" Tho' transient, terrible, at thy good hour,
" Gently, ah, gently, lay me in my bed, 2325
" My clay-cold bed! by nature, now, so near;
" By nature near, still nearer by disease!
" Till then be this an emblem of my grave;
" Let it outpreach the preacher; ev'ry night
" Let it outcry the boy at Philip's ear, 2330
" That tongue of death! that herald of the tomb!

" And when (the ſhelter of thy wing implor'd)
" My ſenſes, ſooth'd, ſhall ſink in ſoft repoſe,
" O ſink this truth ſtill deeper in my ſoul,
" Suggeſted by my pillow, ſign'd by Fate, 2335
" Firſt in Fate's volume, at the page of Man—
" " Man's ſickly ſoul, tho' turn'd and toſs'd for ever
" From ſide to ſide, can reſt on nought but thee;
" Here in full truſt, hereafter in full joy:"
" On thee, the promis'd, ſure, eternal down 2340
" Of ſpirits, toil'd in travel thro' this vale:
" Nor of that pillow ſhall my ſoul deſpond;
" For—Love almighty! Love almighty! (ſing,
" Exult, Creation!) Love almighty reigns!
" That death of death! that cordial of deſpair!
" And loud Eternity's triumphant ſong! 2346
" Of whom no more:—for, O thou Patron-God!
" Thou God and mortal! thence more God to man!
" Man's theme eternal! man's eternal theme!
" Thou canſt not 'ſcape uninjur'd from our praiſe:
" Uninjur'd from our praiſe can he eſcape 2351
" Who, diſembroſom'd from the Father, bows
" The heav'n of heav'n's to kiſs the diſtant earth!
" Breathes out in agonies a ſinleſs ſoul!
" Againſt the croſs Death's iron ſceptre breaks!
" From famiſh'd Ruin plucks her human prey! 2356
" Throws wide the gates celeſtial to his foes!
" Their gratitude, for ſuch a boundleſs debt,
" Deputes their ſuff'ring brothers to receive!

" And if deep human guilt in payment fails, 2360
" As deeper guilt prohibits our despair!
" Enjoins it, as our duty, to rejoice!
" And (to close all) omnipotently kind,
" Takes his delights among the sons of men *."
What words are these---and did they come from heav'n? 2365
And were they spoke to man? to guilty man?
What are all mysteries to love like this?
The songs of angels, all the melodies
Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound;
Heal and exhilarate the broken heart. 2370
Tho' plung'd, before, in horrours dark as night:
Rich prelibation of consummate joy!
Nor wait we dissolution to be bless'd.
This final effort of the moral Muse,
How justly *titled* †! nor for me alone; 2375
For all that read. What spirit of support,
What heights of Consolation, crown my song!
Then farewell Night! of darkness, now no more;
Joy breaks, shines, triumphs; 't is eternal day.
Shall that which rises out of nought complain 2380
Of a few evils, paid with endless joys?
My Soul! henceforth, in sweetest union join
The two supports of human happiness,
Which some, erroneous, think can never meet,
True taste of life, and constant thought of death!

* Prov. chap. viii. † The Consolation.

The thought of death, ſole victor of its dread! 2386
Hope be thy joy, and probity thy ſkill;
Thy patron he whoſe diadem has dropp'd
Yon' gems of heav'n, eternity thy prize;
And leave the racers of the world their own, 2390
Their feather and their froth, for endleſs toils:
They part with all for that which is not bread;
They mortify, they ſtarve, on wealth, fame, pow'r,
And laugh to ſcorn the fools that aim at more.
How muſt a ſpirit, late eſcap'd from earth, 2395
Suppoſe Philander's, Lucia's, or Narciſſa's,
The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
Look back, aſtoniſh'd on the ways of men,
Whoſe lives' whole drift is to forget their graves!
And when our preſent privilege is paſt, 2400
To ſcourge us with due ſenſe of its abuſe,
The ſame aſtoniſhment will ſeize us all.
What then muſt pain us would preſerve us now.
Lorenzo! 't is not yet too late. Lorenzo!
Seize wiſdom, ere 't is torment to be wiſe; 2405
That is, ſeize Wiſdom ere ſhe ſeizes thee.
For what, my ſmall Philoſopher! is hell?
'Tis nothing but full knowledge of the truth,
When Truth, reſiſted long, is ſworn our foe,
And calls eternity to do her right. 2410

Thus darkneſs aiding intellectual light,
And ſacred Silence whiſp'ring truths divine,
And truths divine converting pain to peace,

My ſong the midnight raven has outwing'd,
And ſhot, ambitious of unbounded ſcenes, 2415
Beyond the flaming limits of the world
Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
Of fancy, when our hearts remain below?
Virtue abounds in flatterers and foes;
'Tis pride to praiſe her, penance to perform. 2420
To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
Lorenzo! riſe, at this auſpicious hour,
An hour when Heav'n 's moſt intimate with man;
When, like a falling ſtar, the ray divine
Glides ſwift into the boſom of the juſt; 2425
And juſt are all determin'd to reclaim,
Which ſets that title high within thy reach.
Awake then; thy Philander calls: awake!
Thou, who ſhalt wake when the Creation ſleeps;
When, like a taper, all theſe ſuns expire; 2430
When Time, like him of Gaza in his wrath,
Plucking the pillars that ſupport the world,
In Nature's ample ruins lies entomb'd,
And midnight, univerſal midnight! reigns. 2434

End of Night-Thoughts.

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From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
May 29. 1784.

END OF VOLUME SECOND.