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THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH:
A
POEM.

A NEW EDITION.

[Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]

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THE
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OF PRESERVING
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A
POEM.
By JOHN ARMSTRONG, M.D.



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THE

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OF THE

INDUSTRIAL

REVOLUTION

IN THE

UNITED STATES

OF AMERICA

1880

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK I.

AIR.

DAUGHTER of Pæon, queen of every joy,
HYGEIA*; whose indulgent smile sustains,
The various race luxuriant nature pours,
And on th' immortal essences bestows
Immortal youth; auspicious, O descend!
Thou chearful guardian of the rolling year,

*Hygeia, the goddess of health, was, according to the genealogy of the heathen deities, the daughter of Æsculapius; who, as well as Apollo, was distinguished by the name of Pæon.

Whether thou wanton'ft on the western gale,
 Or fhak'ft the rigid pinions of the north,
 Diffufeft life and vigour thro' the tracts
 Of air, thro' earth, and ocean's deep domain. 10
 When thro' the blue ferenity of heaven
 Thy power approaches, all the wafeful hoft
 Of Pain and Sicknefs, fqualid and deform'd,
 Confounded funk into the loathfome gloom,
 Where, in deep Erebus involv'd, the fiends 15
 Grow more profane. Whatever fapes of death,
 Shook from the hideous chambers of the globe,
 Swarm thro' the fhudd'ring air : whatever plagues
 Or meagre famine breeds, or with flow wings
 Rife from the putrid watry element, 20
 The damp wafte foreft, motionlefs and rank,
 That fmothers earth and all the breathlefs winds,
 Or the vile carnage of th' inhuman field ;
 Whatever baneful breathes the rotten South ;
 Whatever ills th' extremes or fudden change 25
 Of cold and hot, or moift and dry produce ;
 They fly thy pure effulgence : they, and all
 The fecret poifons of avenging heaven,
 And all the pale tribes halting in the train
 Of Vice and heedlefs Pleafure : or if aught 30
 The comet's glare amid the burning fky,

Mournful

Book I. PRESERVING HEALTH. 3

Mournful eclipse, or planets ill-combin'd,
Portend disastrous to the vital world ;
Thy salutary power averts their rage,
Averts the general bane : and but for thee 35
Nature would sicken, nature soon would die.

Without thy chearful active energy
No rapture swells the breast, no poet sings,
No more the maids of Helicon delight.
Come then with me, O Goddess heavenly gay! 40
Begin the song ; and let it sweetly flow,
And let it wisely teach thy wholesome laws :
“ How best the fickle fabric to support
“ Of mortal man ; in healful body how
“ A healthful mind the longest to maintain.” 45
'Tis hard, in such a strife of rules, to chuse
The best, and those of most extensive use ;
Harder in clear and animated song
Dry philosophic precepts to convey.
Yet with thy aid the secret wilds I trace 50
Of nature, and with daring steps proceed
Thro' paths the Muses never trod before.

Nor should I wander, doubtful of my way,
Had I the lights of that sagacious mind

Which taught to check the pestilential fire, 55
 And quell the deadly Python of the Nile.
 O thou, belov'd by all the graceful arts,
 Thou, long the fav'rite of the healing powers,
 Indulge, O MEAD! a well-design'd essay.
 Howe'er imperfect: and permit that I 60
 My little knowledge with my country share,
 Till you the rich Asclepian stores unlock,
 And with new graces dignify the theme.

YE who amid this feverish world would wear
 A body free of pain, of cares a mind; 65
 Fly the rank city, shun its turbid air;
 Breathe not the chaos of eternal smoke
 And volatile corruption, from the dead,
 The dying, sickning, and the living world
 Exhal'd, to fully heaven's transparent dome 70
 With dim mortality. It is not Air
 That from a thousand lungs reeks back to thine,
 Sated with exhalations rank and fell,
 The spoil of dunghills, and the putrid thaw
 Of nature; when from shape and texture she 75
 Relapses into fighting elements:
 It is not Air, but floats a nauseous mass
 Of all obscene, corrupt, offensive things.

Book I. PRESERVING HEALTH. 5

Much moisture hurts ; but here a fordid bath,
With oily rancour fraught, relaxes more 80
The solid frame than simple moisture can.
Besides, immur'd in many a fullen bay
That never felt the freshness of the breeze,
This flumbring Deep remains, and ranker grows
With sickly rest : and (tho' the lungs abhor 85
To drink the dun fuliginous abyfs)
Did not the acid vigour of the mine,
Roll'd from so many thundring chimneys, tame
The putrid steams that overwarm the sky ;
This caustic venom would perhaps corrode 90
Those tender cells that draw the vital air,
In vain with all their unctuous rills bedew'd ;
Or by the drunken venous tubes, that yawn
In countless pores o'er all the pervious skin,
Imbib'd, would poison the balsamic blood, 95
And rouse the heart to every fever's rage,
While yet you breathe, away ; the rural wilds
Invite ; the mountains call you, and the vales ;
The woods, the streams, and each ambrosial breeze
That fans the ever undulating sky ; 100
A kindly sky ! whose fost'ring pow'r regales
Man, beast, and all the vegetable reign.
Find then some woodland scene where Nature smiles

Benign, where all her honest children thrive.
 To us there wants not many a happy Seat ; 105
 Look round the smiling land, such numbers rise
 We hardly fix, bewilder'd in our choice.
 See where, enthron'd in adamantinè state,
 Proud of her bards, imperial Windfor sits ;
 There chuse thy seat, in some aspiring grove 110
 Fast by the slowly-winding Thames ; or where
 Broader she laves fair Richmond's green retreats,
 (Richmond that sees an hundred villas rise
 Rural or gay). O! from the summer's rage,
 O! wrap me in the friendly gloom that hides 115
 Umbrageous Ham ! But if the busy Town
 Attract thee still to toil for power or gold,
 Sweetly thou mayst thy vacant hours possess
 In Hampstead, courted by the western wind ;
 Or Greenwich, waving o'er the winding flood ; 120
 Or lose the world amid the sylvan wilds
 Of Dulwich, yet by barbarous arts unspoil'd.
 Green rise the Kentish hills in chearful air ;
 But on the marshy plains that Essex spreads
 Build not, nor rest too long thy wand'ring feet. 125
 For on a rustic throne of dewy turf,
 With baneful fogs her aching temples bound,
 Quartana there presides : a meagre Fiend

Book I. PRESERVING HEALTH.

7

Begot by Eurus, when his brutal force
Compress'd the slothful Naiad of the Fens. 130
From such a mixture sprung, this fitful pest
With sev'rish blasts subdues the sickning land:
Cold tremors come, with mighty love of rest,
Convulsive yawnings, lassitude, and pains
That sting the burden'd brows, fatigue the loins, 135
And rack the joints, and every torpid limb;
Then parching heat succeeds, till copious sweats
O'erflow: a short relief from former ills.
Beneath repeated shocks the wretches pine;
The vigour sinks, the habit melts away; 140
The chearful, pure, and animated bloom
Dies from the face, with squalid atrophy
Devour'd, in fallow melancholy clad.
And oft the Sorceress, in her fated wrath,
Resigns them to the furies of her train; 145
The bloated Hydrops, and the yellow fiend
Ting'd with her own accumulated gall.

In quest of Sites, avoid the mournful plain
Where osiers thrive, and trees that love the lake;
Where many lazy muddy rivers flow: 150
Nor, for the wealth that all the Indies roll,
Fix near the marshy margin of the main.

For from the humid soil, and watry reign,
 Eternal vapours rise ; the spongy air
 For ever weeps ; or, turgid with the weight 155
 Of waters, pours a sounding deluge down.
 Skies such as these let ev'ry mortal shun
 Who dreads the dropsy, palsy, or the gout,
 Tertian, corrosive scurvy, or moist catarrh ;
 Or any other injury that grows 160
 From raw-spun fibres idle and unstrung,
 Skin ill-perspiring, and the purple flood
 In languid eddies loitering into phlegm.

Yet not alone from humid skies we pine ;
 For Air may be too dry. The subtle heaven, 165
 That winnows into dust the blasted downs,
 Bare and extended wide without a stream,
 Too fast imbibes th' attenuated lymph,
 Which, by the surface, from the blood exhales.
 The lungs grow rigid, and with toil essay 170
 Their flexible vibrations ; or inflam'd,
 Their tender ever-moving structure thaws.
 Spoil'd of its limpid vehicle, the blood
 A mass of lees remains, a droffy tide
 That flow as Lethe wanders thro' the veins ; 175
 Unactive in the services of life,

Unfit

Book I. PRESERVING HEALTH.

9

Unfit to lead its pitchy current thro'
The secret mazy channels of the brain.
The melancholic Fiend (that worst despair
Of phyc), hence the rust-complexion'd man 180
Pursues, whose blood is dry, whose fibres gain
Too stretch'd a tone : And hence in climes adust
So sudden tumults seize the trembling nerves,
And burning fevers glow with double rage.

Fly, if you can, these violent extremes 185
Of Air ; the wholesome is nor moist nor dry.
But as the power of chusing is deny'd
To half mankind, a further task ensues ;
How best to mitigate these fell extremes,
How breathe unhurt the withering element, 190
Or hazy atmosphere : Tho' Custom moulds
To ev'ry clime the soft Promethean clay ;
And he who first the fogs of Essex breath'd,
(So kind is native air) may in the fens
Of Essex from inveterate ills revive, 195
At pure Montpelier or Bermuda caught.
But if the raw and oozy heaven offend,
Correct the soil, and dry the sources up
Of watry exhalation ; wide and deep
Conduct your trenches thro' the quaking bog ; 200
Solicitous, with all your winding arts,

Betray

Betray th' unwilling lake into the stream ;
 And weed the forest, and invoke the winds
 To break the toils where strangled vapours lie ;
 Or thro' the thickets fend the crackling flames. 205
 Mean time, at home with chearful fires dispel
 The humid air : And let your table smoke
 With solid roast or bak'd ; or what the herds
 Of tamer breed supply ; or what the wilds
 Yield to the toilsom pleasures of the chase. 210
 Generous your wine, the boast of rip'ning years,
 But frugal be your cups ; the languid frame,
 Vapid and sunk from yesterday's debauch,
 Shrinks from the cold embrace of watry heavens.
 But neither these, nor all Apollo's arts, 215
 Difarm the dangers of the dropping sky,
 Unless with exercise and manly toil
 You brace your nerves, and spur the lagging blood.
 The fat'ning clime let all the sons of ease
 Avoid ; if indolence would wish to live. 220
 Go, yawn and loiter out the long slow year
 In fairer skies. If drougthy regions parch
 The skin and lungs, and bake the thickening blood ;
 Deep in the waving forest chuse your seat,
 Where fuming trees refresh the thirsty air ; 225
 And wake the fountains from their secret beds,
 And into lakes dilate the rapid stream.

Here

Book I. PRESERVING HEALTH.

11

Here spread your gardens wide ; and let the cool,
The moist relaxing vegetable store
Prevail in each repast : Your food supplied 230
By bleeding life, be gently wasted down,
By soft decoction and a mellowing heat.
To liquid balm ; or, if the solid mass
You chuse, tormented in the boiling wave ;
That thro' the thirsty channels of the blood 235
A smooth diluted chyle may ever flow.
The fragrant dairy from its cold recess
Its nectar acid or benign will pour
To drown your thirst ; or let the mantling bowl
Of keen Sherbet the fickle taste relieve, 240
For with the viscous blood the simple stream
Will hardly mingle ; and fermented cups
Oft dissipate more moisture than they give.
Yet when pale seasons rise, or winter rolls
His horrors o'er the world, thou may'st indulge 245
In feasts more genial, and impatient broach
The mellow cask. Then too the scourging air
Provokes to keener toils than sultry droughts
Allow. But rarely we such skies blaspheme.
Steep'd in continual rains, or with raw fogs 250
Bedew'd, our Seasons droop : incumbent still
A ponderous heaven o'erwhelms the sinking soul.

Lab'ring

Lab'ring with storms in heapy mountains rise
 Th' imbattled clouds, as if the Stygian shades
 Had left the dungeon of eternal night, 255
 Till black with thunder all the South descends.
 Scarce in a showerless day the heavens indulge
 Our melting clime ; except the baleful East
 Withers the tender spring, and sourly checks
 The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk 260
 Of summers, balmy airs, and skies serene.
 Good heaven ! for what unexpiated crimes
 This dismal change ! The brooding elements
 Do they, your powerful ministers of wrath,
 Prepare some fierce exterminating plague ? 265
 Or is it fix'd in the decrees above
 That lofty Albion melt into the main ?
 Indulgent nature ! O dissolve this gloom !
 Bind in eternal adamant the winds
 That drown or wither : Give the genial West 270
 To breathe, and in its turn the sprightly North :
 And may once more the circling seasons rule
 The year ; not mix in every monstrous day.

Mean time, the moist malignity to shun
 Of burthen'd skies ; mark where the dry champaign 275
 Swells into chearful hills ; where Marjoram

And

Book I. PRESERVING HEALTH. 13

And Thyme, the love of bees, perfume the air ;
And where the * Cynorrhodon with the rose
For fragrance vies ; for in the thirsty foil
Most fragrant breathe the aromatic tribes. 280

There bid thy roofs high on the basking steep
Ascend, there light thy hospitable fires.
And let them see the winter morn arise,
The summer evening blushing in the west ;
While with umbrageous oaks the ridge behind 285
O'erhung, defends you from the blust'ring north,
And bleak affliction of the peevish east.

O ! when the growling winds contend, and all
The sounding forest fluctuates in the storm ;
To sink in warm repose, and hear the din 290
Howl o'er the steady battlements, delights
Above the luxury of vulgar sleep.

The murmuring rivulet, and the hoarser strain
Of waters rushing o'er the slippery rocks,
Will nightly lull you to ambrosial rest. 295

To please the fancy is no trifling good,
Where health is studied ; for whatever moves
The mind with calm delight, promotes the just
And natural movements of th' harmonious frame.
Besides, the sportive brook for ever shakes 300

* The wild rose, or that which grows on the common briar.

The trembling air; that floats from hill to hill,
 From vale to mountain, with incessant change
 Of purest element, refreshing still
 Your airy seat, and uninfected Gods.
 Chiefly for this I praise the man who builds
 High on the breezy ridge, whose lofty sides
 Th' ethereal deep with endless billows chafes.
 His purer mansion nor contagious years
 Shall reach, nor deadly putrid airs annoy.

But may no fogs, from lake or fenny plain,
 Involve my hill! And wheresoe'er you build;
 Whether on sun-burnt Epsom, or the plains
 Wash'd by the silent Lee; in Chelsea low,
 Or high Blackheath with wintry winds assail'd;
 Dry be your house: but airy more than warm.
 Else every breath of ruder wind will strike
 Your tender body thro' with rapid pains;
 Fierce coughs will teize you, hoarseness bind your voice,
 Or moist Gravedo load your aching brows.
 These to defy, and all the fates that dwell,
 In cloister'd air tainted with steaming life,
 Let lofty ceilings grace your ample rooms;
 And still at azure noontide may your dome
 At every window drink the liquid sky.

Book I. PRESERVING HEALTH. 15

Need we the sunny situation here, 325
And theatres open to the south, commend?
Here, where the morning's misty breath infests
More than the torrid noon? How sickly grow,
How pale, the plants in those ill fated vales
That, circled round with the gigantic heap 330
Of mountains, never felt, nor ever hope
To feel, the genial vigour of the sun!
While on the neighbouring hill the rose inflames
The verdant spring; in virgin beauty blows
The tender lily, languishingly sweet; 335
O'er every hedge the wanton woodbine roves,
And autumn ripens in the summer's ray.
Nor less the warmer living tribes demand
The soft'ring sun: whose energy divine
Dwells not in mortal fire; whose gen'rous heat 340
Glow thro' the mass of grosser elements,
And kindles into life the ponderous spheres.
Chear'd by thy kind invigorating warmth,
We court thy beams, great majesty of day!
If not the soul, the regent of this world, 345
First-born of heaven, and only less than God!

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THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK II.

DIET.

ENOUGH of Air. A desert subject now,
Rougher and wilder, rises to my sight.
A barren waste, where not a garland grows
To bind the Muse's brow ; not ev'n a proud
Stupendous solitude frowns o'er the heath,
To rouse a noble horror in the soul :
But rugged paths fatigue, and error leads
Thro' endless labyrinths the devious feet.
Farewel, ethereal fields ! the humbler arts

Of life ; the Table and the homely Gods, 10
Demand my song. Elyfian gales adieu !

The blood, the fountain whence the spirits flow,
The generous stream that waters every part,
And motion, vigour, and warm life conveys
To every particle that moves or lives ; 15
This vital fluid, thro' unnumber'd tubes
Pour'd by the heart, and to the heart again
Refunded ; scourg'd for ever round and round ;
Enrag'd with heat and toil, at last forgets
Its balmy nature ; virulent and thin 20
It grows ; and now, but that a thousand gates
Are open to its flight, it would destroy
The parts it cherish'd and repair'd before.
Besides, the flexible and tender tubes
Melt in the mildest most nectareous tide 25
That ripening nature rolls ; as in the stream
Its crumbling banks ; but what the vital force
Of plastic fluids hourly batters down,
That very force, those plastic particles
Rebuild : So mutable the state of man. 30
For this the watchful appetite was giv'n,
Daily with fresh materials to repair
This unavoidable expence of life,
This necessary waste of flesh and blood.

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 21

Hence the concoctive powers, with various art, 35
Subdue the cruder aliments to chyle ;
The chyle to blood ; the foamy purple tide
To liquors, which thro' finer arteries
To different parts their winding course pursue ;
To try new changes, and new forms put on, 40
Or for the public, or some private use.

Nothing so foreign but th' athletic hind
Can labour into blood. The hungry meal
Alone he fears, or aliments too thin ;
By violent powers too easily subdu'd, 45
Too soon expell'd. His daily labour thaws,
To friendly chyle, the most rebellious mass
That salt can harden, or the smoke of years ;
Nor does his gorge the rancid bacon rue,
Nor that which Cestria sends, tenacious paste 50
Of solid milk. But ye of softer clay,
Infirm and delicate ! and ye who waste
With pale and bloated sloth the tedious day !
Avoid the stubborn aliment, avoid
The full repast ; and let sagacious age 55
Grow wiser, lesson'd by the dropping teeth.

Half subtiliz'd to chyle, the liquid food
Readiest obeys th' assimilating powers ;

And soon the tender vegetable mass
 Relents ; and soon the young of those that tread 60
 The steadfast earth, or cleave the green abyss,
 Or pathless sky. And if the Steer must fall,
 In youth and sanguine vigour let him die ;
 Nor stay till rigid age, or heavy ails,
 Absolve him ill-requited from the yoke. 65
 Some with high forage, and luxuriant ease,
 Indulge the veteran Ox ; but wiser thou,
 From the bald mountain or the barren downs,
 Expect the flocks by frugal nature fed ;
 A race of purer blood, with exercise 70
 Refin'd and scanty fare : For, old or young,
 The stall'd are never healthy ; nor the cramm'd.
 Not all the culinary arts can tame,
 To wholesome food, the abominable growth
 Of rest and gluttony ; the prudent taste 75
 Rejects like bane such loathsome lusciousness.
 The languid stomach curses even the pure
 Delicious fat, and all the race of oil :
 For more the oily aliments relax
 Its feeble tone ; and with the eager lymph 80
 (Fond to incorporate with all it meets)
 Coily they mix, and shun with slippery wiles
 The woo'd embrace. Th' irresoluble oil,
 So gentle late and blandishing, in floods

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 23

Of rancid bile o'erflows : What tumults hence, 85
What horrors rise, were nauseous to relate.
Chuse leaner viands, ye whose jovial make
Too fast the gummy nutriment imbibes :
Chuse sober meals ; and rouse to active life
Your cumbrous clay ; nor on th' enfeebling down, 90
Irresolute, protract the morning hours.
But let the man whose bones are thinly clad,
With chearful ease and succulent repast
Improve his slender habit. Each extreme
From the blest mean of sanity departs. 95

I could relate what table this demands
Or that complexion ; what the various powers
Of various foods : But fifty years would roll,
And fifty more, before the tale were done.
Besides there often lurks some nameless, strange, 100
Peculiar thing ; nor on the skin display'd,
Felt in the pulse, nor in the habit seen ;
Which finds a poison in the food that most
The temp'ature affects. There are, whose blood
Impetuous rages thro' the turgid veins, 105
Who better bear the fiery fruits of Ind
Than the moist Melon, or pale Cucumber.
Of chilly nature others fly the board
Supply'd with slaughter, and the vernal powers

For cooler, kinder, sustenance implore. 110
 Some even the generous nutriment detest
 Which, in the shell, the sleeping embryo rears.
 Some, more unhappy still, repent the gifts
 Of Pales; soft, delicious and benign:
 The balmy quintessence of every flower, 115
 And every grateful herb that decks the spring;
 The fost'ring dew of tender sprouting life;
 The best refection of declining age;
 The kind restorative of those who lie
 Half-dead and panting, from the doubtful strife 120
 Of nature struggling in the grasp of death.
 Try all the bounties of this fertile globe,
 There is not such a salutary food
 As suits with every stomach. But (except,
 Amid the mingled mass of fish and fowl, 125
 And boil'd and bak'd, you hesitate by which
 You sunk oppress'd, or whether not by all;)
 Taught by experience soon you may discern
 What pleases, what offends. Avoid the cates
 That lull the sicken'd appetite too long; 130
 Or heave with fev'rish flushings all the face,
 Burn in the palms, and parch the roughning tongue;
 Or much diminish or too much increase
 Th' expence, which nature's wise œconomy,
 Without

Book III PRESERVING HEALTH. 25

Without or waste or avarice, maintains 135
Such cates abjur'd, let prouling hunger loose,
And bid the curious palate roam at will ;
They scarce can err amid the various stores
That buri't the teeming entrails of the world.

Led by sagacious taste, the ruthless king 140
Of beasts on blood and slaughter only lives ;
The tiger, form'd alike to cruel meals,
Would at the manger starve : Of milder feeds
The generous horse to herbage and to grain
Confines his wish ; tho' fabling Greece resound 145
The Thracian feeds with human carnage wild.
Prompted by instinct's never-erring power,
Each creature knows its proper aliment ;
But man, th' inhabitant of ev'ry clime,
With all the commoners of nature feeds. 150
Directed, bounded, by this power within,
Their cravings are well-aim'd : Voluptuous Man
Is by superior faculties misled :
Misled from pleasure even in quest of joy.
Sated with nature's boons, what thousands seek, 155
With dishes tortur'd from their native taste,
And mad variety, to spur beyond
Its wifer will the jaded appetite!

Is this for pleasure? Learn a juster taste;
And know, that temperance is true luxury. 160

Or is it pride? Pursue some nobler aim.
Dismiss your parasites, who praise for hire;
And earn the fair esteem of honest men,
Whose praise is fame. Form'd of such clay as yours,
The sick, the needy, shiver at your gates. 165

Even modest want may bless your hand unseen,
Tho' hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.
Is there no virgin, grac'd with every charm
But that which binds the mercenary vow?
No youth of genius, whose neglected bloom 170

Unfoster'd sicken in the barren shade?
No worthy man, by fortune's random blows,
Or by a heart too generous and humane,
Constrain'd to leave his happy natal seat,
And sigh for wants more bitter than his own? 175

There are, while human miseries abound,
A thousand ways to waste superfluous wealth,
Without one fool or flatterer at your board,
Without one hour of sickness or disgust.

But other ills th' ambiguous feast pursue, 180
Besides provoking the lascivious taste.

Such various foods, tho' harmless each alone,

Each

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 27

Each other violate; and oft we see
What strife is brew'd, and what pernicious bane,
From combinations of innoxious things. 185

Th' unbounded taste I mean not to confine
To hermit's diet, needlessly severe.

But would you long the sweets of health enjoy,
Or husband pleasure; at one impious meal
Exhaust not half the bounties of the year, 190

Of every realm. It matters not mean while
How much to-morrow differ from to-day;

So far indulge: 'tis fit, besides, that man,
To change obnoxious, be to change inur'd.

But stay the curious appetite, and taste 195
With caution fruits you never tried before.

For want of use the kindest aliment
Sometimes offends; while custom tames the rage
Of poison to mild amity with life.

So heav'n has form'd us to the general taste 200

Of all its gifts; so custom has improv'd
This bent of nature; that few simple foods,

Of all that earth, or air, or ocean yield,

But by excess offend. Beyond the sense

Of light refection, at the genial board 205

Indulge not often; nor protract the feast

To

To dull satiety ; till soft and flow
 A drowzy death creeps on, th' expansive soul
 Oppress'd, and smother'd the celestial fire.
 The stomach, urg'd beyond its active tone, 210
 Hardly to nutrimental chyle subdues
 The softest food : unfinished and deprav'd,
 The chyle, in all its future wanderings, owns
 Its turbid fountain ; not by purer streams
 So to be clear'd, but foulness will remain. 215
 To sparkling wine what ferment can exalt
 Th' unripen'd grape ? Or what mechanic skill
 From the crude ore can spin the ductile gold ?

Gross riot treasures up a wealthy fund
 Of plagues : but more immedicable ills 220
 Attend the lean extreme. For physic knows
 How to disburden the too tumid veins,
 Even how to ripen the half-labour'd blood :
 But to unlock the elemental tubes,
 Collaps'd and shrunk with long inanity, 225
 And with balsamic nutriment repair
 The dried and worn-out habit, were to bid
 Old age grow green, and wear a second spring ;
 Or the tall ash, long ravish'd from the soil,
 Thro' wither'd veins imbibe the vernal dew. 230
 When hunger calls, obey ; nor often wait

Till

Till hunger sharpen to corrosive pain :
 For the keen appetite will feast beyond
 What nature well can bear ; and one extreme
 Ne'er without danger meets its own reverse. 235
 Too greedily th' exhausted veins absorb
 The recent chyle, and load enfeebled powers
 Oft to th' extinction of the vital flame.
 To the pale cities, by the firm-set siege
 And famine humbled, may this verse be borne ; 240
 And hear, ye hardiest sons that Albion breeds
 Long tofs'd and famish'd on the wintry main ;
 The war shook off, or hospitable shore
 Attain'd, with temperance bear the shock of joy ;
 Nor crown with festive rites th' auspicious day : 245
 Such feast might prove more fatal than the waves,
 Than war or famine. While the vital fire
 Burns feebly, heap not the green fuel on ;
 But prudently foment the wandering spark
 With what the soonest feels its kindred touch : 250
 Be frugal ev'n of that : a little give
 At first ; that kindled, add a little more ;
 Till, by deliberate nourishing, the flame
 Reviv'd, with all its wonted vigour glows.

But

But tho' the two (the full and the jejune) 255
 Extremes have each their vice; it much avails
 Ever with gentle tide to ebb and flow
 From this to that: So nature learns to bear
 Whatever chance or headlong appetite
 May bring. Besides, a meagre day subdues 260
 The cruder clods by sloth or luxury
 Collected, and unloads the wheels of life.
 Sometimes a coy aversion to the feast
 Comes on, while yet no blacker omen lours;
 Then is a time to shun the tempting board, 265
 Were it your natal or your nuptial day.
 Perhaps a fast so seasonable starves
 The latent seeds of woe, which rooted once
 Might cost you labour. But the day return'd
 Of festal luxury, the wise indulge 270
 Most in the tender vegetable breed:
 Then chiefly when the summer beams inflame
 The brazen heavens; or angry Sirius sheds
 A feverish taint thro' the still gulph of air.
 The moist cool viands then, and flowing cup 275
 From the fresh dairy-virgin's liberal hand,
 Will save your head from harm, tho' round the world
 The dreaded * Causos roll his wasteful fires.
 Pale humid Winter loves the generous board,

* The burning fever.

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 31

The meal more copious, and a warmer fare ; 280
And longs with old wood and old wine to cheer
His quaking heart. The seasons which divide
Th' empires of heat and cold ; by neither claim'd,
Influenc'd by both ; a middle regimen
Impose. Thro' autumn's languishing domain 285
Descending, nature by degrees invites
To glowing luxury. But from the depth
Of winter, when th' invigorated year
Emerges ; when Favonius flush'd with love,
Toysful and young, in every breeze descends 290
More warm and wanton on his kindling bride ;
Then, shepherds, then begin to spare your flocks ;
And learn, with wise humanity, to check
The lust of blood. Now pregnant earth commits
A various offspring to th' indulgent sky : 295
Now bounteous nature feeds with lavish hand
The prone creation ; yields what once suffic'd
Their dainty sovereign, when the world was young ;
Ere yet the barbarous thirst of blood had seiz'd
The human breast. Each rolling month matures 300
The food that suits it most ; so does each clime.

Far in the horrid realms of Winter, where
Th' establish'd ocean heaps a monstrous waste

Of shining rocks and mountains to the pole ;
 There lives a hardy race, whose plainest wants 305
 Relentless earth, their cruel step-mother,
 Regards not. On the waste of iron fields,
 Untam'd, intractable, no harvests wave :
 Pomona hates them, and the clownish god
 Who tends the garden. In this frozen world 310
 Such cooling gifts were vain : a fitter meal
 Is earn'd with ease ; for here the fruitful spawn
 Of Ocean swarms, and heaps their genial board
 With generous fare and luxury profuse.
 These are their bread, the only bread they know ; 315
 These, and their willing slave the deer that crops
 The shrubby herbage on their meagre hills.
 Girt by the burning Zone, not thus the South
 Her swarthy sons in either Ind maintains :
 Or thirly Libya ; from whose fervid loins 320
 The lion bursts, and every fiend that roams
 Th' affrighted wilderness. The mountain herd,
 Adult and dry, no sweet repast affords ;
 Nor does the tepid main such kinds produce,
 So perfect, so delicious, as the shoals 325
 Of icy Zembla. Rashly where the blood
 Brews feverish frays ; where scarce the tubes sustain
 Its tumid fervour and tempestuous course ;
 Kind

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 33

Kind Nature tempts not to such gifts as these.
But here in livid ripeness melts the Grape: 336
Here, finish'd by invigorating suns,
Thro' the green shade the golden Orange glows:
Spontaneous here the turgid Melon yields
A generous pulp; the Coco swells on high
With milky riches; and in horrid mail 335
The crisp Ananas wraps its poignant sweets.
Earth's vaunted progeny: In ruder air
Too coy to flourish, even too proud to live;
Or hardly rais'd by artificial fire
To vapid life. Here with a mother's smile 340
Glad Amalthea pours a copious horn.
Here buxom Ceres reigns: Th' autumnal sea
In boundless billows fluctuates o'er their plains.
What suits the climate best, what suits the men,
Nature profuses most, and most the taste 345
Demands. The fountain, edg'd with racy wine
Or acid fruit, bedews their thirsty souls.
The breeze eternal breathing round their limbs
Supports in else intolerable air:
While the cool Palm, the Plantain, and the grove 350
That waves on gloomy Lebanon, assuage
The torrid hell that beams upon their heads.

Now come, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead;
 Now let me wander thro' your gelid reign,
 I burn to view th' enthusiastic wilds 355
 By mortal else untrod. I hear the din
 Of waters thundring o'er the ruin'd cliffs.
 With holy reverence I approach the rocks
 Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.
 Here from the desert down the rumbling steep 360
 First springs the Nile; here bursts the sounding Po
 In angry waves; Euphrates hence devolves
 A mighty flood to water half the East;
 And there, in Gothic solitude reclin'd,
 The cheerless Tanais pours his hoary urn. 365
 What solemn twilight! What stupendous shades
 Enwrap these infant floods! Thro' every nerve
 A sacred horror thrills, a pleasing fear
 Glides o'er my frame. The forest deepens round;
 And, more gigantic still, th' impending trees 370
 Stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom.
 Are these the confines of some fairy world?
 A land of Genii? Say, beyond these wilds
 What unknown nations? If indeed beyond
 Aught habitable lies. And whither leads, 375
 To what strange regions, or of bliss or pain,
 That subterraneous way? Propitious maids,

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 35

Conduct me, while with fearful steps I tread
This trembling ground. The task remains to sing
Your gifts (so Pæon, so the powers of health 380
Command) to praise your crystal element:
The chief ingredient in heaven's various works;
Whose flexile genius sparkles in the gem,
Grows firm in oak, and fugitive in wine;
The vehicle, the source, of nutriment 385
And life, to all that vegetate or live.

O comfortable streams! With eager lips
And trembling hand the languid thirsty quaff
New life in you; fresh vigour fills their veins.
No warmer cups the rural ages knew; 390
None warmer fought the fires of human kind.
Happy in temperate peace! Their equal days
Felt not th' alternate fits of feverish mirth,
And sick dejection. Still serene and pleas'd,
They knew no pains but what the tender soul 395
With pleasure yields to, and would ne'er forget.
Blest with divine immunity from ails,
Long centuries they liv'd; their only fate
Was ripe old age, and rather sleep than death.
Oh! could those worthies from the world of Gods 400
Return to visit their degenerate sons,

How would they scorn the joys of modern time,
 With all our art and toil improv'd to pain !
 Too happy they ! But wealth brought luxury,
 And luxury on sloth begot disease. 405

Learn temperance, friends ; and hear without disdain
 The choice of Water. Thus the * Coan sage
 Opin'd, and thus the learn'd of every School.
 What least of foreign principles partakes
 Is best : The lightest then ; what bears the touch 410
 Of fire the least, and soonest mounts in air ;
 The most insipid ; the most void of smell.
 Such the rude mountain from his horrid sides
 Pours down ; such waters in the sandy vale
 For ever boil, alike of winter frosts 415
 And summer's heat secure. The crystal stream,
 O'er rocks resounding, or for many a mile
 Hurl'd down the pebbly channel, wholesome yields
 And mellow draughts ; except when winter thaws,
 And half the mountains melt into the tide. 420
 Tho' thirst were ne'er so resolute, avoid
 The fordid lake, and all such drowsy floods
 As fill from Lethe Belgia's slow canals ;

* Hippocrates

Book II: PRESERVING HEALTH. 37

(With rest corrupt, with vegetation green ;
Squalid with generation, and the birth 425
Of little monsters;) till the power of fire
Has from prophane embraces disengag'd
The violated lymph. The virgin stream
In boiling wastes its finer soul in air.

Nothing like simple element dilutes 430
The food, or gives the chyle so soon to flow.
But where the stomach, indolently given,
Toys with its duty, animate with wine
Th' insipid stream : Tho' golden Ceres yields
A more voluptuous, a more sprightly draught ; 435
Perhaps more active. Wine unmix'd, and all
The gluey floods that from the vex'd abyss
Of fermentation spring ; with spirit fraught,
And furious with intoxicating fire ;
Retard concoction, and preserve unthaw'd 440
Th' embodied mass. You see what countless years,
Embalm'd in fiery quintessence of wine,
The puny wonders of the reptile world,
The tender rudiments of life, the slim
Unravellings of minute anatomy, 445
Maintain their texture, and unchang'd remain.

We curse not wine : The vile excess we blame ;
 More fruitful than th' accumulated board,
 Of pain and misery. For the subtle draught
 Faster and surer swells the vital tide ; 450
 And with more active poison, than the floods
 Of grosser crudity convey, pervades
 The far-remote meanders of our frame.
 Ah ! sly deceiver ! Branded o'er and o'er,
 Yet still believ'd ! Exulting o'er the wreck 455
 Of sober vows !—But the Parnassian Maids
 * Another time perhaps shall sing the joys,
 The fatal charms, the many woes of wine ;
 Perhaps its various tribes, and various powers.

Mean time, I would not always dread the bowl, 460
 Nor every trespass shun. The feverish strife,
 Rous'd by the rare debauch, subdues, expels,
 The loitering crudities that burthen life ;
 And, like a torrent full and rapid, clears
 Th' obstructed tubes. Besides, this restless world 465
 Is full of chances, which, by habit's power,
 To learn to bear is easier than to shun.
 Ah ! when ambition, meagre love of gold,
 Or sacred country calls, with mellowing wine

* See Book iv,

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 39

To moisten well the thirsty suffrages ; 470
Say how, unseason'd to the midnight frays
Of Comus and his rout, wilt thou contend
With Centaurs long to hardy deeds inur'd ?
Then learn to revel ; but by slow degrees :
By slow degrees the liberal arts are won ; 475
And Hercules grew strong. But when you smooth
The brows of care, indulge your festive vein
In cups by well-inform'd experience found
The least your bane : and only with your friends.
There are sweet follies ; frailties to be seen 480
By friends alone, and men of generous minds.

Oh ! seldom may the fated hours return
Of drinking deep ! I would not daily taste,
Except when life declines, even sober cups.
Weak withering age no rigid law forbids, 485
With frugal nectar, smooth and slow with balm,
The sapless habit daily to bedew,
And give the hesitating wheels of life
Gliblier to play. But youth has better joys :
And is it wise, when youth with pleasure flows, 490
To squander the reliefs of age and pain ?

What dextrous thousands just within the goal
Of wild debauch direct their nightly course !

Perhaps no fickly qualms bedim their days,
 No morning admonitions shock the head. 495
 But ah! what woes remain! Life rolls apace,
 And that incurable disease old age,
 In youthful bodies more severely felt,
 More sternly active, shakes their blasted prime:
 Except kind nature by some hasty blow 500
 Prevent the lingering fates. For know, whate'er
 Beyond its natural fervour hurries on
 The sanguine tide; whether the frequent bowl,
 High-season'd fare, or exercise to toil
 Protracted; spurs to its last stage tir'd life, 505
 And sows the Temples with untimely snow.
 When life is new, the ductile fibres feel
 The heart's increasing force; and, day by day,
 The growth advances: till the larger tubes,
 Acquiring (from their * elemental veins, 510

* In the human body, as well as in those of other animals, the larger blood vessels are composed of smaller ones; which, by the violent motion and pressure of the fluids in the large vessels, lose their cavities by degrees, and degenerate into impervious chords or fibres. In proportion as these small vessels become solid, the larger must of course grow less extensible, more rigid, and make a stronger resistance to the action of the heart, and force of the blood. From this gradual condensation of the smaller vessels, and consequent rigidity of the larger ones, the progress of the human body from infancy to old age is accounted for.

Book II. PRESERVING HEALTH. 41

Condens'd to solid chords) a firmer tone,
Sustain, and just sustain, th' impetuous blood.
Here stops the growth. With overbearing pulse
And pressure, still the great destroy the small;
Still with the rains of the small grow strong. 515
Life glows mean time, amid the grinding force
Of viscous fluids and elastic tubes;
Its various functions vigorously are plied
By strong machinery; and in solid health
The Man confirm'd long triumphs o'er disease. 520
But the full ocean ebbs: There is a point,
By nature fix'd, whence life must downwards tend.
For still the beating tide consolidates
The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still
To the weak throbs of th' ill-supported heart. 525
This languishing, these strength'ning by degrees
To hard unyielding unelastic bone,
Thro' tedious channels the congealing flood
Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on;
It loiters still: And now it stirs no more. 530
This is the period few attain; the death
Of nature; thus (so heav'n ordain'd it) life
Destroys itself; and could these laws have chang'd,
Nestor might now the fates of Troy relate;
And Homer live immortal as his song. 535

What

What does not fade? The tower that long had stood
 The crash of thunder and the warring winds,
 Shook by the slow but sure destroyer Time,
 Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base.
 And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass, 540
 Descend: the Babylonian spires are sunk;
 Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down.
 Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,
 And tottering empires rush by their own weight.
 This huge rotundity we tread grows old; 545
 And all those worlds that roll around the sun,
 The sun himself, shall die; and ancient Night
 Again involve the desolate abyss:
 Till the great FATHER thro' the lifeless gloom
 Extend his arm to light another world, 550
 And bid new planets roll by other laws.
 For thro' the regions of unbounded space,
 Where unconfined Omnipotence has room,
 BEING, in various systems, fluctuates still
 Between creation and abhor'd decay: 555
 It ever did; perhaps and ever will.
 New worlds are still emerging from the deep;
 The old descending, in their turns to rise.

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK III.

EXERCISE.



THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK III.

EXERCISE.

THRO' various toils, th' adventurous Muse has pass'd;
But half the toil, and more than half, remains.
Rude is her Theme, and hardly fit for Song;
Plain, and of little ornament; and I
But little practis'd in th' Aonian arts. 5
Yet not in vain such labours have we tried,
If aught these lays the fickle health confirm.
To you, ye delicate, I write; for you

I tame

I tame my youth to philosophic cares,
 And grow still paler by the midnight lamps. 10
 Not to debilitate with timorous rules
 A hardy frame; nor needlessly to brave
 Unglorious dangers, proud of mortal strength;
 Is all the lesson that in wholesome years
 Concerns the strong. His care were ill bestow'd 15
 Who would with warm effeminacy nurse
 The thriving oak which on the mountain's brow
 Bears all the blasts that sweep the wintry heav'n.

Behold the labourer of the glebe, who toils
 In dust, in rain, in cold and sultry skies: 20
 Save but the grain from mildews and the flood,
 Nought anxious he what sickly stars ascend.
 He knows no laws by Esculapius given;
 He studies none. Yet him nor midnight fogs
 Infest, nor those envenom'd shafts that fly 25
 When rapid Sirius fires th' autumnal noon.
 His habit pure with plain and temperate meals,
 Robust with labour, and by custom steel'd
 To every casualty of varied life;
 Serene he bears the peevish Eastern blast, 30
 And uninfected breathes the mortal South.

Such

Such the reward of rude and sober life;
 Of labour such. By health the peasant's toil
 Is well repaid; if exercise were pain
 Indeed, and temperance pain. By arts like these 35
 Laconia nurs'd of old her hardy sons;
 And Rome's unconquer'd legions urg'd their way,
 Unhurt, thro' every toil in every clime.

Toil, and be strong. By toil the flaccid nerves
 Grow firm, and gain a more compacted tone; 40
 The greener juices are by toil subdu'd,
 Mellow'd, and subtiliz'd; the vapid old
 Expell'd, and all the rancour of the blood.
 Come, my companions, ye who feel the charms
 Of nature and the year; come, let us stray 45
 Where chance or fancy leads our roving walk:
 Come, while the soft voluptuous breezes fan
 The fleecy heavens, enwrap the limbs with balm,
 And shed a charming languor o'er the soul.
 Not when bright Winter sows with prickly frost 50
 The vigorous ether, in unmanly warmth
 Indulge at home; nor even when Eurus' blasts
 This way and that convolve the lab'ring woods.
 My liberal walks, save when the skies in rain
 Or fogs relent, no season should confine 55

Or to the cloister'd gallery or arcade.
 Go, climb the mountain ; from th' ethereal source
 Imbibe the recent gale. The chearful morn
 Beams o'er the hills ; go, mount th' exulting steed.
 Already, see, the deep-mouth'd beagles catch : 60
 The tainted mazes ; and, on eager sport
 Intent, with emulous impatience try
 Each doubtful trace. Or, if a nobler prey
 Delight you more, go chase the desperate deer ;
 And thro' its deepest solitudes awake 65
 The vocal forest with the jovial horn.

But if the breathless chase o'er hill and dale
 Exceed your strength ; a sport of less fatigue,
 Not less delightful, the prolific stream
 Affords. The crystal rivulet, that o'er 70
 A stony channel rolls its rapid maze,
 Swarms with the silver fry. Such, thro' the bounds
 Of pastoral Stafford, runs the brawling Trent ;
 Such Eden, sprung from Cumbrian mountains ; such
 The Esk, o'erhung with woods ; and such the stream 75
 On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air,
 Liddal ; till now, except in Doric lays
 Tun'd to her murmurs by her love-sick swains,

Unknown

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 49

Unknown in song: Tho' not a purer stream,
'Thro' meads more flowery or more romantic groves, 80
Rolls toward the western main. Hail, sacred flood!
May still thy hospitable swains be blest
In rural innocence; thy mountains still
Teem with the fleecy race; thy tuneful woods
For ever flourish; and thy vales look gay 85
With painted meadows, and the golden grain!
Oft, with thy blooming sons, when life was new,
Sportive and petulant, and charm'd with toys,
In thy transparent eddies have I lav'd:
Oft trac'd with patient steps thy fairy banks, 90
With the well-imitated fly to hook
The eager trout, and with the slender line
And yielding rod solicit to the shore
The struggling panting prey; while vernal clouds
And tepid gales obscur'd the ruffled pool, 95
And from the deeps call'd forth the wanton swarms.

Form'd on the Samian school, or those of Ind,
There are who think these pastimes scarce humane.
Yet in my mind (and not relentless I)
His life is pure that wears no fouler stains: 100
But if thro' genuine tenderness of heart,

D

Or

Or secret want of relish for the game,
 You shun the glories of the chace, nor care
 To haunt the peopled stream ; the garden yields
 A soft amusement, an humane delight. 105
 To raise th' insipid nature of the ground ;
 Or tame its savage genius to the grace
 Of careless sweet rusticity, that seems
 The amiable result of happy chance,
 Is to create ; and gives a god-like joy, 110
 Which every year improves. Nor thou disdain
 To check the lawless riot of the trees,
 To plant the grove, or turn the barren mould.
 O happy he ! whom, when his years decline,
 (His fortune and his fame by worthy means 115
 Attain'd, and equal to his moderate mind ;
 His life approv'd by all the wise and good,
 Even envied by the vain) the peaceful groves
 Of Epicurus, from this stormy world,
 Receive to rest ; of all ungrateful cares. 120
 Absolv'd, and sacred from the selfish crowd.
 Happiest of men ! if the same soil invites
 A chosen few, companions of his youth,
 Once fellow-rakes perhaps, now rural friends ;
 With whom in easy commerce to pursue 125

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 51

Nature's free charms, and vie for Sylvan fame:
A fair ambition; void of strife or guile,
Or jealousy, or pain to be outdone.
Who plans th' enchanted garden, who directs
The vists best, and best conducts the stream; 135
Whose groves the fastest thicken and ascend;
Whom first the welcome spring salutes; who shews
The earliest bloom, the sweetest proudest charms
Of Flora; who best gives Pomona's juice
To match the sprightly genius of Champain. 135
Thrice happy days! in rural business past;
Blest winter nights! when, as the genial fire
Cheers the wide hall, his cordial family
With soft domestic arts the hours beguile,
And pleasing talk that starts no timorous fame, 140
With witless wantonness to hunt it down;
Or thro' the fairy-land of tale or song
Delighted wander, in fictitious fates
Engag'd, and all that strikes humanity:
Till lost in fable, they the stealing hour 145
Of timely rest forget. Sometimes, at eve,
His neighbours lift the latch, and blest unbid
His festal roof; while, o'er the light repast,
And sprightly cups, they mix in social joy;

And, thro' the maze of conversation, trace 150
 Whate'er amuses or improves the mind.
 Sometimes at eve (for I delight to taste
 The native zest and flavour of the fruit,
 Where sense grows wild and takes of no manure)
 The decent, honest, chearful husbandman 155
 Should drown his labours in my friendly bowl;
 And at my table find himself at home.

Whate'er you study, in whate'er you sweat,
 Indulge your taste. Some love the manly foils;
 The tennis some; and some the graceful dance. 160
 Others, more hardy, range the purple heath
 Or naked stubble; where from field to field
 The sounding coveys urge their labouring flight;
 Eager amid the rising cloud to pour
 The gun's unerring thunder: And there are 165
 Whom still the * meed of the green archer charms.
 He chuses best; whose labour entertains
 His vacant fancy most: The toil you hate
 Fatigues you soon, and scarce improves your limbs.

* This word is much used by some of the old English poets, and signifies *Reward* or *Prize*.

Book III: PRESERVING HEALTH. 53

As beauty still has blemish ; and the mind 170
The most accomplish'd its imperfect side ;
Few bodies are there of that happy mould
But some one part is weaker than the rest :
The legs, perhaps, or arms refuse their load,
Or the chest labours. These assiduously, 175
But gently, in their proper arts employ'd,
Acquire a vigour and springy activity
To which they were not born. But weaker parts
Abhor fatigue and violent discipline.

Begin with gentle toils ; and, as your nerves 180
Grow firm, to hardier by just steps aspire.
The prudent, even in every moderate walk,
At first but saunter ; and by slow degrees
Increase their pace. This doctrine of the wife
Well knows the master of the flying steed. 185
First from the goal the manag'd coursers play
On bended reins ; as yet the skilful youth
Repress their foamy pride ; but every breath
The race grows warmer, and the tempest swells ;
Till all the fiery mettle has its way, 190
And the thick thunder hurries o'er the plain.
When all at once from indolence to toil

You spring, the fibres by the hasty shock
 Are tir'd and crack'd, before their unctuous coats,
 Compress'd, can pour the lubricating balm. 195
 Besides, collected in the passive veins,
 The purple mass a sudden torrent rolls,
 O'erpowers the heart, and deluges the lungs
 With dangerous inundation: Oft the source
 Of fatal woes; a cough that foams with blood, 200
 Asthma, and feller * Peripneumony,
 Or the slow minings of the hectic fire.

Th' athletic Fool, to whom what heav'n deny'd
 Of soul is well compensated in limbs,
 Oft from his rage, or brainless frolic, feels 205
 His vegetation and brute force decay.
 The men of better clay and finer mould
 Know nature, feel the human dignity;
 And scorn to vie with oxen or with apes,
 Pursu'd prolisly, even the gentlest toil 210
 Is waste of health: repose by small fatigue
 Is earn'd; and (where your habit is not prone

* The inflammation of the lungs.

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH 55

To thaw) by the first moisture of the brows.
The fine and subtle spirits cost too much
To be profus'd, too much the roscid balm. 215
But when the hard varieties of life
You toil to learn ; or try the dusty chace,
Or the warm deeds of some important day :
Hot from the field, indulge not yet your limbs
In wish'd repose ; nor court the fanning gale, 220
Nor taste the spring. O ! by the sacred tears
Of widows, orphans, mothers, sisters, fires,
Forbear ! No other pestilence has driven
Such myriads o'er th' irremeable deep.
Why this so fatal, the sagacious Muse 225
Thro' nature's cunning labyrinths could trace :
But there are secrets which who knows not now,
Must, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps
Of Science ; and devote seven years to toil.
Besides, I would not stun your patient ears 230
With what it little boots you to attain.
He knows enough, the mariner, who knows
Where lurk the shelves, and where the whirlpools
boil,
What signs portend the storm : To subtler minds
He leaves to scan, from what mysterious cause 235

Charybdis rages in th' Ionian wave ;
 Whence those impetuous currents in the main,
 Which neither oar nor sail can stem ; and why
 The roughening deep expects the storm, as sure
 As red Orion mounts the shrouded heaven. 240

In ancient times, when Rome with Athens vied
 For polish'd luxury and useful arts ;
 All hot and reeking from the Olympic strife,
 And warm Palestra, in the tepid bath
 Th' athletic youth relax'd their weary'd limbs. 245
 Soft oils bedew'd them, with the grateful pow'rs
 Of Nard and Cassia fraught, to sooth and heal
 The cherish'd nerves. Our less voluptuous clime
 Not much invites us to such arts as these.
 'Tis not for those, whom gelid skies embrace, 250
 And chilling fogs ; whose perspiration feels
 Such frequent bars from Eurus and the North ;
 'Tis not for those to cultivate a skin,
 Too soft ; or teach the recremental fume
 Too fast to crowd thro' such precarious ways. 255
 For thro' the small arterial mouths, that pierce
 In endless millions the close-woven skin,
 The baser fluids in a constant stream

Escape,

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 57

Escape, and viewless melt into the winds.
While this eternal, this most copious, waste 260
Of blood, degenerate into vapid brine,
Maintains its wonted measure, all the powers
Of health befriend you, all the wheels of life
With ease and pleasure move : But this restrain'd
Or more or less, so more or less you feel 265
The functions labour : From this fatal source
What woes descend is never to be sung.
To take their numbers were to count the sands
That ride in whirlwind the parch'd Libyan air ;
Or waves that, when the blustering North embroils 270
The Baltic, thunder on the German shore.
Subject not then by soft emollient arts
This grand expence, on which your fates depend,
To every caprice of the sky ; nor thwart
The genius of your clime : For from the blood 275
Least fickle rise the recremental steams,
And least obnoxious to the styptic air,
Which breathe thro' straiter and more callous pores.
The temper'd Scythian hence, half-naked treads
His boundless snows, nor rues th' inclement heaven ; 280
And hence our painted ancestors defied
The East ; nor curs'd, like us, their fickle sky.

The

The body, moulded by the clime, endures
 Th' Equator heats or Hyperborean frost :
 Except, by habits foreign to its turn, 285
 Unwise you counteract its forming pow'r.
 Rude at the first, the winter shocks you less
 By long acquaintance : Study then your sky,
 Form to its manners your obsequious frame,
 And learn to suffer what you cannot shun. 290
 Against the rigors of a damp cold heav'n
 To fortify their bodies, some frequent
 The gelid cistern ; and, where nought forbids,
 I praise their dauntless heart : A frame so steel'd
 Dreads not the cough, nor those ungenial blasts 295
 That breathe the Tertian or fell Rheumatism ;
 The nerves so temper'd never quit their tone,
 No chronic languors haunt such hardy breasts.
 But all things have their bounds : and he who makes
 By daily use the kindest regimen 300
 Essential to his health, should never mix
 With human kind, nor art nor trade pursue.
 He not the safe vicissitudes of life
 Without some shock endures ; ill-fitted he
 To want the known, or bear unusual things. 305
 Besides, the powerful remedies of pain

(Since

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 59

(Since pain in spite of all our care will come)
Should never with your prosperous days of health
Grow too familiar : For by frequent use
The strongest medicines lose their healing power, 310
And even the surest poisons theirs to kill,

Let those who from the frozen Arctos reach
Parch'd Mauritania, or the sultry West,
Or the wide flood thro' rich Indostan roll'd,
Plunge thrice a day, and in the tepid wave 315
Untwist their stubborn pores ; that full and free
Th' evaporation thro' the soften'd skin
May bear proportion to the swelling blood.
So shall they 'scape the fever's rapid flames ;
So feel untainted the hot breath of hell. 320
With us, the man of no complaint demands
The warm ablution, just enough to clear
The sluices of the skin, enough to keep
The body sacred from indecent soil.
Still to be pure, ev'n did it not conduce 325
(As much it does) to health, were greatly worth
Your daily pains. 'Tis this adorns the rich ;
The want of this is Poverty's worst woe ;
With this external virtue Age maintains

A decent grace ; without it Youth and charms 330
 Are loathsome. This the venal Graces know ;
 So doubtless do your wives : For married fires,
 As well as lovers, still pretend to taste ;
 Nor is it less (all prudent wives can tell)
 To lose a husband's than a lover's heart. 335

But now the hours and seasons when to toil
 From foreign themes recall my wandering song.
 Some labour fasting, or but slightly fed
 To lull the grinding stomach's hungry rage.
 Where nature feeds too corpulent a frame 340
 'Tis wisely done : For while the thirsty veins,
 Impatient of lean penury, devour
 The treasur'd oil, then is the happiest time
 To shake the lazy balsam from its cells.
 Now while the stomach from the full repast 345
 Subsides, but ere returning hunger gnaws,
 Ye leaner habits, give an hour to toil :
 And ye whom no luxuriancy of growth
 Oppresses yet, or threatens to oppress.
 But from the recent meal no labours please, 350
 Of limbs or mind. For now the cordial powers
 Claim all the wandering spirits to a work

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 61

Of strong and subtle toil, and great event :
A work of time : and you may rue the day
You hurried, with untimely exercise, 355
A half-concocted chyle into the blood.

The body overcharg'd with unctuous phlegm
Much toil demands : The lean elastic lefs.

While winter chills the blood, and binds the veins,
No labours are too hard : By those you 'scape 360

The slow diseases of the torpid year ;
Endless to name ; to one of which alone,
To that which tears the nerves, the toil of slaves
Is pleasure : Oh ! from such inhuman pains
May all be free who merit not the wheel ! 365

But from the burning Lion when the sun
Pours down his sultry wrath ; now while the blood
Too much already maddens in the veins,
And all the finer fluids thro' the skin

Explore their flight ; me, near the cool cascade 370

Reclin'd, or fauntring in the lofty grove,

No needless flight occasion should engage

To pant and sweat beneath the fiery noon.

Now the fresh morn alone and mellow eve

To shady walks and active rural sports 375

Invite. But, while the chilling dews descend,

May

May nothing tempt you to the cold embrace
 Of humid skies ; tho' 'tis no vulgar joy
 To trace the horrors of the solemn wood
 While the soft evening saddens into night : 380
 Tho' the sweet Poet of the vernal groves
 Melts all the night in strains of am'rous woe.

The shades descend, and midnight o'er the world
 Expands her sable wings. Great Nature droops
 Thro' all her works. Now happy he whose toil 385
 Has o'er his languid powerless limbs diffus'd
 A pleasing lassitude : He not in vain
 Invokes the gentle Deity of dreams.
 His powers the most voluptuously dissolve
 In soft repose : On him the balmy dews 390
 Of sleep with double nutriment descend.
 But would you sweetly waste the blank of night
 In deep oblivion ; or on Fancy's wings
 Visit the paradise of happy Dreams,
 And waken chearful as the lively morn ; 395
 Oppress not Nature sinking down to rest
 With feasts too late, too solid, or too full :
 But be the first concoction half-matur'd

Ere

Ere you to mighty indolence resign
 Your passive faculties. He from the toils 400
 And troubles of the day to heavier toil
 Retires, whom trembling from the tower that rocks
 Amid the clouds, or Calpe's hideous height,
 The busy dæmons hurl; or in the main
 O'erwhelm; or bury struggling under ground. 405
 Not all a monarch's luxury the woes
 Can counterpoise of that most wretched man,
 Whose nights are shaken with the frantic fits
 Of wild Orestes; whose delirious brain,
 Stung by the Furies, works with poison'd thought: 410
 While pale and monstrous painting shocks the soul;
 And mangled consciousness bemoans itself
 For ever torn; and chaos floating round.
 What dreams presage, what dangers these or those
 Portend to sanity, tho' prudent seers 415
 Reveal'd of old, and men of deathless fame,
 We would not to the superstitious mind
 Suggest new throbs, new vanities of fear.
 'Tis ours to teach you from the peaceful night
 To banish omens and all restless woes. 420

In study some protract the silent hours,
 Which others consecrate to mirth and wine ;
 And sleep till noon, and hardly live till night.
 But surely this redeems not from the shades
 One hour of life. Nor does it nought avail 425
 What season you to drowsy Morpheus give
 Of th' ever-varying circle of the day ;
 Or whether, thro' the tedious winter gloom,
 You tempt the midnight or the morning damps.
 The body, fresh and vigorous from repose, 430
 Defies the early fogs : but, by the toils
 Of wakeful day, exhausted and unstrung,
 Weakly resists the night's unwholesome breath.
 The grand discharge, th' effusion of the skin,
 Slowly impair'd, the languid maladies 435
 Creep on, and thro' the sickning functions steal.
 So, when the chilling East invades the spring,
 The delicate Narcissus pines away
 In hectic languor ; and a slow disease
 Taints all the family of flowers, condemn'd 440
 To cruel heav'ns. But why, already prone
 To fade, should beauty cherish its own bane ?
 O shame ! O pity ! nipt with pale Quadrille,
 And midnight cares, the bloom of Albion dies !

By

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 65

By toil subdu'd, the Warrior and the Hind 445
Sleep fast and deep : their active functions soon
With generous streams the subtle tubes supply ;
And soon the tonic irritable nerves
Feel the fresh impulse and awake the soul.
The sons of indolence, with long repose, 450
Grow torpid ; and with slowest Lethe drunk,
Feebly and lingeringly return to life,
Blunt every sense and powerless every limb.
Ye, prone to sleep (whom sleeping most annoys)
On the hard matras or elastic couch 455
Extend your limbs, and wean yourselves from sloth ;
Nor grudge the lean projector, of dry brain
And springy nerves, the blandishments of down :
Nor envy, while the buried Bacchanal
Exhales his surfeit in prolixer dreams. 460

He without riot, in the balmy feast
Of life, the wants of nature has supply'd
Who rises cool, serene, and full of soul.
But pliant nature more or less demands,
As custom forms her ; and all sudden change 465
She hates of habit, even from bad to good.
If faults in life, or new emergencies,

From habits urge you by long time confirm'd,
 Slow may the change arrive, and stage by stage ;
 Slow as the shadow o'er the dial moves, 470
 Slow as the stealing progress of the year.

Observe the circling year. How unperceiv'd
 Her seasons change ! Behold ! by slow degrees,
 Stern Winter tam'd into a ruder Spring ;
 The ripen'd Spring a milder Summer glows ; 475
 Departing Summer sheds Pomona's store ;
 And aged Autumn brews the Winter-storm.
 Slow as they come, these changes come not void
 Of mortal shocks : The cold and torrid reigns,
 The two great periods of th' important year, 480
 Are in their first approaches seldom safe :
 Funereal Autumn all the sickly dread,
 And the black fates deform the lovely Spring.
 He well advis'd, who taught our wiser sires
 Early to borrow Muscovy's warm spoils, 485
 Ere the first frost has touch'd the tender blade ;
 And late resign them, tho' the wanton Spring
 Should deck her charms with all her sifter's rays.
 For while the effluence of the skin maintains
 Its native measure, the pleuritic Spring 490

Glides

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 67

Glides harmless by ; and Autumn, sick to death
With fallow Quartans, no contagion breathes.

I in prophetic numbers could unfold
The omens of the year : what seasons teem
With what diseases ; what the humid South 495
Prepares, and what the Dæmon of the East :
But you perhaps refuse the tedious song.
Besides, whatever plagues, in heat, or cold,
Or drought, or moisture dwell, they hurt not you,
Skill'd to correct the vices of the sky, 500
And taught already how to each extream
To bend your life. But should the public bane
Infect you ; or some trespass of your own,
Or flaw of nature, hint mortality :
Soon as a not unpleasing horror glides 505
Along the spine, thro' all your torpid limbs ;
When first the head throbs, or the stomach feels
A sickly load, a weary pain the loins ;
Be Celsus call'd : The Fates come rushing on ;
The rapid fates admit of no delay. 510
While wilful you, and fatally secure,
Expect to-morrow's more auspicious sun,
The growing pest, whose infancy was weak

And easy vanquish'd, with triumphant sway
 O'erpowers your life. For want of timely care, 515
 Millions have died of medicable wounds.

Ah! in what perils is vain life engag'd!
 What flight neglects, what trivial faults destroy
 The hardiest frame! of indolence, of toil,
 We die; of want, of superfluity: 520
 The all-surrounding heaven, the vital air,
 Is big with death. And, tho' the putrid South
 Be shut; tho' no convulsive agony
 Shake, from the deep foundations of the world,
 Th' imprisoned plagues; a secret venom oft 525
 Corrupts the air, the water, and the land.
 What livid deaths has sad Byzantium seen!
 How oft has Cairo, with a mother's woe,
 Wept o'er her slaughter'd sons and lonely streets!
 Even Albion, girt with less malignant skies, 530
 Albion the poison of the Gods has drank,
 And felt the sting of monsters all her own.

Ere yet the fell Plantagenets had spent
 Their ancient rage, at Bosworth's purple field;
 While, for which tyrant England should receive, 535
 Her

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 69

Her legions in incestuous murders mix'd,
And daily horrors ; till the Fates were drunk
With kindred blood by kindred hands profus'd :
Another plague of more gigantic arm
Arose, a monster never known before, 540
Rear'd from Cocytus its portentous head.
This rapid Fury not, like other pests,
Pursu'd a gradual course, but in a day
Rush'd as a storm o'er half th' astonish'd isle,
And strew'd with sudden carcases the land. 545

First thro' the shoulders, or whatever part
Was seiz'd the first, a fervid vapour sprung.
With rash combustion thence, the quivering spark
Shot to the heart, and kindled all within :
And soon the surface caught the spreading fires. 550
Thro' all the yielding pores the melted blood
Gush'd out in smoaky sweats ; but nought assuag'd
The torrid heat within, nor aught reliev'd
The stomach's anguish. With incessant toil,
Desperate of ease, impatient of their pain, 555
They toss'd from side to side. In vain the stream
Ran full and clear, they burnt and thirsted still.
The restless arteries with rapid blood

Beat strong and frequent. Thick and pantingly
 The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'rings
 heav'd. 560

At last a heavy pain oppress'd the head,
 A wild delirium came; their weeping friends
 Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs.
 Harass'd with toil on toil, the sinking powers
 Lay prostrate and o'erthrown; a ponderous sleep 565
 Wrapt all the senses up: They slept and died.

In some a gentle horror crept at first
 O'er all the limbs; the sluices of the skin
 Withheld their moisture, till by art provok'd
 The sweats o'erflow'd; but in a clammy tide: 570
 Now free and copious, now restrain'd and slow;
 Of tinctures various, as the temperature
 Had mix'd the blood; and rank with fetid steams:
 As if the pent-up humours by delay
 Were grown more fell, more putrid, and malign. 575
 Here lay their hopes (tho' little hope remain'd)
 With full effusion of perpetual sweats
 To drive the venom out. And here the fates
 Were kind, that long they linger'd not in pain.
 For who surviv'd the sun's diurnal race, 580

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH. 71

Rose from the dreary gates of hell redeem'd :
Some the sixth hour oppress'd, and some the third.

Of many thousands few untainted 'scap'd ;
Of those infected fewer 'scap'd alive ;
Of those who liv'd some felt a second blow ; 585
And whom the second spar'd a third destroy'd.
Frantic with fear, they sought by flight to shun
The fierce contagion. O'er the mournful land
Th' infected city pour'd her hurrying swarms :
Rous'd by the flames that fir'd her seats around, 590
Th' infected country rush'd into the town.
Some, sad at home, and in the desert some,
Abjur'd the fatal commerce of mankind ;
In vain : where'er they fled, the Fates pursu'd.
Others, with hopes more specious, cross'd the main,
To seek protection in far-distant skies ; 596
But none they found. It seem'd the general air,
From pole to pole, from Atlas to the East,
Was then at enmity with English blood.
For, but the race of England, all were safe 600
In foreign climes ; nor did this fury taste
The foreign blood which England then contain'd.
Where should they fly ? The circumambient heav'n

Involv'd them still ; and every breeze was bane.

Where find relief ? The salutary art 605

Was mute ; and, startled at the new disease,

In fearful whispers hopeless omens gave.

To Heav'n with suppliant rites they sent their pray'rs ;

Heav'n heard them not. Of every hope depriv'd ;

Fatigu'd with vain resources ; and subdu'd 610

With woes resistless and enfeebling fear ;

Passive they sunk beneath the weighty blow,

Nothing but lamentable sounds was heard,

Nor aught was seen but ghastly views of death.

Infectious horror ran from face to face, 615

And pale despair. 'Twas all the business then

To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.

In heaps they fell : and oft one bed, they say,

The sick'ning, dying, and the dead contain'd.

Ye guardian Gods, on whom the Fates depend 620

Of tottering Albion ! ye eternal Fires

That lead thro' heav'n the wandering year ! ye

Powers

That o'er th' incircling elements preside !

May nothing worse than what this age has seen 625

Arrive ! Enough abroad, enough at home

Book III. PRESERVING HEALTH.

73

Has Albion bled. Here a distemper'd heav'n
Has thin'd her cities ; from those lofty cliffs
That awe proud Gaul, to Thule's wintry reign ;
While in the West, beyond th' Atlantic foam,
Her bravest sons, keen for the fight, have dy'd 630
The death of cowards and of common men :
Sunk void of wounds, and fall'n without renown.

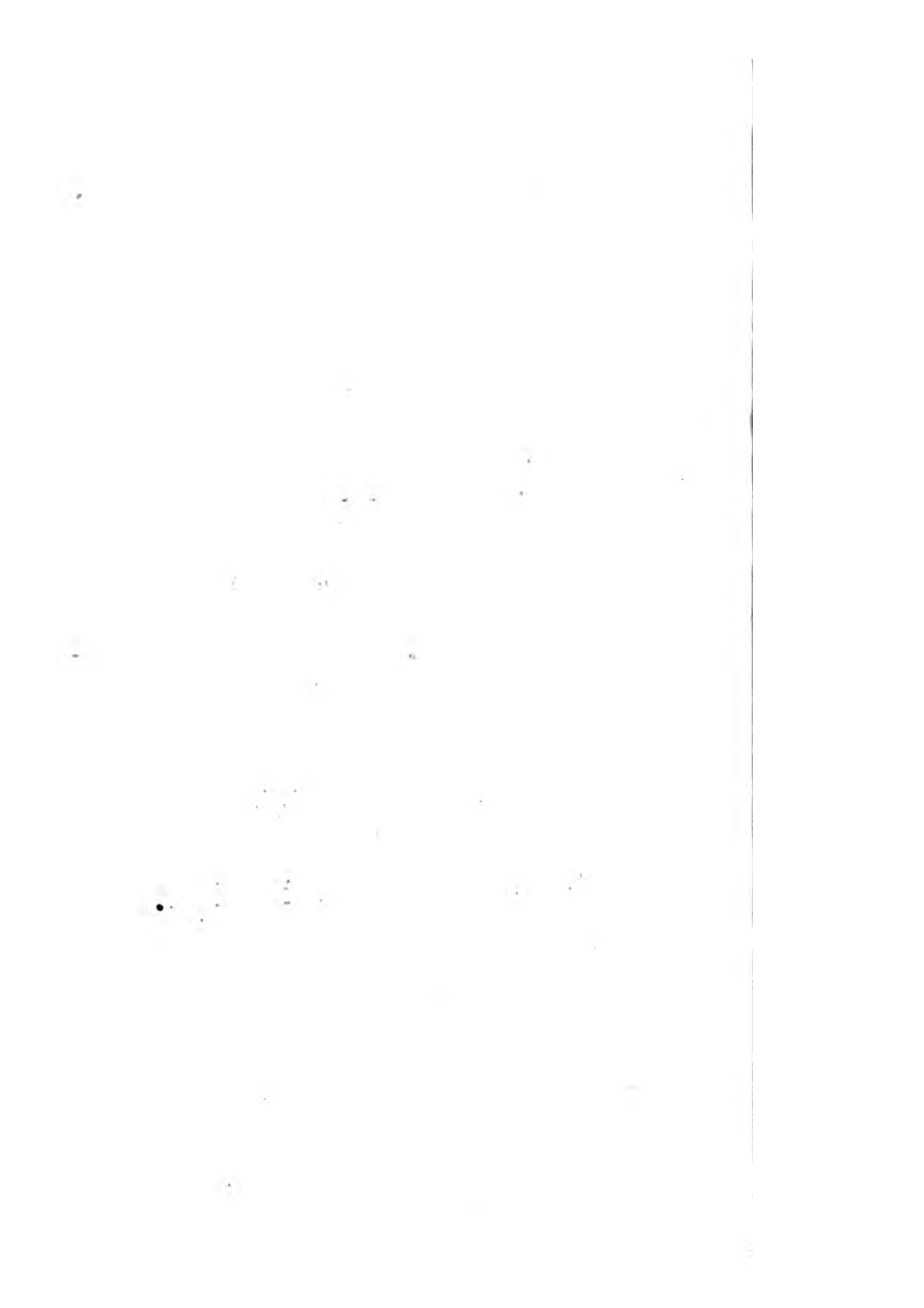
But from these views the weeping Muses turn,
And other themes invite my wand'ring song.

THE

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK IV.

THE PASSIONS.



THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK IV.

THE PASSIONS.

THE choice of Aliment, the choice of Air,
The use of Toil and all external things,
Already fung ; it now remains to trace
What good, what evil from ourselves proceeds :
And how the subtle Principle within 5
Inspires with health, or mines with strange decay
The passive Body. Ye poetic Shades,
That know the secrets of the world unseen,
Assist my song ! For, in a doubtful theme
Engag'd, I wander thro' mysterious ways. 10
There

There is, they say, (and I believe there is)
 A spark within us of th' immortal fire,
 That animates and moulds the grosser frame ;
 And when the body sinks escapes to heaven,
 Its native feat, and mixes with the Gods. 15
 Mean while this heavenly particle pervades
 The mortal elements ; in every nerve
 It thrills with pleasure, or grows mad with pain.
 And, in its secret conclave, as it feels
 The body's woes and joys, this ruling power 20
 Weilds at its will the dull material world,
 And is the body's health or malady.

By its own toil the gross corporeal frame
 Fatigues, extenuates, or destroys itself.
 Nor less the labours of the mind corrode 25
 The solid fabric : for by subtle parts,
 And viewless atoms, secret Nature moves
 The mighty wheels of this stupendous world.
 By subtle fluids pour'd thro' subtle tubes
 The natural, vital, functions are perform'd. 30
 By these the stubborn aliments are tam'd ;
 The toiling heart distributes life and strength ;

These

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 79

These the still-crumbling frame rebuild ; and these
Are lost in thinking, and dissolve in air.

But 'tis not Thought (for still the soul's employ'd) 35
'Tis painful thinking that corrodes our clay.
All day the vacant eye without fatigue
Strays o'er the heaven and earth ; but long intent
On microscopic arts its vigour fails.
Just so the mind, with various thought amus'd, 40
Nor akes itself, nor gives the body pain.
But anxious Study, Discontent, and Care,
Love without hope, and Hate without revenge,
And Fear, and Jealousy, fatigue the soul,
Engross the subtle ministers of life, 45
And spoil the lab'ring functions of their share.
Hence the lean gloom that Melancholy wears ;
The Lover's paleness ; and the fallow hue
Of Envy, Jealousy ; the meagre stare
Of fore Revenge : the canker'd body hence 50
Betrays each fretful motion of the mind.

The strong-built pedant ; who both night and day
Feeds on the coarsest fare the schools bestow,
And crudely fattens at gross Burman's stall ;
O'erwhelm'd with phlegm lies in a dropsy drown'd, 55
Or

Or sinks in lethargy before his time.
 With useful studies you, and arts that please
 Employ your mind, amuse but not fatigue.
 Peace to each drowfy metaphyfic sage !
 And ever may all heavy systems rest ! 60
 Yet some there are, even of elastic parts,
 Whom strong and obstinate ambition leads
 Thro' all the rugged roads of barren lore,
 And gives to relish what their generous taste
 Would else refuse. But may nor thirst of fame, 65
 Nor love of knowledge, urge you to fatigue
 With constant drudgery the liberal soul.
 Toy with your books : and, as the various fits
 Of humour seize you, from Philosophy
 To Fable shift ; from serious Antonine 70
 To Rabelais' ravings, and from prose to song.

While reading pleases, but no longer, read ;
 And read aloud resounding Homer's strain,
 And wield the thunder of Demosthenes.
 The chest so exercis'd improves its strength ; 75
 And quick vibrations thro' the bowels drive
 The restless blood, which in unactive days
 Would loiter else thro' unelastic tubes.
 Deem it not trifling while I recommend

What

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 81

What posture suits : To stand and sit by turns, 80
As nature prompts, is best. But o'er your leaves
To lean for ever, cramps the vital parts,
And robs the fine machinery of its play.

'Tis the great art of life to manage well
The restless mind. For ever on pursuit 85
Of knowledge bent, it starves the grosser powers :
Quite unemploy'd, against its own repose
It turns its fatal edge, and sharper pangs
Than what the body knows embitter life.
Chiefly where Solitude, sad nurse of Care, 90
To sickly musing gives the pensive mind.
There Madness enters ; and the dim-ey'd Fiend,
Sour Melancholy, night and day provokes
Her own eternal wound. The sun grows pale ;
A mournful visionary light o'erspreads 95
The chearful face of nature ; earth becomes
A dreary desert, and heaven frowns above,
Then various shapes of curs'd illusion rise :
Whate'er the wretched fears, creating Fear
Forms out of nothing ; and with monsters teems 100
Unknown in hell. The prostrate soul beneath
A load of huge imagination heaves ;

F

And

And all the horrors that the murd'rer feels
With anxious flutterings wake the guiltless breast.

Such phantoms Pride in solitary scenes, 105
Or Fear, on delicate Self-love creates.
From other cares absolv'd, the busy mind
Finds in yourself a theme to pore upon ;
It finds you miserable, or makes you so.
For while yourself you anxiously explore, 110
Timorous Self-love, with fickning Fancy's aid,
Presents the danger that you dread the most,
And ever galls you in your tender part.
Hence some for love, and some for jealousy,
For grim religion some, and some for pride, 115
Have lost their reason : some for fear of want,
Want all their lives ; and others every day
For fear of dying suffer worse than death.
Ah ! from your bosoms banish, if you can,
Those fatal guests : and first the Demon Fear ; 120
That trembles at impossible events,
Lest aged Atlas should resign his load,
And heaven's eternal battlements rush down.
Is there an evil worse than Fear itself ?
And what avails it, that indulgent heaven 125
From mortal eyes has wrapt the woes to come,

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH.

83

If we, ingenious to torment ourselves,
Grow pale at hideous fictions of our own ?
Enjoy the present ; nor with needless cares,
Of what may spring from blind Misfortune's womb,
Appal the surest hour that life bestows. 131
Serene, and master of yourself, prepare
For what may come ; and leave the rest to Heaven.

Oft from the Body, by long ails mistun'd,
These evils sprung the most important health, 135
That of the Mind, destroy : and when the mind
They first invade, the conscious body soon
In sympathetic languishment declines.
These chronic Passions, while from real woes
They rise, and yet without the body's fault 140
Infest the soul, admit one only cure ;
Diversions, hurry, and a restless life.
Vain are the consolations of the wife ;
In vain your friends would reason down your pain.
O ye, whose souls relentless love has tam'd 145
To soft distress, or friends untimely slain !
Court not the luxury of tender thought ;
Nor deem it impious to forget those pains
That hurt the living, nought avail the dead.
Go, soft enthusiast ! quit the cypress groves, 150

Nor to the rivulet's lonely moanings tune
 Your sad complaint. Go, seek the chearful haunts
 Of men, and mingle with the bustling croud ;
 Lay schemes for wealth, or power, or fame, the wish
 Of nobler minds, and push them night and day. 155
 Or join the caravan in quest of scenes
 New to your eyes, and shifting every hour,
 Beyond the Alps, beyond the Apennines.
 Or more advent'rous, rush into the field
 Where war grows hot ; and, raging thro' the sky, 160
 The lofty trumpet swells the madd'ning soul :
 And in the hardy camp and toilsome march
 Forget all softer and less manly cares.

But most too passive, when the blood runs low,
 Too weakly indolent to strive with pain, 165
 And bravely by resisting conquer Fate,
 Try Circe's arts ; and in the tempting bowl
 Of poison'd Nectar sweet oblivion drink.
 Struck by the pow'rful charm, the gloom dissolves
 In empty air ; Elysium opens round. 170
 A pleasing phrenzy buoys the lighten'd soul,
 And sanguine hopes dispel your fleeting care ;
 And what was difficult, and what was dire,
 Yields to your prowess and superior stars :

BOOK IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 85

The happiest you of all that e'er were mad, 175
Or are, or shall be, could this folly last.

But soon your heaven is gone ; a heavier gloom
Shuts o'er your head : and, as the thund'ring stream,
Swoln o'er its banks with sudden mountain rain,
Sinks from its tumult to a silent brook ; 180

So, when the frantic raptures in your breast
Subside, you languish into mortal man ;
You sleep, and waking find yourself undone.
For prodigal of life in one rash night
You lavish'd more than might support three days. 185

A heavy morning comes ; your cares return
With tenfold rage. An anxious stomach well
May be endur'd ; so may the throbbing head :
But such a dim delirium, such a dream,
Involves you ; such a dastardly despair 190

Unmans your soul, as madd'ning Pentheus felt,
When, baited round Cithæron's cruel fides,
He saw two suns, and double Thebes ascend.
You curse the sluggish Port ; you curse the wretch,
The felon, with unnatural mixture first 195
Who dar'd to violate the virgin Wine.

Or on the fugitive Champain you pour
A thousand curses ; for to heav'n it rapt
Your soul, to plunge you deeper in despair.

Perhaps you rue even that divinest gift, 200
 The gay, serene, good-natur'd Burgundy,
 Or the fresh fragrant vintage of the Rhine :
 And wish that heaven from mortals had with-held
 The grape, and all intoxicating bowls.

Besides, it wounds you sore to recollect 205
 What follies in your loose unguarded hour
 Escap'd. For one irrevocable word,
 Perhaps that meant no harm, you lose a friend.
 Or in the rage of wine your hasty hand
 Performs a deed to haunt you to your grave. 210
 Add that your means, your health, your parts decay ;
 Your friends avoid you ; brutishly transform'd,
 They hardly know you ; or if one remains
 To wish you well, he wishes you in heaven.
 Despis'd, unwept you fall ; who might have left 215
 A sacred, cherish'd, sadly-pleasing name ;
 A name still to be utter'd with a sigh.
 Your last ungraceful scene has quite effac'd
 All sense and memory of your former worth.

How to live happiest ; how avoid the pains, 220
 The disappointments, and disgusts of those
 Who would in pleasure all their hours employ ;
 The

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 87

The Precepts here of a divine old man
I could recite. Tho' old, he still retain'd
His manly sense, and energy of mind. 225
Virtuous and wise he was, but not severe;
He still remember'd that he once was young;
His easy presence check'd no decent joy.
Him even the dissolute admir'd; for he
A graceful looseness when he pleas'd put on, 230
And laughing could instruct. Much had he read,
Much more had seen; he studied from the life,
And in th' original perus'd mankind.

Vers'd in the woes and vanities of life,
He pitied Man: and much he pitied those 235
Whom falsely-smiling Fate has curs'd with means
To dissipate their days in quest of joy.
Our aim is Happiness; 'tis yours, 'tis mine,
He said, 'tis the pursuit of all that live;
Yet few attain it, if 'twas e'er attain'd. 240
But they the widest wander from the mark,
Who thro' the flow'ry paths of saunt'ring Joy
Seek this coy Goddess; that from stage to stage
Invites us still, but shifts as we pursue.
For, not to name the pains that pleasure brings 245
To counterpoise itself, relentless Fate

Forbids that we thro' gay voluptuous wilds,
 Should ever roam : and were the fates more kind,
 Our narrow luxuries would soon be stale.
 Were these exhaustless, Nature would grow sick, 250
 And, cloy'd with pleasure, squeamishly complain
 That all was vanity, and life a dream.
 Let nature rest : be busy for yourself,
 And for your friend ; be busy even in vain,
 Rather than teize her fated appetites. 255
 Who never fasts, no banquets e'er enjoys ;
 Who never toils or watches, never sleeps.
 Let nature rest : and when the taste of joy
 Grows keen, indulge ; but shun satiety.

'Tis not for mortals always to be blest. 260
 But him the least the dull or painful hours
 Of life oppress, whom sober Sense conducts,
 And Virtue, thro' this labyrinth we tread.
 Virtue and sense I mean not to disjoin ;
 Virtue and Sense are one : and, trust me, still. 265
 A faithless Heart betrays the Head unsound.
 Virtue (for mere Good-nature is a fool)
 Is Sense and Spirit, with Humanity :
 'Tis sometimes angry, and its frown confounds ;
 'Tis even vindictive, but in vengeance just. 270

Knaves

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 89

Knaveſ fain would laugh at it ; ſome great ones dare ;
But at his heart the moſt undaunted ſon
Of fortune dreads its name and awful charms.
To nobleſt uſes this determines wealth ;
This is the ſolid pomp of proſperous days ; 275
The peace and ſhelter of adverſity.
And if you pant for glory, build your fame
On this foundation, which the ſecret ſhock
Defies of Envy and all-fapping Time.
The gawdy gloſs of Fortune only ſtrikes 280
The vulgar eye : the ſuffrage of the wiſe,
The praiſe that's worth ambition, is attain'd
By Senſe alone, and dignity of mind.

Virtue, the ſtrength and beauty of the ſoul,
Is the beſt gift of heaven : a happineſs 285
That even above the ſmiles and frowns of fate
Exalts great Nature's favourites : a wealth
That ne'er encumbers, nor to baſer hands
Can be transfer'd : it is the only good
Man juſtly boaſts of, or can call his own. 290
Riches are oft by guilt and baſeneſs earn'd ;
Or dealt by chance, to ſhield a lucky knave,
Or throw a cruel ſun-ſhine on a fool.
But for one end, one much-neglected uſe,

Are

Are riches worth your care : (for Nature's wants 295

Are few, and without opulence supply'd.)

This noble end is, to produce the Soul ;

To shew the virtues in the fairest light ;

To make Humanity the Minister

Of bounteous Providence ; and teach the breast 300

That generous luxury the Gods enjoy.

Thus, in his graver vein, the friendly Sage

Sometimes declaim'd. Of Right and Wrong he taught

Truths as refin'd as ever Athens heard ;

And (strange to tell !) he practis'd what he preach'd.

Skill'd in the Passions, how to check their sway 306

He knew, as far as Reason can controul

The lawless Powers. But other cares are mine :

Form'd in the school of Pæon, I relate

What Passions hurt the body, what improve :

Avoid them, or invite them, as you may.

Know then, whatever chearful and serene

Supports the mind, supports the body too.

Hence the most vital movement mortals feel

Is Hope ; the balm and life-blood of the soul. 315

It pleases, and it lasts. Indulgent heaven

Sent -

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 91

Sent down the kind delusion, thro' the paths
Of rugged life to lead us patient on ;
And make our happiest state no tedious thing.
Our greatest good, and what we least can spare, 325
Is Hope ; the last of all our evils, Fear.

But there are Passions grateful to the breast,
And yet no friends to Life : perhaps they please
Or to excess, and dissipate the soul ;
Or while they please, torment. The stubborn Clown,
The ill-tam'd Ruffian, and pale Usurer, 326
(If Love's omnipotence such hearts can mould)
May safely mellow into love ; and grow
Refin'd, humane, and generous, if they can.
Love in such bosoms never to a fault 330
Or pains or pleasures. But, ye finer Souls,
Form'd to soft luxury, and prompt to thrill
With all the tumults, all the joys and pains,
That beauty gives ; with caution and reserve
Indulge the sweet destroyer of repose, 335
Nor court too much the Queen of charming cares.
For, while the cherish'd poison in your breast
Ferments and maddens ; sick with jealousy,
Absence, distrust, or even with anxious joy,
The wholesome appetites and powers of life 340
Dissolve

Dissolve in languor. The coy stomach loaths
 The genial board : Your chearful days are gone ;
 The generous bloom that flush'd your cheeks is fled.
 To sighs devoted and to tender pains,
 Pensive you sit, or solitary stray, 345
 And waste your youth in musing. Musing first
 'Toy'd into care your unsuspecting heart :
 It found a liking there, a sportful fire,
 And that fomented into serious love ;
 Which musing daily strengthens and improves 350
 Thro' all the heights of fondness and romance :
 And you're undone, the fatal shaft has sped,
 If once you doubt whether you love or no.
 The body wastes away ; th' infected mind,
 Dissolv'd in female tendernefs, forgets 355
 Each manly virtue, and grows dead to fame.
 Sweet heaven from such intoxicating charms
 Defend all worthy breasts ! Not that I deem
 Love always dangerous, always to be shun'd.
 Love well repaid, and not too weakly sunk 360
 In wanton and unmanly tendernefs,
 Adds bloom to Health ; o'er ev'ry virtue sheds
 A gay, humane, and amiable grace,
 And brightens all the ornaments of man.
 But fruitless, hopeless, disappointed, rack'd 365
 With

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 93

With jealousy, fatigu'd with hope and fear,
Too ferious, or too languishingly fond,
Unnerves the body and unmans the soul.
And some have died for Love ; and some run mad ;
And some with desperate hand themselves have slain. 370

Some to extinguish, others to prevent,
A mad devotion to one dangerous Fair,
Court all they meet ; in hopes to dissipate
The cares of Love amongst an hundred Brides.
Th' event is doubtful : for there are who find 375
A cure in this ; there are who find it not.
'Tis no relief, alas ! it rather galls
The wound, to those who are sincerely sick.
For while from feverish and tumultuous joys
The nerves grow languid and the soul subsides, 380
The tender Fancy smarts with every sting,
And what was Love before is Madness now.
Is health your care, or luxury your aim,
Be temperate still : When Nature bids, obey ;
Her wild impatient fallies bear no curb : 385
But when the prurient habit of delight,
Or loose Imagination, spurs you on
To deeds above your strength, impute it not

To

To Nature : Nature all compulsion hates.
 Ah ! let nor luxury nor vain renown 390
 Urge you to feats you well might sleep without ;
 To make what should be rapture a fatigue,
 A tedious task ; nor in the wanton arms
 Of twining Laïs melt your manhood down.
 For from the colliquation of soft joys 395
 How chang'd you rise ! the ghost of what you was !
 Languid, and melancholy, and gaunt, and wan ;
 Your veins exhausted, and your nerves unstrung.
 Spoil'd of its balm and sprightly zest, the blood
 Grows vapid phlegm ; along the tender nerves 400
 (To each slight impulse tremblingly awake)
 A subtle Fiend that mimics all the plagues
 Rapid and restless springs from part to part.
 The blooming honours of your youth are fallen ;
 Your vigour pines ; your vital powers decay ; 405
 Diseases haunt you ; and untimely Age
 Creeps on ; unfocial, impotent, and lewd.
 Infatuate, impious, epicure ! to waste
 The stores of pleasure, cheerfulness, and health !
 Infatuate all who make delight their trade, 410
 And coy perdition every hour pursue.

Who

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 95

Who pines with Love, or in lascivious flames
Consumes, is with his own consent undone;
He chuses to be wretched, to be mad ;
And warn'd proceeds and wilful to his fate. 415

But there's a Passion, whose tempestuous sway
Tears up each virtue planted in the breast,
And shakes to ruins proud Philosophy.
For pale and trembling Anger rushes in,
With fault'ring speech, and eyes that wildly stare ; 420
Fierce as the Tiger, madder than the seas,
Desperate, and arm'd with more than human strength.

How soon the calm, humane, and polish'd man
Forgets compunction, and starts up a fiend !
Who pines in Love, or wastes with silent Cares, 425
Envy, or Ignominy, or tender Grief,
Slowly descends, and ling'ring, to the shades.
But he whom Anger stings, drops, if he dies,
At once, and rushes apoplectic down ;
Or a fierce fever hurries him to hell. 430

For, as the Body thro' unnumber'd strings
Reverberates each vibration of the Soul ;
As is the Passion, such is still the Pain
The Body feels ; or chronic, or acute.
And oft a sudden storm at once o'erpowers 435

The

The Life, or gives your Reason to the winds.
 Such fates attend the rash alarm of Fear,
 And sudden Grief, and Rage, and sudden Joy:

There are, mean time, to whom the boist'rous fit
 Is Health, and only fills the fails of life. 440
 For where the Mind a torpid winter leads,
 Wrapt in a Body corpulent and cold,
 And each clogg'd function lazily moves on;
 A generous folly spurns th' incumbent load,
 Unlocks the breast, and gives a cordial glow. 445
 But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil,
 Or are your nerves too irritably strung,
 Wave all dispute; be cautious, if you joke;
 Keep Lent for ever; and forswear the Bowl.
 For one rash moment sends you to the shades, 450
 Or shatters ev'ry hopeful scheme of life,
 And gives to horror all your days to come.
 Fate, arm'd with thunder, fire, and ev'ry plague,
 That ruins, tortures, or distracts mankind,
 And makes the happy wretched in an hour, 455
 O'erwhelms you not with woes so horrible
 As your own Wrath, nor gives more sudden blows.

While

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 97

While Choler works, good Friend, you may be
wrong ;
Distrust yourself, and sleep before you fight.
'Tis not too late to-morrow to be brave ; 460
If honour bids, to-morrow kill or die,
But calm advice against a raging fit
Avails too little ; and it tries the power
Of all that ever taught in Prose or Song,
To tame the Fiend that sleeps a gentle Lamb, 465
And wakes a Lion. Unprovok'd and calm,
You reason well, see as you ought to see,
And wonder at the madness of mankind :
Seiz'd with the common rage, you soon forget
The speculation of your wiser hours. 470
Beset with Furies of all deadly shapes,
Fierce and insidious, violent and slow :
With all that urge or lure us on to Fate :
What refuge shall we seek ? what arms prepare ?
Where Reason proves too weak, or void of wiles 475
To cope with subtle or impetuous powers,
I would invoke new Passions to your aid :
With Indignation would extinguish Fear,
With Fear or generous Pity vanquish Rage,
And Love with Pride ; and force to force oppose. 480

There is a Charm, a Power, that sways the breast ;
 Bids every Passion revel or be still ;
 Inspires with Rage, or all your Cares dissolves ;
 Can sooth Distraction, and almost Despair.
 That power is Music : Far beyond the stretch 485
 Of those unmeaning warblers on our stage ;
 Those clumsy Heroes, those fat-headed Gods,
 Who move no Passion justly but Contempt :
 Who, like our dancers (light indeed and strong !)
 Do wond'rous feats, but never heard of grace. 490
 The fault is ours ; we bear those monstrous arts ;
 Good Heaven ! we praise them : we, with loudest peals,
 Applaud the fool that highest lifts his heels ;
 And, with insipid shew of rapture, die
 Of idiot notes impertinently long. 495
 But he the Muse's laurel justly shares,
 A Poet he, and touch'd with Heaven's own fire ;
 Who, with bold rage or solemn pomp of sounds,
 Inflames, exalts, and ravishes the soul ;
 Now tender, plaintive, sweet almost to pain, 500
 In Love dissolves you ; now in sprightly strains
 Breathes a gay rapture thro' your thrilling breast ;
 Or melts the heart with airs divinely sad ;
 Or wakes to horror the tremendous strings.

Book IV. PRESERVING HEALTH. 99

Such was the Bard, whose heavenly strains of old 505
Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul.

Such was, if old and heathen fame say true,
The man who bade the Theban domes ascend,
And tam'd the savage nations with his song ;
And such the Thracian, whose harmonious lyre, 510
'Tun'd to soft woe, made all the mountains weep ;

Sooth'd even th' inexorable powers of Hell,
And half redeem'd his lost Eurydice.

Music exalts each Joy, allays each Grief,
Expels Diseases, softens every Pain, 515

Subdues the rage of Poison, and the Plague ;
And hence the wife of ancient days ador'd
One Power of Physic, Melody, and Song.

T H E E N D.