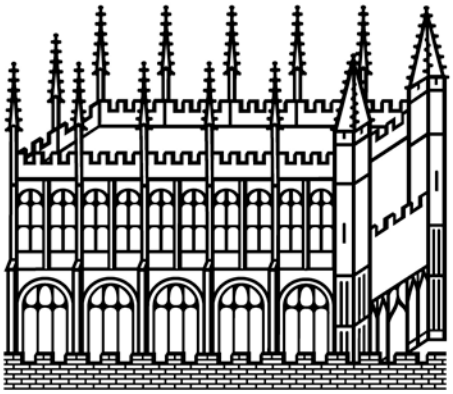

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RIVINGTONS

London, Oxford, and Cambridge

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INTRODUCTION

THE object of these little books is to supply preparatory schools, or the fourth forms of larger schools, with text-books for English reading. They do not therefore aim at a very high standard of criticism, and would occupy a place below those excellent annotated reprints which are issuing from the Oxford Press. The design is, that each volume should contain in it about enough for one Term's work. Such work would probably consist, first, in the explanation and illustration of the text; secondly, in the committing of passages to memory. For this latter purpose, not unfrequently the earlier part, or some selected fragments of the main subject of the book, would be quite sufficient. In other cases, portions of the same author, but not those annotated, might be preferred. Under these circumstances, appropriate passages have been selected and annotated only just sufficiently for the comprehension of the text. These should be run over quickly in a lesson or two, and material for repetition thus being supplied, the more difficult and more fully annotated passages would remain for the closer study of the subject.

The main difficulty in teaching English is, on one side, the apparent obviousness of the subject and the few points it seems to offer for instruction; on the other, if

the study is pursued deeply, the great knowledge really required both for teacher and pupil, and the number of books requisite to render the subject interesting and useful. With regard to the first point, when a teacher is first asked to instruct his class in English, and a poet such as Scott, or Thomson, or Cowper is put into his hands, as he casts his eyes over the pages, he is struck with the hopelessness of his task: what is there in the perfectly simple language before him, beyond a few allusions scattered here and there, on which he can frame questions or from which he can elicit such matter as shall interest or improve the mind of his pupil? If he is interested in the growth of language generally, the solution which strikes him is probably Etymology. Of this at all events, with the aid of dictionaries and books of reference, he can make something. But when he comes to try it, he finds the ignorance of his class renders his efforts abortive, while for his own part he sees his table crowded with books, which yet are not half enough, and after some hours of severe labour, becomes conscious that his time has been wasted upon some six or eight words, which interesting as they may be to him, are mere isolated and unintelligible facts to his pupils, or at best interesting and amusing details. What is misleading him, is his misappreciation of the ignorance of those he has to teach.

I. In the first place, if the poem be a short one, he will be able to ask (1) what is the meaning and purport of the whole. He will be able to elicit from his pupils or to point out to them how one part tells upon the other, what the connection and argument of the poem is. The same he will be able to do in a fragment of a long poem. He will probably find that the whole meaning has been missed

by the greater part of his boys, and certainly that all the finer and more delicate points have been passed over. Certain passages he will also find have been perfectly misunderstood. Of such (2) he may at once demand accurate paraphrases. Such paraphrases should bring out precisely the full meaning of a passage; extreme brevity need not be required, so long as the whole thought both of the passage as a whole and of the individual words is produced.[1] This will lead him (3) to observe more especially what he may perhaps himself have failed to observe, the great part which epithets play in English poetry. These he will be able to classify. He will be able to shew how some are merely ornamental, while others are absolutely essential to the meaning of the passage, how in some cases they are in fact more important than the word they qualify, and how, lastly, they are not unfrequently whole compressed clauses. (4) At the same time, there will come to view the great difficulty which boys feel in finding adequate equivalents for individual words. This is not only a boy's difficulty; it really exists. Examination will make it evident that a very large number of words are used metaphorically; that they are, as it were, compressed similes. As such they cannot be expressed by any one equivalent word, but are capable of being expanded so as to exhibit their original uncompressed meaning. No exercise can be more useful than this work of expansion, which leads boys to observe the exact meaning of words, prevents them from misapplying them, and can be made an instrument for pointing out to them how pictorial and poetical a thing even ordinary language is.

[1] *Cf.* Abbott and Seeley's English Lessons.

(5) Towards the same end will tend an exact definition of the meanings of words. There are comparatively few words even when not used metaphorically for which a second exact equivalent can be found in the language. This may be made[1] a means of explaining the inductive process, a number of uses of the word being given, and an exact idea of its meaning being thus gradually evolved. This may perhaps complete the list of points, as far as regards the substance of the passage or the meaning and character of the words, which can be advantageously touched upon. There still remain to be mentioned the points regarding the form.

II. (1) A competent knowledge of the ordinary rules of grammar may be presupposed, but should it not exist, grammar, in its most important province, can be taught as well by means of English as by any other language. The same syntactical rules which form the basis of the grammars of other language, which are in fact the general rules to which thought in all languages is subordinated, find of course their illustrations in English. As a vehicle for teaching *accidence* it is much less valuable, since the wear and tear it has undergone has robbed it of most of its inflections and left it dependent on prepositions and auxiliaries. Nevertheless there will occur instances of peculiar constructions in which English differs from other languages, and also of inflections of which the origin is not at once obvious. Such instances should be pointed out. Some of these (2) have to be explained by reference to older languages from which English has sprung, and will introduce the history of the language or derivation; but this should not be

[1] See Abbott and Seeley's English Lessons.

pursued merely as an amusing or interesting study. The history of a word is often very interesting and suggestive of national, social or intellectual changes, and thus far to call attention to such words is very desirable. But beyond information and the excitement of thought this is but of little value, and should be confined to a few words only, which may be taken almost at hazard. On the other hand, it is possible to lay down definite rules and principles of derivation which shall apply to whole large classes of words. Thus the meaning of all the commoner prefixes and suffixes may be known, whether they be of Teutonic or of classical origin. The chief laws of the change of letters may be marked out, and some two or three principles, such as the frequent degradation of words from high meanings to lower ones and the origin of metaphysical from physical notions illustrated.

III. If to these points a full knowledge of the allusions which occur so plentifully in all poems be added, there will be found ample material for exact, useful, and interesting teaching.

IV. There is one other point for which it is nearly impossible to give short rules, and on which nevertheless stress should be laid. This is what may be summed up under the word "style." The amount and completeness of criticism which can be usefully employed will depend on the capacity of teacher and pupil, and in the forms for which these handbooks are intended no great advances can be made. At the same time no author could be satisfactorily studied, unless the reader's attention were drawn to his chief peculiarities of thought and language, to the place he occupies in the history of literature, and

the influences which seem to have affected him most. In illustrating these points the teacher would have to make use of parallel passages, both of English and classical authors. The common classical authors the pupils may be expected to have, but English authors in any sufficient number would be wanting. It would therefore be well for the teacher to draw his illustrations from one or two books recognised in his school, as for instance Shakspere, "The Thousand and One Gems," or "The Golden Treasury." Such books may of course be left to the choice or convenience of the master.

Summary of the points to be exacted in an English lesson.

I.—Points relative to the Substance.

1. A general knowledge of the purport of the passage and line of argument pursued.
2. An exact paraphrase of parts of the whole, producing exactly and at length the author's meaning.
3. The force and character of the epithets.
4. The meaning of similes and expansion of metaphors.
5. The exact meanings of individual words, arrived at by a process of induction.

II.—Points with regard to the Form.

1. General Grammar rules; if necessary, peculiarities of English Grammar.
2. Derivation—

(*a*) The general laws and principles of derivation, including a knowledge of affixes and suffixes.

(*b*) Interesting historical derivations of particular words.

III.—The knowledge of all allusions.

IV. A knowledge of such parallel passages and illustrations as the teacher has supplied.

Example of a lesson applied to the first few lines of Thomson's "Winter."

What is the substance of the first forty lines?

The approach of winter. The exalted thoughts which it brings with it; and the charm it exercises upon the youthful mind. This is followed by a dedication to Lord Wilmington, in which the poet, having passed through the round of the seasons, comes to lay his work at the feet of a man whom he can regard as an upright patriot in the midst of a degraded age.

Let us examine the meaning a little more closely.

Tell me the exact meaning of the first three lines.

Winter comes in its turn to govern the life and external appearance of the year, which is constantly changing as the seasons pass over it. Its character is gloomy, and its attendants, which seem to rise and accompany it, are vapours, clouds, and storms.

What do you mean by calling winter "sullen and sad?"

As the face of a sullen and sad man is darkened and gloomy, so is the aspect of nature during winter.

(Here explain what a metaphor means.)

Is this then properly a metaphor?

No; it would be, but the word "his" in the next clause shows that the poet is here using the figure called personification.

What do you mean by that?

That he regards winter as a human being, whom he clothes with the character of winter, so that, speaking of

him as sullen and sad, is really attributing human characteristics to a human being, and is therefore no metaphor.

There are two epithets, "varied" and "rising;" are these important epithets?

"Varied" is, because it is an allusion to the preceding parts of the same poem; "rising" is only ornamental, but adds fresh force to the picture, and implies the idea that winter, like the clouds, seems to rise up from the horizon.

"His." Do you know anything peculiar in the use of "his" as applied to an inanimate thing?

It was originally the possessive of both masculine and neuter in English. "Its" is a word of later growth, and came into use between Shakspere's time and Dryden's. In the Bible "his" is more commonly used; as, for instance, in Genesis, "Every creeping thing after his kind."

Let us pass to the next few lines (3-5).

"Be these my theme." Parse the word "be." Is it not curious that the present tense of "to be" is "am." Explain this.

The exact meaning of these lines.

May winter with its clouds be the subject of my poem, for they can supply the soul with sobering thoughts.

The peculiar use of "that" and "which" in English might be explained here, and the force of the relative introducing what might be called a causal sentence might be pointed out.

"Welcome—evening sky" (5-14). What is the meaning of this?

I bid you hail, for there is something in your feelings which is akin to my gloominess. Even in the time of my youth, the season of cheerfulness, and when I was without

the cares of life, I have found pleasure in the roughness of winter, have found a sympathy with my own innocence in the virgin purity of the snow, and have observed with delight the sounds and sights of the winter storm.

In the above lines an opportunity would occur of explaining one or two derivations.

"Kindred glooms." The connection of kind and kin and kindred might be pointed out, and its close similarity with the word "congenial" in the other classical branch of the language.

The meaning of *con* in composition might be illustrated by numerous examples.

"With frequent foot." This poetical way of expressing "frequent" might be pointed out, and illustrated perhaps by the use of "hot fote" for "rapidly" in Chaucer.

"Cheerful," "careless." To what class of epithets do these belong? If important, in what does their importance consist?

In both instances the whole effect of the contrast depends upon them. They are in fact compressed sentences. In the morn of life, though I was cheerful and free from care, I still loved the gloom of winter.

"Brewed." Is the word well used here? It keeps up the metaphor of the adjective "fermenting."

What is the meaning of the last three lines, and whence is the image taken?

From Job ix. 9, "Who maketh . . . . the chambers of the south." Chambers as here used in an astrological term, meaning divisions of the sky. The poet, taking this language, has turned it into a picture, and described spring as coming up through those regions of the sky, and looking out of them.

The next lines offer much opportunity for questioning on the meaning of the text.

Why first essay? (17).

Winter was Thomson's first successful poem in London.

What is the meaning of rounded? (19)

Gone round. Give any similar use.

(20-25) Paraphrase these lines. The muse likened to a bird, now, swallow-like, skimming in spring time, now, like the eagle, which alone can confront the sun, soaring upwards in the full blaze of summer, now sweeping in the autumnal gale, and now again, like a poor struggling rook, blown back and rolled in the whirling storm, but still striving to suit her voice and temper to the situation.

"Awful." (30) Draw attention to the use and misuse of the word—illustrating such degradation of language.

"Swell." (25) What does this word mean?

"To increase." Is that exactly right? Could you say "Swell the length of a piece of string?" No. Try various phrases in which "swell" will do and "increase" will not do, and thence deduce the exact meaning of "swell."

If it means to increase with an idea of enlarged breadth and circumference, how can it be used of notes?

The word, properly belonging to visible and material things, is transferred picturesquely to the invisible note of music.

Do you find any useless or merely ornamental epithets here? (20-40)

Only one—"sound integrity," where the two words mean exactly the same thing.

Make the pupil point out how several of the others are

really needed. Thus—*gay* Spring, to contrast it with Winter, and illustrate the *varied* year; *doubling* storm, to explain the *rolling; sounding* cadence, where *sounding* means loud, become so to suit the floods; *judging* ear meaning the ear of you, my judge, and so on.

Explain the grammar 30-36. What is the case and construction of "*goodness*," "*soul*," "*spirit*"? What the construction of "burning strong?"

There will also be room in these lines for pointing out some of the chief peculiarities of the author, *e.g.*—the constant use of classical forms of expressions, as in "numbers wildly great," "equal goodness," &c.; his love for nature as in 5-16; his inclination to bombast as in 10-13; while the allusions to Wilmington and political characteristics of the time will supply further matter for questioning.

This short specimen, though including only some few of the points mentioned, is perhaps enough to shew how much useful thought and attention can be spent on only a few lines of English teaching. The questions are perhaps too closely packed together for any lesson but a first or very early one. Many of the points, which recur frequently, may afterwards be passed over with a slight allusion, while only the peculiarities of the particular lesson are emphasized. Otherwise there is a danger that too little work will be got through in the term.

It was originally intended to put questions at the bottom of each page; but this would have involved such constant repetition of the same class of questions, that it was felt to be better that a few general hints should be given which, it is hoped, will enable any teacher to supply himself with questions without difficulty.

LIFE OF THOMSON

JAMES THOMSON was born in 1700. His father was a clergyman in Roxburghshire. He was intended for the Scotch Church himself, but gave up this intention, and determined to devote himself to literature. He was induced to make this change in his life, it is said, by some words of praise and warning given him by Professor Hamilton, who was much struck by a poetical paraphrase of a Psalm which Thomson had made and shewn to him as a university exercise. He betook himself to London, with very little money; but taking with him the manuscript of his poem "The Winter," afterwards incorporated with "The Seasons." To make matters worse, his pocket was picked, and he lost what little money he had, together with his letters of introduction, and was thus thrown entirely on his own resources. He contrived however to dispose of his manuscript (1726) to Mr. Millar the publisher. The favourable notice of this poem by Spence raised him into notoriety, and found him friends, among others Dr. Rundle, who introduced him to Talbot, the Lord Chancellor, who stood his friend through life. The rest of the Seasons were published, and well received, in 1727, 1728 and 1730.

The stage was at this time a most promising opening for a writer, and Thomson tried his hand at tragedy. As is plain however from his didactic poems, his genius was thoroughly undramatical, and though he wrote many

plays, as Sophonisba, Agamemnon, Edward and Eleonora, The Masque of Alfred, etc., none of his plays met with great success, and none have kept the stage. Sophonisba, of which much was expected, was nearly ruined by an unfortunate weak line, very characteristic of Thomson's simplicity of thought and indolence in finishing his work. "Oh, Sophonisba, Sophonisba, oh!" tickled the fancy of the audience, and soon appeared parodied as—"Oh, Jemmy Thomson, Jemmy Thomson, oh!" The Masque of Alfred, in the writing of which Mallet had a considerable share, is remarkable for containing the song "Rule Britannia." At this time it was impossible for a literary man not to take a part in politics. Sir Robert Walpole was in power, and was remarkable for his contempt for literary men. Among the numerous hack-writers he employed there was scarcely one of eminence. In common with all the rest of the young literary talent of the time, Thomson joined the violent opposition which was clamouring against the minister; and in 1727 he published "Britannia," a poem attacking the Ministry for not pushing matters to extremity with Spain, which was doing its best, and somewhat roughly, to suppress illicit English enterprise in the South Seas. In 1735-36, he produced a poem on Liberty, but this abstract subject was as unsuited to his didactic genius as the Drama had been, though, with a perversity not uncommon among authors, he regarded it as his best production. Much better, in fact his masterpiece, is the Castle of Indolence, in the Spenserian stanza. This was the growth of several years, and took its origin in some verses in which he rallied himself for his own besetting sin, and implied that many who found fault with him were no better themselves. The subject

was congenial, and the metre suited to his smooth versification, and the work, as completed and published in 1748, is his best.

Thomson was indolent, simple, and self-indulgent, stout and well-liking in person, silent in general company, but with powers of attracting close personal friends, among whom were numbered Pope; Collins; Mallet, his college friend, — Hammond mentioned in this poem; and Quin, the actor. His taste for natural beauty finds a fitting expression in his Seasons, and his love for quiet social enjoyment is well shewn in such a passage as that beginning in the 441st line of the following poem. Content with ease and leisure, he found enough for his life in small sinecures provided for him by his friends. Thus, while Talbot lived, he held the office of secretary, and, after his death, got through Sir George Thomson, afterwards Lord Lyttleton, the surveyor-generalship of the Leeward Islands. Like many other offices of that time, the duties of this place could be performed by deputy. He therefore procured a substitute, remaining himself in England, and realizing about £300 a year. He died in 1748 of a cold caught while sailing on the river at Richmond.

Both the beauties and faults of his poetry are characteristic, his simplicity and childlike goodness of heart is visible in the religious and didactic tone which pervades his works, the sensuousness of his nature in his descriptions of the miseries of hardship; while the marks of indolence are only too obvious in the use of idle epithets, of lines of incongruous roughness or sweetness introduced where the contrary feeling is required, and in the want of polish that marks all his work.

WINTER

SEE, WINTER comes, to rule the varied year;
Sullen and sad, with all his rising train—
Vapours, and clouds, and storms. Be these my theme;
These, that exalt the soul to solemn thought
And heavenly musing. Welcome, kindred glooms!
Congenial horrors, hail! with frequent foot,
Pleased have I, in my cheerful morn of life,
When nursed by careless solitude I lived,
And sung of Nature with unceasing joy,
Pleased have I wandered through your rough domain;
Trod the pure virgin-snows, myself as pure;
Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst;
Or seen the deep fermenting tempest brewed
In the grim evening-sky. Thus passed the time,
Till through the lucid chambers of the south
Looked out the joyous Spring—looked out and smiled.
To thee, the patron of this first essay,
The muse, O Wilmington! renews her song.
Since has she rounded the revolving year:
Skimmed the gay Spring: on eagle-pinions borne,
Attempted through the summer blaze to rise;
Then swept o'er Autumn with the shadowy gale;
And now among the wintry clouds again,
Rolled in the doubling storm, she tries to soar;
To swell her note with all the rushing winds;
To suit her sounding cadence to the floods;
As is her theme, her numbers wildly great:
Thrice happy, could she fill thy judging ear,
With bold description, and with manly thought.
Nor art thou skilled in awful schemes alone,
And how to make a mighty people thrive:

But equal goodness, sound integrity,
A firm, unshaken, uncorrupted soul
Amid a sliding age, and burning strong,
Not vainly blazing, for thy country's weal—
A steady spirit, regularly free:
These, each exalting each, the statesman light
Into the patriot; these, the public hope
And eye to thee converting, bid the muse
Record what envy dares not flattery call.
  Now when the cheerless empire of the sky
To Capricorn the Centaur-Archer yields,
And fierce Aquarius stains the inverted year;
Hung o'er the farthest verge of heaven, the sun
Scarce spreads o'er ether the dejected day.
Faint are his gleams, and ineffectual shoot
His struggling rays, in horizontal lines,
Through the thick air; as, clothed in cloudy storm,
Weak, wan, and broad, he skirts the southern sky;
And, soon descending, to the long dark night
Wide-shading all, the prostrate world resigns.
Nor is the night unwished; while vital heat,
Light, life, and joy, the dubious day forsake.
Meantime, in sable cincture, shadows vast,
Deep-tinged and damp, and congregated clouds,
And all the vapoury turbulence of heaven,
Involve the face of things. Thus Winter falls,
A heavy gloom oppressive o'er the world,
Through Nature shedding influence malign,
And rouses up the seeds of dark disease.
The soul of man dies in him, loathing life,
And black with more than melancholy views.
The cattle droop; and o'er the furrowed land,
Fresh from the plough, the dun discoloured flocks,
Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root.
Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;
And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
And fractured mountains wild, the brawling brook
And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan,
Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.
  Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
Wrapt in black glooms. First, joyless rains obscure
Drive through the mingling skies with vapour foul,

Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods
That grumbling wave below. The unsightly plain
Lies a brown deluge ; as the low-bent clouds
Pour flood on flood, yet unexhausted still
Combine, and, deepening into night, shut up
The day's fair face. The wanderers of heaven,
Each to his home, retire ; save those that love
To take their pastime in the troubled air,
Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
The cattle from the untasted fields return,
And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls,
Or ruminate in the contiguous shade.
Thither the household feathery people crowd—
The crested cock, with all his female train,
Pensive and dripping; while the cottage-hind
Hangs o'er the enlivening blaze, and taleful there
Recounts his simple frolic : much he talks,
And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
Without, and rattles on his humble roof.
Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swelled,
And the mixed ruin of its banks o'erspread,
At last the roused-up river pours along :
Resistless, roaring, dreadful, down it comes.
From the rude mountain, and the mossy wild,
Tumbling through rocks abrupt, and sounding far;
Then o'er the sanded valley floating spreads,
Calm, sluggish, silent : till again, constrained
Between two meeting hills, it bursts a way,
Where rocks and woods o'erhang the turbid stream;
There gathering triple force, rapid and deep,
It boils, and wheels, and foams, and thunders through.
Nature ! great parent ! whose unceasing hand
Rolls round the Seasons of the changeful year,
How mighty, how majestic, are thy works !
With what a pleasing dread they swell the soul,
That sees astonished, and astonished sings !
Ye too, ye Winds : that now begin to blow,
With boisterous sweep, I raise my voice to you.
Where are your stores, ye powerful beings ! say,
Where your aërial magazines, reserved
To swell the brooding terrors of the storm?
In what far-distant region of the sky,
Hushed in deep silence, sleep you when 'tis calm?

When from the pallid sky the sun descends,
With many a spot, that o'er his glaring orb
Uncertain wanders, stained; red fiery streaks
Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds
Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
Which master to obey; while rising slow,
Blank, in the leaden-coloured east, the moon
Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns.
Seen through the turbid, fluctuating air,
The stars obtuse emit a shivering ray;
Or frequent seem to shoot athwart the gloom,
And long behind them trail the whitening blaze.
Snatched in short eddies, plays the withered leaf;
And on the flood the dancing feather floats.
With broadened nostrils to the sky upturned,
The conscious heifer snuffs the stormy gale.
Even as the matron, at her nightly task,
With pensive labour draws the flaxen thread,
The wasted taper and the crackling flame
Foretell the blast. But chief the plumy race,
The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
Retiring from the downs, where all day long
They picked their scanty fare, a blackening train
Of clamorous rooks thick-urge their weary flight,
And seek the closing shelter of the grove.
Assiduous, in his bower, the wailing owl
Plies his sad song. The cormorant on high
Wheels from the deep, and screams along the land.
Loud shrieks the soaring hern; and with wild wing
The circling sea-fowl cleave the flaky clouds.
Ocean, unequal pressed, with broken tide
And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
Eat into caverns by the restless wave,
And forest-rustling mountain, comes a voice,
That solemn-sounding bids the world prepare.
Then issues forth the storm with sudden burst,
And hurls the whole precipitated air
Down in a torrent. On the passive main
Descends the ethereal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discoloured deep.
Through the black night that sits immense around,
Lashed into foam, the fierce conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn.

Meantime the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swelled, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchored navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds across the howling waste
Of mighty waters : now the inflated wave
Straining they scale, and now impetuous shoot
Into the secret chambers of the deep,
The wintry Baltic thundering o'er their head.
Emerging thence again, before the breath
Of full-exerted heaven they wing their course,
And dart on distant coasts ; if some sharp rock,
Or shoal insidious, break not their career,
And in loose fragments fling them floating round.
  Nor less at land the loosened tempest reigns.
The mountain thunders; and its sturdy sons
Stoop to the bottom of the rocks they shade.
Lone on the midnight steep, and all aghast,
The dark wayfaring stranger breathless toils,
And, often falling, climbs against the blast.
Low waves the rooted forest, vexed, and sheds
What of its tarnished honours yet remain;
Dashed down, and scattered, by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling through the dissipated grove,
The whirling tempest raves along the plain ;
And on the cottage thatched, or lordly roof,
Keen-fastening, shakes them to the solid base.
Sleep frighted flies; and round the rocking dome,
For entrance eager, howls the savage blast.
Then too, they say, through all the burdened air,
Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant sighs,
That, uttered by the demon of the night,
Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.
  Huge uproar lords it wide. The clouds, commixed
With stars swift-gliding, sweep along the sky.
All Nature reels : till Nature's King, who oft
Amid tempestuous darkness dwells alone,
And on the wings of the careering wind
Walks dreadfully serene, commands a calm ;
Then straight air, sea, and earth are hushed at once.
  As yet 'tis midnight deep. The weary clouds,
Slow-meeting, mingle into solid gloom.

Now, while the drowsy world lies lost in sleep,
Let me associate with the serious night,
And contemplation, her sedate compeer;
Let me shake off the intrusive cares of day,
And lay the meddling senses all aside.
  Where now, ye lying vanities of life!
Ye ever-tempting, ever-cheating train!
Where are you now? and what is your amount?
Vexation, disappointment, and remorse:
Sad, sickening thought! and yet deluded man,
A scene of crude disjointed visions past,
And broken slumbers, rises still resolved,
With new-flushed hopes, to run the giddy round.
  Father of light and life! thou Good Supreme!
O teach me what is good; teach me Thyself!
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit; and feed my soul
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure—
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss!
  The keener tempests come; and fuming dun
From all the livid east, or piercing north,
Thick clouds ascend; in whose capacious womb
A vapoury deluge lies, to snow congealed.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along:
And the sky saddens with the gathered storm.
Through the hushed air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin-wavering; till at last the flakes
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherished fields
Put on their winter robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all; save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low, the woods
Bow their hoar head; and, ere the languid sun,
Faint from the west, emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid and chill,
Is one wild dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man. Drooping, the labourer-ox
Stands covered o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
Tamed by the cruel season, crowd around
The winnowing store, and claim the little boon
Which Providence assigns them. One alone,
The redbreast, sacred to the household gods,

Wisely regardful of the embroiling sky,
In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
His annual visit. Half-afraid, he first
Against the window beats ; then, brisk, alights
On the warm hearth : then, hopping o'er the floor,
Eyes all his smiling family askance,
And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is ;
Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
By death in various forms, dark snares, and dogs,
And more unpitying men, the garden seeks,
Urged on by fearless want. The bleating kind
Eye the bleak heaven, and next the glistening earth,
With looks of dumb despair ; then, sad-dispersed,
Dig for the withered herb through heaps of snow.
Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind ;
Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
With food at will ; lodge them below the storm,
And watch them strict : for, from the bellowing east,
In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
Sweeps up the burden of whole wintry plains
In one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
Hid in the hollow of two neighbouring hills,
The billowy tempest whelms ; till, upward urged,
The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipped with a wreath high-curling in the sky.
As thus the snows arise, and, foul and fierce,
All Winter drives along the darkened air,
In his own loose-revolving fields the swain
Disastered stands ; sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown joyless brow ; and other scenes,
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain ;
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild ; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray ;
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
Stung with the thoughts of home : the thoughts of home
Rush on his nerves, and call their vigour forth
In many a vain attempt. How sinks his soul !
What black despair, what horror fills his heart !

When for the dusky spot which fancy feigned
His tufted cottage, rising through the snow,
He meets the roughness of the middle waste,
Far from the track, and blest abode of man;
While round him night resistless closes fast,
And every tempest, howling o'er his head,
Renders the savage wilderness more wild.
Then throng the busy shapes into his mind,
Of covered pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent! beyond the power of frost;
Of faithless bogs; of precipices huge,
Smoothed up with snow; and, what is land unknown,
What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,
Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.
These check his fearful steps; and down he sinks
Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
Mixed with the tender anguish nature shoots
Through the wrung bosom of the dying man—
His wife, his children, and his friends unseen.
In vain for him the officious wife prepares
The fire fair-blazing and the vestment warm;
In vain his little children, peeping out
Into the mingling storm, demand their sire,
With tears of artless innocence. Alas!
Nor wife, nor children, more shall he behold,
Nor friends, nor sacred home. On every nerve
The deadly Winter seizes; shuts up sense;
And, o'er his inmost vitals creeping cold,
Lays him along the snow a stiffened corse,
Stretched out, and bleaching in the Northern blast.
Ah! little think the gay licentious proud,
Whom pleasure, power, and affluence surround;
They, who their thoughtless hours in giddy mirth,
And wanton, often cruel, riot waste;
Ah! little think they, while they dance along,
How many feel this very moment death,
And all the sad variety of pain.
How many sink in the devouring flood,
Or more devouring flame. How many bleed,
By shameful variance betwixt man and man.
How many pine in want, and dungeon-glooms;

Shut from the common air, and common use
Of their own limbs. How many drink the cup
Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
Of misery. Sore pierced by wintry winds,
How many shrink into the sordid hut
Of cheerless poverty. How many shake
With all the fiercer tortures of the mind,
Unbounded passion, madness, guilt, remorse;
Whence tumbled headlong from the height of life,
They furnish matter for the tragic muse.
Even in the vale, where wisdom loves to dwell,
With friendship, peace, and contemplation joined,
How many, racked with honest passions, droop
In deep retired distress. How many stand
Around the deathbed of their dearest friends,
And point the parting anguish. Thought fond man
Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
That one incessant struggle render life,
One scene of toil, of suffering, and of fate,
Vice in his high career would stand appalled,
And heedless rambling impulse learn to think;
The conscious heart of charity would warm,
And her wide wish benevolence dilate;
The social tear would rise, the social sigh;
And into clear perfection, gradual bliss,
Refining still, the social passions work.
And here can I forget the generous band,
Who, touched with human woe, redressive searched
Into the horrors of the gloomy jail?
Unpitied, and unheard, where misery moans;
Where sickness pines; where thirst and hunger burn,
And poor misfortune feels the lash of vice.
While in the land of liberty, the land
Whose every street and public meeting glow
With open freedom, little tyrants raged;
Snatched the lean morsel from the starving mouth;
Tore from cold wintry limbs the tattered weed;
Even robbed them of the last of comforts, sleep;
The free-born Briton to the dungeon chained,
Or, as the lust of cruelty prevailed,
At pleasure marked him with inglorious stripes;
And crushed out lives, by secret barbarous ways,
That for their country would have toiled, or bled.

O great design ! if executed well,
With patient care, and wisdom-tempered zeal.
Ye sons of mercy ! yet resume the search;
Drag forth the legal monsters into light,
Wrench from their hands oppression's iron rod,
And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
Much still untouched remains ; in this rank age,
Much is the patriot's weeding hand required.
The toils of law (what dark insidious men
Have cumbrous added to perplex the truth,
And lengthen simple justice into trade),
How glorious were the day that saw these broke,
And every man within the reach of right !
  By wintry famine roused, from all the tract
Of horrid mountains which the shining Alps,
And wavy Apennines, and Pyrenees,
Branch out stupendous into distant lands,
Cruel as death, and hungry as the grave !
Burning for blood, bony, and gaunt, and grim !
Assembling wolves in raging troops descend;
And, pouring o'er the country, bear along,
Keen as the north-wind sweeps the glossy snow.
All is their prize. They fasten on the steed,
Press him to earth, and pierce his mighty heart.
Nor can the bull his awful front defend,
Or shake the murdering savages away.
Rapacious, at the mother's throat they fly,
And tear the screaming infant from her breast.
The godlike face of man avails him nought.
Even Beauty, force divine ! at whose bright glance
The generous lion stands in softened gaze,
Here bleeds, a hapless undistinguished prey.
But if, apprised of the severe attack,
The country be shut up, lured by the scent,
On churchyards drear (inhuman to relate !)
The disappointed prowlers fall, and dig
The shrouded body from the grave ; o'er which,
Mixed with foul shades and frighted ghosts, they howl.
  Among those hilly regions, where, embraced
In peaceful vales, the happy Grisons dwell,
Oft, rushing sudden from the loaded cliffs,
Mountains of snow their gathering terrors roll.
From steep to steep, loud thundering, down they come,

A wintry waste in dire commotion all;
And herds, and flocks, and travellers, and swains,
And sometimes whole brigades of marching troops,
Or hamlets sleeping in the dead of night,
Are deep beneath the smothering ruin whelmed.
Now, all amid the rigours of the year,
In the wild depth of Winter, while without
The ceaseless winds blow ice, be my retreat,
Between the groaning forest and the shore,
Beat by the boundless multitude of waves,
A rural, sheltered, solitary scene;
Where ruddy fire and beaming tapers join
To cheer the gloom. There studious let me sit,
And hold high converse with the mighty dead;
Sages of ancient time, as gods revered,
As gods beneficent, who blessed mankind
With arts and arms, and humanized a world.
Roused at the inspiring thought, I throw aside
The long-lived volume; and deep-musing, hail
The sacred shades, that slowly rising pass
Before my wondering eyes. First Socrates,
Who, firmly good in a corrupted state,
Against the rage of tyrants single stood,
Invincible; calm reason's holy law,
That voice of God within the attentive mind,
Obeying, fearless, or in life or death:
Great moral teacher! Wisest of mankind!
Solon the next, who built his commonweal
On equity's wide base; by tender laws
A lively people curbing, yet undamped
Preserving still that quick peculiar fire,
Whence in the laurelled field of finer arts
And of bold freedom, they unequalled shone—
The pride of smiling Greece, and humankind.
Lycurgus then, who bowed beneath the force
Of strictest discipline, severely wise,
All human passions. Following him, I see,
As at Thermopylæ he glorious fell,
The firm devoted chief, who proved by deeds
The hardest lesson which the other taught.
Then Aristides lifts his honest front;
Spotless of heart, to whom the unflattering voice
Of freedom gave the noblest name of Just;

In pure majestic poverty revered;
Who, even his glory to his country's weal
Submitting, swelled a haughty rival's fame.
Reared by his care, of softer ray, appears
Cimon, sweet-souled; whose genius, rising strong,
Shook off the load of young debauch; abroad
The scourge of Persian pride, at home the friend
Of every worth and every splendid art;
Modest, and simple, in the pomp of wealth.
Then the last worthies of declining Greece,
Late-called to glory, in unequal times,
Pensive appear. The fair Corinthian boast,
Timoleon, tempered happy, mild and firm,
Who wept the brother while the tyrant bled.
And, equal to the best, the Theban pair,
Whose virtues, in heroic concord joined,
Their country raised to freedom, empire, fame.
He too, with whom Athenian honour sunk,
And left a mass of sordid lees behind,
Phocion the Good; in public life severe,
To virtue still inexorably firm;
But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,
Sweet peace and happy wisdom smoothed his brow,
Not friendship softer was, nor love more kind.
And he, the last of old Lycurgus' sons,
The generous victim to that vain attempt,
To save a rotten state, Agis, who saw
Even Sparta's self to servile avarice sunk.
The two Achaian heroes close the train:
Aratus, who a while relumed the soul
Of fondly lingering liberty in Greece;
And he, her darling as her latest hope,
The gallant Philopœmen, who to arms
Turned the luxurious pomp he could not cure:
Or, toiling in his farm, a simple swain;
Or, bold and skilful, thundering in the field.
Of rougher front, a mighty people come!
A race of heroes! in those virtuous times
Which knew no stain, save that with partial flame
Their dearest country they too fondly loved.
Her better founder first, the light of Rome,
Numa, who softened her rapacious sons:
Servius, the king who laid the solid base

On which o'er earth the vast republic spread.
Then the great consuls venerable rise.
The public father who the private quelled,
As on the dread tribunal sternly sad.
He, whom his thankless country could not lose,
Camillus, only vengeful to her foes.
Fabricius, scorner of all-conquering gold;
And Cincinnatus, awful from the plough.
Thy willing victim, Carthage, bursting loose
From all that pleading nature could oppose;
From a whole city's tears, by rigid faith
Imperious called and honour's dire command.
Scipio, the gentle chief, humanely brave,
Who soon the race of spotless glory ran;
And, warm in youth, to the poetic shade
With friendship and philosophy retired.
Tully, whose powerful eloquence a while
Restrained the rapid fate of rushing Rome.
Unconquered Cato, virtuous in extreme.
And thou, unhappy Brutus, kind of heart,
Whose steady arm, by awful virtue urged,
Lifted the Roman steel against thy friend.
Thousands, besides, the tribute of a verse
Demand; but who can count the stars of heaven?
Who sing their influence on this lower world?
  Behold, who yonder comes! in sober state,
Fair, mild, and strong, as is a vernal sun:
'Tis Phœbus' self, or else the Mantuan swain.
Great Homer too appears, of daring wing,
Parent of song! and equal by his side,
The British Muse; joined hand in hand they walk,
Darkling, full up the middle steep to fame.
Nor absent are those shades whose skilful touch
Pathetic drew the impassioned heart, and charmed
Transported Athens with the mortal scene;
Nor those who, tuneful, waked the enchanting lyre.
  First of your kind! society divine!
Still visit thus my nights, for you reserved,
And mount my soaring soul to thoughts like yours.
Silence, thou lonely power! the door be thine;
See on the hallowed hour that none intrude,
Save a few chosen friends, who sometimes deign
To bless my humble roof, with sense refined,

Learning digested well, exalted faith,
Unstudied wit, and humour ever gay.
Or from the Muses' hill will Pope descend,
To raise the sacred hour, to bid it smile,
And with the social spirit warm the heart?
For though not sweeter his own Homer sings,
Yet is his life the more endearing song.
  Where art thou, Hammond? thou the darling pride,
The friend and lover of the tuneful throng!
Ah! why, dear youth, in all the blooming prime
Of vernal genius, where disclosing fast
Each active worth, each manly virtue lay,
Why wert thou ravished from our hope so soon?
What now avails that noble thirst of fame,
Which stung thy fervent breast? that treasured store
Of knowledge early gained? that eager zeal
To serve thy country, glowing in the band
Of youthful patriots, who sustain her name?
What now, alas! that life-diffusing charm
Of sprightly wit? that rapture for the muse,
That heart of friendship, and that soul of joy,
Which bade with softest light thy virtues smile?
Ah! only shewed, to check our fond pursuits,
And teach our humbled hopes that life is vain!
  Thus in some deep retirement would I pass
The winter glooms, with friends of pliant soul,
Or blithe, or solemn, as the theme inspired:
With them would search, if Nature's boundless frame
Was called late-rising from the void of night,
Or sprung eternal from the Eternal Mind;
Its life, its laws, its progress, and its end.
Hence larger prospects of the beauteous whole
Would, gradual, open on our opening minds;
And each diffusive harmony unite
In full perfection, to the astonished eye.
Then would we try to scan the moral world;
Which, though to us it seems embroiled, moves on
In higher order, fitted and impelled
By Wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
In general good. The sage historic muse
Should next conduct us through the deeps of time:
Shew us how empire grew, declined, and fell,
In scattered states; what makes the nations smile,

Improves their soil, and gives them double suns ;
And why they pine beneath the brightest skies,
In Nature's richest lap. As thus we talked,
Our hearts would burn within us, would inhale
That portion of divinity, that ray
Of purest Heaven, which lights the public soul
Of patriots and of heroes. But if doomed,
In powerless humble fortune, to repress
These ardent risings of the kindling soul ;
Then, even superior to ambition, we
Would learn the private virtues : how to glide
Through shades and plains, along the smoothest stream
Of rural life ; or, snatched away by hope,
Through the dim spaces of futurity,
With earnest eye anticipate those scenes
Of happiness and wonder—where the mind,
In endless growth and infinite ascent,
Rises from state to state, and world to world.
But when with these the serious thought is foiled,
We, shifting for relief, would play the shapes
Of frolic fancy ; and incessant form
Those rapid pictures, that assembled train
Of fleet ideas, never joined before,
Whence lively wit excites to gay surprise ;
Or folly-painting humour, grave himself,
Calls laughter forth, deep-shaking every nerve.
Meantime the village rouses up the fire :
While, well attested and as well believed,
Heard solemn, goes the goblin-story round,
Till superstitious horror creeps o'er all.
Or, frequent in the sounding hall, they wake
The rural gambol. Rustic mirth goes round :
The simple joke that takes the shepherd's heart,
Easily pleased ; the long loud laugh, sincere ;
The kiss, snatched hasty from the sidelong maid,
On purpose guardless, or pretending sleep ;
The leap, the slap, the haul ; and shook to notes
Of native music, the respondent dance.
Thus jocund fleets with them the winter night.
The city swarms intense. The public haunt,
Full of each theme, and warm with mixed discourse,
Hums indistinct. The sons of riot flow
Down the loose stream of false enchanted joy,

To swift destruction. On the rankled soul
The gaming fury falls; and in one gulf
Of total ruin, honour, virtue, peace,
Friends, families, and fortune, headlong sink.
Up springs the dance along the lighted dome,
Mixed, and evolved, a thousand sprightly ways.
The glittering court effuses every pomp;
The circle deepens; beamed from gaudy robes,
Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves:
While, a gay insect in his summer-shine,
The fop, light-fluttering, spreads his mealy wings.
Dread o'er the scene, the ghost of Hamlet stalks;
Othello rages; poor Monimia mourns;
And Belvidera pours her soul in love.
Terror alarms the breast; the comely tear
Steals o'er the cheek: or else the comic muse
Holds to the world a picture of itself,
And raises sly the fair impartial laugh.
Sometimes she lifts her strain, and paints the scenes
Of beauteous life; whate'er can deck mankind,
Or charm the heart, in generous Bevil shewed.
O thou whose wisdom, solid yet refined,
Whose patriot virtues, and consummate skill
To touch the finer springs that move the world,
Joined to whate'er the graces can bestow,
And all Apollo's animating fire,
Give thee, with pleasing dignity, to shine
At once the guardian, ornament, and joy
Of polished life; permit the rural muse,
O Chesterfield, to grace with thee her song!
Ere to the shades again she humbly flies,
Indulge her fond ambition, in thy train
(For every muse has in thy train a place),
To mark thy various full-accomplished mind:
To mark that spirit, which, with British scorn,
Rejects the allurements of corrupted power;
That elegant politeness, which excels,
Even in the judgment of presumptuous France,
The boasted manners of her shining court;
That wit, the vivid energy of sense,
The truth of nature, which, with Attic point
And kind well-tempered satire, smoothly keen,

Steals through the soul, and without pain corrects.
Or, rising thence with yet a brighter flame,
Oh! let me hail thee on some glorious day,
When to the listening senate, ardent, crowd
Britannia's sons to hear her pleaded cause.
Then drest by thee, more amiably fair,
Truth the soft robe of mild persuasion wears:
Thou to assenting reason givest again
Her own enlightened thoughts; called from the heart,
The obedient passions on thy voice attend;
And even reluctant party feels a while
Thy gracious power—as through the varied maze
Of eloquence, now smooth, now quick, now strong,
Profound and clear, you roll the copious flood.

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

What art thou, frost? and whence are thy keen stores
Derived, thou secret all-invading power,
Whom even the illusive fluid cannot fly?
Is not thy potent energy, unseen,
Myriads of little salts, or hooked, or shaped
Like double wedges, and diffused immense

Through water, earth, and ether? Hence at eve,
Steamed eager from the red horizon round,
With the fierce rage of Winter deep suffused,
An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool
Breathes a blue film, and in its mid-career
Arrests the bickering stream. The loosened ice,
Let down the flood, and half-dissolved by day,
Rustles no more; but to the sedgy bank
Fast grows, or gathers round the pointed stone—
A crystal pavement, by the breath of heaven
Cemented firm; till, seized from shore to shore,
The whole imprisoned river growls below.
Loud rings the frozen earth, and, hard, reflects
A double noise; while, at his evening watch,
The village dog deters the nightly thief;
The heifer lows; the distant water-fall
Swells in the breeze; and, with the hasty tread
Of traveller, the hollow-sounding plain
Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,
Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
Shines out intensely keen; and, all one cope
Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
From pole to pole the rigid influence falls,
Through the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
And seizes nature fast. It freezes on;
Till morn, late-rising o'er the drooping world,
Lifts her pale eye unjoyous. Then appears
The various labour of the silent night:
Prone from the dripping eave, and dumb cascade,
Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
The pendent icicle; the frost-work fair
Where transient hues, and fancied figures rise;
Wide-spouted o'er the hill, the frozen brook,
A livid tract, cold-gleaming on the morn;
The forest bent beneath the plumy wave;
And by the frost refined the whiter snow,
Incrusted hard, and sounding to the tread
Of early shepherd, as he pensive seeks
His pining flock, or from the mountain top,
Pleased with the slippery surface, swift descends.
  On blithesome frolics bent, the youthful swains,
While every work of man is laid at rest,
Fond o'er the river crowd, in various sport

And revelry dissolved ; where mixing glad,
Happiest of all the train ! the raptured boy
Lashes the whirling top. Or, where the Rhine
Branched out in many a long canal extends,
From every province swarming, void of care,
Batavia rushes forth ; and as they sweep,
On sounding skates, a thousand different ways,
In circling poise, swift as the winds, along,
The then gay land is maddened all to joy.
Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow,
Pour a new pomp. Eager, on rapid sleds,
Their vigorous youth in bold contention wheel
The long-resounding course. Meantime, to raise
The manly strife, with highly blooming charms,
Flushed by the season, Scandinavia's dames,
Or Russia's buxom daughters, glow around.
Pure, quick, and sportful, is the wholesome day;
But soon elapsed. The horizontal sun,
Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon;
And, ineffectual, strikes the gelid cliff.
His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
Nor feels the feeble touch. Perhaps the vale
Relents a while to the reflected ray;
Or from the forest falls the clustered snow,
Myriads of gems, that in the waving gleam
Gay-twinkle as they scatter. Thick around
Thunders the sport of those who with the gun,
And dog impatient bounding at the shot,
Worse than the season, desolate the fields;
And, adding to the ruins of the year,
Distress the footed or the feathered game.
But what is this? our infant Winter sinks,
Divested of his grandeur, should our eye
Astonished shoot into the frigid zone;
Where, for relentless months, continual night
Holds o'er the glittering waste her starry reign.
There, through the prison of unbounded wilds,
Barred by the hand of Nature from escape,
Wide-roams the Russian exile. Nought around
Strikes his sad eye, but deserts lost in snow;
And heavy-loaded groves; and solid floods,
That stretch, athwart the solitary vast,
Their icy horrors to the frozen main;

And cheerless towns far-distant, never blessed,
Save when its annual course the caravan
Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay,
With news of humankind. Yet there life glows;
Yet cherished there, beneath the shining waste,
The furry nations harbour: tipped with jet,
Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press;
Sables, of glossy black; and dark-embrowned,
Or beauteous freaked with many a mingled hue,
Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts.
There, warm together pressed, the trooping deer
Sleep on the new-fallen snows; and, scarce his head
Raised o'er the heapy wreath, the branching elk
Lies slumbering sullen in the white abyss.
The ruthless hunter wants nor dogs nor toils,
Nor with the dread of sounding bows he drives
The fearful flying race; with ponderous clubs,
As weak against the mountain-heaps they push
Their beating breast in vain, and piteous bray,
He lays them quivering on the ensanguined snows,
And with loud shouts rejoicing bears them home.
There through the piny forest half absorpt,
Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear
With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn;
Slow-paced, and sourer as the storms increase,
He makes his bed beneath the inclement drift,
And, with stern patience, scorning weak complaint,
Hardens his heart against assailing want.
  Wide o'er the spacious regions of the north,
That see Boötes urge his tardy wain,
A boisterous race, by frosty Caurus pierced,
Who little pleasure know and fear no pain,
Prolific swarm. They once relumed the flame
Of lost mankind in polished slavery sunk,
Drove martial horde on horde, with dreadful sweep
Resistless rushing o'er the enfeebled south,
And gave the vanquished world another form.
Not such the sons of Lapland: wisely they
Despise the insensate barbarous trade of war;
They ask no more than simple Nature gives;
They love their mountains and enjoy their storms.
No false desires, no pride-created wants,
Disturb the peaceful current of their time;

And, through the restless ever-tortured maze
Of pleasure, or ambition, bid it rage.
Their reindeer form their riches. These their tents,
Their robes, their beds, and all their homely wealth
Supply, their wholesome fare, and cheerful cups.
Obsequious at their call, the docile tribe
Yield to the sled their necks, and whirl them swift
O'er hill and dale, heaped into one expanse
Of marbled snow, or far as eye can sweep
With a blue crust of ice unbounded glazed.
By dancing meteors then, that ceaseless shake
A waving blaze refracted o'er the heavens,
And vivid moons, and stars that keener play
With doubled lustre from the radiant waste,
Even in the depth of polar night, they find
A wondrous day—enough to light the chase,
Or guide their daring steps to Finland fairs.
Wished Spring returns; and from the hazy south,
While dim Aurora slowly moves before,
The welcome sun, just verging up at first,
By small degrees extends the swelling curve;
Till seen at last for gay rejoicing months,
Still, round and round, his spiral course he winds,
And as he nearly dips his flaming orb,
Wheels up again, and re-ascends the sky.
In that glad season, from the lakes and floods,
Where pure Niëmi's fairy mountains rise,
And fringed with roses Tenglio rolls his stream,
They draw the copious fry. With these, at eve,
They, cheerful, loaded to their tents repair;
Where, all day long in useful cares employed,
Their kind unblemished wives the fire prepare.
Thrice-happy race! by poverty secured
From legal plunder and rapacious power:
In whom fell interest never yet has sown
The seeds of vice; whose spotless swains ne'er knew
Injurious deed; nor, blasted by the breath
Of faithless love, their blooming daughters woe.
  Still pressing on, beyond Tornéa's lake,
And Hecla flaming through a waste of snow,
And farthest Greenland, to the pole itself,
Where, failing gradual, life at length goes out,
The muse expands her solitary flight;

And, hovering o'er the wild stupendous scene,
Beholds new seas beneath another sky.
Throned in his palace of cerulean ice,
Here Winter holds his unrejoicing court;
And through his airy hall the loud misrule
Of driving tempest is for ever heard:
Here the grim tyrant meditates his wrath;
Here arms his winds with all-subduing frost;
Moulds his fierce hail, and treasures up his snows,
With which he now oppresses half the globe.
Thence winding eastward to the Tartar's coast,
She sweeps the howling margin of the main;
Where undissolving, from the first of time,
Snows swell on snows amazing to the sky;
And icy mountains high on mountains piled
Seem to the shivering sailor from afar,
Shapeless and white, an atmosphere of clouds.
Projected huge, and horrid, o'er the surge,
Alps frown on alps; or rushing hideous down,
As if old chaos was again returned,
Wide-rend the deep, and shake the solid pole.
Ocean itself no longer can resist
The binding fury; but, in all its rage
Of tempest taken by the boundless frost,
Is many a fathom to the bottom chained,
And bid to roar no more: a bleak expanse,
Shagged o'er with wavy rocks, cheerless, and void
Of every life, that from the dreary months
Flies conscious southward. Miserable they!
Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,
Take their last look of the descending sun;
While, full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
The long, long night, incumbent o'er their heads,
Falls horrible. Such was the Briton's fate,
As with first prow (what have not Britons dared!)
He for the passage sought, attempted since
So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
By jealous Nature with eternal bars.
In these full regions, in Arzina caught,
And to the stony deep his idle ship
Immediate sealed, he with his hapless crew,
Each full-exerted at his several task,

Froze into statues; to the cordage glued
The sailor, and the pilot to the helm.
  Hard by these shores, where scarce his freezing stream
Rolls the wild Oby, live the last of men;
And, half-enlivened by the distant sun,
That rears and ripens man, as well as plants,
Here human nature wears its rudest form.
Deep from the piercing season sunk in caves,
Here by dull fires, and with unjoyous cheer,
They waste the tedious gloom. Immersed in furs,
Doze the gross race. Nor sprightly jest, nor song,
Nor tenderness, they know; nor aught of life,
Beyond the kindred bears that stalk without.
Till morn at length, her roses drooping all,
Sheds a long twilight brightening o'er their fields,
And calls the quivered savage to the chase.
  What cannot active government perform,
New-moulding man? Wide-stretching from these shores,
A people savage from remotest time,
A huge neglected empire—one vast mind,
By Heaven inspired, from Gothic darkness called.
Immortal Peter! first of monarchs! He
His stubborn country tamed, her rocks, her fens,
Her floods, her seas, her ill-submitting sons;
And while the fierce barbarian he subdued,
To more exalted soul he raised the man.
Ye shades of ancient heroes, ye who toiled
Through long successive ages to build up
A labouring plan of state, behold at once
The wonder done! behold the matchless prince!
Who left his native throne, where reigned till then
A mighty shadow of unreal power;
Who greatly spurned the slothful pomp of courts:
And roaming every land, in every port
His sceptre laid aside, with glorious hand
Unwearied plying the mechanic tool,
Gathered the seeds of trade, of useful arts,
Of civil wisdom, and of martial skill.
Charged with the stores of Europe, home he goes!
Then cities rise amid the illumined waste;
O'er joyless deserts smiles the rural reign;
Far-distant flood to flood is social joined;
The astonished Euxine hears the Baltic roar;

Proud navies ride on seas that never foamed
With daring keel before; and armies stretch
Each way their dazzling files, repressing here
The frantic Alexander of the north,
And awing there stern Othman's shrinking sons.
Sloth flies the land, and ignorance, and vice,
Of old dishonour proud: it glows around,
Taught by the royal hand that roused the whole,
One scene of arts, of arms, of rising trade:
For what his wisdom planned, and power enforced,
More potent still, his great example shewed.
  Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point,
Blow hollow-blustering from the south. Subdued,
The frost resolves into a trickling thaw.
Spotted the mountains shine; loose sleet descends,
And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
O'er rocks and woods, in broad brown cataracts,
A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once;
And, where they rush, the wide-resounding plain
Is left one slimy waste. Those sullen seas,
That wash the ungenial pole, will rest no more
Beneath the shackles of the mighty north;
But, rousing all their waves, resistless heave.
And hark! the lengthening roar continuous runs
Athwart the rifted deep: at once it bursts,
And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
Ill fares the bark with trembling wretches charged,
That, tossed amid the floating fragments, moors
Beneath the shelter of an icy isle,
While night o'erwhelms the sea, and horror looks
More horrible. Can human force endure
The assembled mischiefs that besiege them round?
Heart-gnawing hunger, fainting weariness,
The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
Now ceasing, now renewed with louder rage,
And in dire echoes bellowing round the main.
More to embroil the deep, leviathan
And his unwieldy train, in dreadful sport,
Tempest the loosened brine; while through the gloom,
Far from the bleak inhospitable shore,
Loading the winds, is heard the hungry howl
Of famished monsters, there awaiting wrecks.

Yet Providence, that ever-waking eye,
Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
Of mortals lost to hope, and lights them safe
Through all this dreary labyrinth of fate.
'Tis done!—Dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquered year.
How dead the vegetable kingdom lies!
How dumb the tuneful! Horror wide extends
His desolate domain. Behold, fond man!
See here thy pictured life; pass some few years,
Thy flowering Spring, thy Summer's ardent strength,
Thy sober Autumn fading into age,
And pale concluding Winter comes at last
And shuts the scene. Ah! whither now are fled
Those dreams of greatness? those unsolid hopes
Of happiness? those longings after fame?
Those restless cares? those busy bustling days?
Those gay-spent, festive nights? those veering thoughts,
Lost between good and ill, that shared thy life?
All now are vanished! Virtue sole survives,
Immortal, never-failing friend of man,
His guide to happiness on high.—And see!
'Tis come, the glorious morn! the second birth
Of heaven and earth! Awakening nature hears
The new-creating word, and starts to life,
In every heightened form, from pain and death
For ever free. The great eternal scheme
Involving all, and in a perfect whole
Uniting, as the prospect wider spreads,
To reason's eye refined clears up apace.
Ye vainly wise! ye blind presumptuous! now,
Confounded in the dust, adore that Power
And Wisdom oft arraigned: see now the cause
Why unassuming worth in secret lived,
And died, neglected; why the good man's share
In life was gall and bitterness of soul;
Why the lone widow and her orphans pined
In starving solitude—while luxury,
In palaces, lay straining her low thought
To form unreal wants; why heaven-born truth,
And moderation fair, wore the red marks
Of superstition's scourge; why licensed pain,
That cruel spoiler, that embosomed foe,

Embittered all our bliss. Ye good distressed !
Ye noble few ! who here unbending stand
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up a while ;
And what your bounded view, which only saw
A little part, deemed evil, is no more.
The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
And one unbounded Spring encircle all.

NOTES

The subject—Winter. The exalted thoughts connected with it (3), *especially in youth* (6).

1 *Varied.* Marked by change of seasons, which Thomson had described.

2 *Rising.* Winter, like the day, seems to come up from the horizon with mists and clouds attending him.

3 *Sad.* Tristis hiems. Virg.

5 *Kindred, congenial.* Words of identical meaning, from the two different elements of English—*kindred* from A.S. connected with kin—'kind a sort,' 'kind gentle,' which means suitable to kin; cf. *Hamlet*, "a little more than kin, and less than kind."

Congenial; from 'cum,' with; 'gigno,' to be born, connected with 'gens,' a family; 'genus,' a sort; genial, kind, cheerful.

Frequent foot. Cf. 'hote fote,' used by Chaucer for quick.

7 *Careless.* Used in its first meaning, free from care.

Pleased have I. Observe the parenthesis and repetition of nominative in line 10.

12 *Big.* Means here 'teeming' = Fr. 'grosse,' pregnant.

13 *Deep.* Adverb to fermenting. 'Fermenting' and 'brewed' keep up the image.

15 *Chambers.* Cf. Job ix. 9, "He is wise in heart, which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and all the chambers of the south." Chambers here means "regions of the sky," a term of astrology.

Dedication to Sir Spencer Compton, Lord Wilmington. Having gone the round of the year, the muse returns to her first subject (19), *and lays her efforts at Wilmington's feet, a man at once important in public, and admirable in private character* (30).

17 *First essay.* Cf. Life. It was the manuscript of this poem which enabled Thomson to start in London. This dedication belongs to a later edition, after the other Seasons had been brought out. The period of Thomson's early efforts in London

was just that when the fortunes of literary men were at the lowest ebb. Just before his time literature had met with ready patronage by the chiefs of political parties, and notably by Bolingbroke and Harley. Under Walpole all such official patronage ceased, and as the price given by publishers was as yet very low, and the reading public very small, authors had to trust to private assistance. Each work therefore was usually dedicated in somewhat fulsome language to some influential patron. Thomson, after much distress, obtained a sufficient livelihood from his friends, the opponents of Walpole.

18 *Muse.* The poet's poetical power, sometimes used masculine of the poet himself. Cf. Milton's *Lycidas*, 19.

" So may some gentle muse
With lucky words favour my destined urn,
And as *he* passes, turn
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud."

Wilmington. Sir Spencer Compton, Speaker of the House of Commons, called to the premiership on the death of George I. He proved totally inefficient, had to apply to his predecessor, Walpole, for the draft of the royal speech, and by the wisdom of Queen Caroline was therefore rejected. He continued a course of mediocre statesmanship; was paymaster, raised to the peerage in 1728, Lord Privy Seal in 1730, and received the Garter in 1733.

19 *Rounded.* Gone round.

20-25 The muse likened to a bird, now, swallow-like, skimming in spring time, now, like the eagle, which alone can confront the sun, soaring upwards in the full blaze of summer, now sweeping in the autumnal gale, and now again, like a poor struggling rook, blown back and rolled in the whirling storm, but still striving to suit her voice and temper to the situation.

21 *Blaze.* Cf. 'blazonry'—"to blaze" or cut white gashes in trees as marks. First meaning, 'brightness' or 'whiteness,' so anything gaudy.

24 *Doubling.* Turning back upon itself. Like a hare turning suddenly round; or merely for *re*-doubling, swelling.

26 *Cadence.* From 'cado,' to fall. Cf. Fr. 'chute,' a fall; the dying end of a melody.

27 *Numbers.* Notes. Lat. numeri.

37 *Sliding.* Corrupt, slippery.

All the nouns and epithets from line 30 are in apposition to, and summed up in, *these*—"*light*" is the principal verb of the sentence.

39 *Converting* = turning.

The approach of Winter. Its gloomy character (45). *Its effect in depressing the spirits both of man and beast* (61).

41 The sun passes from Sagittarius to Capricorn about December 21st. Capricorn ('caper cornu,' the horned goat). Centaur archer; half horse, half man, put for Sagittarius from 'sagitta,' arrow.

The Zodiac, of which these are called signs, is a portion of the heavens, on each side of the ecliptic or sun's path, within which the orbits of the old planets fell, say about 15°, so called from the diminutive of the Greek word Ζῶον, a beast, because the names of the constellations were chiefly those of animals. *Aquarius*, the waterer. The Zodiac was divided into twelve districts called after the prominent constellations. Aquarius is the eleventh sign. The sun enters it about January 21, heralding the rainy season in Italy.

44 *Stains.* Discolours.

Inverted. Because the earth is so turned, that the wrong side of it, so to speak, is towards the sun. The axis of the earth is inclined at an angle which does not vary during its revolutions; consequently at one time more of the north, at another time more of the south part of the globe is exposed to the sun's influence. The epithet, probably taken from Horace, Sat. I. i. 36, may, however, mean nothing more than changed with the passage of the seasons.

45 *Dejected day.* The low cast light.

Ether, the air,—here means "firmament," hardly illuminated by the low light of the sun.

45-50 Observe the accuracy of the picture, the low horizontal beams, the sun just skirting the southern sky, &c.

49 *Wan.* Faint and pale, from Goth. 'vans,' wanting; so old English word, 'wanhope,' despair, where it is a negative particle; so wanting colour, or pale.

Broad. Enlarged by the low-lying mists.

53 *Dubious.* A question whether it be night or day, so gloomy is it.

56 *Turbulence.* The use of the abstract for the concrete; the attribute 'turbulence' used for the turbulent elements.

61 Observe the various use of participles. They can be employed to supply the place of nearly all adverbial or adjectival clauses. Here the participle *loathing* stands for the causal clause. The soul of man dies in him *because* he loathes life. In reality, present participles assert a coincident fact, and only that. The context supplies a more exact relation, which may be accurately defined by an adverbial or adjectival clause.

62 *Melancholy.* Like other words connected with health or temperament, like humour, choleric, splenetic, warm-hearted, &c., the use of the word "melancholy" rests on the old material theory which connected mental qualities immediately with bodily conditions. Was a man's bile black, he was dull and gloomy or

melancholy ; when the fluid was too active he was humorous and capricious ; Was the spleen too full, he was jealous and fault-finding, &c.

65, 66 *Wholesome, moorish.* The termination 'some,' found in handsome, buxom, wholesome, &c., was much more common in old English, *e.g.*, ugsome, toothsome, laboursome ; it means tendency, and answers to the German ending *sam.*

"Ish" implies quality, but usually in a depreciatory sense, as childish, womanish ; or slightness, as blackish.

67 *Genius* here means spirit, and is used as giving a personal character to the storm.

70 *The cave, presageful, sent a hollow moan.* Presageful means full of evil prophecy. The whole line is an instance of what Ruskin calls the pathetic fallacy, which consists in increasing, scarcely legitimately, the effect of natural appearances, by attributing to inanimate objects the feelings of human beings.

First sort of storm, rain : its effect on the landscape (76) ; *on the animal creation* (80). *It produces a flood* (94).

73 *Glooms.* Properly speaking, incapable of a plural.

74 *Mingling skies.* Mingling : the use of this word is from the Latin. It means confused, and can be well applied here if skies is used in its original meaning of clouds. Greek *σκία*, shadow, shade. Swedish—sky, a cloud.

> "And let a certaine winde go
> That blewe so hidously and hie,
> That it ne lefte not a skie
> In all the welkin long and broade."
>
> CHAUCER, *House of Fame.*

Where 'welkin,' by the by, is a similar instance ; it means sky in English, where 'wolke' means cloud in German.

79 *Combine.* Close in for the night, as cloud-masses so often do.

80 *Wanderers of heaven.* Birds.

83 An instance of Thomson's carelessness as to congruity. "Or skimming, flutter round the dimply pool," is a pretty and harmonious line, but belongs to a soft and gentle picture rather than to a description of a storm.

85 *Meaning low.* Lowing so as to express their fear.

86 *Contiguous.* Neighbouring.

89 *Hind.* Farm-servant, residing in the house. A.S. 'hine,' a domestic, 'hine-man', a farmer ; 'hyna-fæder,' paterfamilias. By a similar change in Latin ; 'famulus,' a servant, 'familia,' a family.

90 *Taleful.* } Similar words from different sources. Tale
91 *Recounts.* } is connected with the German zahl, number,

zahlen, to count—erzählen, to recount. Count is from Lat. computare.

94 The effects of the rain-storm are seen in the swollen stream. The picture is a Scotch one drawn from the poet's youth. The burn comes down turgid and red, snags and fragments of hayricks float on it. It boils down the ravine and spreads over the valley sanded with the deposit of many-a similar spate.

104 Its force much increased by the narrowness of its bed.

Address to Nature (106). *Introduction of the second form of storm, wind* (111). *Approach of the wind-storm* (117) : *its effects on the atmosphere* (120) ; *on the animal creation* (131) ; *on the sea* (155) ; *on the land* (175) ; *its sudden cessation* (196).

112 *Boisterous.* In older English, 'boystous,' or 'bustuous.'

"As boystous as a bere at baie."—CHAUCER.

114 *Magazine.* From the Spanish 'al-magacen.'

115 *Brooding.* Overhanging, threatening, but not yet burst.

118 *Pallid, &c.* The sun leaves the neutral coloured sky, flecked with clouds.

120 *Red fiery streaks.* Not lightning; lurid sunlit cloud masses.

122 *With dizzy poise, &c.* The heaped up cumulus clouds, as yet nearly motionless, seem to wait to see which way the wind will come.

124 *Blank.* White, pale. Thus, naked, as used of a sword ; unmarked, of paper ; resourceless, of mind : so, blank despair.

125 *Wan circle.* The halo.

Blunted horns. The clear, well-defined edge taken off by the mist.

126—141 Almost a translation of Virgil, Geor. i. 365-390.

126 *Fluctuating.* Moving to and fro in the uncertain wind-currents.

127 *Obtuse* = dulled.

128 Falling stars ; really an autumnal, not a winter, phenomenon.

130 Flaws of wind preceding a gale, known as cat's paws.

131 Another instance of an incongruously soft line.

133 *Conscious.* Foreseeing the storm.

134 *As.* While.

135 ff. The epithets *pensive* and *flaxen* are ornamental. They define, but do not add to the picture. On the other hand, *wasted* and *crackling* are absolutely necessary, as the force of the omen depends upon them. They might be changed into substantives, the *wasting* of the taper, the *crackling* of the flames.

140 *Blackening.* A word of growth, used in a neuter sense. Growing blacker as they come nearer.

141 *Thick-urge.* A false compound. Thick has nothing to do with the action of the word ; it means only the numbers.

143 *Assiduous.* Close sitting. Contrast with line 184.

147 *Flaky clouds.* Thomson's analysis of cloud forms is not perfect. Flaky clouds would not mark a wind storm.

148 *Unequal.* The approaching wind pressing unequally disturbs the ocean, interrupts the regular flow of the tide, and makes its movement apparently blind and meaningless.

150 *Eat.* An old-fashioned past participle. We have resumed the still older and more correct form eaten.

151 *Forest-rustling.* Again a false compound. This would naturally mean the rustling of the forest, and not rustling with forests. Keats uses "forest-wild."

154 *Precipitated air.* The clouds, before motionless with dizzy poise, are suddenly whirled headlong.

157 *Turns from its bottom.* A Latin exaggeration. Many such phrases found their way into the classical poetry of the Georgian period.

158 *Immense.* Unmeasured, infinite.

160 *To burn.* Fitful flashes of the foam-like lambent flame against the dark water.

167 ff. A strong description of sinking in the trough of the sea.

175 *Loosened.* Unrestrained.

176 *The mountain thunders.* The thunder is re-echoed from the mountains above.

The sturdy sons. The trees.

178 We have here one of the suggestions of human interest which are necessary to redeem descriptive poetry from dulness.

179 *Dark.* In the dark ; so Milton :

> " The nightingale . . . sings
> Darkling, and in shadiest covert hid,
> Tunes her nocturnal note."—*Penseroso.*

181 *Rooted.* The trees bend low, but hold to their roots. Everything loose about them is stript from them.

182 *Tarnished honours.* The proper meaning of tarnished is withered, brown. Fr. 'terni.' Honos was used in Latin for the foliage of a tree—as, Silvis aquilo decussit honorem—Virg. Geor. ii. 404; December silvis honorem decutit—Hor. Ep. ii. 6. Observe here and throughout how much both of language and turn of thought Thomson has drawn from Latin poetry.

183, 184 The construction is the nominative absolute.

184 *Assiduous.* Unceasing. Cf. 143.

185 *Dissipated.* Blown in different directions. Lat. 'dissipo,' to scatter.

187 *Thatched.* Properly speaking covered, now applied to one form of covering. A. S. 'Theccan,' to cover. German, 'dach,' a roof, 'decken,' to cover. Latin, 'tego,' to cover, 'tectum,' a house. Greek, στέγειν, to cover. στέγη, a roof.

191 An appeal to imagination and superstition. To heighten the horrors of the scene, and the misery of the wanderer's position.

195 *Lords it.* It, used impersonally and generally. Cf. the frequent use of 'le' and 'en' in French: En être, l'en porter, &c.

197, 198 Psalm civ. Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ii. 263.

The hush in the storm at nightfall gives opportunity for thought (202). *Moral reflections* (209). *Prayer for guidance* (216)

202 *The weary clouds.* An instance of the pathetic fallacy; the closing in of clouds into night (not a very true description) occurs already in line 79.

206 *Compeer.* Cum-par. So pair; disparage, which means to move from a state of equality.

209 *Ye.* Used properly only in the nominative and vocative.

210 *Ever-cheating.* Fr. 'échoir,' to fall. Eng. 'escheat.' 'Escheaters,' the officers who secured for the Crown properties falling to it—an odious office, equivalent to pettifoggers and rascals. So to cheat.

211 *Amount.* What do you come to after all.

214 *Crude.* Raw, undigested, therefore unassimilated.

216 *New-flushed.* Filled with new vitality, connected with Ger. 'fluss,' a river. Primary sense, 'flow,' so a flow of blood flushes the cheek. You flush a drain; a river is flush or level with its bank.

219 *Folly.* Fr. 'fol' or 'fou.' Welsh, 'ffol.' Cf. Ps. cxviii. in old psalter of Corbie, quoted in Renouard, 'De tes commandemens ne foliai,' 'I have not wandered from thy commandments.' Cf. Fr. 'feu follet,' Will-o'-the-wisp.

221 *Conscious.* Here = of conscience. Contrast with use in line 133.

Return to the subject. The third form of storm, snow (223): *its effects on the animal creation* (240); *on flocks in a snow-drift* (265). *The peasant lost amid the snow-drifts* (276).

224 *Livid, piercing.* Epithets appealing to different senses are not well used thus coupled.

228 *Saddens.* Observe how constantly, in English, verbs are used in both active and neuter sense.

229 *Whitening.* Cf. 140.

232 *Cherished* = carefully tended. Fr. 'chér,' dear.

234 *Save.* Fr. 'sauf.' Really an adjective, making the construction an absolute one. Thus, the place where the new snow melts being safe.

240 *The labourer-ox.* A poetical use of a substantive for an adjective. Milton, "Comus," 291, uses the past participle—"laboured-ox."

242 *Toil.* This word has two meanings from two roots. 1*st*, 'toil,' a web or net. Fr. 'toile,' cloth. Lat. 'tela,' a web. Thus toilet means the cloth over a dressing table. 2*nd*, 'toil,' labour. A. S. 'tilian,' to till or labour.

244 *The winnowing store.* The store in the act of being winnowed. An active particle apparently used for the passive. This use was constant till the close of the last century. Thus they would say, "I saw a horse leading about." The termination *ing* represents both the old participial *and* or *end*, and the infinitive termination *an*. Now infinitives are substantives; so "I saw a horse in leading," more modern "a leading," is strictly correct grammar. A confusion between these two uses of the termination *ing* led people to regard them both as participles, and caused such expressions as *the winnowing store* here, and again four lines further an *embroiling sky*.

253 *Askance.* Connected with scant, and so from the idea of doing anything scantily; near the edge, sideways. Cf. Italian 'cogliere, scarso,' to strike obliquely (Wedgwood).

261 *Kind.* Compare note on line 5. Kindred, kind here = tribe.

263 *Sad-dispersed.* An illegitimate compound, means sad and dispersed.

266 *Baffle.* Fr. 'baffouer,' perhaps connected with the Scotch 'bauchle,' to laugh at, coupled with the phrase 'blow out.' "Bauchyllyt, scyle blew out on the false king as a tyrant" (Wallace). It seems to have represented some regular process of disgrace inflicted on recreant knights. Wedgwood quotes a passage, "The Scotch should baffle him, which is a great reproach among the Scots. They make an image painted reverse, with the heels upwards, crying and blowing out of him with horns in the most despiteful manner they can." So Spenser—

> "And blotted out his arms with falsehood bent,
> And himself baffuld."

267 *Food at will.* Food always within their reach.

Below, under. Shelter from.

270 *Waft.* An old verb, 'to waff,' exists, meaning 'blow.' The addition of the 't' probably formed the substantive from which the common verb waft is derived.

273 *Upward urged.* Snow, drifting from the windward side of the mountain, falls over and fills up the ravine between it and the next mountain, so that the bottom of the valley seems to rise

and be urged upwards into another mountain, at the summit of which the surface-snow is blown off and rises like a wreath of smoke.

278 *Loose revolving.* The loose surface-snow wheeling round him, as though the field itself was moving.

Swain. Young farm servant. Thus in pastoral poems used for a lover, whence it has passed into general poetic language.

279 *Disastered.* Evil-starred. This word, ill-starred, in an evil hour, and several other such phrases are derived from astrology.

280 *Other.* New, not those he was used to.

281 *Horrid.* Rough, repulsive.

Shag. To render shaggy; originally a verb of motion, meaning to jog, so to cut sharply up and down (Wedgwood); or to make hairy. A. S. 'sceacga.'

291 *Tufted.* With uneven, moss-grown thatch.

292 *Middle waste.* Latin idiom for the middle of the waste.

296 *Savage.* Anciently salvage. Fr. 'sauvage,' from silva, a wood. In heraldry, a wild man girt with leaves, still called a savage man.

298 *Unfathomably.* Fathom properly means an embrace. A. S. 'fœthm,' a bosom. So six feet, the length of a man's embrace from hand to hand. So pace, from a footstep; furlong, the length of a furrow; span, the spread of a hand. The Dutch 'vadun,' connected with German 'faden,' a thread, and so as much string as the length of a man's two arms.

301 *What is land unknown.* From *what—water* an absolute construction. *Of the still unfrozen spring* depends on *busy shapes.*

310 This line, in construction absolute, gives the cause of the "tender anguish."

311 *Officious.* Dutiful. At present almost exclusively used to mean obtrusive, over busy.

The ills of life seldom remembered by the prosperous (322); *were they more remembered there would be a great increase of fellow-feeling* (348).

332 *Dungeon glooms.* Properly speaking gloom, an abstract quality, can have no plural. This is a poetic use of the abstract of not unfrequent occurrence. The condition of prisoners was very different then from what it is now. Cf. line 359. Indeed the debtors' prisons were very miserable far into this century. Cf. Dickens' description of the Fleet in *Pickwick.*

335 *Baleful.* Bale. In Chaucer = mischief, danger. So in

Scotch, the bale-fire means the beacon or fire telling of danger: afterwards misery, ruin.

337 *Sordid.* Poor, wretched; whence its secondary meaning, miserly.

341 *Whence.* Here means the agent "by which."

Height. The high places, or success in life. The image is kept up by *vale*, 343, meaning the lowly walks of life.

342 *Tragic.*

"Tragedie is to sayn a certain storie
As olde bookes maken us memorie,
Of him that stood in gret prosperitee
And is yfallen out of high degree
In to miserie, and endeth wretchedly."—CHAUCER.

Tragedy means strictly the goat song. Τράγος, a he-goat, ᾠδή, a song. Either from the oldest tragedies being exhibited when a goat was sacrificed, or because a goat was the prize of poetical compositions, or because the first actors dressed in goat-skins.

"He too that did in tragic verse contend
For the vile goat, soon after forth did send
The rough rude satyrs naked."—B. JONSON.

348 *Point.* Add point to. Fr. 'aiguiser.'

Fond. Here infatuated. 'To fond,' in Chaucer, is to seek earnestly, to try, from A. S. 'Fundian.' Perhaps the adjective fond, silly, doting, means full of fruitless desires. Wedgwood derives it from a different source, connecting it with Fr. 'fol,' Icelandic, 'Fani,' and a word in Chaucer, 'to fon.' "Thou shalt begin to fon, and dote in love."—CHAUCER, *The Court of Love.*

Thought. Conditional inversion. If man thought.

350 *That.* Nominative to render.

354 *Conscious.* Capable of feeling, susceptible. Contrast with the two former meanings of the word.

355 *Benevolence dilate.* Benevolence would open still wider her wide good-will.

356 *Social.* Sympathetic.

357, 358 And gradually increasing happiness, by refining all men, would work those passions and feelings which bind man to man into clear unsullied perfection.

This reminds the poet of the late efforts (1730) *of the Prison Committee* (359). *He calls upon the same reformers to attempt an improvement in the law* (376).

362 ff. This is an allusion to the poor debtors' side of the Fleet and Marshalsea. For particulars see Knight's *Popular History*, vol. vi. page 65. Instruments of torture were freely

used, and the position of jailor was eagerly sought and paid for, no decent comfort being obtainable except on the payment of exorbitant fees.

366 *Whose every street, &c.* A land in which the voice of clap-trap orators is constantly raised to brag of freedom.

367-374 *Little tyrants* is the nominative to all these verbs.

382 *Rank.* Overgrown with abuses. The image kept up in the word *weeding.*

384 *Toils.* Snares. See note on line 242.

385, 386 *Perplex, simple.* 'Per,' an intensitive ; 'plex,' from 'plico,' to wind. 'Simple,' from Lat. 'simplex,' from a root, found in 'singulus,' semel, meaning 'whole,' and 'plico' =wholefold; duplex, twofold; and so on. The two words well used together.

387 *Broke.* As eat, line 150. An old past participle of the strong form. It has since acquired the more regular weak termination 'en.'

The poet returns to his more proper subject. The effect of the snow storm on wolves (389).

390 *Horrid.* Rough with rocks and pines.

Shining Alps. Shining with frozen snow.

391 *Wavy.* With undulating outline, a contrast with the sharper scenery of the Alps.

392 *Branch out.* Observe active use. Compare note on line 228.

394 *Burning for blood, bony.* Observe the alliteration. This poetical trick is very common in English poetry, more especially in Spenser and Byron. Is referable to the ancient form of English poetry, where alliteration took the place of rhyme, each couplet having at least three alliterative words. As

"In a somer seson whan softe was the sonne
I shoop me in shroudes as I a sheep were."
Beginning of *Piers Ploughman.*

399 *Pierce.* With their teeth.

404 *God-like.* Gen. i. 27, "So God created man in his image."

Nought. 'Ne a whit,' shortened to not.

407 *Hapless.* Without a chance of escape. Hap means chance. So 'perhaps,' 'mishap,' 'happy,' &c.

Undistinguished. In no way better off than others.

415 *Grisons.* Most easterly of the Swiss Cantons, enclosing the valleys of the Upper Rhine; they are particularly exposed to avalanches. Thus in 1749 the whole village of Rueras, in the valley of Tarvich, in the Canton of Grisons, was covered, and at the same time removed from its situation, by an avalanche; but

this change, happening in the night, was effected without the least noise, so that the inhabitants were not aware of it, and on waking in the morning could not conceive why it did not grow day. A hundred persons were dug out of the snow, sixty of whom were still alive, the interstices between the snow containing sufficient air to support life. The Grisons is a confederation of little republics, called in German Graubünden, from a confederation called the Grey League (from their grey smockfrocks) into which the villagers entered in 1424 against their feudal lords.

The poet's literary employments in winter (424). *The shades of the great men of ancient Greece pass before him* (436), *of ancient Rome* (498). *The great poets of the ancient world* (530).

426 An instance of the poet's appreciation of comfort.

428 *Multitude.* Cf. Shakspeare. "Multitudinous seas incarnadine," Macbeth ii. 2.

434 *Beneficent.* In its accurate meaning 'doing good.'

437 *Long-lived.* Ancient.

439 *Socrates.* An Athenian philosopher living between 469 and 399 B.C. The son of a statuary, by name Sophroniscus, he for some time followed his father's calling, but contenting himself with the merest necessities of life, he appears to have abandoned it and to have devoted himself to what he considered his mission, the instruction of his fellow-citizens. He is known chiefly by the writings of his friends and disciples, Plato and Xenophon. From these two authors, the one a philosopher, the other a practical man, we gather what is known of his personal character, and of his teaching—at once practical and ethical. Aided by an unusually strong constitution, he was able to render himself independent of circumstances. He usually led a life of abstinence, and was capable of enduring the extremes of fatigue and cold, as is shewn by the stories of his extraordinary endurance as a soldier; but at times he would join in the festivities of his friends, and then shewed an equal power of resisting the effects of excess. Thus master of his body, he devoted himself to his work. This he carried on not in any particular school or place, but in the markets and highways, where his remarkably ugly and grotesque appearance made him very conspicuous. His *system* was based on the partial truth that virtue and knowledge are the same—that no man would do wrong if he knew the right. Thus the affections and passions were left too much out of sight. In pursuance of this doctrine, he attacked all received and common-place beliefs as the most fruitful source of ignorance. He carried on this attack by a *method* which has since borne the name of "Socratic." It consisted in driving his opponent to

hopeless confusion and absurdity by a series of probing questions —a method, it need not be said, as disagreeable as efficacious. This system and method he applied not only to the practical affairs of life and ethics, but also to politics and religion. The ruler should not, he said, be either a ruler by position and birth, or by election, but by *knowledge*. The devotion given to the gods should be *reasonable*, and not depend on impossible and often immoral myths. Such teaching naturally attracted the young and innovating rather than the old and conservative, and was in all ways fitted to make him enemies. The whole educational body, sophists, orators, poets, who based their teaching on the received views of the time, and made the best of existing materials, were set against him, especially as he objected to teaching for money. Parents disliked the influence he obtained over their sons; politicians, whether oligarchic or democratic, objected to teaching which seemed equally directed against both theories of government. Devout believers in the gods and mythology laid more stress on the destructive part of his religious teaching than on the reasonable piety which he upheld and practised; while all alike smarted under the humiliating method he employed. Moreover, his quaint appearance made him an easy butt for Aristophanes and other comic writers of the day; and his friendship for Alcibiades and Kritias—the first detested for his overweening insolence, the latter for the cynical tyranny he exhibited as one of the Thirty tyrants—made him obnoxious to the democracy. Under these circumstances, shortly after the restoration of the democracy, he was accused of not worshipping the gods the city worshipped, of introducing new divinities of his own, and of corrupting youth. In spite of the real purity and piety of his teaching, there was enough show of truth in the accusation, coupled with his unpopularity, to secure his condemnation, especially as he met his judges, not as they were used to be met, with humility and supplications, but with an avowal of his superiority. In fact, he did not shun death, after all, as he said, an uncertain evil; especially as he felt his work was over. He therefore made no effort to avoid it, and drank the hemlock with perfect equanimity and calmness. The allusions in the text seem to shew that Thomson ascribed his death, as was at one time usual, to the Thirty tyrants. In truth, he was the victim of the restored democracy, though his teaching had been stopped by the Thirty some years previously.

Hail. From the same root as 'hal,' A. S. 'whole,' health, wholeness, or soundness. It is a good instance of the appearance of the same roots in different branches of the Indo-Germanic languages. In Greek ὅλος means whole or sound; in Welsh 'hol' is all; in Latin the 'h,' as frequently happens, becomes an 's,' 'salus,' health, 'solidus,' sound, 'solus,' un-

divided. Thus 'salve' exactly answers to hail. Compare hale and wholesome.

446 *Commonweal.* The Saxon abstract-ending 'th' added to this word made it wealth, on the analogy of such words as hael, health. Thus wealth originally meant well-being, as in the Litany, "In all time of our wealth," = in our prosperity.

Solon. The great creator of the Athenian constitution, 594 B.C. His wisdom and impartiality gained him the office of Archon, and he was entrusted with the duty of arbitrating between the rival oligarchic and democratic parties, whose quarrels were disturbing the city. His first measures relieved the pressure under which the poor were suffering, by his 'seisacheia' or disburdening ordinance, he removed the burden of debt, lowered interest, and abolished personal servitude. He then proceeded to form a constitution based upon property. The higher classes, as they had the most privileges, bore by far the highest share of the public burdens.

449 *Quick.* Lively, living, the proper meaning of quick.

450 *Laurelled field.* Field=sphere, or realm. 'Laurelled,' because the crown of laurel, sacred to the Muses, was the emblem of success in arts.

453 *Lycurgus.* The originator of the Spartan constitution, perhaps about 884 B.C. The object of his laws was to make of Sparta a nation of soldiers. He therefore destroyed wealth by a new division of property; arranged that all men should dine at common tables, where the food was of the simplest description, and live generally a half military half monastic life, in large barracks; while the training they received tended to inure them to hardship and cultivate soldierly qualities.

456 Leonidas, king of Sparta, died 480 B.C. in guarding the passage of Thermopylæ, the only road between Northern and Southern Greece, against the approach of the army of Xerxes. The pass lies between the eastern extremity of Mount Œta and the coast of the Maliac Gulf, and leads from Thessaly on the north to Locris on the south of the mountain.

458 *The other.* Lycurgus.

The hardest lesson. Patriotic self-devotion.

459 *Aristides.* A citizen of Athens so important as to excite the jealousy of Themistocles, who procured his exile by ostracism, although he had already earned the surname of Just. Three years after, 480, while still in exile, he brought news of the position of the Persian fleet, which rendered the battle of Salamis necessary. He regained his previous favour with his countrymen, served his country well, and is said, by the favourable light in which he exhibited the Athenian character, to have been chiefly instrumental in the transfer by the Ionian Greeks of their allegiance from Lacedæmon to Athens, which secured to the latter country the supremacy of Greece.

464 *Haughty rival.* Themistocles.

466 *Cimon.* Son of Miltiades, born B.C. 502. His youthful folly and apparent dulness gained him the title of the Idiot. Aristides saw his capabilities, and cultivated them. His most important victory was at the Eurymedon in Pamphylia, B.C. 466, where he destroyed 200 Persian ships. His friendship for the Lacedæmonians however caused him to be exiled; but want of success during his absence secured him a speedy return. He died 449, at the siege of Citium in Cyprus. He spent the fruit of his victories in public improvements. His political tendencies were aristocratical, and therefore favourable to Sparta, but his chief object was opposition to Persia.

472 *Unequal times.* Times in themselves not so grand as those in which the preceding heroes lived. Or, more likely in so constant an imitator of the Latins as Thomson, it merely equals "iniquis temporibus"—times adverse to their greatness.

473 *Pensive.* Sad, because of the failing of the glories of their country.

474 *Timoleon.* A Corinthian general, born about 410 B.C. He had his brother Timophanes put to death when unable to turn him from his ambitious designs against the liberators of Corinth. After this he left Corinth, but in 343, on being entrusted by the Corinthians to liberate the Syracusans, from Dyonisius the younger, he got possession of Syracuse, and re-established the republic there. He delivered several other towns in Sicily from their tyrants, and died in 337, after having abdicated the supreme power of Syracuse.

475 *Wept the brother.* Alluding to the death of Timophanes mentioned above.

476 *Theban pair.* Pelopidas and Epaminondas, who, on the decline of Athens and Sparta, raised Thebes to the supremacy of Greece. Epaminondas won the great battle of Leuctra in 371 against the Spartans, defeated with the Theban fleet the Athenians on their own element, and fell while winning the battle of Mantinea, 363. Pelopides, his friend, freed his city from the Spartans, 379. He was leader of the sacred band which fought under Epaminondas, but his chief energy was directed against Alexander of Pheræ, and in establishing Theban influence in Macedonia. He died while pursuing the enemy, whom he had conquered at the battle of Cynoscephalæ.

481 *Phocion.* Chief of the aristocratic party in Athens, an advocate of peace with Philip of Macedon, and of moderation towards the Athenian allies. He was the chief Athenian commander during the social war between Athens and her old allies, 359-356. His aristocratic tendencies and opposition to the war party, though they did not prevent the Athenians from employing him, rendered it easy for the Macedonian general

Polysperchon, when he occupied Athens, to procure his condemnation by the people. He was condemned to death, and drank the hemlock, 317.

486 *Old Lycurgus' sons.* Spartans both in name and character.

488 *Agis.* Agis IV. was one of the kings of Sparta in 244 B.C. He attempted to re-establish the laws of Lycurgus, to abolish debts, and make a new partition of lands. He was opposed by his colleague, Leonidas, and put to death.

490 *Two Achaian heroes.* Aratus and Philopœmen, the chiefs of the Achæan League. The supremacy in Greece, after passing from Athens to Sparta, and from Sparta to Thebes, was for a short time in the hands of the Achæans, who attempted to form a union of Greek States. Aratus, general of the League, drove the king of Macedonia from Corinth, but was opposed in his plan by the Ætolians and Lacedæmonians. To conquer them, Aratus sought the aid of his old enemies the Macedonians, who, having made use of him to crush the Ætolians, caused him to be poisoned. Philopœmen, his successor, won over the Ætolians the battle of Orissa, 208, and over the Spartans the battle of Mantinea, 206, thus forcing those two powers to accede to the League. In attempting to suppress the revolt of the Messenians he was taken prisoner and killed, 183. He has been surnamed "The last of the Greeks."

498 *Of rougher front.* The Romans.

499 *Virtuous times.* The old rough times when republican virtues were prevalent in Rome.

503 *Numa.* Spoken of as the second king in Rome.

Her better founder. Because he established the religious institutions of the country.

504 Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome, to whom the country owed its democratic division into tribes, the census, and the first distribution of public lands among the commonalty.

506 On the expulsion of the Tarquins, the regal form of government was changed to a republic. The two chief annual magistrates, in whose hands was the executive power, were called Consuls.

507 *Public father.* Public-spirited father; Lucius Junius Brutus, one of the first Consuls, who had his sons beheaded for their complicity in a scheme for the restoration of the Tarquins.

510 *Camillus.* Marcus Furius Camillus, after repeatedly leading the Romans to victory against the Volscians, and conquering Veii, his aristocratic tendencies led to his exile by the popular party. When Rome was captured by Brennus and the Gauls, 389, Camillus returned, broke off the ignominious treaty with that nation, and drove them defeated from Rome. He

induced the people to restore their own city rather than migrate to Veii. He won the name of second founder of Rome.

511 *Fabricius.* Consul in the year 282, conqueror of the Samnites and the Bruttii. He was sent to treat with Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, who was invading Italy. Though poor, he refused all the attempts of that king to bribe him, honourably restored all the prisoners when the senate refused to ransom them, and upon another occasion informed the invading prince of the treachery of his physician, who had offered to poison him.

512 *Cincinnatus.* Consul in the year 460. Unpopular from his aristocratic opposition to Tarentillian law; but in 458, the Roman army being enclosed by the Æquians and the Volscians, he was summoned in haste to assume the dictatorship. He was found engaged in humble agricultural pursuits; but came forth from his retirement, relieved the army, and in sixteen days resigned his office, and retired into obscurity. He was again summoned to supreme power in 438, to suppress the conspiracy of Spurius Mælius. Having performed this duty, he again resigned after a dictatorship of twenty-one days.

513 *Thy willing victim.* Regulus. He was taken prisoner by the Carthaginians. In 250, after a lengthened imprisonment, he was sent by the Carthaginians to Rome in hopes that he would counsel submission. Instead of which, he urged a continuation of the war, and returned to his prison, where he was barbarously put to death.

517 *Scipio.* Scipio Africanus Minor. As commander of the Romans he destroyed Carthage in 148 B.C. He was not the great Scipio, whose surname was also Africanus, and who conquered Hannibal at the battle of Zama, but his adopted son. Africanus Minor also conquered Numantia. He was unpopular, and espoused the patrician interests in opposition to the Gracchi. He was a great lover of literature, the pupil of Polybius, friend of Lælius and of Terence.

519 *Warm in youth.* His victories were won at an early age, and during his unpopularity he withdrew into literary retirement at Cajeta.

521 *Tully.* Marcus Tullius Cicero, the orator, who during his consulship opposed and thwarted the designs of Catiline, and thus for a while restrained Rome from rushing into those democratic excesses which produced the Empire.

523 *Cato.* Marcus Porcius Cato, a victorious general in Sardinia, in Spain, and in Greece, 195 B.C. Eight years afterwards he held the office of censor, and exercised his power with the severity which has passed into a proverb. He was the great enemy of Carthage, closing all his addresses with the words "Delenda est Carthago." He was also devoted to literature. From the order in which this name occurs in Thomson's list it

is difficult not to believe that he confused Cato the Censor with Cato of Utica, the Stoic philosopher, and great opponent of Julius Cæsar, who put himself to death after the battle of Pharsalia.

524 *Brutus.* Marcus Junius Brutus. One of the conspirators who murdered his friend Julius Cæsar. He was defeated at the battle of Philippi 42 B.C. by Anthony and Octavius Cæsar.

531 *Vernal sun.* The sun in spring. The epithets, applied to Virgil, describe the polished finish which is characteristic of Virgil, in contradistinction to the greater simplicity and boldness of Homer.

532 *Phœbus.* Apollo. God of the sun and of poetry.

Mantuan swain. Virgil, who lived between 70 and 19 B.C. He was born in the neighbourhood of Mantua. His chief works are the Georgics and Eclogues, which are of a pastoral character, and the Æneid, an heroic epic, upon the origin of the Roman people.

Swain. As before remarked, originally a husbandman, then a pastoral lover, then a pastoral poet.

533 *Homer.* The great epic poet of Greece. The chief works attributed to him are the Iliad, the history of the siege of Troy, where Achilles was the hero, and the Odyssey, the story of the wanderings of Ulisses or Odysseus, on his return from that expedition.

Parent of song. The date of Homer is put at about 900 B.C. He was an Ionian by birth.

535 *The British muse.* Muse here used for poet. Cf. line 18. Milton is meant.

536 *Darkling.* In the dark. Both Milton and Homer were blind. The word is borrowed from Milton, cf. *Penseroso.*

Middle steep. Fame is regarded as placed at the summit of a difficult hill, straight up the centre pathway of which great poets move.

537 *Shades.* Cf. line 438. The allusion is to the tragic poets of Athens. Æschylus, the earliest and grandest of the line, born 525 B.C. He may be said to have formed the Greek theatre. Before his time tragedies were acted on a moveable wheeled stage like the English mysteries. Only seven of his tragedies remain. The prevalent idea in them is the terrible contest of man with inexorable fate. In 468 Sophocles won the prize for tragedy over him, and kept from that time the public favour. Sophocles was born 495. He enriched the form of the drama by admitting a larger number of personages at once upon the stage, and by diminishing the lofty religious tone of his predecessor increased the human interest of his plays. Of his many productions only seven remain entire. Euripides was

born 480. He was several times victorious over Sophocles. His tragedies, of which eighteen remain to us, are marked by a still further improvement in art. The part of the chorus is subordinated to the general plot, and the play of human passions is much more prominent than the religious element. His language is the model of elegance and finish.

540 *Who waked the enchanting lyre.* The lyric poets. Those, that is, who wrote odes and other poems in light and irregular metres, fit to be set to the music of the lyre. Pindar, Anacreon, and Sappho are the best known.

To receive such company the poet would be alone, or with some few chosen literary friends (541).

543 *Mount.* Observe the active meaning to this verb.

544 *The door be thine.* An awkward expression, meaning be door-keeper.

545 *Hallowed.* Connected with the word 'hal,' mentioned before, line 437.

549 *Humour.* Before the discovery of the circulation of the blood by Dr. Harvey, humours or fluids were conceived of as residing in the body. A superabundance of these humours was held to make the man capricious and quaint. Quaint rich wit thus became called humour. Cf. line 62.

550 *The Muses' hill.* Mount Parnassus, the abode of the Muses and their servants the poets.

558 *Pope.* Alexander Pope, born 1688. He spent his youth at Binfield in Windsor Forest, which supplied him with inspiration for his pastorals and for his poem on Windsor Forest. He earned for himself a very wide acquaintance, both among literary and fashionable men, numbering among his acquaintance Addison, with whom he quarrelled, Atterbury and Bolingbroke, who is said to have had some hand in the *Essay on Man.* To judge by his *Essay on Criticism* and the preface to his Works he regarded it as the chief object of the poet to please. In this spirit, philosophy being the fashion, he composed the *Essay on Man*, a philosophic poem. Small and deformed, he had a morbid love of admiration, while his power of satire gave him the power of wreaking vengeance upon his enemies. To these qualities are to be traced the *Essay on Criticism* and the *Dunciad.* There is not much originality in his poetry. His pastorals are adaptations of Virgil and Theocratus; his *Temple of Fame* of Chaucer; his *Homer* is a translation; and these, with *The Rape of the Lock*, a mock heroic poem, very like Boileau's *Lutrin*, and his *Imitations of Horace*, constitute his chief works. His gift was terse expression, and finished and harmonious verse. The writings of his imitators occupy literary history till the rise of Cowper and Wordsworth.

551 *Sacred hour.* The silent hour which the poet had set apart for contemplation, but which he would allow to be enlivened by Pope's wit.

554 His social gifts were even more valuable than his literary.

555 *Hammond.* A friend of Thomson's, Member for Truro. He wrote elegiac poems, and is said to have lost his intellect on being rejected by Miss Dashgood. Of his poems Johnson says, "These elegies have neither passion, nature, nor manner."

557 *Dear youth.* Hammond died at the age of 32.

565 With other young literary men he joined the opposition against Walpole.

570 *Fond.* Foolish. Cf. note 348.

In such retirement the poet would philosophise (572), *or study political history* (587), *or conquering ambition pursue virtue* (595), *or give full play to gay imagination* (610).

573 *Pliant soul.* Able to bend themselves to suit their companions.

576 *Late rising.* Would discuss whether the universe existed before the earth, or whether the pantheistic view was right, and the Creator and the created were coeval.

580 *Gradual.* Cf. note on 890.

581 *Diffusive.* Our knowledge would grow till it enabled us to see the real unity of those harmonies which now appear diffused, or broken up, as colours diffused by a prism reunite and form white light. The termination 'ive' has more properly an active meaning. The word here = diffused.

583 *Scan.* Literally, to ascend. To scan a verse, to ascend its steps as it were, and count them. Latin, 'scandere versus.' Thus to examine carefully.

584 *Embroiled.* Entangled. Cf. 246. Connected with the French 'brouiller,' to get in a mess, as in a fog. This passage is an instance of the enquiring, somewhat sceptical spirit of the age, which produced such philosophers as Locke, Bolingbroke, and Hume, and was the immediate predecessor of the age of the French cyclopédists.

587 *The historic muse.* The Muses were nine mythical personages. Clio presided over history; Thalia presided over comedy; Melpomene over tragedy; Arato over light and elegiac poetry; Caliope, epic poetry; Eurania, astronomy; Polymnia, eloquence and lyric poetry; Pterpsichore, dancing; Uterpe, music. Their homes were Parnassus, Pindus, and Helicon; their sacred fountains Hippocrene and Castalia.

590 *In scattered states.* In small isolated instances, as the Greek commonwealths.

591 *Double suns.* Good institutions double the prosperity

of a country although unfertile, while bad institutions produce poverty in fertile climates, as in modern Spain and Greece.

594 *Burn within us.* Luke xxiv. 32.

595 *Divinity.* Divine nature. "Divinæ particulam auræ" —*Virg.*

596 *Lights.* Illuminates.

597 *Doomed.* The same word as to deem, to judge. Thus 'doomsday,' the day of judgment. Dempster, the supreme judge in the Isle of Man. Here, to sentence.

600 *Even superior to ambition.* Love of fame. "That last infirmity of noble minds."—*Lycidas*, 71.

604 *Dim spaces of futurity.* The poet's thought turns to speculation as to heaven and the future state.

609 *Foiled.* Perhaps connected with 'fol,' to render foolish, or with 'fouler,' 'refouler,' to dull, to blunt. In the sense of to serve as a foil it is probably from the French 'feuille,' a leaf. Tinsel, to heighten the brilliancy of a jewel. The word here means frustrated.

610 *Play.* Play off, display.

613 *Never joined before.* Wit is defined as a happy bringing together into apparent connection of incongruous ideas.

615 These three lines well describe the differences between wit and dry humour. In one the sense of pleasure is derived from unexpected similarities of ideas, in the other from absurdities gravely narrated.

Leaving himself, the poet returns to the social pleasures of th winter time. In village life (617), *in city life* (630), *gambling* (635), *fashionable gaiety* (640), *the theatre* (645).

622 *Mirth.* Another instance of the Saxon termination 'th.' From 'merig,' merry, the substantive becomes mirth.

624 *Sincere.* From the same root as *sim*plex, simul, &c., and a root visible in Germ. 'schier,' pure.

626 *The leap, etc.* The rude romping of the rustic lovers.

Shook. As eat and broke, in lines 150, 387, far more correct shaken. The word, rather a strange one, is an attempt to express the inelegant dancing of country jigs.

630 *Intense.* Adverb. Swarms intense, is full of eager crowds. To swarm, to be in a confused crowd like an ant's nest or bee swarm ; used of thought in Germany, 'schwärmerei,' mystic enthusiasm ; the equivalent in French is 'fourmiller.'

633 *Loose.* Lawless, unrestrained.

634 *Rankled.* The verb comes from rank, meaning to become foul or corrupt. Rank seems formerly to have meant vigorous action, thus in *Faerie Queen*, book ii. canto iii., "The seeley man seeing him ride so rank, and aim at him, fell flat to ground for fear." Then coarse, over-vigorous, as rank

grass, rank smell. Rankle, used chiefly of wounds, to be inflamed, virulent. Rankled here means corrupted.

640 *Effuses.* Pours forth.

641 *Gaudy.* From Lat. 'gaudium,' joy. Fr. 'gaudir,' to frolic. Thus gaudy, belonging to a festival, gaudy dress, a festival dress, gaudy day, a festival day. So anything gay. The large beads on a rosary were called gauds.

645 *Mealy.* The epithet belongs to the insect, not the fop, and refers to the down on the butterfly's wing.

646 *Hamlet* and *Othello.* Heroes of Shakspere's plays.

647 *Monimia.* A character in Otway's play of *The Orphan.*

648 *Belvidera.* In *Venice Preserved,* by the same author, Otway, an English dramatist, born in 1651. *The Orphan* was written in 1680, after he had thrown up a commission in the army, procured for him by his patron, the Earl of Plymouth. *Venice Preserved,* his last and best play, was exhibited in 1682. He was unsuccessful as an actor, and his writing, though popular, was not remunerative. He is said to have died in extreme indigence in 1785.

655 *Bevil.* A character in Steele's *The Conscious Lovers.* Steele was a friend of Addison, and one of the chief contributors to the *Spectator.* He was an Irishman, of warm sensibility and rich humour, but without self-restraint. He was in the army, and for a few months in Parliament, but was expelled the House for alleged treasonable writing. He held several small appointments under Government, but his spendthrift character prevented him from ever being easy in his money matters.

As an instance of fashionable life at its best, the poet apostrophises Lord Chesterfield (656).

656 Philip Dormer Stanhope, 4th Earl of Chesterfield, born in 1694. He is best known as the model of the elegant gentleman of the time, and the patron and friend of literary men. He was however also a statesman of importance. In early life he attached himself to the interests of the Prince of Wales, afterwards George II., but on that Prince's accession, neglecting Queen Caroline, by an error of judgment, and courting Mrs. Howard (Lady Suffolk), the king's mistress, he was disappointed in his hopes of advancement. He was however made ambassador to Holland, and for his skilful diplomacy in behalf of Hanover, rewarded with the Stewardship of the Household and the Garter. All his friendships threw him upon the side of the Opposition ; and he lost his places for opposition to Walpole on the excise scheme. Nor was it till the coalition of 1744 that the King was induced again to employ him. He filled the position of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland with success, and was afterwards made Secretary of State; but unable to keep friends

with the Pelhams, he retired from office in 1748. He lived till 1773, but ill-health and deafness kept him much from politics. His best known book is his letters to his son, in which he tries, by most sensible worldly advice, to train his illegitimate son into as fine a gentleman as himself.

657 *Patriot virtue.* Alluding to his opposition to Walpole, and to his dislike to the Hanoverian connection.

658 *Finer springs.* His eloquence was marked by its delicacy and irony.

660 *Apollo.* The god of beauty and of literature.

665 *Shades.* Into rural retirement.

668 *Full accomplished mind.* Alluding to the wide though somewhat shallow range of Chesterfield's mind. He was mainly instrumental, among other things, in the introduction of the change of the calendar.

670 Alluding to his constant opposition.

672 *Presumptuous France.* Chesterfield had passed his earlier manhood in France, and was perfect in the language and manners of that country. He tells us that he was often taken for a Frenchman.

Presumptuous. 'Pre, sumo,' to take first. Therefore sometimes to presuppose or guess, sometimes to be grasping of the first place.

673 *Boasted.* Boast. Properly to blow out. Cf. German 'bausen,' to swell the cheeks.

674 *Energy.* Used here in its proper sense, an exhibition of power.

675 *Attic point.* Delicate wit. The Romans, from whom the adjective is derived, looked upon Greece as their teacher in all matters of elegance.

676 *Well-tempered.* The image is of a rapier of well-tempered steel, sharp point and smooth sides.

678 *Brighter flame.* Chesterfield regarded as the sun rising on some glorious day.

685 *Enlightened thoughts.* Reasonable men hear their own thoughts rendered clearer by your words.

Returning to his old subject, the poet speaks of a new aspect of winter: the frost (691). *Its healthful effect on man* (697). *Its use to the vegetable world* (706). *Speculation as to what it is* (714). *A description of its effects* (720).

691 *Happy.* Because of the pleasures of the frost.

Nitre. Nitre is a salt of potassium, commonly called saltpetre. Here used for any salt capable of subtle intermixture with the air. Nitre cools gas under heat with great rapidity. The poet's notion seems to be that frost was not only an effect of a certain condition of the atmosphere, but an actually existing

thing, which he here likens to a finely divided salt. Cf. line 718. But it may mean only oxygen, which Priestley calls "nitre." Cf. Cowper's 'Task,' iii. 32, 'while the nitrous air feeds a blue flame;' and Autumn, 5, 'Whate'er the wintry frost nitrous prepared.'

695 A not very accurate way of expressing the healthful effects of frost.

697 This imagery is correct. Expansion is one of the first powers of heat.

699 *Constringent.* Pressing closer together, thus strengthening.

Feeds and animates our blood. Here the erroneous notion that frost is a substance, and can feed our blood, again appears. The animating effects of frost really depend on the increased exertion of the vital forces to produce reaction and preserve warmth. Cold, when no reaction is possible, is fatal.

702 *Intense.* Close compressed, and therefore anxious to expand in action.

706 *Concocted.* 'Con,' with 'coquo,' to cook.

Glebe. The soil. Latin 'gleba.' "But if Italy have any glebe more fruitful than these fallows I am deceived."—BEN JONSON'S *Fox.* 'Ascriptus glebæ' of the villein bound to the soil. Thence the clergyman's piece of soil, as distinguished from his tithes or other income.

708 The real value of frost is not that it gives anything to the soil, but the water in the soil expands, and disintegrates the mass, thus letting the air and oxygen permeate it.

709 The fire always burns brighter in frosty weather, because the contrast between the heated air which passes upwards and the heavy cold air being greater, the draught and supply of oxygen is proportionately increased.

710 *Luculent.* Lat. 'luculentus,' from 'lux,' full of light; 'caminus luculentus,' a bright fire.—CICERO.

712 *Open.* Verb used neuterly.

716 *Illusive fluid.* Probably means quicksilver, the fixing of which was one of the old chemical problems. It is the only metal liquid at the ordinary temperature, and freezes at 40° below Zero.

717 *Energy.* Here means cause of power.

719 *Immense.* As in line 158. Immeasurable.

720 *Hence.* From this impalpable mass of cold atoms.

721 *Steamed.* Issued in vapour. The notion is that the horizon being made red by vapour what issues from it comes in that shape.

Eager. Fr. 'aigre.' Lat. 'acer,' sharp. "It is a nipping and an eager air."—*Hamlet.* So vinegar, sharp vine.

722 *Suffused.* Lat. 'sub, fundo,' to pour under. Means

to overspread. Here it means, inspired thoroughly with the fierce rage of winter.

723 *Gale.* A. S. 'galan,' to yell. In old English, 'to gale,' to make a noise or speak. Chaucer, *The Friar's Tale*, 618, "Now telleth forth, and let the somptnour gale." So nightingale, the bird that sings by night. The transition is easy to a noisy wind.

725 *Bickering.* To bicker, originally probably a word of noise, is used either for the noise of rapidly moving weapons, or for the rapid movement that causes the noise. Both notions seem joined here. To bicker is usually to quarrel.

732 *Reflects.* Gives back. Properly to bend back.

733 *Double.* Only means unusually loud. Cf. line 24, where doubling, though differently explained in the notes, may have the meaning of twice as big as usual.

738 *From afar.* A Latinism. It means travellers' steps are heard a long way.

538 *Ethereal round.* The canopy of heaven.

740 *Cope.* A priest's cape or hood, or an arch. Also the top of a wall is called the coping. The cope of heaven would mean the arch of heaven; it seems to be connected with the whole mass of words of which 'caput,' 'chapter,' 'cap,' are examples, the notion being of a rounded summit.

752 *Wide spouted.* Some little mountain brook, swelled by the thaw of the day, spread over the side of a hill, making a sheet of ice.

753 *Livid.* Colourless, pale.

754 *Plumy wave.* Delicate feather-like fringe of the frost.

Swift descends. Alluding to a glissade. The traveller in the Alps puts his heels together, and leaning backwards on his staff, shoots with ease and rapidity over newly-frozen snow.

Sports on the ice (760).

763 *Dissolved.* Spread abroad.

765 *Top.* The summit, or from its similarity in shape, the plaything. Thus 'toupée' in French is both a humming-top and the high-piled arrangement of hair prevalent in the last century. 'Topi' is the Hindostani for a hat.

765 *Rhine.* The great river between France and Germany. It rises in the Grisons, and runs into the eastern end of the lake of Constance; issuing thence, it proceeds in a westerly direction to Bâle, where it makes a sharp turn to the north, and falls through several channels into the Northern Ocean. These channels are joined together by a network of canals.

768 *Batavia.* Holland, through which the mouths of the Rhine run.

769 *Skates.* The Norse word 'skat' means the top of a

tree, properly the point. 'Skata,' is to run to a point. Thus the pointed skate and the sharp-tailed fish have the same name. In England an early mention of skating tells us that the apprentices of London, as early as Henry II., ran upon the ice on mutton bones tied to the soles of their feet.

771 *The then gay land.* An awkward expression, implying that Holland is generally sober.

775 *Long-resounding.* The peculiar lengthened grating sound of iron upon ice.

To wheel a course. A Latinism. A course means properly a running, not the ground on which a race is run.

Close of the winter's day (779).

778 *Buxom.* A. S. 'bocsam,' obedient, from 'bugan,' to bow. Its original meaning, bending in obedience. "Buxam to the law," occurs in *Piers Ploughman.* So general pliancy applied to the pliancy of healthy and well-grown women.

780 *Horizontal sun.* Almost horizontal even at noonday.

781 *Broad.* From shining through frosty vapours.

785 *Reflected.* Reflected from the snow.

Relents. There is there a slight thaw.

787 *Waving gleam.* Flakes from the trees falling irregularly give an appearance of waving to the light.

791 *Season.* Fr. 'saison.' Kindred words have the idea of time, of maturity; or as verbs, to bring to a proper condition, either from 'satio,' Lat. seed-time, or from the Italian 'stagione,' a season, or time of year, involving an awkward dropping out of the 't.'

The poet contrasts the slight winter of England with the severity of the Northern winter (794); *the hardships of the Siberian winter* (799); *amidst the severity, animals life lives on, description of fur-bearing animals* (809).

796 *Shoot.* A strong word to express the action of sight; cf. Summer, 17— "raptured glance
Shot on surrounding heaven."

Zone, properly girdle. The earth is divided into imaginary strips of varying temperature girding it round.

797 *Relentless.* The adjective, properly belonging to the constant fierce frost, applied to the months during which it exists.

801 *Exile.* Siberia is used as a place of banishment by the Russians. The exile here regarded as imprisoned by the obstacles that surround him.

803 *Heavy loaded.* The participles "loaded" or "laden" both used, almost promiscuously. In practice, where the load is thought of without reference to weight, "loaded" is exclusively employed. Where the weight is thought of, "laden" is more

common, as, "a loaded gun," "a heavy laden waggon," but a waggon filled without regard to weight, "a loaded waggon." Here one would have expected 'heavy laden.'

804 *Vast.* An adjective used for substantive.

805 *Main.* Generally means ocean as here, but sometimes the mainland.

806 *Far distant. i.e.* from one another.

807 *Caravan.* An Arabic word—a company of traders.

808 *Cathay.* China; properly the north part.

811 *Harbour.* Seek refuge. 'Herberge' in old English, any shelter.

Furry nations. Thomson frequently speaks of animals and even flowers as nations or people. Thus, line 87, "Feathery people." 137, "Plumy race." Summer, 388, "Fish a harmless race," also 682, "gelid race of berries." Cf. Proverbs xxx., "The conies are but a feeble folk." Here, 'furry race,' 'fur-bearing animals.'

814 *Freaked.* Mottled. Johnson says Thomson introduced the word, but cf. Lycidas, 144—"Pansies freaked with jet."

815 *Costly pride.* In apposition to *thousands*, which, with *ermines* is in apposition to *furry nations.*

817 *His head raised.* Absolute.

818 *Heapy*—in heaps. An old, not very common word. Gray uses it, and in Rowe's Lucan is the line,

"Old ocean lifts his heapy waves on high."

Wreath. Snow wreaths are properly mounds of blown snow. The reference here is to the habit of the elk or moose, which uses the broad plate-like expansion of his horns to heap the snow up round his resting-place. Such an enclosure is spoken of as an elk-yard.

Branching elk. Elk with branching antlers.

819 *White abyss.* The elk sleeps in the deep snow hollow he has scraped, resting his head on the bank.

820 *Nor, nor.* A common poetical form instead of 'neither, nor.'

823 *Piteous.* Adjective used for an adverb, a very common poetical form.

Bray. Not the usual word used of the noise of a stag; most animals have onomatopæic words to express their various noises. To bellow, or more poetically to bell, is the word appropriated to deer.

827 *Absorpt.* Half-sunk in the snow. Observe the peculiar form "pt" instead of "ed." Several modern authors, as for instance the Hares in "Guesses at Truth," have tried to introduce this shortened form of the past participle. It frequently requires a change of consonants. The final "t," by a law of pronunciation, requiring the change of the preceding letter;

"bt" would be unpronounceable, and the 't' could only be sounded as a 'd.' Similarly, after 'p' a 'd' would be changed to 't.'

828 *Tenant.* A word derived from the feudal system, from Latin "teneo." A *holder* of property, subsequently an inhabitant.

Shapeless. His rough coat matted with the snow, destroying his outline.

829 *Horrid.* Lat. "horridus." Used here in its original sense, 'bristling.'

Forlorn. For, prefix allied with the German "*ver*," having the meaning of completion, usually in a bad sense; common enough in old English as "for-pined ghost," "fordrunken," to "fordrive," to "forfare," all in Chaucer. Now confined to a few words, "forlorn," forget," "forsake," "forgive."

830 *Sourer.* Growing fiercer and fiercer. An instance of an adjective of sense applied to the feelings.

833 Alluding to the habit of the bear, of sleeping without eating through the winter.

A description of the inhabitants of these northern climes (834); *the north was the home of the nations which destroyed the Roman Empire* (838); *the present inhabitants of Lapland are a peaceful race* (842); *a description of their poor but contented life* (847); *the muse, passing over Iceland and Greenland, describes the Pole* (887); *the throne or home of winter* (895); *Tartary described* (902); *its dangers to mariners* (920); *the fate of the first English expedition to the Arctic Ocean* (925); *the Samoiedes and Osteacs described* (936).

835. *That see Boötes urge his tardy wain.* The constellation of the Great Bear is sometimes variously called King Charles' wain, or The Plough. It is never seen to set in the north, nor indeed in England, and moving through a very small circle in the heavens, appears to move slowly, therefore *tardy.* Boötes derived from Gk. *βοῦς*, an ox, means a ploughman. It is the name of a small star near the Great Bear, and belongs properly to its third name. It is sometimes called Arcto-phylax, or the bear-keeper.

Wain. An abbreviated form of waggon. An obsolete word except in this connection.

836 *Boisterous.* Cf. note on 112.

Caurus. North-east wind. Cf. Virg. Georg. iii. 356, iv. 278.

838 *Prolific swarm.* Prolific, rapidly increasing. The nations north of the great mountain-chains of Asia and Europe were the barbarous tribes of the old world, and, when their numbers became too great to be supported by their own country, poured in swarms over the civilized regions of the South.

Relumed. Abbreviated poetical form for reillumined.

839 Modern civilization is due to the destruction of the worn-out civilization of the Roman Empire, into which fresh spirit was infused by the various barbarous races which passed over it in successive waves of migration. Each newly-arrived nation drove its predecessor before it. It was the mixture of barbarian with Roman civilization which produced the feudal system to which modern society is due.

843 *Lapland.* The country to the extreme north of Europe, partly belonging to Sweden, partly to Russia.

844 *Insensate.* Devoid of all sense, mad. This peculiar form is a secondary derivative from a low Latin word.

849 *Maze.* Maze seems to come from the verb to mase, to be dreaming, to be in error.

"Ye mase, ye masen goode sire, quod she,
This thank have I for I have made you see."

CHAUCER, *Merchant's Tale.*

"Some neither walks nor sleeps but mazen standing."

Quoted in Wedgwood.

The stream of life is regarded as entering a tortuous course, where, like a troubled streamlet, it is tortured, or rent in pieces by obstacles.

850 *Bid it rage.* No false desires bid the current of time drive fiercely through this course.

853 The food of the Lapps is chiefly cheese or milk drawn from the reindeer.

854 *Obsequious.* Lat. "obsequor," to follow or obey.

855 *Sled.* More commonly sledge.

Yield. The idea of submission to harness or the yoke has passed as a metaphor into our common language, as to bear a foreign yoke.

857 *Marbled.* This usually means veined or mottled like marble. Here, as hard and smooth as marble.

859 *Dancing meteors.* The Aurora Borealis.

Refracted. To refract is to break the natural course of rays of light. The process takes place when the ray passes from a medium of one density into another of a different density. The rays of the Aurora are thus bent across the sky.

861 *Vivid.* Literally lively. Now invariably applied to brilliancy.

Keener. Doubled. The stars seem to shine brighter, with their light reflected from the snow-covered waste.

864 *A wondrous day.* The Aurora Borealis, literally northern dawn, together with the moon and stars, make a sort of daylight in the long months during which the sun is never seen.

865 *Finland.* A country of Russia on the Baltic, south of

Lapland. The fairs in Finland afford to the Lapps their chief communication with the civilized world. See Miss Martineau's "Feats on the Fiord."

866 *Wished.* Longed for.

867 *Aurora.* The real dawn, the glimmer preceding the sun.

868 *Verging up.* Shewing its verge or edge.

869 *Swelling curve.* The rounded outline of the sun. The sun, preceded by the twilight of dawn, first shews its mere edge above the horizon, and gradually more and more of its outline.

870 *Months.* From the inclination of the earth's axis, the North Pole during all the winter months is turned entirely from the sun, while during the summer it is always turned towards the sun. Thus, for several consecutive months at one season the sun never appears to rise, or at another to set.

871 *Spiral course.* The meaning of spiral beautifully described in the next two lines.

875 *Niëmi.* M. de Maupertius, in his book on the Figure of the Earth, after having described the beautiful lake and mountain of Niëmi in Lapland, says: "From this height we had occasion several times to see those vapours rise from the lake which the people of the country call Haltios, and which they deem to be the guardian spirits of the mountains. We had been frightened with stories of bears that haunted this place, but saw none. It seemed rather a place of resort for fairies and genii than bears." (T.)

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

877 *Fry.* Little fishes. An accepted word in poetry for a throng; a swarm of fishes.

> "So close behind some promontory nigh,
> The hugh Leviathans attend their prey
> And give no chase, but swallow in their fry,
> That through their open jaws mistake their way."
>
> DRYDEN.

884 *Swains.* Cf. note on 278.

885 *Nor, their.* The conjunction and demonstrative form together a relative corresponding to 'whose.'

886 *Woe.* The accusative after 'knew' understood.

Their. The Lapps, represented by 'race,' 881.

885 *Blasted.* Agrees with 'daughters,' the participial clause is here causal, = by being blasted.

887 *Tornéa's Lake.* A lake in the extreme north-west of Norway. The river of the same name flows from it, separating Sweden and Russia, and runs into the head of the Gulf of Bothnia near a town of the same name.

888 *Hecla.* The great volcano of Iceland.

889 *Greenland.* A vast tract covered with glaciers and snow. It lies between the extreme north of Europe and America, and is probably an island.

890 *Gradual.* An adjective for adverb. Modern English has become so chary of using this form, at one time common, that the termination "ly" is not unfrequently added even erroneously to keep up the distinction between the adjective and adverb; for instance, "ungainly" for "ungain," which was the old form. Cf. 580.

893 *New seas.* Thomson meant, that the muse, passing across the Pole, beheld the other hemisphere. These is no allusion to the open sea, which is now held to occupy the North Pole.

894 *Cerulean.* Lat. "ceruleus," sea-coloured, or sky-blue. The word is taken from Virgil, who applies it to ice in the first Georgic.

895-901 The court of King Winter is described in these lines. The tempest is his jester or lord of misrule; the winds are his soldiers; the frost their shafts and javelins; the hail and snow their ammunition.

902 *Tartar's coast.* Coast-line of Siberia.

903 *She.* The muse.

Main. The Arctic Ocean.

906 *Projected.* Cast forward. We use more usually the adjective "projecting," overhanging.

Horrid. Cf. note on 829. Apparently used here in an intermediate sense, rough and dread-inspiring.

910 *Alps.* Properly grassy pastures in the high mountains, whither the flocks are driven in summer. Thence applied particularly to the best known regions of such pastures, the Alps of Switzerland, then generally to any high mountain. Pope's Essay on Criticism, 232:

"Hills peep o'er hills, and Alps on Alps arise."

Rushing hideous down. The ends of the great glaziers which fill the valleys in the polar regions abut upon the sea. These glaziers move constantly downwards, and huge fragments breaking from them plunge into the sea and form icebergs.

912 *Shake the solid pole.* An instance of poetical exaggeration. *Solid* means firm, stable; not hard frozen.

915 *Taken.* Caught, laid hold of; in spite of its fury.

Boundless. Not an idle epithet, 'very great,' but, 'refusing to acknowledge any limit, even the raging sea.'

916 *Many a fathom.* An accusative of distance, to the depth of many a fathom. Cf. note 298.

918 *Shagged.* Cf. note 281.

Wavy. Applied 391 to the Pyrenees. The metaphor here is in the *rocks*, not in the *wavy*. The waves have become rocks.

920 *Conscious.* Used as in line 133. Foreseeing the coming horrors of winter.

922 *The descending sun.* Descending below the horizon to remain unseen for the long winter months.

923 *Tenfold.* The termination "fold," German "falt," now implying multiplication, had originally its proper meaning, and tenfold meant doubled over ten times, in ten folds. We have no word "onefold," but "simple," from Sans. roots, meaning "whole-fold." Cf. note 385.

924 *Incumbent.* Lat. "in," and "cumbo," to lie upon, so to brood.

Thorn, a London merchant, suggested to Henry VIII. that the Spice Islands and Eastern Continent, to which Vasco de Gama had discovered a maritime route round the Cape of Good Hope, might be more easily reached by a northern course either to the west of Newfoundland or round the north of Asia. In the last year of Edward VI.'s reign, Sir Hugh Willoughby set out with three ships, with Richard Chancellor and Stephen Burroughs, and a crew of a 100 mariners, to discover a north-east passage. His ship, with the frozen bodies of the crew, was found in the following year in the river Arzina, east of the North Cape. Richard Chancellor escaped, and made his way to Archangel.

927 *Attempted since.* The north-west passage. For many years the idea of reaching China by a short cut round America was prevalent. Sir John Franklin, following many distinguished mariners, as Frobisher, Davis, Hudson, Ross, and Parry, was lost in an attempt to discover it in 1845. The efforts made to find and relieve him have thrown great light on the geography of those regions. Sir Robert M'Clure discovered the existence of the suspected passage, but found it too full of ice for any practical use.

932 *Hapless. Hap* meant luck, fortune. Thus happy and hapless, fortunate and unfortunate. In the sixteenth century "unhap" for misfortune was still in use.

933 *Full exerted.* The Poet describes the sailors as caught by the frost in the midst of their work.

934 *Froze.* The word is here neuter.

935 *The sailor glued.* Absolute; being 'glued.'

936 *Freezing stream.* This epithet gives the reason why the Oby can scarce roll his stream.

937 *Oby.* The great river of the west of Siberia; flows northward across that country into the Bay of Oby.

Last of men. The Samoiedes and Osteacs, wretched tribes inhabiting the extreme north.

941 *From the piercing season.* To escape the piercing season.

944 *Gross.* Uneducated. Without pleasures except those of sense.

946 *Kindred bears.* Bears as unpolished and wild as themselves. These tribes respect the bear highly, and offer sacrifices to him even when proceeding on a bear-hunt.

947 *Her roses drooping all.* An absolute construction. Even the beauties of the dawn seem faded in this cheerless region.

The genius of a great governor, as exemplified by Peter the Great, can reform even such materials as the Northern savages (950); *Panegyric of Peter* (955); *his various achievements* (966).

953 ff. Peter the Great died in 1725, the year before "Winter" was published. In spite of some barbaric attributes, such as cruelty, intemperance and impurity, his work justly earned him his title. He set before himself the task of introducing into Russia the civilization of the West, and of forcing his kingdom into the European confederation of nations. For this purpose he travelled through Europe, and spent some time in England and Holland, studying the art of shipbuilding. He organized the Russian army, carried on wars with Sweden and with Turkey, established a fleet both on the Black Sea and the Baltic, and moved his capital from Moscow, an inland town, to Petersburg upon the Gulf of Finland. He there founded and completed a magnificent city, although the ground on which it was built was a mere morass, and the foundations had to be artificially constructed. As was to be expected, a reform of so sudden a character, the work of a single man, and carried out by constant paternal interference of government, was somewhat superficial. From him, however, dates the importance of Russia in Europe.

954 *Gothic.* Rude. As the Goths were some of the first of the conquering tribes which broke into the Roman Empire and destroyed its civilization, their name has been used to characterise anything uncivilized.

959 While civilizing the manners of the barbarian, he raised him also in the scale of humanity.

960 *Ye shades.* Lawgivers of ancient times, as Lycurgus in Sparta, Solon in Athens, Servius Tullius in Rome, Moses among the Israelites. Cf. 437.

962 *Labouring.* Laboriously and gradually made.

965 The name of Czar, borne by the Princes of Russia, is the same as Cæsar, and implies world-wide dominion. In fact, before Peter the Czars were but petty princes of wild tribes.

966 *Greatly.* Nobly.

> "For all were once perfect, ...
> . . . . And all must be at length restored,
> So God has *greatly* purposed."—COWPER.

969 Peter visited the English dockyards at Deptford, living

there in the house of Evelyn the Diarist. At Saardam, in Holland, he had gone so far as to labour as an ordinary ship's carpenter.

973 *Cities.* Alluding to St. Petersburg.

975 *Social.* He made the sea, by means of his fleets, a means of intercourse rather that of dissociation. Horace calls the ocean "Oceano dissociabili."

976 *Euxine.* Black Sea. Peter brought 500 skilled workmen, among whom was Fergusson the engineer, from England, for the purpose of joining the Don and the Volga by canals.

980 *Alexander of the North.* Charles XII. of Sweden. This king, whose love of war and adventure almost deserves the epithet of *frantic*, was Peter's great enemy in the North. He won the great battle of Narva, but subsequently, pushing too far southwards to establish communications with the Cossacks of the Ukraine under Maseppa, he was fatally defeated in 1709 at Pultowa. He is called Alexander from his lust of conquest. Both the epithet and the name may have been suggested by Pope's line in the Essay on Man, iv. 222:

"From Macedonia's madman to the Swede."

981 *Othman's shrinking sons.* The Turks. Gibbon derives the name Ottoman Turks from Othman, caliph in 1299 to 1326. The third caliph, however, bore the same name. The real name is Osman, and the Turks call themselves Osmanlis.

983 *It.* The land.

The Poet, returning from his digression, describes the breaking up of the Northern winter (987); *its danger to sailors* (1004); *increased by whales and the presence of bears* (1014).

988 *Blunted point.* As we speak of piercing wind, so here the opposite adjective is used.

990 *Resolves.* Here in its proper original meaning to melt.

Thaw. Properly another form of "dew," German "thau."

991 *Spotted.* Marked with places where the snow has melted or slipt away.

Loose. The spongy substance of half-melted snow contrasted with the small close flakes of snow during a frost.

1001 The roar of the breaking of the ice follows the crack as it gradually extends itself along the frozen sea.

1002 *Rifted.* Riven. To rift is a secondary verb formed from the substantive, a rift.

1003 The loose masses of ice are piled one on another.

1004 *Charged.* In this sense the use of *charged* is taken from the French "charger," to load.

1005 *Moors.* Dutch "meren," to moor. A great number of nautical phrases, such as yacht, starboard, larboard, and many others, are derived from the Dutch.

1009 *Mischief.* French "méchef." Chef is from Latin

"caput," a head or end; and the word means a bad ending. Many Romance languages have it.

1014 *Embroil.* To mix in confusion. Cf. 247 and 584.

Leviathan—dreadful sport. The whale. Ps. civ. 26, "There is that Leviathan, whom Thou hast made to play therein."

1015 *Unwieldy train.* Awkward tail. This passage is certainly a reminiscence of Paradise Lost, vii. 410, where the creation of the fish is described :

> "Part huge of bulk
> Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
> Tempest the ocean; there Leviathan,
> Hugest of living creatures, . . . sleeps or swims."

A passage already copied by Pope, Iliad, xxi. 30: "The huge dolphin tempesting the main." [See note in Todd's Milton.] B. Jonson, in the Poetaster, Act v. 1., seems to have first used the word as a neuter verb, and Milton to have first made it active.

1016 *Loosened brine.* Free from the bonds of the frost.

1018 *Loading.* As we say borne by the winds; the sound is therefore spoken of as being the load of the winds.

1019 *Monsters.* The white bears.

1023 *Labyrinth.* The winding grotto, where the fabled monster, the Minotaur, lived. None entering the cave could find their way out, till Theseus, supplied with a silken clue, entered it, killed the monster, and returned unharmed. The word now means any difficult and entangled path.

Conclusion of all the Four Poems on the Seasons, of which Winter was the last (1024); *the life of man is compared with the seasons, Death, like winter with death* (1028); *as a new spring follows winter a new birth follows death* (1041); *thus explaining the mystery of the apparent injustice of life and the universality of death* (1050).

1024 *'Tis done.* The year is over.

1027 *Tuneful.* The birds. Cf. note 811.

1028 *Fond.* Cf. note 348.

1029 *Thy pictured life.* The picture of thy life. Latin use of the past participle.

1033 *Shuts the scene.* Draws the curtain across the stage. The allusion is to the trite comparison of life to a drama.

1037 *Veering.* Rapidly changing from one direction to another, like a ship tacking.

1038 *Shared thy life.* That between them had occupied all thy life.

1045 *Heightened form.* An illusion to 1 Corinthians xv. : "It is sown an earthly body, it is raised a spiritual body," etc.

1048 Contrast with 1067, "which only saw a little part."

On earth our view of the eternal scheme is partial, it becomes wider hereafter.

1049 *Reason's eye refined.* The mystery of life is insoluble to reason here; hereafter "we shall know even as we are known." *Refined* is the important word, and is causal. Cf. note 885.

1050 *Now.* When the new morn has come.

1052 *Arraigned.* Law suits were called "rationes." To call a person "ad rationes" was to call upon him for his reasons or summon him; so the French "arresner," and "arraigner" from "arrationare."

1055 *Gall and bitterness.* Acts viii. 23: "I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness."

1061 *Licensed.* Allowed by God to exist. These lines might be transposed thus—"Why pain was allowed to embitter our bliss."

1062 *Embosomed.* An enemy dwelling within our own hearts.

1065 *Bear up—and—is. Is,* is used for will be; the imperative followed by an assertion is equivalent to a conditional clause. If you bear up, that partial evil which you saw will be absorbed in the universal good.

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