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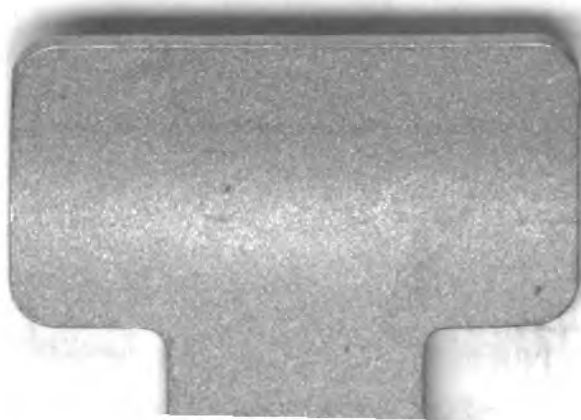
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The Canterbury Poets.

EDITED BY WILLIAM SHARP.

POEMS BY JAMES THOMSON.

* * FOR FULL LIST OF THE VOLUMES IN THIS SERIES,
SEE CATALOGUE AT END OF BOOK.

POEMS BY JAMES THOMSON.
EDITED, WITH AN INTRO-
DUCTION, BY WILLIAM BAYNE.

LONDON
WALTER SCOTT, LIMITED
PATERNOSTER SQUARE



TO THE
REV. JOHN MAIR, D.D.,
MINISTER OF SOUTHDEAN,
WHOSE INTEREST, AT ONCE SCHOLARLY
AND PRACTICAL, HAS PERMANENTLY
CONTRIBUTED TO THE FAME OF
THE POET OF "THE SEASONS."

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INTRODUCTION.



I.

FOR a full century after the publication of Thomson's works, his chief poems were favoured with the greatest popularity. The rise, first of Tennyson, and then of Mr. Swinburne, seems to have marked a period of decline in the general interest in Thomson. New methods of poetical art, wherein verbal and metrical effects predominated, prevailed in attracting the majority of readers; and he has distinctly shared the partial eclipse of most of the eighteenth century poets. But this depression in the fame of Thomson is evidently to be succeeded by no slight renewal of the esteem in which he was formerly held, with possibly a heightened and more discerning appreciation.

Neuroticism and the thrill of decadence, that have so keenly tended to assert themselves in

the closing years of the nineteenth century, meet with an excellent prohibitive in the literary and speculative qualities of a writer like Thomson. The extraordinary success that attended the publication of the Nature studies of Richard Jefferies, and the cordial approval bestowed upon the work of more than one pastoral writer in recent years, alike strengthen the conclusion that the hour of a revival in Nature poetry has come. Everybody cannot be in close communion with the world of external Nature; and from a heavier spirit of ennui than that which drove the generation of Pope to agreeable converse with the latest volume of *The Seasons*, readers of our own day eagerly grasp at truthful and vividly presented expositions of the charm of the outward world. The author of *The Seasons* can still satisfy this want with peculiar aptness.

The philosophical creed to which modern science has brought the conviction of the average man to-day corresponds more to the cast of the eighteenth century belief, hard and ungracious as it was, than does that of any intermediate period. The elevated pantheism of Wordsworth; the intangible mythological creed of Shelley; even the restless faith of Tennyson, inspired by an occasional note of unrelieved pessimism, have made room with not a few for a more

positive conception of the relations between the visible and the invisible. It is now not enough that a supreme doctrine should be constituted out of what may be, after all, a system of arrangements in "pathetic fallacy"; or, that a brilliant recrudescence of pagan humanitarianism should dazzle the wondering intuition. The speculative division between what is known and what is unknown has been increased rather than limited by the effect of modern inquiry; and we are faced with the direct consideration of the concrete on the one hand, and of the abstract on the other; with a resistless line between the finite and the absolute. Regarding the world of external phenomena, Thomson has much to offer that is attractive; if only from his simple delight in its æsthetic character, he presents matter of the greatest refreshing for the consciousness that always, in more or less degree, seeks such satisfaction in Nature. In the higher aspect of the subject, moreover, although he makes clear no mystery, his is yet a creed of spiritual affirmation, reaching beyond the mere vision of a vital optimism to an imaginative grasp at one with the loftiest mood of Wordsworth:—

"The Form remains, the Function never dies;
While we, the brave, the mighty, and the wise,
We men, who in our morn of youth defied
The elements, must vanish;—be it so!

*a**

Enough, if something from our hands have power
To live and act, and serve the future hour ;
And if, as toward the silent tomb we go,
Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendent
dower,
We feel that we are greater than we know."

Thomson, when all is said, holds a place in English literature remarkable both from the historical and the artistic qualities of his work. He, and none else, was the pioneer—and a great pioneer—of the eighteenth century romantic movement, especially, of course, in its thorough concern in the interpretation of outward Nature. Nature, either in its larger or its more restricted sense, meant very little to the writers of our "silver age." The idea of man also suffered under the general blinding artificiality of thought and expression, and of life. A stimulus was given by Thomson to contemporary thought with results that were wonderful in their reach and significance. *The Seasons*, strikingly free from prevalent literary fashions, came into the world of contemporary literature like a freshening gale from the "pastoral Tweed" into a bustling street. As far as the romantic idea of Nature is concerned, Thomson is quite unrivalled by any poet of his generation. Gray, like Pope, believed there was virtue in a dash of natural description superadded to a dis-

cussion on human affairs; but he drew the line at this point. Collins, endowed with a lyrical faculty of the finest order, merely sat at the feet of Thomson in respect of Nature interpretation. Mr. Gosse, in his recently-published volume on *Modern English Literature*, unhesitatingly advocates this view; but we may demur to the causes which he chooses to assign as detrimental to earlier substantial recognition of Thomson's genius. "It was Thomson," he says, "who made the first resistance to the new classical formula, and it is, in fact, Thomson who is the real pioneer of the whole romantic movement with its return to nature and simplicity. This gift would be more widely recognised than it is if it had not been for the poet's timidity, his easy-going indolence. The *Winter* of Thomson, that epoch-making poem, was published earlier than the *Dunciad* and the *Essay on Man*, earlier than *Gulliver's Travels* and the *Political History of the Devil*; it belongs in time to the central period of Queen Anne. But in spirit, in temper, in style, it has nothing whatever to do with that age, but inaugurates another, which, if we consider exactly, culminated, after a slow but direct ascent, in Wordsworth. . . . James Thomson is at present but tamely admired. His extraordinary freshness, his new outlook into the whole world of imaginative life, deserve a very

different recognition from what is commonly awarded to him."

Not only in England, but in France and Germany, *The Seasons* created a new fashion in poetry. Among English poets, Thomson probably divides with Byron alone the rank next to Shakespeare in the honours of a European reputation. The delight in Nature which sprang up in France about the middle of last century, having Rousseau for its leader, was undeniably of English origin. Possibly, and even probably, some such author as Rousseau would have arrived at a like literary method apart from the existence of any foreign influence; but Thomson actually set the example to the French writer. A French authority has, indeed, asserted as much. "Le pittoresque," remarks Stendhal, "comme les bonnes diligences et les bateaux à vapeur, vient d'Angleterre." Both Voltaire and Montesquieu were in accord with the note of renaissance in our Georgian literature, though Voltaire so frantically mistrusted Shakespeare; and they carried English ideas on the subject into French literature, alike from reading and from personal knowledge. One of the most notable of Thomson's immediate disciples in France was Chateaubriand, with his detestation of his own times and surroundings, turning, in the words of Carlyle, "to wander amid the Natchez,

by the roar of Niagara Falls, the moan of endless forests;" seeking to escape from "formulas and rabid jangle of hypotheses, parliamentary eloquence, constitution-building, and the guillotine, listening to the mystic, everlasting lullaby-song of the Great Mother, savage, indeed, but not false, not unkind." Diverse troubled tributaries combined to enhance the main stream of the French romantic revival which culminated in the work of Victor Hugo; and the passion for Nature among modern French writers, in its own marked characteristics, may be said to include the most varied sources of interest, past and present, in its complex method.

The Nature renaissance has run in Germany a course somewhat similar to its progress in France. At about the same date as Rousseau, Ewald von Kleist composed his poem of "Spring." The new literary element was well sustained by the prompt allegiance of J. H. Voss; a little past the middle of the century he published his pastoral of "Louise," an idyll in hexameter verse, depicting scenes of humble rural life. The movement had only a secondary effect on the two master-spirits of German literature, whose work followed hard upon the appearance of the productions of von Kleist, though exception must be made in this conclusion of the charming idyllic passages of some of

Schiller's dramas. The true objective of Goethe's magnificent genius, furthermore, was the study of man; and it is consequently with Byron and not with Wordsworth that he found the real affinity of his imaginative view. Both in France and Germany, literary criticism to-day points to a decided renewal of interest in the poetry of Thomson.

II.

James Thomson was born on 7th September 1700, at Ednam, near Kelso, where his father was the parish minister. He was the fourth child in a family of nine. When the future poet was an infant of two months, his father was appointed to the charge of the neighbouring parish of Southdean. Here Thomson spent the whole of his early youth. The spot greatly charmed his affections, and left vivid traces of its scenes on his ripened imaginative gift. At the age of fifteen, destined for the training of the profession of a clergyman, he entered Edinburgh University. It is not recorded that he was a specially distinguished student. But as a schoolboy he had attracted the attention of Mr. Riccaltoun, afterwards minister of Hobkirk, a man of originality and culture; and at college young Thomson gave evidence of skill as a versifier, and displayed an intelligent

interest in scientific studies. He was, tradition says, turned from his career as a clergyman by an adverse criticism of one of his probationary sermons, which was preached before Professor Hamilton. Its diction was characterised as too ornate, and the necessity of a rigid change in this particular was urged upon the writer. Very likely, however, the reasons that impelled Thomson's departure to London in the last year of his Divinity course, were much stronger than a severe criticism by one of his professors. No doubt, the literary ambition that was yet to lead him on so successfully had already asserted itself, and probably swayed him effectually in selecting a literary career in London in preference to the duties of a parish minister at home. It is not quite clear how he intended to earn a livelihood in London. It has been thought that, like his friend Murdoch, he had resolved to take orders in the Church of England. But there is nothing to support this view. Some, again, consider that Thomson had the immediate aim of obtaining a Government office. In any case, he achieved no such step as either, but for two years after he went to the metropolis was occupied as a tutor.

Thomson arrived in London in the spring of 1725. He had valuable introductions, and it was not long till, in the drawing-room of Lady Grizel

Baillie, he met Pope and Gay, and various notable persons of ability and influence. In September he writes to Dr. Cranstoun, of Ancrum, that he is engaged on "Winter." The poem was published in March 1726. It very soon became popular, and a second edition, containing an interesting preface on poetry, appeared during the summer. The poet did not dally over his success. His plan for a poem on the whole of the seasons was at once formed, and speedily carried out. "Summer" was published in 1727; "Spring" followed in 1728; while two years later came "Autumn," taking its appropriate place in a complete edition of *The Seasons*. The "Hymn" was also now printed. To these introductory years of Thomson's literary achievements belong two of the best of his minor pieces, "On the Death of his Mother," and the ode "To the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton."

The friendly reception given to his poetry had encouraged Thomson to devote himself wholly to literary work. Accordingly, we find him early in 1730 bringing out his play of *Sophonisba* at Drury Lane. It was not unpopular, though one unfortunate line was somewhat unfairly utilised to travesty the piece. The poet was once more to take up the less congenial duties of a tutor; but on this occasion he did so under agreeable circumstances. He was appointed travelling tutor to the eldest son

of Mr. Charles Talbot, the Solicitor-General. He accompanied his pupil for about a year in a Continental tour. They left England at the close of 1730, remaining in Paris till the autumn of the following year, when they visited Rome. The poet does not appear to have relished his experience on the Continent. He was unfavourably impressed with Parisian society, and at Rome his discontent with his surroundings led him to make inconsiderate remarks even on the fine art collections. He found social conditions abroad very different from those of England, with the result that he became more alert than ever to the excellence of the constitutional principles of Great Britain. His conclusions assumed literary form in his elaborate poem on "Liberty." He worked at this poem for three years, from the date of his return to England, at Christmas, 1731. He regarded it as his chief performance in poetry, and it was much praised by some of the critics of the day. "I look upon this mighty work," his friend Aaron Hill wrote to him, "as the last stretched blaze of our expiring genius." But the book met with no public favour. Its condemnation, in fact, was just. While careful, learned, and often eloquent, the poem is curiously lacking in that imaginative glow which distinguishes *The Seasons*, and is seldom absent from the poetical productions of Thomson.

Solace was not absent for the poet's disappointment regarding "Liberty." In 1735, Talbot, now Lord Chancellor, appointed him Secretary of Briefs; the post was a sinecure, and brought him a fair income. This financial good fortune enabled him to adopt a settled residence, and he chose a house at Richmond, where he had Pope as a near neighbour at Twickenham. Dramatic composition continuously occupied Thomson from the time of his settlement at Richmond. His tragedy of *Agamemnon* was ready for representation early in 1737; but the performance was somewhat delayed. His next play, *Edward and Eleanor*, came under the ban of the public censor. Disloyal sentiments—sentiments unfavourable to George II., and laudatory of Frederick, Prince of Wales—were deemed to occur in certain passages, and the play was never produced on the stage. Three years later the poet must have been freed from the suspicion of entertaining any treasonable opinion; for, at the request of the Prince of Wales, he composed the *Masque of Alfred*, in conjunction with Mallet, to celebrate the anniversary of the accession of George I. The masque was performed on 1st August 1740, at Clieveden on the Thames, before a large assemblage of the Court and aristocracy. Dr. Arne set the music for the play, being assisted in his task, it is said, by Handel.

The year 1743 is noteworthy in Thomson's history as marking the beginning of a close intimacy with Lyttelton, whose friendly interest was peculiarly strong among the numerous firm friendships which the poet enjoyed. Lyttelton's influence as a political leader was sufficiently powerful to enable him to secure for Thomson a valuable Government office. This was the post of Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands. From this he derived an income of £300 a year, having the additional happiness of being permitted to carry on its duties by deputy. With such an excellent resource, he could give undivided and strenuous effort to his literary engagements. It is to this period, therefore, that we probably owe the best of his labours at "The Castle of Indolence." Although not published till 1748, this poem was begun as early as 1733. Its delicate workmanship may well be supposed to have been mainly the result of the author's later years of leisure. In 1744 Thomson issued a much-amended edition of *The Seasons*. Shortly afterwards came a complete edition of his works. The representation of *Tancred and Sigismunda*, the best of his dramas, took place in 1745. Garrick was the principal actor; and "the town," we are told, "flocked to the performances." This play had the distinction of being translated into French, and was also brought out on the French stage. An-

other play, entitled *Coriolanus*, was soon ready; but, in the midst of the preparations for its production, Thomson was suddenly seized with his last illness. His death, which took place at Richmond on 27th August, 1748, was the result of a chill. He died famous and esteemed. Collins in his tender elegy immortalised him as a "Druid"; Shenstone had come to rate him with Virgil, "best of poets." He was much and sincerely lamented by his friends, of whose genuine appreciation the opinion of Murdoch may be taken as a fair example. Murdoch wrote:—"We have lost our old, tried, amiable, open, and honest-hearted Thomson, whom we never parted from but unwillingly, and never met but with fresh transport; in whom we found ever the same delightful companion, the same faithful depositary of our inmost thoughts, and the same sensible sympathising adviser." Thomson was buried in Richmond Church. A monument to his memory was unveiled in Westminster Abbey in 1762; and, through the instrumentality of Lord Buchan, a memorial was erected on Ferney Hill, near Ednam, in 1820. A few years ago a stained glass window was dedicated to him in the parish church of Southdean.

Thomson was never married; and a considerable amount of romantic interest attaches to his affection for Miss Young, who is now and again referred

to in his verse in terms of devoted admiration. Their marriage was resisted by Miss Young's mother, and her betrothal to Admiral Campbell is said to have caused the poet life-long unhappiness. The biographers of Thomson agree in recognising the candour and manly cheerfulness of his disposition. The one dissentient voice among his contemporaries was that of Dr. Johnson, whose animadversions on this theme were visited with frequent rebuke by Lord Buchan. Lord Buchan, who was fortunate enough to glean a good deal of first-hand information regarding Thomson, to all appearance makes out a good case for Thomson's real worth of character. Probably his conviviality—which is the main point of offence against him—was, as in the case of his legendary indolence, in no slight degree exaggerated. Assuredly, in respect of this second fault, to which posterity has somewhat liberally given credence, it must have existed rather in name than in positive fact. No man who put through his hands so much and so excellent work in literature as did Thomson, could truly be ranked as a brilliant Sybarite.

✓ Notwithstanding the great contemporary example of Wordsworth, Hazlitt accounted Thomson the "best of our descriptive poets;" and in a strict construction of the term "descriptive," the praise is deserved. As far as the complete devotedness of

the writer to the subject is concerned, the author of *The Seasons* takes the foremost place in English poetry in this vein; in the actual quality of his work, moreover, he bears adequate comparison with Wordsworth and Cowper. For magnificence and eloquent recital of the beauties of part of a landscape, or of a scene of sky or sea, Wordsworth excels; take, for instance, the cloud scene of the second book of "The Excursion," or the description of the wind-swept glories of the twin mountain-peaks in the same book. But the religious ethic that interpenetrates all the poetry of Wordsworth, while enhancing the philosophical interest of his work, removes something of the simple charm of his descriptions of Nature. Thomson, like Cowper, clearly differentiates his descriptive passages from those of a reflective kind; but the merit of each writer is again distinct. Realism prevails with both; while Cowper, however, dwells with minute detail on a picture, Thomson, using much less pains, describes with equally graphic effect. Cowper's "Morning Walk" calls up a very full array of natural phenomena, all true and suggestive in an account of what strikes the contemplative eye on such an opportunity; yet in "Summer" the like circumstances, stated in briefer compass, result in a description no whit inferior in vividness:—

“The meek-eyed morn appears—mother of dews,
At first faint-gleaming in the dappled east ;
Till far o’er ether spreads the widening glow,
And, from before the lustre of her face,
White break the clouds away. With quicken’d step
Brown night retires. Young day pours in apace,
And opens all the lawny prospect wide.
The dripping rock, the mountain’s misty top,
Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn.
Blue, through the dusk, the smoking currents shine ;
And from the bladed field the fearful hare
Limps awkward ; while along the forest glade
The wild deer trip, and, often turning, gaze
At early passenger. Music awakes
The native voice of undissembled joy,
And thick around the woodland hymns arise.”

Nor does Thomson display alone a rare gift of description when working on a broad scale ; his slighter touches are often felicity itself. None but a keen imaginative observer could have written phrases so choice as “the tempest-loving raven,” “the woods with yellow lustre bright,” or “in still retreats and flowery solitudes.” Everywhere throughout *The Seasons* comes in, from time to time, the result of searching and earnest observation, set forth with nicety and appositeness of language.

Avowedly descriptive of external nature in the main, *The Seasons* at the same time devotes appropriate attention to man and his affairs.

Wordsworth reflects on man with an overmastering zeal in his consideration of the outward world ; if Thomson makes no approach to him in this respect, the landscapes which he treats, at least, are anything but inanimate scenes. Hogarth in a higher mood, or Wilkie, might have fitly drawn inspiration from some of the figure-pieces of *The Seasons*. The harvest scene in "Autumn," or that of the hay-makers in "Summer," forms a finely-conceived, finished, and effective drawing. And that the poet could have attained to greater successes than these had he tried is made exceedingly plain by the deliberate and precisely-wrought study of the fox-hunters in "Autumn." The humorous realism of this scene is felt and portrayed with astonishing truth and vigour, and forcibly suggests the inference that other scenes of social life, dwelt upon with a like insistence of detail, must have combined to establish the poet's rank as a delineator of man as well as of Nature.

Johnson, with greater accuracy than he generally exhibited with reference to Thomson as a poet and as a man, declared that the glaring defect of *The Seasons* was its "want of method." And yet this, too, is not the whole truth; for the method of the poem is quite decided and perceptible. But the immense range which the poet traversed lends a

certain involved appearance to the development of his work. Only do we find by some rigour of attention how admirable is the design by which he throws upon the mental vision distinctive aspects of Nature, episodes, and reflections, that properly belong to each section of his poem. Perhaps a better comprehension of the knack of literary dove-tailing, such as was at the command of Pope and Goldsmith, would have corrected this flaw. But the defect is more in semblance than in reality. No reader will find Thomson unpleasantly repeating himself, or putting undue emphasis on one or other portion of his subject; nor will he realise that the poem is not always pervaded by a suitable and enticing unity. The much-maligned digressions also serve a purpose of their own. Thomson obviously felt the need experienced by any literary artist of adding a fillip to his evolution of a narrative. These digressions occur in each part of *The Seasons*; now taking a reflective shape, either religious or ethical, or, again, crystallising into story. Their bearing upon the subject at large proceeds in a natural sequence. Their value as poetry is a different matter. No justification falls to be made for the splendid rehearsal of British glories in commerce, in politics, and in literature, that adorns "Summer"; nor for the impressive account of the heroes of classical story which has a place in

“Winter.” Yet opinions will probably agree as to the failure in charm which characterises with one exception the idyllic efforts of the poet. The story of “Lavinia” possesses much gracefulness; but the two others are exotics—poor exotics, too—in the delightful field in which they flourish. All the same, the introduction of some such episodes was a requisite of the author’s method; and we can only of right blame his lack of attainment, not the idea on which he designed.

The chief fault of Thomson’s poetry in general is its infelicity of style, linguistic and poetical. It was, of course, impossible that Thomson could altogether avoid the peculiar diction of his age, though it may be wished that he had occasionally less emphasised its verbosity; but he erred deliberately when he attempted to copy the rhythmical harmonies of Milton. No doubt, his success, after all, is surprising. The freshness and beauty of his conceptions invest language as well as rhythm with a transforming charm. “His redundant style,” says Campbell, “is the flowing vesture of the Druid.” But to judge from the power over blank verse which Thomson displays at times, particularly in the monody on Congreve, and in one or two of his dramas, where his models are the purity of Elizabethan English, and the natural sweetness of Elizabethan

metre, the literary form of *The Seasons*, but for the accident of Milton's influence, might have been other than it is. Two essentials in composition empowered Milton as a master of verse; and from the capacity of using these Thomson was inevitably debarred both by circumstance and gift. Milton had the advantage of a literary language much purer than that of the early part of the eighteenth century, with its cheap introduction of Gallic classicalisms, and its coinage of hybrid forms. Again, the author of "Paradise Lost" wielded with rare power a remarkable species of blank verse, running into intricate and effective harmonies of word, phrase, and line, that set a task of the utmost difficulty before any imitator. Keats, who was emulous of the venture attempted by Thomson, confessed to the inadequacy of his powers to produce the puissant musical movements of Miltonic verse. "Hyperion" proved an undertaking too great; and more than once Keats expressed his conviction of the fruitlessness of his hope to carry out a successful poem on this model.


The principal phases of thought underlying the poetry of Thomson are his patriotism and his religious ardour. Without going to the violent extreme of one of his critics, who frankly states his belief that the poet sought to turn the drama of his day into a medium of political philippic, there can

be no doubt that his constitutional views were of an enthusiastic and indeed militant character. This is to be noted from his personal bearing in the London society of his time; from his correspondence with Dodington during his Continental tour; in several of his occasional poems; and in the culminating lyrical fervour of "Rule, Britannia." As one writer has pointed out with excellent discernment, Thomson's patriotism took its particular form from the nature of the theme which so greatly engrossed him. Not the historical, so much as the geographical or scenic associations of his country stirred his poetical zeal. In this, indeed, he joins with the select poetical brotherhood of his native land. The impassioned fondness of the Scot for the "land of brown heath," that pulsed like a heart-beat through the ballads and the work of the "Makers," down to the poetry of Burns and Scott, thrills with lively expression in the verse of Thomson. And while it is true that he was a Scot first, he was also thoroughly patriotic in his general conviction. Groom and noble, squire and knight, have each an allotted part in his ideal of a nation's political greatness; and his survey in "Summer" that begins with the glorification of the British peasantry, closes with a fervid panegyric of the nation's rulers. Born at a later date, he would undoubtedly have rejoiced in the increased stability of the

British constitution; and the stirring notes of poetical celebration of British prowess and daring expressed by Campbell and Tennyson would not have failed to secure in him an eager and competent supporter.

The robustness of Thomson's political creed, if never so imaginatively coloured as his conception of the world of Nature, is undeniable; and, though he failed to elaborate his ideas in this relation with any illustrious effect—if we exclude his immortal lyric,—he could utter an axiomatic dictum on the subject with telling force. His brief address to "Britain" affords an interesting example of this:—

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

A good argument for Thomson's authorship of "Rule, Britannia" has been drawn from the sheer virility of his poetical style as compared with that of Mallet. Mallet was an agreeable minor poet; but he never gave evidence in his verse of the deep and vigorously-expressed national sympathy that so unfailingly confronts the reader of Thomson's  Sentiment, as well as language, in

Mallet's one serious national effort, his masque of "Britannia," is thin and indeterminate beside the masculine and forcible expression of national greatness in not a few of Thomson's poems. The greatest war-song in English literature may much more reasonably be expected, apart altogether from other evidence, to have been the production not of a "whiffler in poetry," but of the poet who inscribed such vigorous verse as that descriptive of the Saxon sea-kings in "Liberty," or of the Elizabethan adventurers in "Britannia." Thomson is remarkable in English literature as an insistent, and at times splendidly successful, singer of the constitutional greatness of the nation. This characteristic is well worth recalling, going to establish as it does a highly commendable phase of sentiment not frequently made to engage poetical attention. That industry, commerce, constitutional excellence should prove fitting material for the poet as well as the historian is certainly a right and proper necessity; and to Thomson belongs the credit above all English poets of earnestly devoting his genius to the sublimation of this idea. M. Morel, in *James Thomson, sa vie et ses œuvres*, speaks very discriminatingly on this point; and a few words of the French critic may be cited. M. Morel, who, it may be added, has been discussing Thomson's optimism, says:—

“Thomson always associates the thought of man, his works and his interests, with the contemplation of Nature. And this is a consideration which excludes a discouraging conclusion. For the observer who looks down on everything with a contemptuous dilettantism, the contrast between the world and man can but declare the weakness and the helplessness of the latter. . . . But such is not the sentiment which the universe inspires in Thomson. He sees the world full of men’s activity; he knows that their labour finds in everything a stimulus, a certain support, as well as an unconscious sympathy. He knows that there is a complete harmony between humanity and that Nature wherein man has his being, by which he lives, and which he also makes what it is. His poetry is utilitarian, if we understand by this that the recollection of the influence of ordinary affairs on human interests is always present. In the admirable essay on æsthetics to which we have more than once referred, Ruskin, as a young man, expounded with vehemence against that poor and barren idea which intermingles the contemplation of the Beautiful with the degrading prepossession in favour of the Useful. But Ruskin, as an old man, re-reading the opinions which he had formerly enunciated, amended them in their exclusive and absolute force:—‘As I have grown older, the

aspects of Nature conducive to human life have hourly become more dear to me; and I had rather see a brown harvest-field than the brightest Aurora Borealis.' These sincere and profound words of the great writer on æsthetics are a sufficient reply to much of the reproach and scorn which are thrown at the poem of *The Seasons*."

It is not usual to lay stress on the religious view of Thomson's poetry of Nature; with himself, in truth, it was kept in the background, and in comparison with such a poet as Wordsworth, his philosophical tendency is far from emphatically asserted. Yet there is obvious reason to believe that Thomson too, despite his formal acknowledgment of the strictly-defined metaphysic of his day, thought and systematised for himself on the all-engaging problems of Nature and of man. In various passages of *The Seasons* especially, and in the rapt emotion of the "Hymn," he withdrew his fealty from the cold speculation of his times, and adopted a purely intuitional faith in agreement with the idea of the supernatural in revelation. Mr. Gosse expresses the opinion that the "Hymn" recalled to English verse "a melody, a rapture which had been entirely unknown since Milton's death." An unavoidable parallel to the "Hymn" occurs in later English poetry in the noble "Hymn before Sunrise" of Coleridge. In no way imitative

of the sacred ode of Thomson, that of Coleridge throbs to the same supernal aspiration; glows with a curiously similar scenic light, and with a kindred intensity of optimistic feeling. But the parallel between the work of Coleridge and of Thomson in regard to imaginative kinship reaches beyond this single instance. Coleridge's beautiful sonnet on "Nature" reveals a strong resemblance to one stanza in *The Castle of Indolence*, in the same strain. Nor does the intrinsic similarity of their speculative interest end here. While Wordsworth worked out his pantheistic ideal of the universe, and Shelley turned back in reverent vision to the materialism of Æschylus, Coleridge with a more profound and more comprehensive philosophical insight than either of these contemporaries, never departed from a consistent faith in "the Will Absolute, the One, the Good." With him, as with Thomson, Nature is impersonal, a vesture of the Divine. He recognised the splendid earnest of Wordsworth's Nature faith, and gave it a designation that worthily consecrates it:—

" An Orphic song indeed,
A song divine of high and passionate thoughts,
To their own music chanted."

But the marvellous genius of Coleridge ever rested on an intuitional faith. The pantheism of the

following lines was a passing conjecture, not a conviction :—

“ And what if all of animated Nature
Be but organic harps diversely framed,
That tremble into thought, as o'er them sweep,
Plastic and vast, one intellectual breeze,
At once the Soul of each, and God of all ? ”

Agnosticism might be justly taken as the significant feature of the creed of both Coleridge and Thomson; but with both this agnosticism was a belief lighted up with a great hopefulness for man and for the world. Thomson, we can judge, experienced no less than Wordsworth and Coleridge that spiritual travail on man's life and destiny concerning which the poet of “The Excursion” meditated and wrote with such fulness of power; but his closer mental association with the stir of human affairs gave his opinions on the subject a personal more than an abstract quality. He also lacked, no doubt, the intellectual subtlety and fibre essential to the task which his eminent successor entered upon with amplitude and sincerity of grasp. It was not the special charge of his poetic commission, so to speak, to systematise the reflected images of Nature's lustrous beauty into a philosophical scheme. He could not have appropriately uttered the representative note of “The Excursion” :—

“The gift is yours,
Ye winds and sounding cataracts ! 'tis yours,
Ye mountains ! thine, O Nature ! Thou hast fed
My lofty speculations ; and in thee,
For this uneasy heart of ours, I find
A never-failing principle of joy
And purest pleasure.”

The whole tendency of Thomson's thought regarding Nature was less abstract, less etherealised, both in outlook and in expression, than that of Wordsworth. While the conception of Nature in “The Excursion” was in the direction of general speculative analysis of human motive, that in *The Seasons* had its bias towards the concrete and the practical. What was concerned with the concrete was also more personal. The characteristic dictum on the charm of Nature which was bequeathed in *The Castle of Indolence* is simplicity itself, but yet how greatly infused with imaginative strength !

“I care not, Fortune, what you me deny :
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace ;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face ;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream at eve :
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave :
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.”

More weighty deductions than these lie stored in the mystic depth of the heart of Nature; but these, at least, are palpable, and, in their cheering radiance, beyond cavil. They form the crowning word of that uncryptic language in which Thomson, with a skill beyond most poets, has spoken of the bright and awakening influence of the world of Nature on the responsive consciousness of most of mankind. To have accomplished this bespeaks a genius whose work, in its order, may be fairly called great and inspiring.

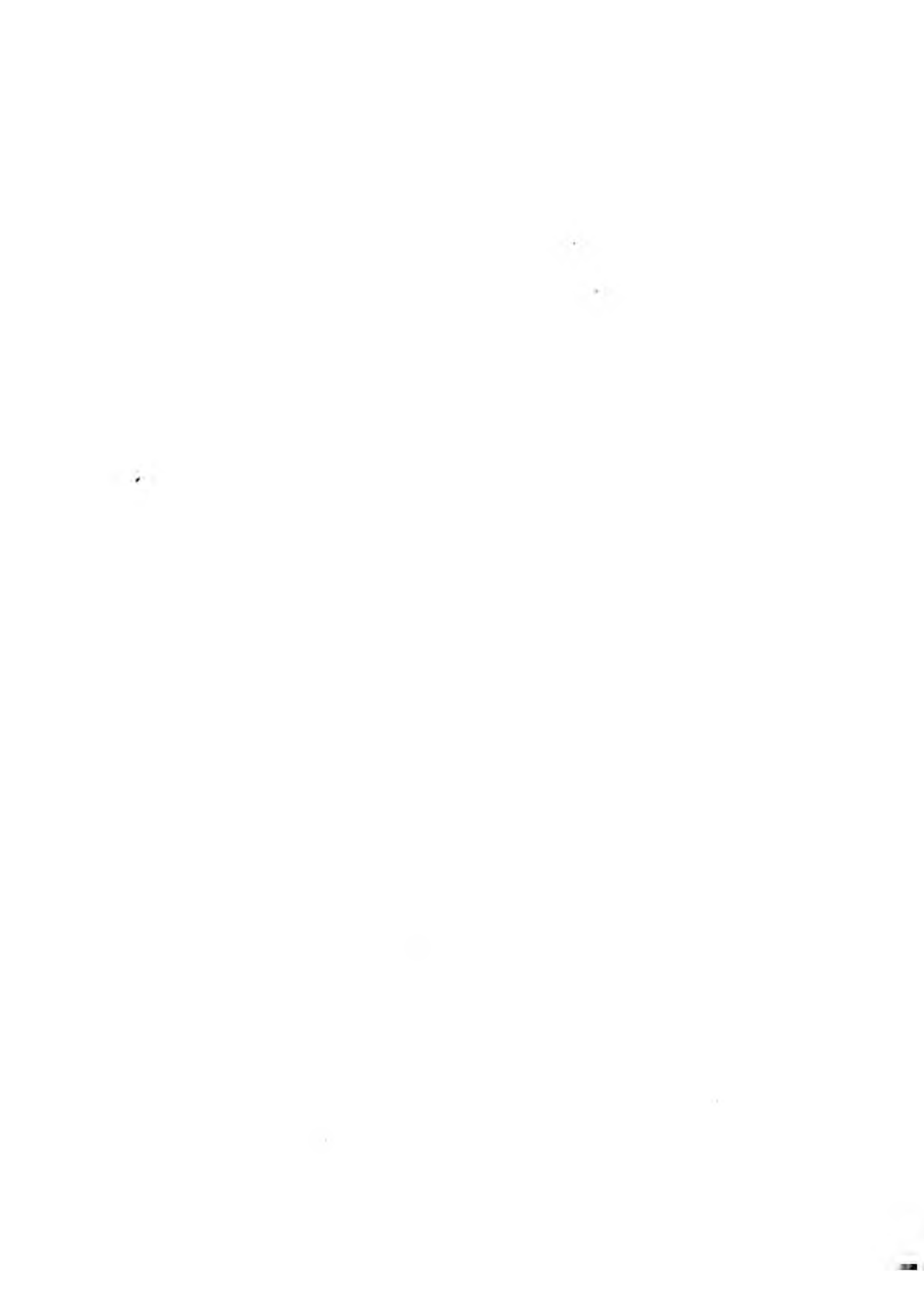
WILLIAM BAYNE.

EDINBURGH,

7th September, 1900.

. The text of *The Seasons* adopted in the present edition is that of the author's revised edition of 1746; in *The Castle of Indolence* that of the first edition has been followed. Thomson's own notes to the poems, distinguished by the initial "T," are reproduced. A few notes by the present editor are added.

THE SEASONS.



SPRING.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Inscribed to the Countess of Hertford. The Season is described as it affects the various parts of Nature, ascending from the lower to the higher; with digressions arising from the subject. Its influence on inanimate Matter, on Vegetables, on brute Animals, and last on Man. Concluding with a dissuasive from the wild and irregular passion of Love, opposed to that of a pure and happy kind.

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

O Hertford,* fitted or to shine in courts
With unaffected grace, or walk the plain
With innocence and meditation join'd
In soft assemblage, listen to my song,
Which thy own Season paints; when Nature all
Is blooming and benevolent, like thee.

10

* Frances, Countess of Hertford.

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

As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd,
 And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,
 Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets 20
 Deform the day delightless ; so that scarce
 The bittern knows his time, with bill ingulf'd
 To shake the sounding marsh ; or from the shore
 The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,
 And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.

At last from Aries rolls the bounteous sun,
 And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more
 The expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold ;
 But, full of life and vivifying soul,
 Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin, 30
 Fleecy, and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven.

Forth fly the tepid airs ; and unconfin'd,
 Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.
 Joyous the impatient husbandman perceives
 Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers
 Drives from their stalls, to where the well-us'd plough
 Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.
 There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke
 They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,
 Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark. 40

Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining share
 The master leans, removes the obstructing clay,
 Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.

White through the neighb'ring fields the sower stalks,
 With measur'd step ; and liberal throws the grain
 Into the faithful bosom of the ground.

The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene.

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

Such themes as these the rural Maro sung
 To wide imperial Rome, in the full height
 Of elegance and taste, by Greece refin'd.
 In ancient times, the sacred plough employ'd
 The kings, and awful fathers of mankind ;
 And some, with whom compar'd your insect-tribes 60
 Are but the beings of a summer's day,
 Have held the scale of empire, rul'd the storm
 Of mighty war ; then, with victorious hand,
 Disdaining little delicacies, seized
 The plough, and greatly independent scorn'd
 All the vile stores corruption can bestow.

Ye generous Britons, venerate the plough ;
 And o'er your hills, and long withdrawing vales,
 Let Autumn spread his treasures to the sun,
 Luxuriant and unbounded. As the sea, 70

Far through his azure turbulent domain,
 Your empire owns, and from a thousand shores
 Wafts all the pomp of life into your ports ;
 So with superior boon may your rich soil,
 Exuberant, Nature's better blessings pour
 O'er every land, the naked nations clothe,
 And be the exhaustless granary of a world !

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

80

From the moist meadow to the wither'd hill,
 Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,
 And swells, and deepens to the cherish'd eye.
 The hawthorn whitens ; and the juicy groves
 Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
 Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd
 In full luxuriance to the sighing gales ;
 Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
 And the birds sing conceal'd. At once array'd
 In all the colours of the flushing year,
 By Nature's swift and secret working hand,
 The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
 With lavish fragrance ; while the promis'd fruit
 Lies yet a little embryo, unperceiv'd

90

100

Within its crimson folds. Now from the town
 Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damps,
 Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
 Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
 From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
 Of sweet-briar hedges I pursue my walk ;
 Or taste the smell of dairy ; or ascend
 Some eminence, Augusta,* in thy plains,
 And see the country, far diffus'd around,
 One boundless blush, one white-empurpled shower 110
 Of mingled blossoms ; where the raptur'd eye
 Hurries from joy to joy, and, hid beneath
 The fair profusion, yellow Autumn spies—

If, brush'd from Russian wilds, a cutting gale
 Rise not, and scatter from his humid wings
 The clammy mildew ; or, dry-blowing, breathe
 Untimely frost ; before whose baleful blast
 The full-blown Spring through all her foliage shrinks,
 Joyless and dead, a wide-dejected waste.

For oft, engender'd by the hazy north, 120
 Myriads on myriads, insect armies waft
 Keen in the poison'd breeze ; and wasteful eat,
 Through buds and bark, into the blacken'd core
 Their eager way. A feeble race, yet oft
 The sacred sons of vengeance ; on whose course
 Corrosive famine waits, and kills the year.
 To check this plague, the skilful farmer chaff
 And blazing straw before his orchard burns ;
 Till, all involv'd in smoke, the latent foe

* London.

From every cranny suffocated falls ; 130
 Or scatters o'er the blooms the pungent dust
 Of pepper, fatal to the frosty tribe ;
 Or, when the envenom'd leaf begins to curl,
 With sprinkled water drowns them in their nest ;
 Nor, while they pick them up with busy bill,
 The little trooping birds unwisely scares.

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

The north-east spends his rage, and now shut up
 Within his iron caves—the effusive south
 Warms the wide air, and o'er the void of heaven
 Breathes the big clouds with vernal showers distent.
 At first a dusky wreath they seem to rise,
 Scarce staining ether ; but by fast degrees,
 In heaps on heaps the doubling vapour sails
 Along the loaded sky, and mingling deep 150
 Sits on the horizon round a settled gloom,
 Not such as wintry storms on mortals shed,
 Oppressing life ; but lovely, gentle, kind,
 And full of every hope and every joy,
 The wish of Nature. Gradual sinks the breeze
 Into a perfect calm ; that not a breath
 Is heard to quiver through the closing woods,
 Or rustling turn the many twinkling leaves
 Of aspen tall. The uncurling floods, diffus'd

SPRING.

9

In glassy breadth, seem through delusive lapse 160
 Forgetful of their course. 'Tis silence all,
 And pleasing expectation. Herds and flocks
 Drop the dry sprig, and mute-imploring eye
 The falling verdure. Hush'd in short suspense,
 The plummy people streak their wings with oil,
 To throw the lucid moisture trickling off;
 And wait the approaching sign to strike at once
 Into the general choir. Even mountains, vales,
 And forests seem impatient to demand
 The promis'd sweetness. Man superior walks 170
 Amid the glad creation, musing praise,
 And looking lively gratitude. At last,
 The clouds consign their treasures to the fields;
 And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
 Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow
 In large effusion o'er the freshen'd world.
 The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard,
 By such as wander through the forest walks,
 Beneath the umbrageous multitude of leaves.
 But who can hold the shade, while Heaven descends 180
 In universal bounty, shedding herbs,
 And fruits, and flowers, on Nature's ample lap?
 Swift fancy fir'd anticipates their growth;
 And, while the milky nutriment distils,
 Beholds the kindling country colour round.
 Thus all day long the full-distended clouds
 Indulge their genial stores, and well-shower'd earth
 Is deep enrich'd with vegetable life;
 Till, in the western sky, the downward sun

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

SPRING.

11

Rais'd through ten thousand different plastic tubes, 220
The balmy treasures of the former day.

Then spring the living herbs, profusely wild,
O'er all the deep green earth, beyond the power
Of botanist to number up their tribes,
Whether he steals along the lonely dale,
In silent search ; or through the forest, rank
With what the dull incurious weeds account,
Bursts his blind way ; or climbs the mountain-rock,
Fired by the nodding verdure of its brow.

With such a lib'ral hand has Nature flung 230
Their seeds abroad, blown them about in winds,
Innumerable mix'd them with the nursing mould,
The moistening current, and prolific rain.

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

The first fresh dawn then wak'd the gladden'd race
Of uncorrupted man, nor blush'd to see
The sluggard sleep beneath its sacred beam ;
For their light slumbers gently fum'd away ;
And up they rose as vigorous as the sun,
Or to the culture of the willing glebe,
Or to the cheerful tendance of the flock.
Meantime the song went round ; and dance and sport,

Wisdom and friendly talk successive stole 250
 Their hours away ; while in the rosy vale
 Love breath'd his infant sighs, from anguish free
 And full replete with bliss ; save the sweet pain,
 That inly thrilling, but exalts it more.
 Nor yet injurious act, nor surly deed,
 Was known among those happy sons of Heaven ;
 For reason and benevolence were law.
 Harmonious Nature too look'd smiling on.
 Clear shone the skies, cool'd with eternal gales
 And balmy spirit all. The youthful sun 260
 Shot his best rays, and still the gracious clouds
 Dropp'd fatness down ; as o'er the swelling mead
 The herds and flocks commixing play'd secure.
 This when, emergent from the gloomy wood,
 The glaring lion saw, his horrid heart
 Was meeken'd, and he join'd his sullen joy.
 For music held the whole in perfect peace :
 Soft sigh'd the flute ; the tender voice was heard,
 Warbling the varied heart ; the woodlands round
 Applied their quire ; and winds and waters flow'd 270
 In consonance. Such were those prime of days.

But now those white unblemish'd minutes, whence
 The fabling poets took their golden age,
 Are found no more amid these iron times,
 These dregs of life ! Now the distemper'd mind
 Has lost that concord of harmonious powers,
 Which forms the soul of happiness ; and all
 Is off the poise within : the passions all
 Have burst their bounds ; and reason, half extinct,

SPRING.

13

Or impotent, or else approving, sees 280
 The foul disorder. Senseless and deform'd
 Convulsive anger storms at large ; or pale
 And silent, settles into fell revenge.
 Base envy withers at another's joy,
 And hates that excellence it cannot reach.
 Desponding fear, of feeble fancies full,
 Weak and unmanly, loosens every power.
 Even love itself is bitterness of soul,
 A pensive anguish pining at the heart ;
 Or, sunk to sordid interest, feels no more 290
 That noble wish, that never cloy'd desire,
 Which, selfish joy disdainng, seeks alone
 To bless the dearer object of its flame.
 Hope sickens with extravagance ; and grief,
 Of life impatient, into madness swells,
 Or in dead silence wastes the weeping hours.
 These, and a thousand mix'd emotions more,
 From ever-changing views of good and ill,
 Form'd infinitely various, vex the mind
 With endless storm : whence, deeply rankling, grows 300
 The partial thought, a listless unconcern,
 Cold, and averting from our neighbour's good ;
 Then dark disgust, and hatred, winding wiles,
 Coward deceit, and ruffian violence.
 At last, extinct each social feeling, fell
 And joyless inhumanity pervades
 And petrifies the heart. Nature disturb'd
 Is deem'd vindictive to have chang'd her course.
 Hence, in old dusky time, a deluge came :

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

The Seasons since have, with severer sway,
 Oppress'd a broken world : the Winter keen
 Shook forth his waste of snows ; and Summer shot
 His pestilential heats. Great Spring before 320
 Green'd all the year ; and fruits and blossoms blush'd,
 In social sweetness, on the self-same bough.

Pure was the temperate air ; an even calm
 Perpetual reign'd, save what the zephyrs bland
 Breath'd o'er the blue expanse ; for then nor storms
 Were taught to blow, nor hurricanes to rage ;
 Sound slept the waters ; no sulphureous glooms
 Swell'd in the sky, and sent the lightning forth ;
 While sickly damps, and cold autumnal fogs,
 Hung not, relaxing, on the springs of life. 330

But now, of turbid elements the sport,
 From clear to cloudy toss'd, from hot to cold,
 And dry to moist, with inward-eating change,
 Our drooping days are dwindled down to nought,
 Their period finish'd ere 'tis well begun.

And yet the wholesome herb neglected dies ;
 Though with the pure exhilarating soul
 Of nutriment and health, and vital powers,
 Beyond the search of art, 'tis copious blest.

SPRING.

15

For, with hot ravin fir'd, ensanguin'd man 340
 Is now become the lion of the plain,
 And worse. The wolf, who from the nightly fold
 Fierce drags the bleating prey, ne'er drunk her milk,
 Nor wore her warming fleece; nor has the steer,
 At whose strong chest the deadly tiger hangs,
 E'er plough'd for him. They too are temper'd high,
 With hunger stung and wild necessity,
 Nor lodges pity in their shaggy breast.
 But man, whom Nature form'd of milder clay,
 With every kind emotion in his heart, 350
 And taught alone to weep—while from her lap
 She pours ten thousand delicacies, herbs,
 And fruits, as numerous as the drops of rain,
 Or beams that gave them birth,—shall he, fair form!
 Who wears sweet smiles, and looks erect on heaven,
 E'er stoop to mingle with the prowling herd,
 And dip his tongue in gore? The beast of prey,
 Blood-stain'd, deserves to bleed; but you, ye flocks,
 What have ye done? ye peaceful people, what,
 To merit death? you, who have given us milk 360
 In luscious streams, and lent us your own coat
 Against the Winter's cold? And the plain ox,
 That harmless, honest, guileless animal,
 In what has he offended? he, whose toil,
 Patient and ever ready, clothes the land
 With all the pomp of harvest; shall he bleed,
 And struggling groan beneath the cruel hands
 Even of the clown he feeds? and that, perhaps,
 To swell the riot of the autumnal feast,

Won by his labour? This the feeling heart 370
 Would tenderly suggest; but 'tis enough,
 In this late age, adventurous, to have touch'd
 Light on the numbers of the Samian sage.*
 High Heaven forbids the bold presumptuous strain,
 Whose wisest will has fix'd us in a state
 That must not yet to pure perfection rise.
 Besides, who knows how, rais'd to higher life,
 From stage to stage the vital scale ascends?

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

When with his lively ray the potent sun
 Has pierc'd the streams, and rous'd the finny race,
 Then issuing cheerful, to thy sport repair;
 Chief should the western breezes curling play,

* Pythagoras.

And light o'er ether bear the shadowy clouds.
 High to their fount, this day, amid the hills
 And woodlands warbling round, trace up the brooks ; 400
 The next pursue their rocky-channell'd maze
 Down to the river, in whose ample wave
 Their little naiads love to sport at large.
 Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
 Is mix'd the trembling stream, or where it boils
 Around the stone, or from the hollow'd bank
 Reverted plays in undulating flow,
 There throw, nice-judging, the delusive fly ;
 And as you lead it round in artful curve,
 With eye attentive mark the springing game. 410
 Straight as above the surface of the flood
 They wanton rise, or urg'd by hunger leap,
 Then fix, with gentle twitch, the barbed hook,
 Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank,
 And to the shelving shore slow-dragging some,
 With various hand proportion'd to their force.
 If yet too young, and easily deceiv'd,
 A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
 Him, piteous of his youth and the short space
 He has enjoy'd the vital light of heaven, 420
 Soft disengage, and back into the stream
 The speckled captive throw. But should you lure
 From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots
 Of pendent trees, the monarch of the brook,
 Behoves you then to ply your finest art.
 Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly ;
 And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft

The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.
 At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun
 Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death 430
 With sullen plunge. At once he darts along,
 Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd line ;
 Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,
 The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode ;
 And flies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
 Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand,
 That feels him still, yet to his furious course
 Gives way, you, now retiring, following now
 Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage ;
 Till floating broad upon his breathless side, 440
 And to his fate abandon'd, to the shore
 You gaily drag your unresisting prize.

Thus pass the temperate hours ; but when the sun
 Shakes from his noon-day throne the scattering clouds,
 Even shooting listless languor through the deeps ;
 Then seek the bank where flowering elders crowd,
 Where scatter'd wild the lily of the vale
 Its balmy essence breathes, where cowslips hang
 The dewy head, where purple violets lurk,
 With all the lowly children of the shade : 450
 Or lie reclin'd beneath yon spreading ash,
 Hung o'er the steep ; whence, borne on liquid wing,
 The sounding culver shoots ; or where the hawk,
 High in the beetling cliff his eyry builds.
 Then let the classic page thy fancy lead
 Through rural scenes ; such as the Mantuan swain
 Paints in the matchless harmony of song.

Or catch thyself the landscape, gliding swift
 Athwart imagination's vivid eye ;
 Or by the vocal woods and waters lull'd, 460
 And lost in lonely musing, in the dream
 Confus'd of careless solitude, where mix
 Ten thousand wandering images of things,
 Soothe every gust of passion into peace ;
 All but the swellings of the soften'd heart,
 That waken, not disturb, the tranquil mind.

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

Yet, though successful, will the toil delight. 480
 Come then, ye virgins and ye youths, whose hearts
 Have felt the raptures of refining love ;
 And thou, Amanda,* come, pride of my song !
 Form'd by the Graces, loveliness itself !
 Come with those downcast eyes, sedate and sweet,

* Miss Young, who married Vice-Admiral Campbell.

Those looks demure, that deeply pierce the soul,
 Where, with the light of thoughtful reason mix'd,
 Shines lively fancy and the feeling heart—
 O come ! and while the rosy-footed May
 Steals blushing on, together let us tread 490
 The morning dews, and gather in their prime
 Fresh-blooming flowers, to grace thy braided hair,
 And thy loved bosom that improves their sweets.

See, where the winding vale its lavish stores
 Irriguous spreads ! See, how the lily drinks
 The latent rill, scarce oozing through the grass,
 Of growth luxuriant ; or the humid bank,
 In fair profusion, decks ! Long let us walk,
 Where the breeze blows from yon extended field
 Of blossom'd beans. Arabia cannot boast 500
 A fuller gale of joy, than liberal thence
 Breathes through the sense, and takes the ravish'd soul.
 Nor is the mead unworthy of thy foot,
 Full of fresh verdure, and unnumber'd flowers,
 The negligence of Nature, wide, and wild ;
 Where, undisguis'd by mimic art, she spreads
 Unbounded beauty to the roving eye.

Here their delicious task the fervent bees
 In swarming millions tend : around, athwart,
 Through the soft air, the busy nations fly, 510
 Cling to the bud, and with inserted tube
 Sucks its pure essence, its ethereal soul ;
 And oft with bolder wing they soaring dare
 The purple heath, or where the wild thyme grows,
 And yellow load them with the luscious spoil.

At length the finish'd garden to the view
 Its vistas opens, and its alleys green.
 Snatch'd through the verdant maze, the hurried eye
 Distracted wanders ; now the bowery walk
 Of covert close, where scarce a speck of day 520
 Falls on the lengthen'd gloom, protracted sweeps :
 Now meets the bending sky ; the river now
 Dimpling along, the breezy ruffled lake,
 The forest darkening round, the glittering spire,
 The ethereal mountain, and the distant main.
 But why so far excursive? when at hand,
 Along these blushing borders bright with dew,
 And in yon mingled wilderness of flowers,
 Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every grace ;
 Throws out the snow-drop and the crocus first, 530
 The daisy, primrose, violet darkly blue,
 And polyanthus of unnumber'd dyes ;
 The yellow wall-flower, stain'd with iron brown ;
 And lavish stock, that scents the garden round ;
 From the soft wing of vernal breezes shed,
 Anemonies ; auriculas, enriched
 With shining meal o'er all their velvet leaves ;
 And full ranunculus, of glowing red.
 Then comes the tulip race, where beauty plays
 Her idle freaks : from family diffus'd 540
 To family, as flies the father-dust,
 The varied colours run ; and, while they break
 On the charm'd eye, the exulting florist marks,
 With secret pride, the wonders of his hand.
 No gradual bloom is wanting ; from the bud,

First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky tribes ;
 Nor hyacinths, of purest virgin white,
 Low bent, and blushing inward ; nor jonquils,
 Of potent fragrance ; nor narcissus fair,
 As o'er the fabled fountain hanging still ; 550
 Nor broad carnations, nor gay-spotted pinks ;
 Nor, shower'd from every bush, the damask-rose :
 Infinite numbers, delicacies, smells,
 With hues on hues expression cannot paint,
 The breath of Nature, and her endless bloom.

Hail, Source of Being ! Universal Soul
 Of heaven and earth, Essential Presence, hail !
 To Thee I bend the knee ; to Thee my thoughts
 Continual climb ; who, with a master-hand,
 Hast the great whole into perfection touch'd. 560
 By Thee the various vegetative tribes,
 Wrapt in a filmy net, and clad with leaves,
 Draw the live ether, and imbibe the dew.
 By Thee dispos'd into congenial soils,
 Stands each attractive plant, and sucks, and swells
 The juicy tide—a twining mass of tubes.
 At Thy command the vernal sun awakes
 The torpid sap, detruded to the root
 By wintry winds ; that now in fluent dance,
 And lively fermentation, mounting, spreads 570
 All this innumerable-colour'd scene of things.

As rising from the vegetable world
 My theme ascends, with equal wing ascend
 My panting muse ; and hark, how loud the woods

Invite you forth in all your gayest trim !
 Lend me your song, ye nightingales ! oh pour
 The mazy-running soul of melody
 Into my varied verse ! while I deduce,
 From the first note the hollow cuckoo sings,
 The symphony of Spring, and touch a theme
 Unknown to fame—the passion of the groves.

580

When first the soul of love is sent abroad,
 Warm through the vital air, and on the heart
 Harmonious seizes, the gay troops begin
 In gallant thought to plume the painted wing ;
 And try again the long-forgotten strain,
 At first faint-warbled. But no sooner grows
 The soft infusion prevalent, and wide,
 Than, all alive, at once their joy o'erflows
 In music unconfin'd. Up springs the lark,
 Shrill-voiced, and loud, the messenger of morn :
 Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
 Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
 Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
 Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush
 Bending with dewy moisture, o'er the heads
 Of the coy quiristers that lodge within,
 Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
 And wood-lark, o'er the kind-contending throng
 Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
 Of notes ; when listening Philomela deigns
 To let them joy, and purposes, in thought
 Elate, to make her night excel their day.
 The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake ;

590

600

The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove;
 Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
 Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to these
 Innumerable songsters, in the freshening shade
 Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix
 Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
 And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
 Aid the full concert; while the stock-dove breathes
 A melancholy murmur through the whole.

610

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

620

630

Connubial leagues agreed, to the deep woods
 They haste away, all as their fancy leads,
 Pleasure, or food, or secret safety prompts;
 That Nature's great command may be obey'd;

Nor all the sweet sensations they perceive
 Indulg'd in vain. Some to the holly-hedge
 Nestling repair, and to the thicket some ;
 Some to the rude protection of the thorn
 Commit their feeble offspring ; the cleft tree
 Offers its kind concealment to a few, 640
 Their food its insects, and its moss their nests.
 Others apart far in the grassy dale,
 Or roughening waste, their humble texture weave.
 But most in woodland solitudes delight,
 In unfrequented glooms, or shaggy banks,
 Steep, and divided by a babbling brook,
 Whose murmurs soothe them all the live-long day,
 When by kind duty fix'd. Among the roots
 Of hazel, pendent o'er the plaintive stream,
 They frame the first foundation of their domes, 650
 Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,
 And bound with clay together. Now 'tis nought
 But restless hurry through the busy air,
 Beat by unnumber'd wings. The swallow sweeps
 The slimy pool, to build his hanging house
 Intent. And often, from the careless back
 Of herds and flocks a thousand tugging bills
 Pluck hair and wool ; and oft, when unobserv'd,
 Steal from the barn a straw ; till soft and warm,
 Clean and complete, their habitation grows. 660

As thus the patient dam assiduous sits,
 Not to be tempted from her tender task,
 Or by sharp hunger, or by smooth delight,
 Though the whole loosen'd Spring around her blows,

Her sympathising lover takes his stand
 High on the opponent bank, and ceaseless sings
 The tedious time away; or else supplies
 Her place a moment, while she sudden flits
 To pick the scanty meal. The appointed time
 With pious toil fulfil'd, the callow young, 670
 Warm'd and expanded into perfect life,
 Their brittle bondage break, and come to light,
 A helpless family, demanding food
 With constant clamour. O what passions then,
 What melting sentiments of kindly care,
 On the new parents seize! Away they fly
 Affectionate, and undesiring bear
 The most delicious morsel to their young;
 Which equally distributed, again
 The search begins. Even so a gentle pair, 680
 By fortune sunk, but form'd of generous mould,
 And charm'd with cares beyond the vulgar breast,
 In some lone cot amid the distant woods,
 Sustain'd alone by providential Heaven,
 Oft, as they weeping eye their infant train,
 Check their own appetites, and give them all.
 Nor toil alone they scorn; exalting love,
 By the great Father of the Spring inspir'd,
 Gives instant courage to the fearful race,
 And to the simple art. With stealthy wing, 690
 Should some rude foot their woody haunts molest,
 Amid a neighbouring bush they silent drop,
 And whirring thence, as if alarm'd, deceive
 The unfeeling schoolboy. Hence, around the head

Of wandering swain, the white wing'd plover wheels
 Her sounding flight, and then directly on
 In long excursion skims the level lawn,
 To tempt him from her nest. The wild duck hence
 O'er the rough moss, and o'er the trackless waste
 The heath-hen flutters, pious fraud ! to lead 700
 The hot pursuing spaniel far astray.

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

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

Sole-sitting, still at every dying fall
 Takes up again her lamentable strain
 Of winding woe; till wide around the woods
 Sigh to her song, and with her wail resound.

But now the feather'd youth their former bounds
 Ardent disdain; and, weighing oft their wings, 730
 Demand the free possession of the sky.

This one glad office more, and then dissolves
 Parental love at once, now needless grown:
 Unlavish Wisdom never works in vain.

'Tis on some evening, sunny, grateful, mild,
 When nought but balm is breathing through the woods,
 With yellow lustre bright, that the new tribes
 Visit the spacious heavens, and look abroad
 On Nature's common—far as they can see,
 Or wing, their range and pasture. O'er the boughs 740

Dancing about, still at the giddy verge
 Their resolution fails; their pinions still,
 In loose libration stretch'd, to trust the void
 Trembling refuse; till down before them fly
 The parent-guides, and chide, exhort, command,
 Or push them off. The surging air receives
 The plumy burden; and their self-taught wings
 Winnow the waving element. On ground
 Alighted, bolder up again they lead,

Farther and farther on, the lengthening flight; 750
 Till vanish'd every fear, and every power
 Rous'd into life and action, light in air
 The acquitted parents see their soaring race,
 And, once rejoicing, never know them more.

High from the summit of a craggy cliff,
 Hung o'er the deep, such as amazing frowns
 On utmost Kilda's* shore, whose lonely race
 Resign the setting sun to Indian worlds,
 The royal eagle draws his vigorous young,
 Strong-pounc'd, and ardent with paternal fire. 760
 Now fit to raise a kingdom of their own,
 He drives them from his fort, the towering seat
 For ages of his empire; which, in peace,
 Unstain'd he holds, while many a league to sea,
 He wings his course, and preys in distant isles.

Should I my steps turn to the rural seat,
 Whose lofty elms, and venerable oaks
 Invite the rook, who high amid the boughs,
 In early Spring, his airy city builds,
 And ceaseless caws amusive; there, well-pleas'd, 770
 I might the various polity survey
 Of the mixt household kind. The careful hen
 Calls all her chirping family around,
 Fed and defended by the fearless cock;
 Whose breast with ardour flames, as on he walks
 Graceful, and crows defiance. In the pond,
 The finely-checker'd duck, before her train,
 Rows garrulous. The stately-sailing swan
 Gives out his snowy plumage to the gale;
 And, arching proud his neck, with oary feet 780
 Bears forward fierce, and guards his osier-isle,
 Protective of his young. The turkey nigh,
 Loud-threatening, reddens; while the peacock spreads

* The farthest of the western islands of Scotland.—T.

His every-colour'd glory to the sun,
And swims in radiant majesty along.

O'er the whole homely scene, the cooing dove
Flies thick in amorous chase, and wanton rolls
The glancing eye, and turns the changeful neck.

While thus the gentle tenants of the shade
Indulge their purer loves, the rougher world 790
Of brutes, below, rush furious into flame

And fierce desire. Through all his lusty veins
The bull, deep-scorch'd, the raging passion feels.
Of pasture sick, and negligent of food,

Scarce seen, he wades among the yellow broom,
While o'er his ample sides the rambling sprays
Luxuriant shoot; or through the mazy wood
Dejected wanders, nor the enticing bud
Crops, though it presses on his careless sense.

And oft, in jealous madd'ning fancy wrapt, 800
He seeks the fight; and, idly-butting, feigns
His rival gor'd in every knotty trunk.

Him should he meet, the bellowing war begins:
Their eyes flash fury; to the hollow'd earth,
Whence the sand flies, they mutter bloody deeds,
And groaning deep, the impetuous battle mix;
While the fair heifer, balmy breathing near,
Stands kindling up their rage. The trembling steed,
With this hot impulse seiz'd in every nerve,

Nor heeds the rein, nor hears the sounding thong; 810
Blows are not felt; but tossing high his head,
And by the well-known joy to distant plains
Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away;

O'er rocks, and woods, and craggy mountains flies ;
 And, neighing, on the aërial summit takes
 The exciting gale ; then, steep-descending, cleaves
 The headlong torrents foaming down the hills,
 Even where the madness of the straiten'd stream
 Turns in black eddies round : such is the force
 With which his frantic heart and sinews swell. 820

Nor undelighted by the boundless Spring
 Are the broad monsters of the foaming deep :
 From the deep ooze and gelid cavern roused,
 They flounce and tumble in unwieldy joy.
 Dire were the strain and dissonant, to sing
 The cruel raptures of the savage kind ;
 How by this flame their native wrath sublim'd,
 They roam, amid the fury of their heart,
 The far-resounding waste in fiercer bands,
 And growl their horrid loves. But this the theme 830
 I sing, enraptur'd, to the British fair,
 Forbids, and leads me to the mountain brow,
 Where sits the shepherd on the grassy turf,
 Inhaling, healthful, the descending sun.
 Around him feeds his many-bleating flock,
 Of various cadence ; and his sportive lambs,
 This way and that convolv'd, in friskful glee
 Their frolics play. And now the sprightly race
 Invites them forth ; when swift, the signal given,
 They start away, and sweep the massy mound 840
 That runs around the hill ; the rampart once
 Of iron war, in ancient barbarous times,
 When disunited Britain ever bled,

Lost in eternal broil ; ere yet she grew
 To this deep-laid indissoluble state,
 Where wealth and commerce lift the golden head ;
 And o'er our labours liberty and law
 Impartial watch ; the wonder of the world !

What is this mighty breath, ye curious, say,
 That, in a powerful language, felt not heard, 850
 Instructs the fowls of heaven, and through their breast
 These arts of love diffuses ? What, but God ?
 Inspiring God ! who boundless Spirit all,
 And unremitting Energy, pervades,
 Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the whole.
 He ceaseless works alone ; and yet alone
 Seems not to work ; with such perfection framed
 Is this complex stupendous scheme of things.
 But, though conceal'd, to every purer eye
 The informing Author in his works appears : 860
 Chief, lovely Spring, in thee, and thy soft scenes,
 The smiling God is seen ; while water, earth,
 And air attest this bounty, which exalts
 The brute creation to this finer thought,
 And annual melts their undesigning hearts
 Profusely thus in tenderness and joy.

Still let my song a nobler note assume,
 And sing the infusive force of Spring on man ;
 When heaven and earth, as if contending, vie
 To raise his being, and serene his soul. 870
 Can he forbear to join the general smile
 Of Nature ? Can fierce passions vex his breast,

SPRING.

33

While every gale is peace, and every grove
 Is melody? Hence! from the bounteous walks
 Of flowing Spring, ye sordid sons of earth,
 Hard, and unfeeling of another's woe,
 Or only lavish to yourselves; away!
 But come, ye generous minds, in whose wide thought,
 Of all his works, Creative bounty burns
 With warmest beam; and on your open front 880
 And liberal eye, sits, from his dark retreat
 Inviting modest want. Nor, till invok'd,
 Can restless goodness wait; your active search
 Leaves no cold wintry corner unexplor'd;
 Like silent-working heaven, surprising oft
 The lonely heart with unexpected good.
 For you the roving spirit of the wind
 Blows Spring abroad; for you the teeming clouds
 Descend in gladsome plenty o'er the world;
 And the sun sheds his kindest rays for you, 890
 Ye flower of human race! In these green days,
 Reviving sickness lifts her languid head;
 Life flows afresh; and young-eyed health exalts
 The whole creation round. Contentment walks
 The sunny glade, and feels an inward bliss
 Spring o'er his mind, beyond the power of kings
 To purchase. Pure serenity apace
 Induces thought, and contemplation still.
 By swift degrees the love of Nature works,
 And warms the bosom; till at last sublim'd 900
 To rapture, and enthusiastic heat,
 We feel the present Deity, and taste

The joy of God to see a happy world !

These are the sacred feelings of thy heart,
 Thy heart inform'd by reason's purer ray,
 O Lyttelton,* the friend ! thy passions thus
 And meditations vary, as at large,
 Courting the muse, through Hagley Park you stray ;
 Thy British Tempè ! There along the dale,
 With woods o'erhung, and shagg'd with mossy rocks, 910
 Whence on each hand the gushing waters play,
 And down the rough cascade white-dashing fall,
 Or gleam in lengthen'd vista through the trees,
 You silent steal ; or sit beneath the shade
 Of solemn oaks, that tuft the swelling mounts
 Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless hand,
 And pensive listen to the various voice
 Of rural peace : the herds, the flocks, the birds,
 The hollow-whispering breeze, the plaint of rills,
 That, purling down amid the twisted roots 920
 Which creep around, their dewy murmurs shake
 On the sooth'd ear. From these abstracted oft,
 You wander through the philosophic world ;
 Where in bright train continual wonders rise,
 Or to the curious or the pious eye.
 And oft, conducted by historic truth,
 You tread the long extent of backward time ;
 Planning, with warm benevolence of mind,
 And honest zeal unwarp'd by party-rage,
 Britannia's weal ; how from the venal gulf 930
 To raise her virtue, and her arts revive.

* George, afterwards Lord, Lyttelton.

Or, turning thence thy view, these graver thoughts
 The muses charm, while, with sure taste refin'd,
 You draw the inspiring breath of ancient song ;
 Till nobly rises, emulous, thy own.
 Perhaps thy lov'd Lucinda* shares thy walk,
 With soul to thine attun'd. Then Nature all
 Wears to the lover's eye a look of love ;
 And all the tumult of a guilty world,
 Toss'd by ungenerous passions, sinks away. 940
 The tender heart is animated peace ;
 And as it pours its copious treasures forth,
 In varied converse, softening every theme,
 You frequent pausing turn, and from her eyes,
 Where meeken'd sense, and amiable grace,
 And lively sweetness dwell, enraptur'd drink
 That nameless spirit of ethereal joy,
 Inimitable happiness ! which love
 Alone bestows, and on a favour'd few.
 Meantime you gain the height, from whose fair brow 950
 The bursting prospect spreads immense around ;
 And snatch'd o'er hill and dale, and wood and lawn,
 And verdant field, and darkening heath between,
 And villages embosom'd soft in trees,
 And spiry towns by surging columns mark'd
 Of household smoke, your eye excursive roams,
 Wide-stretching from the Hall in whose kind haunt
 The hospitable genius lingers still,
 To where the broken landscape, by degrees,
 Ascending, roughens into rigid hills— 960

* Lucy Fortescue, wife of Lyttelton.

O'er which the Cambrian mountains, like far clouds
That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise.

Flush'd by the spirit of the genial year,
Now from the virgin's cheek a fresher bloom
Shoots less and less the live carnation round ;
Her lips blush deeper sweets ; she breathes of youth ;
The shining moisture swells into her eyes
In brighter flow ; her wishing bosom heaves
With palpitations wild ; kind tumults seize
Her veins, and all her yielding soul is love. 970
From the keen gaze her lover turns away,
Full of the dear ecstatic power, and sick
With sighing languishment. Ah then, ye fair !
Be gently cautious of your sliding hearts ;
Dare not the infectious sigh ; the pleading look,
Downcast, and low, in meek submission drest,
But full of guile. Let not the fervent tongue,
Prompt to deceive, with adulation smooth,
Gain on your purpos'd will. Nor in the bower,
Where woodbines flaunt, and roses shed a couch, 980
While evening draws her crimson curtains round,
Trust your soft moments with betraying man.

And let the aspiring youth beware of love,
Of the smooth glance beware ; for 'tis too late,
When on his heart the torrent softness pours.
Then wisdom prostrate lies, and fading fame
Dissolves in air away ; while the fond soul,
Wrapt in gay visions of unreal bliss,
Still paints the illusive form, the kindling grace,
The enticing smile, the modest seeming eye, 990

Beneath whose beauteous beams, belying Heaven,
Lurk searchless cunning, cruelty, and death :
And still false-warbling in his cheated ear,
Her siren voice, enchanting, draws him on
To guileful shores, and meads of fatal joy.

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

But absent, what fantastic woes, arous'd,
Rage in each thought, by restless musing fed,
Chill the warm cheek, and blast the bloom of life !
Neglected fortune flies ; and sliding swift,
Prone into ruin, fall his scorn'd affairs.

'Tis nought but gloom around : the darken'd sun
Loses his light. The rosy-bosom'd Spring 1010
To weeping fancy pines ; and yon bright arch
Contracted bends into a dusky vault.

All Nature fades extinct ; and she alone
Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every thought,
Fills every sense, and pants in every vein.

Books are but formal dulness, tedious friends ;
And sad amid the social band he sits,
Lonely and unattentive. From the tongue
The unfinish'd period falls : while, borne away
On swelling thought, his wasted spirit flies 1020

To the vain bosom of his distant fair ;
 And leaves the semblance of a lover, fix'd
 In melancholy site, with head declined,
 And love-dejected eyes. Sudden he starts,
 Shook from his tender trance, and restless runs
 To glimmering shades, and sympathetic glooms,
 Where the dun umbrage o'er the falling stream
 Romantic hangs ; there through the pensive dusk
 Strays, in heart-thrilling meditation lost,
 Indulging all to love ; or on the bank 1030
 Thrown, amid drooping lilies, swells the breeze
 With sighs unceasing, and the brook with tears.
 Thus in soft anguish he consumes the day,
 Nor quits his deep retirement, till the moon
 Peeps through the chambers of the fleecy east,
 Enlighten'd by degrees, and in her train
 Leads on the gentle hours ; then forth he walks
 Beneath the trembling languish of her beam,
 With soften'd soul, and woos the bird of eve
 To mingle woes with his ; or, while the world 1040
 And all the sons of care lie hush'd in sleep,
 Associates with the midnight shadows drear ;
 And, sighing to the lonely taper, pours
 His idly-tortured heart into the page,
 Meant for the moving messenger of love ;
 Where rapture burns on rapture, every line
 With rising frenzy fired. But if on bed
 Delirious flung, sleep from his pillow flies,
 All night he tosses, nor the balmy power
 In any posture finds ; till the grey morn 1050

Lifts her pale lustre on the paler wretch,
 Exanimate by love ; and then perhaps
 Exhausted Nature sinks awhile to rest,
 Still interrupted by distracted dreams,
 That o'er the sick imagination rise,
 And in black colours paint the mimic scene.
 Oft with the enchantress of his soul he talks ;
 Sometimes in crowds distress'd ; or if retir'd
 To secret winding flower-enwoven bowers,
 Far from the dull impertinence of man, 1060
 Just as he credulous his endless cares
 Begins to lose in blind oblivious love,
 Snatch'd from her yielded hand, he knows not how,
 Through forests huge, and long untravell'd heaths
 With desolation brown, he wanders waste,
 In night and tempest wrapt ; or shrinks aghast,
 Back from the bending precipice ; or wades
 The turbid stream below, and strives to reach
 The farther shore, where succourless and sad,
 She with extended arms his aid implores ; 1070
 But strives in vain : borne by the outrageous flood
 To distance down, he rides the ridgy wave,
 Or whelm'd beneath the boiling eddy sinks.

These are the charming agonies of love,
 Whose misery delights. But through the heart
 Should jealousy its venom once diffuse,
 'Tis then delightful misery no more,
 But agony unmix'd, incessant gall,
 Corroding every thought, and blasting all
 Love's paradise. Ye fairy prospects, then, 1080

Ye beds of roses, and ye bowers of joy,
 Farewell ! Ye gleamings of departed peace,
 Shine out your last ! The yellow-tinging plague
 Internal vision taints, and in a night
 Of livid gloom imagination wraps.
 Ah ! then instead of love-enliven'd cheeks,
 Of sunny features, and of ardent eyes
 With flowing rapture bright, dark looks succeed,
 Suffus'd, and glaring with untender fire ;
 A clouded aspect, and a burning cheek, 1090
 Where the whole poison'd soul malignant sits,
 And frightens love away. Ten thousand fears
 Invented wild, ten thousand frantic views
 Of horrid rivals, hanging on the charms
 For which he melts in fondness, eat him up
 With fervent anguish and consuming rage.
 In vain reproaches lend their idle aid,
 Deceitful pride ; and resolution frail,
 Giving false peace a moment. Fancy pours
 Afresh her beauties on his busy thought, 1100
 Her first endearments twining round the soul,
 With all the witchcraft of ensnaring love.
 Straight the fierce storm involves his mind anew,
 Flames through the nerves, and boils along the veins ;
 While anxious doubt distracts the tortur'd heart,
 For even the sad assurance of his fears
 Were ease to what he feels. Thus the warm youth,
 Whom love deludes into his thorny wilds,
 Through flowery-tempting paths, or leads a life
 Of fever'd rapture, or of cruel care ; 1110

His brightest aims extinguish'd all, and all
His lively moments running down to waste.

But happy they, the happiest of their kind,
Whom gentler stars unite, and in one fate
Their hearts, their fortunes, and their beings blend !
'Tis not the coarser tie of human laws,
Unnatural oft, and foreign to the mind,
That binds their peace, but harmony itself,
Attuning all their passions into love ;
Where friendship full exerts her softest power, 1120
Perfect esteem enliven'd by desire
Ineffable, and sympathy of soul ;
Thought meeting thought, and will preventing will,
With boundless confidence, for nought but love
Can answer love, and render bliss secure.
Let him, ungenerous, who, alone intent
To bless himself, from sordid parents buys
The loathing virgin, in eternal care,
Well-merited, consume his nights and days ;
Let barbarous nations, whose inhuman love 1130
Is wild desire, fierce as the suns they feel ;
Let eastern tyrants, from the light of heaven
Seclude their bosom slaves, meanly possessed
Of a mere lifeless, violated form :
While those whom love cements in holy faith,
And equal transport, free as Nature live,
Disdaining fear. What is the world to them,
Its pomp, its pleasure, and its nonsense all,
Who in each other clasp whatever fair
High fancy forms, and lavish hearts can wish ? 1140

Something than beauty dearer, should they look,
 Or on the mind, or mind illumin'd face ;
 Truth, goodness, honour, harmony, and love,
 The richest bounty of indulgent Heaven !
 Meantime a smiling offspring rises round,
 And mingles both their graces. By degrees,
 The human blossom blows ; and every day,
 Soft as it rolls along, shows some new charm,
 The father's lustre, and the mother's bloom.
 Then infant reason grows apace, and calls 1150
 For the kind hand of an assiduous care.
 Delightful task ! to rear the tender thought,
 To teach the young idea how to shoot,
 To pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind,
 To breathe the enlivening spirit, and to fix
 The generous purpose in the glowing breast.
 Oh speak the joy ! ye whom the sudden tear
 Surprises often, while you look around,
 And nothing strikes your eye but sights of bliss,
 All various Nature pressing on the heart ; 1160
 An elegant sufficiency, content,
 Retirement, rural quiet, friendship, books,
 Ease and alternate labour, useful life,
 Progressive virtue, and approving Heaven.
 These are the matchless joys of virtuous love ;
 And thus their moments fly. The Seasons thus,
 As ceaseless round a jarring world they roll,
 Still find them happy ; and consenting Spring
 Sheds her own rosy garland on their heads :
 Till evening comes at last, serene and mild ; 1170

When after the long vernal day of life,
Enamour'd more, as more remembrance swells
With many a proof of recollected love,
Together down they sink in social sleep ;
Together freed, their gentle spirits fly
To scenes where love and bliss immortal reign.

SUMMER.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

FROM brightening fields of ether fair disclos'd,
Child of the sun, refulgent Summer comes,
In pride of youth, and felt through Nature's depth!
He comes attended by the sultry hours,
And ever-fanning breezes, on his way;

SUMMER.

45

While, from his ardent look, the turning Spring
Averts her blushful face ; and earth, and skies,
All-smiling, to his hot dominion leaves.

Hence, let me haste into the mid-wood shade,
Where scarce a sunbeam wanders through the gloom ; 10
And on the dark green grass, beside the brink
Of haunted stream, that by the roots of oak
Rolls o'er the rocky channel, lie at large,
And sing the glories of the circling year.

Come, Inspiration ! from thy hermit seat,
By mortal seldom found : may Fancy dare,
From thy fix'd serious eye, and raptur'd glance
Shot on surrounding Heaven, to steal one look
Creative of the poet, every power
Exalting to an ecstasy of soul. 20

And thou, my youthful muse's early friend,
In whom the human graces all unite :
Pure light of mind, and tenderness of heart ;
Genius, and wisdom ; the gay social sense,
By decency chastis'd ; goodness and wit,
In seldom-meeting harmony combin'd ;
Unblemish'd honour, and an active zeal
For Britain's glory, liberty, and man :
O Dodington !* attend my rural song,
Stoop to my theme, inspirit every line, 30
And teach me to deserve thy just applause.

With what an awful world-revolving power

* The Right Hon. George Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe.

Were first the unwieldy planets launch'd along
 The illimitable void ! Thus to remain,
 Amid the flux of many thousand years,
 That oft has swept the toiling race of men,
 And all their labour'd monuments away,
 Firm, unremitting, matchless, in their course ;
 To the kind-temper'd change of night and day,
 And of the seasons ever stealing round, 40
 Minutely faithful : such the all-perfect Hand,
 That pois'd, impels, and rules the steady whole !

When now no more the alternate Twins are fired,
 And Cancer reddens with the solar blaze,
 Short is the doubtful empire of the night ;
 And soon, observant of approaching day,
 The meek-eyed morn appears, mother of dews,
 At first faint gleaming in the dappled east ;
 Till far o'er ether spreads the widening glow ;
 And, from before the lustre of her face, 50
 White break the clouds away. With quicken'd step,
 Brown night retires. Young day pours in apace,
 And opens all the lawny prospect wide.
 The dripping rock, the mountain's misty top
 Swell on the sight, and brighten with the dawn.
 Blue through the dusk the smoking currents shine ;
 And from the bladed field the fearful hare
 Limpers awkward ; while along the forest-glade
 The wild deer trips, and often turning gaze
 At early passenger. Music awakes 60
 The native voice of undissembled joy ;

SUMMER.

47

And thick around the woodland hymns arise.
Roused by the cock, the soon-clad shepherd leaves
His mossy cottage, where with peace he dwells ;
And from the crowded fold in order drives
His flock, to taste the verdure of the morn.

Falsely luxurious, will not man awake,
And, springing from the bed of sloth, enjoy
The cool, the fragrant, and the silent hour,
To meditation due and sacred song ?

70

For is there aught in sleep can charm the wise ?
To lie in dead oblivion, losing half
The fleeting moments of too short a life,
Total extinction of the enlightened soul !
Or else to feverish vanity alive,
Wilder'd, and tossing through distemper'd dreams !
Who would in such a gloomy state remain
Longer than Nature craves, when every muse
And every blooming pleasure wait without,
To bless the wildly-devious morning walk ?

80

But yonder comes the powerful king of day,
Rejoicing in the east. The lessening cloud,
The kindling azure, and the mountain's brow
Illum'd with fluid gold, his near approach
Betoken glad. Lo ! now, apparent all,
Aslant the dew-bright earth, and coloured air,
He looks in boundless majesty abroad ;
And sheds the shining day, that burnish'd plays
On rocks, and hills, and towers, and wandering streams,
High-gleaming from afar. Prime cheerer Light !

90

Of all material beings first, and best ;

Efflux divine ; Nature's resplendent robe,
 Without whose vesting beauty all were wrapt
 In unessential gloom ; and thou, O sun !
 Soul of surrounding worlds ! in whom best seen
 Shines out thy Maker, may I sing of thee ?

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

100

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

110

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

120

SUMMER.

49

Harmonious knit, the rosy-finger'd hours,
The zephyrs floating loose, the timely rains,
Of bloom ethereal the light-footed dews,
And soften'd into joy the surly storms.
These, in successive turn, with lavish hand
Shower every beauty, every fragrance shower,
Herbs, flowers, and fruits ; till, kindling at thy touch,
From land to land is flush'd the vernal year.

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

The unfruitful rock itself, impregn'd by thee, 140
In dark retirement forms the lucid stone.
The lively diamond drinks thy purest rays,
Collected light, compact ; that, polish'd bright,
And all its native lustre let abroad,
Dares, as it sparkles on the fair one's breast,
With vain ambition emulate her eyes.
At thee the ruby lights its deepening glow,
And with a waving radiance inward flames.
From thee the sapphire, solid ether, takes
Its hue cerulean ; and, of evening tinct, 150
The purple-streaming amethyst is thine.

With thy own smile the yellow topaz burns;
 Nor deeper verdure dyes the robe of Spring,
 When first she gives it to the southern gale,
 Than the green emerald shows. But, all combin'd,
 Thick through the whitening opal play thy beams;
 Or, flying several from its surface, form
 A trembling variance of revolving hues,
 As the site varies in the gazer's hand.

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

How shall I then attempt to sing of Him
 Who, Light Himself, in uncreated light
 Invested deep, dwells awfully retir'd
 From mortal eye, or angel's purer ken?
 Whose single smile has, from the first of time,
 Fill'd overflowing all those lamps of heaven, 180
 That beam for ever through the boundless sky:

SUMMER.

51

But, should He hide His face, the astonish'd sun,
And all the extinguish'd stars, would loosening reel
Wide from their spheres, and chaos come again.

And yet was every faltering tongue of man,
Almighty Father ! silent in thy praise,
Thy works themselves would raise a general voice ;
Even in the depth of solitary woods
By human foot untrod, proclaim thy power,
And to the quire celestial Thee resound,
The eternal cause, support, and end of all !

190

To me be Nature's volume broad-display'd ;
And to peruse its all-instructing page,
Or, haply catching inspiration thence,
Some easy passage raptur'd to translate,
My sole delight ; as through the falling glooms
Pensive I stray, or with the rising dawn
On fancy's eagle-wing excursive soar.

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

200

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

210

On man, and beast, and herb, and tepid stream.

Who can unpitying see the flowery race,
 Shed by the morn, their new-flush'd bloom resign,
 Before the parching beam? So fade the fair,
 When fevers revel through their azure veins.
 But one, the lofty follower of the sun,
 Sad when he sets, shuts up her yellow leaves,
 Drooping all night; and, when he warm returns,
 Points her enamour'd bosom to his ray.

Home from his morning task the swain retreats, 220
 His flock before him stepping to the fold;
 While the full-udder'd mother lows around
 The cheerful cottage, then expecting food,
 The food of innocence and health. The daw,
 The rook, and magpie, to the grey-grown oaks
 That the calm village in their verdant arms
 Sheltering embrace, direct their lazy flight;
 Where on the mingling boughs they sit embower'd
 All the hot noon, till cooler hours arise.
 Faint, underneath, the household fowls convene; 230
 And, in a corner of the buzzing shade,
 The house-dog, with the vacant greyhound, lies
 Out-stretch'd and sleepy. In his slumbers one
 Attacks the nightly thief, and one exults
 O'er hill and dale; till, waken'd by the wasp,
 They starting snap. Nor shall the muse disdain
 To let the little noisy summer-race
 Live in her lay, and flutter through her song;
 Not mean though simple, to the sun allied,
 From him they draw their animating fire. 240

Wak'd by his warmer ray, the reptile young
 Come wing'd abroad ; by the light air upborne,
 Lighter, and full of soul. From every chink,
 And secret corner, where they slept away
 The wintry storms ; or rising from their tombs,
 To higher life ; by myriads, forth at once,
 Swarming they pour ; of all the varied hues
 Their beauty-beaming parent can disclose.
 Ten thousand forms, ten thousand different tribes,
 People the blaze. To sunny waters some 250
 By fatal instinct fly ; where on the pool
 They sportive wheel ; or sailing down the stream,
 Are snatch'd immediate by the quick-eyed trout
 Or darting salmon. Through the green-wood glade
 Some love to stray ; there lodged, amused, and fed,
 In the fresh leaf. Luxurious, others make
 The meads their choice, and visit every flower,
 And every latent herb ; for the sweet task,
 To propagate their kinds, and where to wrap,
 In what soft beds, their young yet undisclos'd, 260
 Employs their tender care. Some to the house,
 The fold, and dairy, hungry bend their flight ;
 Sip round the pail, or taste the curdling cheese :
 Oft, inadvertent, from the milky stream
 They meet their fate ; or, weltering in the bowl,
 With powerless wings around them wrapt, expire.
 But chief to heedless flies the window proves
 A constant death ; where, gloomily retir'd,
 The villain spider lives, cunning and fierce,
 Mixture abhorr'd ! Amid a mangled heap 270

Of carcasses, in eager watch he sits,
 O'erlooking all his waving snares around.
 Near the dire cell the dreadless wanderer oft
 Passes : as oft the ruffian shows his front.
 The prey at last ensnar'd, he dreadful darts
 With rapid glide along the leaning line ;
 And, fixing in the wretch his cruel fangs,
 Strikes backward, grimly pleased: the fluttering wing
 And shriller sound declare extreme distress,
 And ask the helping hospitable hand. 280

Resounds the living surface of the ground.
 Nor undelightful is the ceaseless hum,
 To him who muses through the woods at noon ;
 Or drowsy shepherd as he lies reclin'd
 With half-shut eyes, beneath the floating shade
 Of willows grey, close-crowding o'er the brook.

Gradual from these what numerous kinds descend,
 Evading even the microscopic eye !
 Full Nature swarms with life ; one wondrous mass
 Of animals, or atoms organis'd 290
 Waiting the vital breath, when Parent-Heaven
 Shall bid his spirit blow. The hoary fen
 In putrid steams emits the living cloud
 Of pestilence. Through subterranean cells,
 Where searching sunbeams scarce can find a way,
 Earth animated heaves. The flow'ry leaf
 Wants not its soft inhabitants. Secure
 Within its winding citadel the stone
 Holds multitudes. But chief the forest boughs,
 That dance unnumber'd to the playful breeze, 300

The downward orchard, and the melting pulp
 Of mellow fruit, the nameless nations feed
 Of evanescent insects. Where the pool
 Stands mantled o'er with green, invisible
 Amid the floating verdure millions stray.
 Each liquid too, whether it pierces, soothes,
 Inflames, refreshes, or exalts the taste,
 With various forms abounds. Nor is the stream
 Of purest crystal, nor the lucid air,
 Though one transparent vacancy it seems,
 Void of their unseen people. These, conceal'd
 By the kind art of forming Heaven, escape
 The grosser eye of man; for, if the worlds
 In worlds inclos'd should on his senses burst,
 From cates ambrosial, and the nectar'd bowl,
 He would abhorrent turn; and in dead night,
 When silence sleeps o'er all, be stunn'd with noise.

310

Let no presuming impious railer tax
 Creative Wisdom, as if aught was form'd
 In vain, or not for admirable ends.
 Shall little haughty Ignorance pronounce
 His works unwise, of which the smallest part
 Exceeds the narrow vision of her mind?
 As if upon a full proportion'd dome,
 On swelling columns heav'd, the pride of art,
 A critic fly, whose feeble ray scarce spreads
 An inch around, with blind presumption bold,
 Should dare to tax the structure of the whole!
 And lives the man, whose universal eye
 Has swept at once the unbounded scheme of things; 330

320

Mark'd their dependence so, and firm accord,
 As with unfaltering accent to conclude
 That this availeth nought? Has any seen
 The mighty chain of beings, lessening down
 From Infinite Perfection to the brink
 Of dreary nothing, desolate abyss!
 From which astonish'd thought, recoiling, turns?
 Till then alone let zealous praise ascend,
 And hymns of holy wonder, to that Power,
 Whose wisdom shines as lovely on our minds, 340
 As on our smiling eyes his servant sun.

Thick in yon stream of light, a thousand ways,
 Upward and downward, thwarting and convolv'd,
 The quivering nations sport; till, tempest-wing'd,
 Fierce Winter sweeps them from the face of day.
 Even so luxurious men unheeding pass
 An idle summer life in fortune's shine,
 A season's glitter! Thus they flutter on
 From toy to toy, from vanity to vice;
 Till, blown away by death, oblivion comes 350
 Behind, and strikes them from the book of life.

Now swarms the village o'er the jovial mead,—
 The rustic youth, brown with meridian toil,
 Healthful and strong; full as the summer rose
 Blown by prevailing suns, the ruddy maid,
 Half naked, swelling on the sight, and all
 Her kindled graces burning o'er her cheek.
 Even stooping age is here; and infant hands
 Trail the long rake, or, with the fragrant load

SUMMER.

57

O'ercharg'd, amid the kind oppression roll. 360
 Wide flies the tedded grain ; all in a row
 Advancing broad, or wheeling round the field,
 They spread their breathing harvest to the sun,
 That throws refreshful round a rural smell ;
 Or, as they rake the green-appearing ground,
 And drive the dusky wave along the mead,
 The russet hay-cock rises thick behind,
 In order gay ; while heard from dale to dale,
 Waking the breeze, resounds the blended voice
 Of happy labour, love, and social glee. 370
 Or rushing thence, in one diffusive band,
 They drive the troubled flocks, by many a dog
 Compell'd, to where the mazy-running brook
 Forms a deep pool, this bank abrupt and high,
 And that fair spreading in a pebbled shore.
 Urg'd to the giddy brink, much is the toil,
 The clamour much, of men, and boys, and dogs,
 Ere the soft fearful people to the flood
 Commit their woolly sides ; and oft the swain,
 On some impatient seizing, hurls them in. 380
 Embolden'd then, nor hesitating more,
 Fast, fast they plunge amid the flashing wave,
 And panting labour to the farther shore.
 Repeated this, till deep the well-wash'd fleece
 Has drunk the flood, and from his lively haunt
 The trout is banish'd by the sordid stream,
 Heavy and dripping to the breezy brow
 Slow move the harmless race ; where, as they spread
 Their swelling treasures to the sunny ray,

Inly disturb'd, and wondering what this wild 390
 Outrageous tumult means, their loud complaints
 The country fill; and, toss'd from rock to rock,
 Incessant bleatings run around the hills.
 At last of snowy white, the gather'd flocks
 Are in the wattled pen innumerable press'd,
 Head above head; and, ranged in lusty rows,
 The shepherds sit, and whet the sounding shears.
 The housewife waits to roll her fleecy stores,
 With all her gay-drest maids attending round.
 One, chief, in gracious dignity enthron'd, 400
 Shines o'er the rest, the pastoral queen, and rays
 Her smiles sweet-beaming on her shepherd king;
 While the glad circle round them yield their souls
 To festive mirth, and wit that knows no gall.
 Meantime, their joyous task goes on apace.
 Some mingling stir the melted tar, and some
 Deep on the new-shorn vagrant's heaving side,
 To stamp his master's cipher ready stand;
 Others the unwilling wether drag along;
 And, glorying in his might, the sturdy boy 410
 Holds by the twisted horns the indignant ram.
 Behold where bound, and of its robe bereft,
 By needy man, that all-depending lord,
 How meek, how patient, the mild creature lies!
 What softness in its melancholy face,
 What dumb complaining innocence appears!
 Fear not, ye gentle tribes, 'tis not the knife
 Of horrid slaughter that is o'er you waved;
 No, 'tis the tender swain's well guided shears,

SUMMER.

59

Who having now, to pay his annual care,
Borrow'd your fleece, to you a cumbrous load,
Will send you bounding to your hills again. 420

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

'Tis raging noon ; and, vertical, the sun
Darts on the head direct his forceful rays.
O'er heav'n and earth, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling deluge reigns ; and all
From pole to pole is undistinguish'd blaze.
In vain the sight dejected to the ground,
Stoops for relief ; thence hot-ascending steams
And keen reflexion pain. Deep to the root
Of vegetation parch'd, the cleaving fields 440
And slippery lawn an arid hue disclose,
Blast fancy's bloom, and wither even the soul.
Echo no more returns the cheerful sound
Of sharpening scythe ; the mower sinking heaps
O'er him the humid hay, with flowers perfum'd ;
And scarce a chirping grasshopper is heard
Through the dumb mead. Distressful Nature pants.
The very streams look languid from afar ;

Or, through the unshelter'd glade, impatient, seem
To hurl into the covert of the grove.

450

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

460

Welcome, ye shades ! ye bowery thickets, hail !

Ye lofty pines ! ye venerable oaks !

470

Ye ashes wild, resounding o'er the steep !

Delicious is your shelter to the soul,

As to the hunted hart the sallying spring,

Or stream full-flowing, that his swelling sides

Laves, as he floats along the herbag'd brink.

Cool through the nerves your pleasing comfort glides ;

The heart beats glad ; the fresh expanded eye

And ear resume their watch ; the sinews knit ;

SUMMER.

61

And life shoots swift through all the lighten'd limbs.

Around the adjoining brook, that purls along 480

The vocal grove, now fretting o'er a rock,

Now scarcely moving through a reedy pool,

Now starting to a sudden stream, and now

Gently diffus'd into a limpid plain,

A various group the herds and flocks compose.

Rural confusion ! On the grassy bank

Some ruminating lie ; while others stand

Half in the flood, and often bending sip

The circling surface. In the middle droops

The strong laborious ox, of honest front, 490

Which incompos'd he shakes ; and from his sides

The troublous insects lashes with his tail,

Returning still. Amid his subjects safe,

Slumbers the monarch swain ; his careless arm

Thrown round his head, on downy moss sustain'd ;

Here laid his scrip, with wholesome viands fill'd,

There, listening every noise, his watchful dog.

Light fly his slumbers, if perchance a flight

Of angry gad-flies fasten on the herd,

Then startling scatters from the shallow brook, 500

In search of lavish stream. Tossing the foam,

They scorn the keeper's voice, and scour the plain,

Through all the bright severity of noon ;

While from their labouring breasts, a hollow moan

Proceeding, runs low-bellowing round the hills.

Oft in this season too, the horse provok'd,

While his big sinews full of spirits swell,

Trembling with vigour, in the heat of blood,

Springs the high fence; and, o'er the field effus'd,
 Darts on the gloomy flood, with stedfast eye, 510
 And heart estrang'd to fear: his nervous chest,
 Luxuriant, and erect, the seat of strength,
 Bears down the opposing stream; quenchless his thirst;
 He takes the river at redoubled draughts,
 And with wide nostrils snorting skims the wave.

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

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

Shook sudden from the bosom of the sky,

SUMMER.

63

A thousand shapes or glide athwart the dusk,
 Or stalk majestic on. Deep-roused I feel 540
 A sacred terror, a severe delight,
 Creep through my mortal frame; and thus, methinks,
 A voice, than human more, the abstracted ear
 Of fancy strikes. "Be not of us afraid,
 Poor kindred man! thy fellow-creatures, we
 From the same Parent-Power our beings drew,
 The same our Lord, and laws, and great pursuit.
 Once some of us, like thee, through stormy life
 Toil'd tempest-beaten, ere we could attain
 This holy calm, this harmony of mind, 550
 Where purity and peace immingle charms.
 Then fear not us; but with responsive song,
 Amid these dim recesses, undisturb'd
 By noisy folly and discordant vice,
 Of Nature sing with us, and Nature's God.
 Here frequent at the visionary hour,
 When musing midnight reigns or silent noon,
 Angelic harps are in full concert heard,
 And voices chanting from the wood-crown'd hill,
 The deepening dale, or inmost sylvan glade,— 560
 A privilege bestow'd, by us alone
 On contemplation, or the hallow'd ear
 Of poet swelling to seraphic strain."

And art thou, Stanley,* of that sacred band?
 Alas! for us too soon! Though raised above
 The reach of human pain, above the flight

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

Of human joy; yet with a mingled ray
 Of sadly pleased remembrance, must thou feel
 A mother's love, a mother's tender woe,
 Who seeks thee still, in many a former scene; 570
 Seeks thy fair form, thy lovely beaming eyes,
 Thy pleasing converse, by gay lively sense
 Inspir'd—where moral wisdom mildly shone,
 Without the toil of art; and virtue glow'd
 In all her smiles, without forbidding pride.
 But, O thou best of parents! wipe thy tears;
 Or rather to parental Nature pay
 The tears of grateful joy, who for a while
 Lent thee this younger self, this opening bloom
 Of thy enlighten'd mind and gentle worth. 580
 Believe the muse: the wintry blast of death
 Kills not the buds of virtue; no, they spread
 Beneath the heavenly beam of brighter suns
 Through endless ages into higher powers.
 Thus up the mount, in airy vision rapt,
 I stray, regardless whither; till the sound
 Of a near fall of water every sense
 Wakes from the charm of thought: swift-shrinking back,
 I check my steps, and view the broken scene.
 Smooth to the shelving brink a copious flood 590
 Rolls fair and placid; where collected all,
 In one impetuous current down the steep
 It thundering shoots, and shakes the country round.
 At first, an azure sheet, it rushes broad;
 Then whitening by degrees, as prone it falls,
 And from the loud-resounding rocks below

SUMMER.

65

Dash'd in a cloud of foam, it sends aloft
A hoary mist, and forms a ceaseless shower.
Nor can the tortur'd wave here find repose;
But, raging still amid the shaggy rocks,
Now flashes o'er the scattered fragments, now
Aslant the hollow channel rapid darts;
And, falling fast from gradual slope to slope,
With wild infracted course and lessen'd roar,
It gains a safer bed, and steals at last,
Along the mazes of the quiet vale.

600

Invited from the cliff, to whose dark brow
He clings, the steep-ascending eagle soars,
With upward pinions through the flood of day;
And, giving full his bosom to the blaze,
Gains on the sun; while all the tuneful race,
Smit by afflictive noon, disorder'd droop
Deep in the thicket; or, from bower to bower
Responsive, force an interrupted strain.

610

The stock-dove only through the forest coos,
Mournfully hoarse; oft ceasing from his plaint,
Short interval of weary woe! again
The sad idea of his murder'd mate,
Struck from his side by savage fowler's guile,
Across his fancy comes; and then resounds
A louder song of sorrow through the grove.

620

Beside the dewy border let me sit,
All in the freshness of the humid air,
There in that hollow'd rock, grotesque and wild,
An ample chair moss-lined, and overhead
By flowering umbrage shaded; where the bee

5

Strays diligent, and with the extracted balm
Of fragrant woodbine loads his little thigh.

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

See, how at once the bright effulgent sun,
Rising direct, swift chases from the sky
The short-lived twilight; and with ardent blaze
Looks gaily fierce o'er all the dazzling air.
He mounts his throne; but kind before him sends,
Issuing from out the portals of the morn, 640
The general breeze,* to mitigate his fire,
And breathe refreshment on a fainting world.
Great are the scenes, with dreadful beauty crown'd
And barbarous wealth, that see, each circling year,
Returning suns, and double seasons† pass,
Rocks rich in gems, and mountains big with mines,
That on the high equator ridgy rise,
Whence many a bursting stream auriferous plays;
Majestic woods, of every vigorous green,

* Which blows constantly between the tropics from the east, or the collateral points, the north-east and south-east; caused by the pressure of the rarefied air on that before it, according to the diurnal motion of the sun from east to west.—T.

† In all places between the tropics, the sun, as he passes and repasses in his annual motion, is twice a year perpendicular, which produces the effect.—T.

SUMMER.

67

Stage above stage, high waving o'er the hills ; 650
Or to the far horizon wide diffus'd,
A boundless deep immensity of shade.

Here lofty trees, to ancient song unknown,
The noble sons of potent heat and floods
Prone-rushing from the clouds, rear high to heaven
Their thorny stems, and broad around them throw
Meridian gloom. Here in eternal prime
Unnumber'd fruits, of keen delicious taste
And vital spirit, drink amid the cliffs
And burning sands that bank the shrubby vales, 660
Redoubled day; yet in their rugged coats
A friendly juice to cool its rage contain.

Bear me, Pomona, to thy citron groves,
To where the lemon and the piercing lime,
With the deep orange, glowing through the green,
Their lighter glories blend. Lay me reclin'd
Beneath the spreading tamarind, that shakes,
Fann'd by the breeze, its fever-cooling fruit.
Deep in the night the massy locust sheds,
Quench my hot limbs; or lead me through the maze, 670
Embowering endless, of the Indian fig ;
Or thrown at gayer ease, on some fair brow,
Let me behold, by breezy murmurs cool'd,
Broad o'er my head the verdant cedar wave,
And high palmettos lift their graceful shade.
Oh, stretch'd amid these orchards of the sun,
Give me to drain the cocoa's milky bowl,
And from the palm to draw its freshening wine,
More bounteous far than all the frantic juice

Which Bacchus pours. Nor, on its slender twigs 680
 Low-bending, be the full pomegranate scorn'd ;
 Nor, creeping through the woods, the gelid race
 Of berries. Oft in humble station dwells
 Unboastful worth, above fastidious pomp.
 Witness, thou best anana, thou the pride
 Of vegetable life, beyond whate'er
 The poets imaged in the golden age :
 Quick let me strip thee of thy tufty coat,
 Spread thy ambrosial stores, and feast with Jove !

From these the prospect varies. Plains immense 690
 Lie stretch'd below, interminable meads
 And vast savannas, where the wandering eye,
 Unfixt, is in a verdant ocean lost.

Another Flora there, of bolder hues,
 And richer sweets, beyond our garden's pride,
 Plays o'er the fields, and showers with sudden hand
 Exuberant spring; for oft these valleys shift
 Their green-embroider'd robe to fiery brown,
 And swift to green again, as scorching suns
 Or streaming dews and torrent rains, prevail. 700

Along these lonely regions, where, retired
 From little scenes of art, great Nature dwells
 In awful solitude, and nought is seen
 But the wild herds that own no master's stall,
 Prodigious rivers roll their fattening seas;
 On whose luxuriant herbage, half-conceal'd,
 Like a fallen cedar, far diffused his train,
 Cased in green scales, the crocodile extends.
 The flood disparts—behold ! in plated mail,

Behemoth* rears his head. Glanced from his side, 710
The darted steel in idle shivers flies.

He fearless walks the plain, or seeks the hills ;
Where, as he crops his varied fare, the herds,
In widening circle round, forget their food,
And at the harmless stranger wondering gaze.

Peaceful beneath primeval trees that cast
Their ample shade o'er Niger's yellow stream,
And where the Ganges rolls his sacred wave ;
Or 'mid the central depth of blackening woods,
High-raised in solemn theatre around, 720

Leans the huge elephant—wisest of brutes !
O truly wise ! with gentle might endow'd,
Though powerful not destructive ! Here he sees
Revolving ages sweep the changeful earth,
And empires rise and fall, regardless he
Of what the never-resting race of men
Project ; thrice happy, could he 'scape their guile,
Who mine, from cruel avarice, his steps ;
Or with his towery grandeur swell their state,
The pride of kings ! or else his strength pervert, 730
And bid him rage amid the mortal fray,
Astonish'd at the madness of mankind.

Wide o'er the winding umbrage of the floods,
Like vivid blossoms glowing from afar,
Thick-swarm the brighter birds. For Nature's hand,
That with a sportive vanity has deck'd
The plummy nations, there her gayest hues

* The hippopotamus, or river-horse.—T.

Profusely pours.* But, if she bids them shine,
 Array'd in all the beauteous beams of day,
 Yet frugal still, she humbles them in song. 740
 Nor envy we the gaudy robes they lent
 Proud Montezuma's realm, whose legions cast
 A boundless radiance waving on the sun,
 While Philomel is ours; while in our shades,
 Through the soft silence of the listening night,
 The sober-suited songstress trills her lay.

But come, my muse! the desert-barrier burst,
 A wild expanse of lifeless sand and sky:
 And, swifter than the toiling caravan,
 Shoot o'er the vale of Sennar; ardent climb 750
 The Nubian mountains, and the secret bounds
 Of jealous Abyssinia boldly pierce.
 Thou art no ruffian, who beneath the mask
 Of social commerce comest to rob their wealth;
 No holy fury thou, blaspheming Heaven,
 With consecrated steel to stab their peace,
 And through the land, yet red from civil wounds,
 To spread the purple tyranny of Rome.
 Thou, like the harmless bee, mayst freely range,
 From mead to mead bright with exalted flowers, 760
 From jasmine grove to grove, mayst wander gay,
 Through balmy shades and aromatic woods,
 That grace the plains, invest the peopled hills,
 And up the more than Alpine mountains wave.
 There on the breezy summit spreading fair

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

SUMMER.

71

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

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

Around the cold aërial mountain's brow,
 And by conflicting winds together dash'd,
 The thunder holds his black tremendous throne.
 From cloud to cloud the rending lightning's rage :
 Till, in the furious elemental war 800
 Dissolved, the whole precipitated mass
 Unbroken floods and solid torrents pours.

The treasures these, hid from the bounded search
 Of ancient knowledge, whence with annual pomp,
 Rich king of floods, o'erflows the swelling Nile.
 From his two springs, in Gojam's* sunny realm,
 Pure-welling out, he through the lucid lake
 Of fair Dambeat† rolls his infant stream.
 There, by the Naiads nursed, he sports away
 His playful youth amid the fragrant isles 810
 That with unfading verdure smile around.
 Ambitious thence the manly river breaks,
 And gathering many a flood, and copious fed
 With all the mellow'd treasures of the sky,
 Winds in progressive majesty along.
 Through splendid kingdoms now devolves his maze,
 Now wanders wild o'er solitary tracts
 Of life-deserted sand ; till, glad to quit
 The joyless desert, down the Nubian rocks,
 From thundering steep to steep, he pours his urn, 820
 And Egypt joys beneath the spreading wave.‡

* A province in the south-east of Abyssinia.

† A beautiful lake in Gojam.

‡ Cf. with ll. 805-821 M. Arnold's description of the Oxus, in the closing passage of "Sohrab and Rustum."

His brother Niger too, and all the floods
 In which the full-form'd maids of Afric lave
 Their jetty limbs; and all that from the tract
 Of woody mountains stretch'd through gorgeous Ind
 Fall on Cormandel's coast, or Malabar;
 From Menam's * orient stream, that nightly shines
 With insect lamps, to where Aurora sheds
 On Indus' smiling banks the rosy shower—
 All at this bounteous season ope their urns, 830
 And pour untoiling harvest o'er the land.

Nor less thy world, Columbus, drinks refresh'd
 The lavish moisture of the melting year.
 Wide o'er his isles, the branching Oronoque
 Rolls a brown deluge; and the native drives
 To dwell aloft on life-sufficing trees,
 At once his dome, his robe, his food, and arms.
 Swell'd by a thousand streams impetuous hurl'd
 From all the roaring Andes, huge descends
 The mighty Orellana. † Scarce the Muse 840
 Dares stretch her wing o'er this enormous mass
 Of rushing water; scarce she dares attempt
 The sea-like Plata, to whose dread expanse,
 Continuous depth, and wondrous length of course,
 Our floods are rills. With unabated force,
 In silent dignity they sweep along,
 And traverse realms unknown, and blooming wilds,

* The river that runs through Siam; on whose banks a vast multitude of those insects called fire-flies make a beautiful appearance in the night.—T.

† The river of the Amazons.—T.

And fruitful deserts, worlds of solitude,
 Where the sun smiles and seasons teem in vain,
 Unseen and unenjoy'd. Forsaking these, 850
 O'er peopled plains they fair-diffusive flow,
 And many a nation feed, and circle safe,
 In their soft bosom, many a happy isle;
 The seat of blameless Pan, yet undisturb'd
 By Christian crimes and Europe's cruel sons.
 Thus pouring on they proudly seek the deep,
 Whose vanquish'd tide, recoiling from the shock,
 Yields to this liquid weight of half the globe;
 And ocean trembles for his green domain.

But what avails this wondrous waste of wealth, 860
 This gay profusion of luxurious bliss,
 This pomp of Nature? what, their balmy meads,
 Their powerful herbs, and Ceres void of pain?
 By vagrant birds dispersed, and wafting winds,
 What, their unplanted fruits? what, the cool draughts,
 The ambrosial food, rich gums, and spicy health,
 Their forests yield? Their toiling insects what,
 Their silky pride, and vegetable robes?
 Ah! what avail their fatal treasures, hid
 Deep in the bowels of the pitying earth, 870
 Golconda's gems, and sad Potosi's mines,
 Where dwelt the gentlest children of the sun?
 What, all that Afric's golden rivers roll,
 Her odorous woods, and shining ivory stores?
 Ill-fated race! the softening arts of peace,
 Whate'er the humanising muses teach;
 The godlike wisdom of the temper'd breast;

Progressive truth, the patient force of thought ;
 Investigation calm, whose silent powers
 Command the world ; the light that leads to heaven ; 880
 Kind equal rule, the government of laws,
 And all-protecting freedom, which alone
 Sustains the name and dignity of man—
 These are not theirs. The parent sun himself
 Seems o'er this world of slaves to tyrannise ;
 And, with oppressive ray, the roseate bloom
 Of beauty blasting, gives the gloomy hue,
 And feature gross ; or worse, to ruthless deeds,
 Mad jealousy, blind rage, and fell revenge,
 Their fervid spirit fires. Love dwells not there ; 890
 The soft regards, the tenderness of life,
 The heart-shed tear, the ineffable delight
 Of sweet humanity—these court the beam
 Of milder climes ; in selfish fierce desire,
 And the wild fury of voluptuous sense,
 There lost. The very brute creation there
 This rage partakes, and burns with horrid fire.

Lo ! the green serpent, from his dark abode,
 Which even imagination fears to tread,
 At noon forth-issuing, gathers up his train 900
 In orbs immense ; then, darting out anew,
 Seeks the refreshing fount ; by which diffused
 He throws his folds ; and while, with threatening tongue
 And deathful jaws erect, the monster curls
 His flaming crest, all other thirst appall'd
 Or shivering flies, or check'd at distance stands,
 Nor dares approach. But still more direful he,

The small close-lurking minister of fate,
 Whose high-concocted venom through the veins
 A rapid lightning darts, arresting swift 910
 The vital current. Form'd to humble man,
 This child of vengeful Nature ! There, sublimed
 To fearless lust of blood, the savage race
 Roam, licensed by the shading hour of guilt,
 And foul misdeed, when the pure day has shut
 His sacred eye. The tiger darting fierce
 Impetuous on the prey his glance has doom'd ;
 The lively-shining leopard, speckled o'er
 With many a spot, the beauty of the waste ;
 And, scorning all the taming arts of man, 920
 The keen hyena, fellest of the fell—
 These, rushing from the inhospitable woods
 Of Mauritania, or the tufted isles
 That verdant rise amid the Libyan wild,
 Innumerable glare around their shaggy king,
 Majestic stalking o'er the printed sand ;
 And with imperious and repeated roars
 Demand their fated food. The fearful flocks
 Crowd near the guardian swain ; the nobler herds,
 Where, round their lordly bull in rural ease, 930
 They ruminating lie, with horror hear
 The coming rage. The awaken'd village starts ;
 And to her fluttering breast the mother strains
 Her thoughtless infant. From the pirate's den,
 Or stern Morocco's tyrant fang, escaped,
 The wretch half wishes for his bonds again ;
 While, uproar all, the wilderness resounds,

SUMMER.

77

From Atlas eastward to the frightened Nile.

Unhappy he, who from the first of joys,
Society, cut off, is left alone

940

Amid this world of death. Day after day,
Sad on the jutting eminence he sits,
And views the main that ever toils below,
Still fondly forming in the farthest verge,
Where the round ether mixes with the wave,
Ships, dim-discover'd, dropping from the clouds.

At evening, to the setting sun he turns

A mournful eye, and down his dying heart
Sinks helpless; while the wonted roar is up,
And hiss continual through the tedious night.

950

Yet here, even here, into these black abodes
Of monsters, unappall'd, from stooping Rome,
And guilty Cæsar Liberty retired,
Her Cato following through Numidian wilds ;
Disdainful of Campania's gentle plains,
And all the green delights Ausonia pours ;
When for them she must bend the servile knee,
And fawning take the splendid robber's boon.

Nor stop the terrors of these regions here ;
Commission'd demons oft, angels of wrath,
Let loose the raging elements. Breathed hot
From all the boundless furnace of the sky,
And the wide glittering waste of burning sand,
A suffocating wind the pilgrim smites
With instant death. Patient of thirst and toil,
Son of the desert, even the camel feels,
Shot through his wither'd heart, the fiery blast.

960

Or from the black-red ether, bursting broad,
 Sallies the sudden whirlwind. Straight the sands,
 Commoved around, in gathering eddies play : 970
 Nearer and nearer still they darkening come ;
 Till, with the general all-involving storm
 Swept up, the whole continuous wilds arise ;
 And by their noon-day fount dejected thrown,
 Or sunk at night in sad disastrous sleep,
 Beneath descending hills, the caravan
 Is buried deep. In Cairo's crowded streets
 The impatient merchant, wondering, waits in vain,
 And Mecca saddens at the long delay.

But chief at sea, whose every flexile wave 980
 Obeys the blast, the aërial tumult swells.
 In the dread ocean undulating wide,
 Beneath the radiant line that girts the globe,
 The circling typhon,* whirl'd from point to point,
 Exhausting all the rage of all the sky,
 And dire ecnephias* reign. Amid the heavens,
 Falsely serene, deep in a cloudy speck †
 Compress'd, the mighty tempest brooding dwells :
 Of no regard, save to the skilful eye,
 Fiery and foul, the small prognostic hangs 990
 Aloft, or on the promontory's brow
 Musters its force. A faint deceitful calm,
 A fluttering gale, the demon sends before,

* Terms of particular storms or hurricanes, known only between the tropics.—T.

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

To tempt the spreading sail. Then down at once
 Precipitant descends a mingled mass
 Of roaring winds and flame, and rushing floods.
 In wild amazement fix'd the sailor stands.
 Art is too slow: by rapid fate oppress'd,
 His broad-wing'd vessel drinks the whelming tide,
 Hid in the bosom of the black abyss. 1000
 With such mad seas the daring Gama* fought,
 For many a day, and many a dreadful night,
 Incessant, labouring round the stormy Cape;
 By bold ambition led, and bolder thirst
 Of gold. For then from ancient gloom emerged
 The rising world of trade: the genius, then,
 Of navigation, that, in hopeless sloth,
 Had slumber'd on the vast Atlantic deep
 For idle ages, starting, heard at last
 The Lusitanian Prince;† who, Heaven-inspired, 1010
 To love of useful glory roused mankind,
 And in unbounded commerce mix'd the world.

Increasing still the terrors of these storms,
 His jaws horrific arm'd with threefold fate,
 Here dwells the direful shark. Lured by the scent
 Of steaming crowds, of rank disease, and death,
 Behold he rushing cuts the briny flood,
 Swift as the gale can bear the ship along;

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

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

And from the partners of that cruel trade,
 Which spoils unhappy Guinea of her sons, 1020
 Demands his share of prey, demands themselves !
 The stormy fates descend ; one death involves
 Tyrants and slaves ; when straight, their mangled limbs
 Crashing at once, he dyes the purple seas
 With gore, and riots in the vengeful meal.

When o'er this world, by equinoctial rains
 Flooded immense, looks out the joyless sun,
 And draws the copious steam ; from swampy fens,
 Where putrefaction into life ferments,
 And breathes destructive myriads ; or from woods, 1030
 Impenetrable shades, recesses foul,
 In vapours rank and blue corruption wrapp'd,
 Whose gloomy horrors yet no desperate foot
 Has ever dared to pierce—then, wasteful, forth
 Walks the dire power of pestilent disease.
 A thousand hideous fiends her course attend,
 Sick Nature blasting, and to heartless woe,
 And feeble desolation, casting down
 The towering hopes and all the pride of man.
 Such as, of late, at Carthagena quench'd 1040
 The British fire. You, gallant Vernon, saw
 The miserable scene ; you pitying saw
 To infant weakness sunk the warrior's arm ;
 Saw the deep-racking pang, the ghastly form,
 The lip pale-quivering, and the beamless eye
 No more with ardour bright ; you heard the groans
 Of agonising ships from shore to shore ;
 Heard, nightly plunged amid the sullen waves,

The frequent corse; while on each other fix'd,
 In sad presage, the blank assistants seem'd,
 Silent to ask whom fate would next demand. 1050

What need I mention those inclement skies,
 Where frequent o'er the sickening city, Plague,
 The fiercest child of Nemesis divine,
 Descends? From Ethiopia's poison'd woods,
 From stifled Cairo's filth, and fetid fields
 With locust armies putrefying heap'd,
 This great destroyer sprung.* Her awful rage
 The brutes escape: man is her destined prey,
 Intemperate man, and o'er his guilty domes 1060
 She draws a close incumbent cloud of death;
 Uninterrupted by the living winds,
 Forbid to blow a wholesome breeze; and stain'd
 With many a mixture by the sun, suffused,
 Of angry aspect. Princely wisdom then
 Dejects his watchful eye; and from the hand
 Of feeble Justice ineffectual drop
 The sword and balance. Mute the voice of joy,
 And hush'd the clamour of the busy world.
 Empty the streets, with uncouth verdure clad; 1070
 Into the worst of deserts sudden turn'd
 The cheerful haunt of men; unless escaped
 From the doom'd house, where matchless horror reigns,
 Shut up by barbarous fear, the smitten wretch,
 With frenzy wild, breaks loose, and, loud to heaven
 Screaming, the dreadful policy arraigns,

* These are the causes supposed to be the first origin of the plague, in Dr. Mead's elegant book on that subject.—T.

Inhuman and unwise. The sullen door,
 Yet uninfected, on its cautious hinge
 Fearing to turn, abhors society.
 Dependants, friends, relations, love himself, 1080
 Savaged by woe, forget the tender tie,
 The sweet engagement of the feeling heart.
 But vain their selfish care. The circling sky,
 The wide enlivening air is full of fate ;
 And, struck by turns, in solitary pangs
 They fall, unblest, untended, and unmourn'd.
 Thus o'er the prostrate city black despair
 Extends her raven wing ; while, to complete
 The scene of desolation, stretch'd around,
 The grim guards stand, denying all retreat, 1090
 And give the flying wretch a better death.

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

Behold, slow-settling o'er the lurid grove,
 Unusual darkness broods ; and, growing, gains
 The full possession of the sky, surcharged

With wrathful vapour, from the secret beds,
 Where sleep the mineral generations, drawn.
 Thence nitre, sulphur, and the fiery spume
 Of fat bitumen, streaming on the day,
 With various-tinctured trains of latent flame, 1110
 Pollute the sky, and in yon baleful cloud,
 A reddening gloom, a magazine of fate,
 Ferment; till by the touch ethereal roused,
 The dash of clouds, or irritating war
 Of fighting winds, while all is calm below,
 They furious spring. A boding silence reigns,
 Dread through the dun expanse, save the dull sound
 That from the mountain, previous to the storm,
 Rolls o'er the muttering earth, disturbs the flood,
 And shakes the forest-leaf without a breath. 1120
 Prone to the lowest vale the aërial tribes
 Descend; the tempest-loving raven scarce
 Dares wing the dubious dusk. In rueful gaze
 The cattle stand, and on the scowling heavens
 Cast a deploring eye; by man forsook,
 Who to the crowded cottage hies him fast,
 Or seeks the shelter of the downward cave.
 'Tis listening fear and dumb amazement all,
 When to the startled eye the sudden glance
 Appears far south, eruptive through the cloud; 1130
 And following slower, in explosion vast,
 The thunder raises his tremendous voice.
 At first, heard solemn o'er the verge of heaven,
 The tempest growls; but as it nearer comes,
 And rolls its awful burden on the wind,

The lightnings flash a larger curve, and more
 The noise astounds; till overhead a sheet
 Of livid flame discloses wide, then shuts,
 And opens wider, shuts and opens still
 Expansive, wrapping ether in a blaze. 1140
 Follows the loosen'd aggravated roar,
 Enlarging, deepening, mingling; peal on peal
 Crush'd horrible, convulsing heaven and earth.
 Down comes a deluge of sonorous hail,
 Or prone-descending rain. Wide-rent, the clouds
 Pour a whole flood; and yet, its flame unquench'd,
 The unconquerable lightning struggles through,
 Ragged and fierce, or in red whirling balls,
 And fires the mountains with redoubled rage.
 Black from the stroke, above, the smouldering pine 1150
 Stands a sad shatter'd trunk; and, stretch'd below,
 A lifeless group the blasted cattle lie:
 Here the soft flocks, with that same harmless look
 They wore alive, and ruminating still
 In fancy's eye; and there the frowning bull,
 And ox half-raised. Struck on the castled cliff,
 The venerable tower and spiry fane
 Resign their aged pride. The gloomy woods
 Start at the flash, and from their deep recess
 Wide-flaming out, their trembling inmates shake. 1160
 Amid Carnarvon's mountains rages loud
 The repercussive roar; with mighty crush,
 Into the flashing deep, from the rude rocks
 Of Penmanmaur, heap'd hideous to the sky,
 Tumble the smitten cliffs; and Snowdon's peak,

Dissolving, instant yields his wintry load.
 Far-seen, the heights of heathy Cheviot blaze,
 And Thule bellows through her utmost isles.

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

They loved ; but such their guileless passion was,
 As in the dawn of time inform'd the heart
 Of innocence, and undissembling truth.
 'Twas friendship heighten'd by the mutual wish, 1180
 The enchanting hope, and sympathetic glow,
 Beam'd from the mutual eye. Devoting all
 To love, each was to each a dearer self ;
 Supremely happy in the awaken'd power
 Of giving joy. Alone amid the shades,
 Still in harmonious intercourse they lived
 The rural day, and talk'd the flowing heart,
 Or sigh'd and look'd unutterable things.

So pass'd their life, a clear united stream,
 By care unruffled ; till, in evil hour, 1190
 The tempest caught them on the tender walk,
 Heedless how far and where its mazes stray'd,
 While with each other blest, creative love
 Still bade eternal Eden smile around.
 Heavy with instant fate, her bosom heaved

Unwonted sighs, and, stealing oft a look
 Of the big gloom, on Celadon her eye
 Fell tearful, wetting her disorder'd cheek.
 In vain assuring love and confidence
 In Heaven repressed her fear; it grew, and shook 1200
 Her frame near dissolution. He perceived
 The unequal conflict, and, as angels look
 On dying saints, his eyes compassion shed,
 With love illumined high. "Fear not," he said,
 "Sweet innocence! thou stranger to offence
 And inward storm! He, who yon skies involves
 In frowns of darkness, ever smiles on thee
 With kind regard. O'er thee the secret shaft
 That wastes at midnight, or the undreaded hour
 Of noon, flies harmless: and that very voice, 1210
 Which thunders terror through the guilty heart,
 With tongues of seraphs whisper peace to thine.
 'Tis safety to be near thee sure, and thus
 To clasp perfection!" From his void embrace,
 Mysterious Heaven! that moment, to the ground,
 A blacken'd corse, was struck the beauteous maid.
 But who can paint the lover, as he stood,
 Pierced by severe amazement, hating life,
 Speechless, and fix'd in all the death of woe!
 So, faint resemblance on the marble tomb 1220
 The well-dissembled mourner stooping stands,
 For ever silent, and for ever sad.*

* Cf. Keats's "For ever wilt thou love and she be fair!"—*Ode on a Grecian Urn*.

As from the face of Heaven the shatter'd clouds
 Tumultuous rove, the interminable sky
 Sublimier swells, and o'er the world expands
 A purer azure. Nature from the storm
 Shines out afresh; and through the lighten'd air
 A higher lustre and a clearer calm
 Diffusive tremble; while, as if in sign
 Of danger past, a glittering robe of joy, 1230
 Set off abundant by the yellow ray,
 Invests the fields, yet drooping from distress.
 'Tis beauty all, and grateful song around,
 Join'd to the low of kine, and numerous bleat
 Of flocks thick-nibbling through the clover'd vale.
 And shall the hymn be marr'd by thankless man,
 Most favour'd, who with voice articulate
 Should lead the chorus of this lower world?
 Shall he, so soon forgetful of the hand
 That hush'd the thunders, and serenest the sky, 1240
 Extinguish'd see that spark the tempest waked,
 That sense of powers exceeding far his own,
 Ere yet his feeble heart has lost its fears?
 Cheer'd by the milder beam, the sprightly youth
 Speeds to the well-known pool, whose crystal depth
 A sandy bottom shows. Awhile he stands
 Gazing the inverted landscape, half afraid
 To meditate the blue profound below;
 Then plunges headlong down the circling flood.
 His ebon tresses and his rosy cheek 1250
 Instant emerge; and through the obedient wave,
 At each short breathing by his lip repell'd,

With arms and legs according well, he makes,
 As humour leads, an easy-winding path ;
 While, from his polish'd sides, a dewy light
 Effuses on the pleased spectators round.

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

Close in the covert of an hazel copse,
 Where, winded into pleasing solitudes, 1270
 Runs out the rambling dale, young Damon sat,
 Pensive, and pierced with love's delightful pangs.
 There to the stream that down the distant rocks
 Hoarse-murmuring fell, and plaintive breeze that play'd
 Among the bending willows, falsely he
 Of Musidora's cruelty complain'd.
 She felt his flame ; but deep within her breast,
 In bashful coyness, or in maiden pride,
 The soft return conceal'd, save when it stole
 In side-long glances from her downcast eye, 1280
 Or from her swelling soul in stifled sighs.

Touch'd by the scene, no stranger to his vows,
 He framed a melting lay, to try her heart ;
 And, if an infant passion struggled there,
 To call that passion forth. Thrice happy swain !
 A lucky chance, that oft decides the fate
 Of mighty monarchs, then decided thine.
 For lo ! conducted by the laughing loves,
 This cool retreat his Musidora sought.
 Warm in her cheek the sultry season glow'd ; 1290
 And, robed in loose array, she came to bathe
 Her fervent limbs in the refreshing stream.
 What shall he do? In sweet confusion lost,
 And dubious flutterings, he awhile remained.
 A pure ingenuous elegance of soul,
 A delicate refinement, known to few,
 Perplex'd his breast, and urged him to retire :
 But love forbade. Ye prudes in virtue, say,
 Say, ye severest, what would you have done?
 Meantime, this fairer nymph than ever bless'd 1300
 Arcadian stream, with timid eye around
 The banks surveying, stripp'd her beauteous limbs
 To taste the lucid coolness of the flood.
 Ah ! then, not Paris on the piny top
 Of Ida panted stronger, when aside
 The rival-goddesses the veil divine
 Cast unconfined, and gave him all their charms,
 Than, Damon, thou ; as from the snowy leg
 And slender foot the inverted silk she drew ;
 As the soft touch dissolved the virgin zone ; 1310
 And, through the parting robe, the alternate breast,

With youth wild-throbbing, on thy lawless gaze
 In full luxuriance rose. But, desperate youth,
 How durst thou risk the soul-distracting view;
 As from her naked limbs of glowing white,
 Harmonious swell'd by Nature's finest hand,
 In folds loose-floating fell the fainter lawn;
 And fair-exposed she stood, shrunk from herself,
 With fancy blushing, at the doubtful breeze
 Alarm'd, and starting like the fearful fawn? 1320
 Then to the flood she rush'd; the parted flood
 Its lovely guest with closing waves received;
 And every beauty softening, every grace
 Flushing anew, a mellow lustre shed:
 As shines the lily through the crystal mild;
 Or as the rose amid the morning dew,
 Fresh from Aurora's hand, more sweetly glows.
 While thus she wanton'd, now beneath the wave
 But ill conceal'd, and now with streaming locks,
 That half embraced her in a humid veil, 1330
 Rising again, the latent Damon drew
 Such maddening draughts of beauty to the soul
 As for a while o'erwhelm'd his raptur'd thought
 With luxury too daring. Check'd at last
 By love's respectful modesty, he deem'd
 The theft profane, if aught profane to love
 Can e'er be deem'd; and, struggling from the shade,
 With headlong hurry fled; but first these lines,
 Traced by his ready pencil, on the bank
 With trembling hand he threw: "Bathe on, my fair, 1340
 Yet unbeheld save by the sacred eye

Of faithful love ; I go to guard thy haunt,
 To keep from thy recess each vagrant foot,
 And each licentious eye." With wild surprise,
 As if to marble struck, devoid of sense,
 A stupid moment motionless she stood;
 So stands the statue* that enchants the world,
 So bending tries to veil the matchless boast,
 The mingled beauties of exulting Greece.
 Recovering, swift she flew to find those robes 1350
 Which blissful Eden knew not ; and, array'd
 In careless haste, the alarming paper snatch'd.
 But, when her Damon's well-known hand she saw,
 Her terrors vanish'd, and a softer train
 Of mix'd emotions, hard to be described,
 Her sudden bosom seized, shame void of guilt,
 The charming blush of innocence, esteem
 And admiration of her lover's flame,
 By modesty exalted ; even a sense
 Of self-approving beauty stole across 1360
 Her busy thought. At length, a tender calm
 Hush'd by degrees the tumult of her soul ;
 And on the spreading beech, that o'er the stream
 Incumbent hung, she with the sylvan pen
 Of rural lovers this confession carved,
 Which soon her Damon kiss'd with weeping joy :
 " Dear youth ! sole judge of what these verses mean,
 By fortune too much favour'd, but by love,
 Alas ! not favour'd less, be still as now
 Discreet ; the time may come you need not fly." 1370

* The Venus of Medici.—T.

The sun has lost his rage: his downward orb
 Shoots nothing now but animating warmth,
 And vital lustre, that, with various ray,
 Lights up the clouds, those beauteous robes of heaven,
 Incessant roll'd into romantic shapes,
 The dream of waking fancy. Broad below,
 Cover'd with ripening fruits, and swelling fast
 Into the perfect year, the pregnant earth
 And all her tribes rejoice. Now the soft hour
 Of walking comes, for him who lonely loves 1380
 To seek the distant hills, and there converse
 With Nature—there to harmonise his heart,
 And in pathetic song to breathe around
 The harmony to others. Social friends,
 Attuned to happy unison of soul,
 To whose exalting eye a fairer world,
 Of which the vulgar never had a glimpse,
 Displays its charms, whose minds are richly fraught
 With philosophic stores, superior light,
 And in whose breast enthusiastic burns 1390
 Virtue the sons of interest deem romance,
 Now call'd abroad, enjoy the falling day;
 Now to the verdant portico of woods,
 To Nature's vast Lyceum, forth they walk ;
 By that kind school where no proud master reigns,
 The full free converse of the friendly heart,
 Improving and improved. Now from the world,
 Sacred to sweet retirement, lovers steal,
 And pour their souls in transport, which the sire
 Of love approving hears, and calls it good. 1400

Which way, Amanda, shall we bend our course?
 The choice perplexes. Wherefore should we choose?
 All is the same with thee. Say, shall we wind
 Along the streams? or walk the smiling mead?
 Or court the forest-glades? or wander wild
 Among the waving harvests? or ascend,
 While radiant Summer opens all its pride,
 Thy hill, delightful Shene? * Here let us sweep
 The boundless landscape; now the raptured eye,
 Exulting swift, to huge Augusta send, 1410
 Now to the sister hills † that skirt her plain,
 To lofty Harrow now, and now to where
 Majestic Windsor lifts his princely brow.
 In lovely contrast to this glorious view,
 Calmly magnificent, then will we turn
 To where the silver Thames first rural grows.
 There let the feasted eye unwearied stray;
 Luxurious there rove through the pendent woods
 That nodding hang o'er Harrington's retreat;
 And, stooping thence to Ham's embowering walks, 1420
 Beneath whose shades, in spotless peace retired,
 With her the pleasing partner of his heart,
 The worthy Queensberry yet laments his Gay,
 And polish'd Cornbury woos the willing muse,
 Slow let us trace the matchless vale of Thames;
 Fair-winding up to where the muses haunt
 In Twit'nam's bowers, and for their Pope implore

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

† Highgate and Hampstead.—T.

The healing god ;* to royal Hampton's pile,
 To Clermont's terraced height, and Esher's groves,
 Where in the sweetest solitude, embraced 1430
 By the soft windings of the silent Mole,
 From courts and senates Pelham finds repose.
 Enchanting vale ! beyond whate'er the muse
 Has of Achaia or Hesperia sung !
 O vale of bliss ! O softly-swelling hills !
 On which the power of cultivation lies,
 And joys to see the wonders of his toil.

Heavens ! what a goodly prospect spreads around,
 Of hills, and dales, and woods, and lawns, and spires,
 And glittering towns, and gilded streams, till all 1440
 The stretching landscape into smoke decays !
 Happy Britannia ! where, the Queen of Arts,
 Inspiring vigour, Liberty, abroad
 Walks unconfined even to thy farthest cots,
 And scatters plenty with unsparing hand.

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

* In his last sickness.

Full are thy cities with the sons of art ;
 And trade and joy, in every busy street,
 Mingling are heard : even drudgery himself,
 As at the car he sweats, or dusty hews 1460
 The palace-stone, looks gay. Thy crowded ports,
 Where rising masts an endless prospect yield,
 With labour burn, and echo to the shouts
 Of hurried sailor, as he hearty waves
 His last adieu, and, loosening every sheet,
 Resigns the spreading vessel to the wind.

Bold, firm, and graceful are thy generous youth
 By hardship sinew'd, and by danger fired,
 Scattering the nations where they go ; and first 1470
 Or on the listed plain, or stormy seas.
 Mild are thy glories too, as o'er the plans
 Of thriving peace thy thoughtful sires preside ;
 In genius and substantial learning high ;
 For every virtue, every worth, renown'd ;
 Sincere, plain-hearted, hospitable, kind ;
 Yet like the mustering thunder, when provoked,
 The dread of tyrants, and the sole resource
 Of those that under grim oppression groan.

Thy sons of glory many ! Alfred thine, 1480
 In whom the splendour of heroic war,
 And more heroic peace, when govern'd well,
 Combine ; whose hallow'd name the virtues saint,
 And his own muses love ; the best of kings.
 With him thy Edwards and thy Henrys shine,
 Names dear to fame ; the first who deep impress'd
 On haughty Gaul the terror of thy arms,

That awes her genius still. In statesmen thou,
 And patriots, fertile. Thine a steady More,
 Who, with a generous though mistaken zeal
 Withstood a brutal tyrant's useful rage; 1490
 Like Cato firm, like Aristides just,
 Like rigid Cincinnatus nobly poor;
 A dauntless soul erect, who smiled on death.
 Frugal and wise, a Walsingham is thine;
 A Drake, who made thee mistress of the deep,
 And bore thy name in thunder round the world.
 Then flamed thy spirit high; but who can speak
 The numerous worthies of the maiden reign?
 In Raleigh mark their every glory mix'd;
 Raleigh, the scourge of Spain; whose breast with all 1500
 The sage, the patriot, and the hero burn'd.
 Nor sunk his vigour when a coward reign
 The warrior fetter'd, and at last resign'd,
 To glut the vengeance of a vanquish'd foe.
 Then, active still and unrestrain'd, his mind
 Explored the vast extent of ages past,
 And with his prison-hours enrich'd the world;
 Yet found no times, in all the long research,
 So glorious, or so base, as those he proved,
 In which he conquer'd, and in which he bled. 1510
 Nor can the muse the gallant Sidney pass,
 The plume of war! with early laurels crown'd,
 The lover's myrtle, and the poet's bay.
 A Hampden too is thine, illustrious land!
 Wise, strenuous, firm, of unsubmitting soul,
 Who stemm'd the torrent of a downward age

To slavery prone, and bade thee rise again,
 In all thy native pomp of freedom bold.
 Bright, at his call, thy age of men effulged,
 Of men on whom late time a kindling eye 1520
 Shall turn, and tyrants tremble while they read.
 Bring every sweetest flower, and let me strew
 The grave where Russell lies; whose temper'd blood,
 With calmest cheerfulness for thee resign'd,
 Stain'd the sad annals of a giddy reign,
 Aiming at lawless power, though meanly sunk
 In loose inglorious luxury. With him
 His friend, the British Cassius,* fearless bled;
 Of high determined spirit, roughly brave,
 By ancient learning to the enlighten'd love 1530
 Of ancient freedom warm'd. Fair thy renown
 In awful sages and in noble bards;
 Soon as the light of dawning science spread
 Her orient ray, and waked the muses' song.
 Thine is a Bacon; hapless in his choice;
 Unfit to stand the civil storm of state,
 And through the smooth barbarity of courts,
 With firm but pliant virtue, forward still
 To urge his course. Him for the studious shade
 Kind Nature form'd, deep, comprehensive, clear, 1540
 Exact, and elegant; in one rich soul,
 Plato, the Stagyrte, and Tully join'd.
 The great deliverer he, who, from the gloom
 Of cloister'd monks and jargon-teaching schools,
 Led forth the true Philosophy, there long

* Algernon Sidney.—T.

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

* Anthony Ashley Cooper, Earl of Shaftesbury.—T.

O'er all the mazes of enchanted ground ;
 Nor thee, his ancient master, laughing sage,
 Chaucer, whose native manners-painting verse,
 Well moralised, shines through the Gothic cloud
 Of time and language o'er thy genius thrown.

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

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

O Thou by whose almighty nod the scale
 Of empire rises, or alternate falls,
 Send forth the saving virtues round the land,

In bright patrol, white peace, and social love ;
 The tender-looking charity, intent
 On gentle deeds, and shedding tears through smiles ;
 Undaunted truth, and dignity of mind ;
 Courage, composed and keen ; sound temperance,
 Healthful in heart and look ; clear chastity, 1610
 With blushes reddening as she moves along,
 Disorder'd at the deep regard she draws ;
 Rough industry ; activity untired,
 With copious life inform'd, and all awake ;
 While in the radiant front superior shines
 That first paternal virtue, public zeal ;
 Who throws o'er all an equal wide survey,
 And, ever musing on the common weal,
 Still labours glorious with some great design.

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

For ever running an enchanted round, 1630
 Passes the day, deceitful, vain, and void ;
 As fleets the vision o'er the formful brain,
 This moment hurrying wild the impassion'd soul,

The next in nothing lost. 'Tis so to him,
 The dreamer of this earth, an idle blank:
 A sight of horror to the cruel wretch,
 Who all day long in sordid pleasure roll'd,
 Himself an useless load, has squander'd vile,
 Upon his scoundrel train, what might have cheer'd
 A drooping family of modest worth. 1640
 But to the generous still-improving mind,
 That gives the hopeless heart to sing for joy,
 Diffusing kind beneficence around,
 Boastless, as now descends the silent dew;
 To him the long review of order'd life
 Is inward rapture, only to be felt.

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

His folded flock secure, the shepherd home
 Hies merry-hearted; and by turns relieves
 The ruddy milk-maid of her brimming pail,
 The beauty whom perhaps his witless heart,
 Unknowing what the joy-mix'd anguish means,
 Sincerely loves, by that blest language shown
 Of cordial glances and obliging deeds. 1670
 Onward they pass, o'er many a panting height
 And valley sunk and unfrequented; where
 At fall of eve the fairy people throng,
 In various game and revelry to pass
 The summer night, as village stories tell.
 But far about they wander from the grave
 Of him whom his ungentle fortune urged
 Against his own sad breast to lift the hand
 Of impious violence. The lonely tower
 Is also shunn'd; whose mournful chambers hold, 1680
 So night-struck fancy dreams, the yelling ghost.

Among the crooked lanes, on every hedge,
 The glow-worm lights his gem, and through the dark,
 A moving radiance twinkles. Evening yields
 The world to night; not in her winter robe
 Of massy Stygian woof, but loose array'd
 In mantle dun. A faint erroneous ray,
 Glanced from the imperfect surfaces of things,
 Flings half an image on the straining eye;
 While wavering woods, and villages, and streams, 1690
 And rocks, and mountain-tops, that long retain'd
 The ascending gleam, are all one swimming scene,

Uncertain if beheld. Sudden to heaven
 Thence weary vision turns ; where, leading soft
 The silent hours of love, with purest ray
 Sweet Venus shines ; and, from her genial rise,
 When day-light sickens, till it springs afresh,
 Unrivall'd reigns, the fairest lamp of night.
 As thus the effulgence tremulous I drink
 With cherish'd gaze, the lambent lightnings shoot 1700
 Across the sky, or horizontal dart
 In wondrous shapes, by fearful murmuring crowds
 Portentous deem'd. Amid the radiant orbs,
 That more than deck—that animate—the sky,
 The life-infusing suns of other worlds ;
 Lo ! from the dread immensity of space
 Returning, with accelerated course,
 The rushing comet to the sun descends ;
 And as he sinks below the shading earth,
 With awful train projected o'er the heavens, 1710
 The guilty nations tremble. But, above
 Those superstitious horrors that enslave
 The fond sequacious herd, to mystic faith
 And blind amazement prone, the enlighten'd few,
 Whose godlike minds philosophy exalts,
 The glorious stranger hail. They feel a joy
 Divinely great ; they in their powers exult,
 That wondrous force of thought, which mounting spurns
 This dusky spot, and measures all the sky ;
 While, from his far excursion through the wilds 1720
 Of barren ether, faithful to his time,
 They see the blazing wonder rise anew,

In seeming terror clad, but kindly bent
 To work the will of all-sustaining Love,
 From his huge vapoury train perhaps to shake
 Reviving moisture on the numerous orbs,
 Through which his long ellipsis winds ; perhaps
 To lend new fuel to declining suns,
 To light up worlds, and feed the eternal fire.

With thee, serene Philosophy ! with thee, 1730
 And thy bright garland, let me crown my song.
 Effusive source of evidence and truth !
 A lustre shedding o'er the ennobled mind,
 Stronger than summer-noon, and pure as that
 Whose mild vibrations soothe the parted soul,
 New to the dawning of celestial day.
 Hence through her nourish'd powers, enlarged by thee,
 She springs aloft with elevated pride
 Above the tangling mass of low desires,
 That bind the fluttering crowd ; and, angel-wing'd, 1740
 The heights of science and of virtue gains,
 Where all is calm and clear ; with Nature round,
 Or in the starry regions, or the abyss,
 To reason's and to fancy's eye display'd—
 The first up-tracing, from the dreary void,
 The chain of causes and effects to Him,
 The world-producing Essence, who alone
 Possesses being ; while the last receives
 The whole magnificence of heaven and earth,
 And every beauty, delicate or bold, 1750
 Obvious or more remote, with livelier sense,
 Diffusive painted on the rapid mind.

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

Without thee what were unenlighten'd man ?
 A savage, roaming through the woods and wilds
 In quest of prey ; and with the unfashion'd fur 1760
 Rough-clad ; devoid of every finer art
 And elegance of life. Nor happiness
 Domestic, mix'd of tenderness and care,
 Nor moral excellence, nor social bliss,
 Nor guardian law were his ; nor various skill
 To turn the furrow, or to guide the tool
 Mechanic ; nor the heaven-conducted prow
 Of navigation bold, that fearless braves
 The burning line or dares the wintry pole ;
 Mother severe of infinite delights ! 1770
 Nothing, save rapine, indolence, and guile,
 And woes on woes, a still-revolving train,
 Whose horrid circle had made human life
 Than non-existence worse ! But, taught by thee,
 Ours are the plans of policy and peace ;
 To live like brothers, and, conjunctive all,
 Embellish life. While thus laborious crowds
 Ply the tough oar, Philosophy directs
 The ruling helm ; or like the liberal breath
 Of potent heaven, invisible, the sail 1780
 Swells out, and bears the inferior world along.
 Nor to this evanescent speck of earth

Poorly confined, the radiant tracts on high
 Are her exalted range; intent to gaze
 Creation through; and, from that full complex
 Of never-ending wonders, to conceive
 Of the Sole Being right, who spoke the word,
 And Nature moved complete. With inward view,
 Thence on the ideal kingdom swift she turns
 Her eye; and instant, at her powerful glance, 1790
 The obedient phantoms vanish or appear,
 Compound, divide, and into order shift,
 Each to his rank, from plain perception up
 To the fair forms of fancy's fleeting train;
 To reason then, deducing truth from truth;
 And notion quite abstract; where first begins
 The world of spirits, action all, and life
 Unfetter'd and unmix'd. But here the cloud,
 So wills Eternal Providence, sits deep.
 Enough for us to know that this dark state, 1800
 In wayward passions lost and vain pursuits,
 This infancy of being, cannot prove
 The final issue of the works of God,
 By boundless love and perfect wisdom form'd,
 And ever rising with the rising mind.

AUTUMN.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

CROWN'D with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf,
While Autumn, nodding o'er the yellow plain,
Comes jovial on; the Doric reed once more,
Well pleased, I tune. Whate'er the Wintry frost
Nitrous prepared, the various-blossom'd Spring

Put in white promise forth, and Summer suns
 Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,
 Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.

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

When the bright Virgin gives the beauteous days,
 And Libra weighs in equal scales the year,
 From heaven's high cope the fierce effulgence shook
 Of parting Summer, a serener blue,
 With golden light enliven'd, wide invests
 The happy world. Attemper'd suns arise,
 Sweet-beam'd, and shedding oft through lucid clouds
 A pleasing calm ; while broad and brown below 30
 Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
 Rich, silent, deep, they stand ; for not a gale

* The Right Hon. Arthur Onslow.

AUTUMN.

109

Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain.
 A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
 Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow.
 Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;
 The clouds fly different; and the sudden sun
 By fits effulgent gilds the illumined field,
 And black by fits the shadows sweep along,—
 A gaily-checker'd heart-expanding view,
 Far as the circling eye can shoot around,
 Unbounded, tossing in a flood of corn.

40

These are thy blessings, Industry! rough power
 Whom labour still attends, and sweat, and pain;
 Yet the kind source of every gentle art
 And all the soft civility of life;
 Raiser of human kind, by Nature cast,
 Naked and helpless out amid the woods
 And wilds, to rude inclement elements;
 With various seeds of art deep in the mind
 Implanted, and profusely pour'd around
 Materials infinite, but idle all.

50

Still unexerted, in the unconscious breast
 Slept the lethargic powers; corruption still,
 Voracious, swallow'd what the liberal hand
 Of bounty scatter'd o'er the savage year;
 And still the sad barbarian roving mix'd
 With beasts of prey; or for his acorn meal
 Fought the fierce tusky boar. A shivering wretch!
 Aghast, and comfortless when the bleak North,
 With Winter charged, let the mix'd tempest fly,
 Hail, rain, and snow, and bitter-breathing frost—

60

Then to the shelter of the hut he fled ;
 And the wild season, sordid, pined away ;
 For home he had not ; home is the resort
 Of love, of joy, of peace and plenty, where,
 Supporting and supported, polish'd friends
 And dear relations mingle into bliss.
 But this the rugged savage never felt,
 Even desolate in crowds ; and thus his days 70
 Roll'd heavy, dark, and unenjoy'd along,
 A waste of time ! till Industry approach'd,
 And roused him from his miserable sloth ;
 His faculties unfolded ; pointed out
 Where lavish Nature the directing hand
 Of art demanded ; show'd him how to raise
 His feeble force by the mechanic powers,
 To dig the mineral from the vaulted earth,
 On what to turn the piercing rage of fire,
 On what the torrent, and the gather'd blast ; 80
 Gave the tall ancient forest to his axe ;
 Taught him to chip the wood, and hew the stone,
 Till by degrees the finish'd fabric rose ;
 Tore from his limbs the blood-polluted fur,
 And wrapt them in the woolly vestment warm,
 Or bright in glossy silk and flowing lawn ;
 With wholesome viands fill'd his table ; pour'd
 The generous glass around—inspired to wake
 The life-refining soul of decent wit ;
 Nor stopp'd at barren bare necessity ; 90
 But, still advancing bolder, led him on
 To pomp, to pleasure, elegance, and grace ;

AUTUMN.

III

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

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

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

Then commerce brought into the public walk
The busy merchant ; the big warehouse built ;
Raised the strong crane ; choked up the loaded street 120
With foreign plenty ; and thy stream, O Thames,
Large, gentle, deep, majestic, king of floods !

Chose for his grand resort. On either hand,
 Like a long wintry forest, groves of masts
 Shot up their spires; the bellying sheet between
 Possess'd the breezy void; the sooty hulk
 Steer'd sluggish on; the splendid barge along
 Row'd, regular, to harmony; around,
 The boat light skimming stretch'd its oary wings;
 While deep the various voice of fervent toil 130
 From bank to bank increased; whence ribb'd with oak,
 To bear the British thunder, black and bold,
 The roaring vessel rush'd into the main.

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

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

Soon as the morning trembles o'er the sky,

AUTUMN.

113

And unperceived unfolds the spreading day,
 Before the ripen'd field the reapers stand,
 In fair array, each by the lass he loves,
 To bear the rougher part, and mitigate
 By nameless gentle offices her toil.

At once they stoop and swell the lusty sheaves ;
 While through their cheerful band the rural talk,
 The rural scandal, and the rural jest,
 Fly harmless, to deceive the tedious time,
 And steal unfelt the sultry hours away.

160

Behind the master walks, builds up the shocks,
 And conscious, glancing oft on every side
 His sated eye, feels his heart heave with joy.
 The gleaners spread around, and here and there,
 Spike after spike, their scanty harvest pick.
 Be not too narrow, husbandmen ! but fling
 From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,
 The liberal handful. Think, oh ! grateful think,
 How good the God of harvest is to you,
 Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields,
 While these unhappy partners of your kind
 Wide-hover round you, like the fowls of heaven,
 And ask their humble dole. The various turns
 Of fortune ponder, that your sons may want
 What now, with hard reluctance, faint ye give.

170

The lovely young Lavinia once had friends ;
 And Fortune smiled deceitful on her birth ;
 For, in her helpless years deprived of all,
 Of every stay, save innocence and heaven,

180

She, with her widow'd mother—feeble, old,
 And poor—lived in a cottage far retired
 Among the windings of a woody vale ;
 By solitude and deep surrounding shades,
 But more by bashful modesty conceal'd.
 Together thus they shunn'd the cruel scorn
 Which virtue, sunk to poverty, would meet
 From giddy fashion and low-minded pride ;
 Almost on Nature's common bounty fed ;
 Like the gay birds that sung them to repose, 190
 Content, and careless of to-morrow's fare.
 Her form was fresher than the morning-rose,
 When the dew wets its leaves ; unstain'd and pure,
 As is the lily or the mountain-snow.
 The modest virtues mingled in her eyes,
 Still on the ground dejected, darting all
 Their humid beams into the blooming flowers ;
 Or when the mournful tale her mother told,
 Of what her faithless fortune promised once,
 Thrill'd in her thought, they, like the dewy star 200
 Of evening, shone in tears. A native grace
 Sat fair-proportion'd on her polish'd limbs,
 Veil'd in a simple robe, their best attire,
 Beyond the pomp of dress ; for loveliness
 Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
 But is, when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.
 Thoughtless of beauty, she was beauty's self,
 Recluse amid the close-embowering woods.
 As in the hollow breast of Apennine,
 Beneath the shelter of encircling hills, 210

AUTUMN.

115

A myrtle rises, far from human eye,
 And breathes its balmy fragrance o'er the wild ;
 So flourish'd blooming, and unseen by all,
 The sweet Lavinia ; till at length, compell'd
 By strong necessity's supreme command,
 With smiling patience in her looks, she went
 To glean Palemon's fields. The pride of swains
 Palemon was, the generous and the rich ;
 Who led the rural life in all its joy
 And elegance, such as Arcadian song
 Transmits from ancient uncorrupted times,
 When tyrant Custom had not shackled man,
 But free to follow nature was the mode.

220

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

230

“ What pity, that so delicate a form,
 By beauty kindled, where enlivening sense
 And more than vulgar goodness seem to dwell,
 Should be devoted to the rude embrace

240

Of some indecent clown ! She looks, methinks,
 Of old Acasto's line ; and to my mind
 Recalls that patron of my happy life,
 From whom my liberal fortune took its rise ;
 Now to the dust gone down—his houses, lands,
 And once fair-spreading family dissolved.
 'Tis said that in some lone obscure retreat,
 Urged by remembrance sad, and decent pride,
 Far from those scenes which knew their better days,
 His aged widow and his daughter live, 250
 Whom yet my fruitless search could never find.
 Romantic wish, would this the daughter were !”

When, strict inquiring, from herself he found
 She was the same, the daughter of his friend,
 Of bountiful Acasto—who can speak
 The mingled passions that surprised his heart,
 And through his nerves in shivering transport ran ?
 Then blazed his smother'd flame, avow'd and bold ;
 And as he view'd her ardent o'er and o'er,
 Love, gratitude, and pity wept at once. 260
 Confused, and frighten'd at his sudden tears,
 Her rising beauties flush'd a higher bloom,
 As thus, Palemon, passionate and just,
 Pour'd out the pious rapture of his soul :

“ And art thou then Acasto's dear remains ?
 She whom my restless gratitude has sought
 So long in vain ? O yes ! the very same,
 The soften'd image of my noble friend ;
 Alive his every feature, every look,
 More elegantly touch'd ! Sweeter than Spring ! 270

Thou sole surviving blossom from the root
 That nourish'd up my fortune, say, ah where,
 In what sequester'd desert, hast thou drawn
 The kindest aspect of delighted heaven?
 Into such beauty spread, and blown so fair;
 Though poverty's cold wind and crushing rain
 Beat keen and heavy on thy tender years?
 Oh, let me now into a richer soil
 Transplant thee safe, where vernal suns and showers
 Diffuse their warmest, largest influence; 280
 And of my garden be the pride and joy!
 Ill it befits thee, oh! it ill befits
 Acasto's daughter, his whose open stores,
 Though vast, were little to his ampler heart,
 The father of a country, thus to pick
 The very refuse of those harvest-fields
 Which from his bounteous friendship I enjoy.
 Then throw that shameful pittance from thy hand,
 But ill applied to such a rugged task;
 The fields, the master, all, my fair, are thine, 290
 If, to the various blessings which thy house
 Has on me lavish'd, thou wilt add that bliss,
 That dearest bliss, the power of blessing thee."

Here ceased the youth; yet still his speaking eye
 Express'd the sacred triumph of his soul,
 With conscious virtue, gratitude, and love,
 Above the vulgar joy divinely raised.
 Nor waited he reply. Won by the charm
 Of goodness irresistible, and all
 In sweet disorder lost, she blush'd consent. 300

The news immediate to her mother brought,
 While, pierced with anxious thought, she pined away
 The lonely moment's for Lavinia's fate ;
 Amazed, and scarce believing what she heard,
 Joy seized her wither'd veins, and one bright gleam
 Of setting life shone on her evening hours,
 Not less enraptured than the happy pair ;
 Who flourish'd long in tender bliss, and rear'd
 A numerous offspring, lovely like themselves,
 And good, the grace of all the country round.

310

Defeating oft the labours of the year,
 The sultry south collects a potent blast.
 At first, the groves are scarcely seen to stir
 Their trembling tops; and a still murmur runs
 Along the soft-inclining fields of corn.
 But as the aërial tempest fuller swells,
 And in one mighty stream, invisible,
 Immense, the whole excited atmosphere
 Impetuous rushes o'er the sounding world ;
 Strain'd to the root, the stooping forest pours
 A rustling shower of yet untimely leaves.
 High-beat, the circling mountains eddy in,
 From the bare wild, the dissipated storm,
 And send it in a torrent down the vale.
 Exposed and naked to its utmost rage,
 Through all the sea of harvest rolling round,
 The billowy plains float wide ; nor can evade,
 Though pliant to the blast, its seizing force,—
 Or whirl'd in air, or into vacant chaff

320

AUTUMN.

119

Shook waste. And sometimes too a burst of rain, 330
 Swept from the black horizon, broad descends
 In one continuous flood. Still overhead
 The mingling tempest weaves its gloom, and still
 The deluge deepens, till the fields around
 Lie sunk and flatted in the sordid wave.
 Sudden the ditches swell ; the meadows swim.
 Red from the hills, innumerable streams
 Tumultuous roar, and high above its banks
 The river lift ; before whose rushing tide,
 Herds, flocks, and harvests, cottages and swains, 340
 Roll mingled down ; all that the winds had spared
 In one wild moment ruin'd, the big hopes
 And well-earn'd treasures of the painful year.
 Fled to some eminence, the husbandman
 Helpless beholds the miserable wreck
 Driving along ; his drowning ox at once
 Descending, with his labours scatter'd round,
 He sees ; and instant o'er his shivering thought
 Comes Winter unprovided, and a train
 Of clamant children dear. Ye masters, then, 350
 Be mindful of the rough laborious hand
 That sinks you soft in elegance and ease ;
 Be mindful of those limbs in russet clad,
 Whose toil to yours is warmth and graceful pride ;
 And oh ! be mindful of that sparing board
 Which covers yours with luxury profuse,
 Makes your glass sparkle, and your sense rejoice ;
 Nor cruelly demand what the deep rains
 And all-involving winds have swept away.

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

These are not subjects for the peaceful muse,
 Nor will she stain with such her spotless song; 380
 Then most delighted, when she social sees
 The whole mix'd animal creation round
 Alive and happy. 'Tis not joy to her,
 The falsely-cheerful, barbarous game of death;
 This rage of pleasure, which the restless youth
 Awakes impatient with the gleaming morn;
 When beasts of prey retire, that all night long,
 Urged by necessity, had ranged the dark,
 As if their conscious ravage shunn'd the light,

AUTUMN.

121

Ashamed. Not so the steady tyrant man,
 Who, with the thoughtless insolence of power
 Inflamed, beyond the most infuriate wrath
 Of the worst monster that e'er roam'd the waste,
 For sport alone pursues the cruel chase,
 Amid the beamings of the gentle days.
 Upbraid, ye ravening tribes, our wanton rage,
 For hunger kindles you, and lawless want;
 But, lavish fed, in Nature's bounty roll'd,
 To joy at anguish, and delight in blood,
 Is what your horrid bosoms never knew. 400

Poor is the triumph o'er the timid hare;
 Scared from the corn, and now to some lone seat
 Retired—the rushy fen, the rugged furze,
 Stretch'd o'er the stony heath, the stubble chapp'd,
 The thistly lawn, the thick-entangled broom,
 Of the same friendly hue, the wither'd fern,
 The fallow ground laid open to the sun,
 Concoctive, and the nodding sandy bank,
 Hung o'er the mazes of the mountain brook.
 Vain is her best precaution, though she sits 410
 Conceal'd, with folded ears, unsleeping eyes,
 By Nature raised to take the horizon in,
 And head couch'd close betwixt her hairy feet,
 In act to spring away. The scented dew
 Betrays her early labyrinth; and deep,
 In scatter'd sullen openings, far behind,
 With every breeze she hears the coming storm.
 But nearer, and more frequent, as it loads
 The sighing gale, she springs amazed, and all

The savage soul of game is up at once— 420
 The pack full opening, various; the shrill horn
 Resounded from the hills; the neighing steed,
 Wild for the chase; and the loud hunter's shout,
 O'er a weak, harmless, flying creature, all
 Mix'd in mad tumult and discordant joy.

The stag too, singled from the herd, where long
 He ranged the branching monarch of the shades,
 Before the tempest drives. At first, in speed
 He sprightly puts his faith; and, roused by fear,
 Gives all his swift aërial soul to flight; 430

Against the breeze he darts, that way the more
 To leave the lessening murderous cry behind.

Deception short! though, fleetier than the winds
 Blown o'er the keen-air'd mountain by the north,
 He bursts the thickets, glances through the glades,
 And plunges deep into the wildest wood;

If slow, yet sure, adhesive to the track
 Hot-steaming, up behind him come again
 The inhuman rout, and from the shady depth
 Expel him, circling through his every shift. 440

He sweeps the forest oft; and sobbing sees
 The glades mild opening to the golden day,
 Where in kind contest with his butting friends

He wont to struggle, or his loves enjoy.
 Oft in the full-descending flood he tries
 To lose the scent, and lave his burning sides;
 Oft seeks the herd; the watchful herd, alarm'd,
 With selfish care avoid a brother's woe.

What shall he do? His once so vivid nerves,

AUTUMN.

123

So full of buoyant spirit, now no more 450
 Inspire the course ; but fainting breathless toil,
 Sick, seizes on his heart : he stands at bay,
 And puts his last weak refuge in despair.
 The big round tears run down his dappled face ;
 He groans in anguish ; while the growling pack,
 Blood-happy, hang at his fair jutting chest,
 And mark his beauteous checker'd sides with gore.

Of this enough. But if the sylvan youth,
 Whose fervent blood boils into violence,
 Must have the chase, behold ! despising flight, 460
 The roused-up lion, resolute and slow,
 Advancing full on the protended spear,
 And coward band that circling wheel aloof.
 Slunk from the cavern, and the troubled wood,
 See the grim wolf : on him his shaggy foe
 Vindictive fix, and let the ruffian die :
 Or, growling horrid, as the brindled boar
 Grins fell destruction, to the monster's heart
 Let the dart lighten from the nervous arm.

These Britain knows not ; give, ye Britons, then, 470
 Your sportive fury, pitiless, to pour
 Loose on the nightly robber of the fold ;
 Him, from his craggy winding haunts unearth'd,
 Let all the thunder of the chase pursue.
 Throw the broad ditch behind you ; o'er the hedge
 High bound resistless ; nor the deep morass
 Refuse, but through the shaking wilderness
 Pick your nice way ; into the perilous flood
 Bear fearless, of the raging instinct full ;

And as you ride the torrent, to the banks 480
 Your triumph sound sonorous, running round,
 From rock to rock, in circling echoes toss'd ;
 Then scale the mountains to their woody tops ;
 Rush down the dangerous steep ; and o'er the lawn,
 In fancy swallowing up the space between,
 Pour all your speed into the rapid game ;
 For happy he who tops the wheeling chase ;
 Has every maze evolved, and every guile
 Disclosed ; who knows the merits of the pack ;
 Who saw the villain seized, and dying hard, 490
 Without complaint, though by an hundred mouths
 Relentless torn. Oh ! glorious he beyond
 His daring peers, when the retreating horn
 Calls them to ghostly halls of grey renown,
 With woodland honours graced,—the fox's fur
 Depending decent from the roof ; and spread
 Round the drear walls, with antic figures fierce,
 The stag's large front : he then is loudest heard,
 When the night staggers with severer toils,
 With feats Thessalian Centaurs never knew, 500
 And their repeated wonders shake the dome.

But first the fuell'd chimney blazes wide ;
 The tankards foam ; and the strong table groans
 Beneath the smoking sirloin, stretch'd immense
 From side to side ; in which with desperate knife
 They deep incision make, and talk the while
 Of England's glory, ne'er to be defaced
 While hence they borrow vigour, or amain,
 Into the pasty plunged, at intervals—

AUTUMN.

125

If stomach keen can intervals allow—
Relating all the glories of the chase. 510

Then sated Hunger bids his brother Thirst
Produce the mighty bowl; the mighty bowl,
Swell'd high with fiery juice, steams liberal round
A potent gale, delicious as the breath
Of Maia to the love-sick shepherdess,
On violets diffused, while soft she hears
Her panting shepherd stealing to her arms.
Nor wanting is the brown October, drawn
Mature and perfect, from his dark retreat 520

Of thirty years; and now his honest front
Flames in the light refulgent, not afraid
Even with the vineyard's best produce to vie.
To cheat the thirsty moments, Whist awhile
Walks his grave round, beneath a cloud of smoke,
Wreathed fragrant from the pipe; or the quick dice,
In thunder leaping from the box, awake
The sounding gammon: while romp-loving miss
Is haul'd about in gallantry robust.

At last these puling idlenesses laid 530
Aside, frequent and full the dry divan
Close in firm circle; and set ardent in
For serious drinking. Nor evasion sly,
Nor sober shift, is to the puking wretch
Indulged apart; but earnest, brimming bowls
Lave every soul, the table floating round,
And pavement faithless to the fuddled foot.
Thus as they swim in mutual swill, the talk,
Vociferous at once from twenty tongues,

Reels fast from theme to theme ; from horses, hounds,
 To church or mistress, politics or ghost, 541
 In endless mazes, intricate, perplex'd.

Meantime, with sudden interruption loud,
 The impatient catch bursts from the joyous heart ;
 That moment touch'd is each congenial soul ;
 And, opening in a full-mouth'd cry of joy,
 The laugh, the slap, the jocund curse goes round ;
 While, from their slumbers shook, the kennel'd hounds
 Mix in the music of the day again.

As when the tempest that has vex'd the deep 550

The dark night long, with fainter murmurs falls ;
 So gradual sinks their mirth. Their feeble tongues,
 Unable to take up the cumbrous word,
 Lie quite dissolved. Before their maudlin eyes,
 Seen dim and blue, the double tapers dance,
 Like the sun wading through the misty sky.

Then, sliding soft, they drop. Confused above,
 Glasses and bottles, pipes and gazetteers,
 As if the table even itself was drunk,

Lie a wet, broken scene ; and wide below 560

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

AUTUMN.

127

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

And heighten Nature's dainties ; in their race, 600
 To rear their graces into second life ;
 To give society its highest taste ;
 Well-order'd home man's best delight to make ;
 And, by submissive wisdom, modest skill,
 With every gentle care-eluding art,
 To raise the virtues, animate the bliss,
 Even charm the pains to something more than joy,
 And sweeten all the toils of human life :
 This be the female dignity and praise.

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

Hence from the busy joy-resounding fields,
 In cheerful error, let us tread the maze
 Of Autumn, unconfined ; and taste revived
 The breath of orchard big with bending fruit.

AUTUMN.

129

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

In this glad season, while his sweetest beams
 The sun sheds equal o'er the meeken'd day;
 Oh lose me in the green delightful walks
 Of, Dodington! thy seat, serene and plain;
 Where simple Nature reigns; and every view,

* Herefordshire, famed for its cider, formed part of an ancient division of Wales, called Siluria.

Diffusive, spreads the pure Dorsetian downs,
 In boundless prospect; yonder shagg'd with wood,
 Here rich with harvest, and there white with flocks!
 Meantime the grandeur of thy lofty dome, 660
 Far-splendid, seizes on the ravish'd eye.
 New beauties rise with each revolving day;
 New columns swell; and still the fresh Spring finds
 New plants to quicken, and new groves to green.
 Full of thy genius all! the muses' seat;
 Where, in the secret bower and winding walk,
 For virtuous Young and thee they twine the bay.
 Here wandering oft, fired with the restless thirst
 Of thy applause, I solitary court
 The inspiring breeze; and meditate the book 670
 Of Nature ever open—aiming thence,
 Warm from the heart, to learn the moral song.
 And, as I steal along the sunny wall,
 Where Autumn basks, with fruit empurpled deep,
 My pleasing theme continual prompts my thought:
 Presents the downy peach, the shining plum,
 With a fine bluish mist of animals
 Clouded, the ruddy nectarine, and, dark
 Beneath his ample leaf, the luscious fig.
 The vine too here her curling tendrils shoots; 680
 Hangs out her clusters, glowing to the south;
 And scarcely wishes for a warmer sky.

Turn we a moment fancy's rapid flight
 To vigorous soils, and climes of fair extent;
 Where, by the potent sun elated high,

The vineyard swells refulgent on the day;
 Spreads o'er the vale ; or up the mountain climbs
 Profuse, and drinks, amid the sunny rocks,
 From cliff to cliff increased, the heighten'd blaze.
 Low bend the weighty boughs. The clusters clear, 690
 Half through the foliage seen, or ardent flame,
 Or shine transparent ; while perfection breathes
 White o'er the turgid film, the living dew.
 As thus they brighten with exalted juice,
 Touch'd into flavour by the mingling ray,
 The rural youth and virgins o'er the field,
 Each fond for each to cull the autumnal prime,
 Exulting rove, and speak the vintage nigh.
 Then comes the crushing swain; the country floats,
 And foams unbounded with the mashy flood, 700
 That, by degrees fermented and refined,
 Round the raised nations pours the cup of joy;
 The claret smooth, red as the lip we press
 In sparkling fancy, while we drain the bowl;
 The mellow-tasted burgundy; and, quick
 As is the wit it gives, the gay champagne.

Now, by the cool declining year condensed,
 Descend the copious exhalations, check'd
 As up the middle sky unseen they stole,
 And roll the doubling fogs around the hill. 710
 No more the mountain, horrid, vast, sublime,
 Who pours a sweep of rivers from his sides,
 And high between contending kingdoms rears
 The rocky long division, fills the view

With great variety; but, in a night
 Of gathering vapour, from the baffled sense
 Sinks dark and dreary. Thence expanding far,
 The huge dusk, gradual, swallows up the plain;
 Vanish the woods. The dim-seen river seems
 Sullen and slow to roll the misty wave. 720
 Even in the height of noon oppress'd, the sun
 Sheds weak and blunt his wide-refracted ray;
 Whence glaring oft, with many a broaden'd orb,
 He frights the nations. Indistinct on earth,
 Seen through the turbid air, beyond the life,
 Objects appear—and, wilder'd, o'er the waste
 The shepherd stalks gigantic; till at last
 Wreathed dun around, in deeper circles still
 Successive closing, sits the general fog
 Unbounded o'er the world—and, mingling thick, 730
 A formless grey confusion covers all.
 As when of old (so sung the Hebrew bard)
 Light, uncollected, through the chaos urged
 Its infant way; nor order yet had drawn
 His lovely train from out the dubious gloom.
 These roving mists, that constant now begin
 To smoke along the hilly country, these,
 With weighty rains, and melted Alpine snows,
 The mountain-cistern fill, those ample stores
 Of water, scoop'd among the hollow rocks, 740
 Whence gush the streams, the ceaseless fountains play,
 And their unfailing wealth the rivers draw:
 Some sages say, that, where the numerous wave
 For ever lashes the resounding shore,

Drill'd through the sandy stratum, every way,
 The waters with the sandy stratum rise;
 Amid whose angles, infinitely strain'd,
 They joyful leave their jaggy salts behind,
 And clear and sweeten, as they soak along.
 Nor stops the restless fluid, mounting still, 750
 Though oft amidst the irriguous vale it springs;
 But to the mountain courted by the sand,
 That leads it darkling on in faithful maze,
 Far from the parent-main, it boils again
 Fresh into day—and all the glittering hill
 Is bright with spouting rills. But hence this vain
 Amusive dream! why should the waters love
 To take so far a journey to the hills,
 When the sweet valleys offer to their toil
 Inviting quiet, and a nearer bed? 760
 Or if, by blind ambition led astray,
 They must aspire; why should they sudden stop
 Among the broken mountain's rushy dells,
 And, ere they gain its highest peak, desert
 The attractive sand that charm'd their course so long?
 Besides, the hard agglomerating salts,
 The spoil of ages, would impervious choke
 Their secret channels, or, by slow degrees,
 High as the hills protrude the swelling vales:
 Old ocean, too, suck'd through the porous globe, 770
 Had long ere now forsook his horrid bed,
 And brought Deucalion's watery times again.
 Say then where lurk the vast eternal springs
 That, like creating Nature, lie conceal'd

From mortal eye, yet with their lavish stores
 Refresh the globe and all its joyous tribes?
 O thou pervading genius, given to man,
 To trace the secrets of the dark abyss,
 Oh lay the mountains bare, and wide display
 Their hidden structure to the astonish'd view! 780
 Strip from the branching Alps their piny load;
 The huge incumbrance of horrific woods
 From Asian Taurus, from Imaus stretch'd
 Athwart the roving Tartar's sullen bounds;
 Give opening Hæmus to my searching eye,
 And high Olympus,* pouring many a stream.
 Oh! from the sounding summits of the north,
 The Dofrine Hills, through Scandinavia roll'd
 To farthest Lapland and the frozen main;
 From lofty Caucasus, far seen by those 790
 Who in the Caspian and black Euxine toil;
 From cold Riphæan rocks, which the wild Russ
 Believes the stony girdle† of the world;
 And all the dreadful mountains, wrapt in storm,
 Whence wide Siberia draws her lonely floods;
 Oh sweep the eternal snows! Hung o'er the deep,
 That ever works beneath his sounding base,
 Bid Atlas, propping heaven, as poets feign,
 His subterranean wonders spread. Unveil
 The miny caverns, blazing on the day, 800

* The mountain called by that name in the lesser Asia.—T.

† The Ural Mountains. Thomson's note is:—"The Moscovites call the Riphæan Mountains Weliki Camenypoys, that is, the great stony girdle; because they suppose them to encompass the whole earth."

Of Abyssinia's cloud-compelling cliffs,
 And of the bending Mountains of the Moon.*
 O'ertopping all these giant-sons of earth,
 Let the dire Andes, from the radiant line
 Stretch'd to the stormy seas that thunder round
 The southern pole, their hideous deeps unfold !
 Amazing scene ! Behold ! the glooms disclose :
 I see the rivers in their infant beds ;
 Deep, deep I hear them labouring to get free.
 I see the leaning strata, artful ranged ; 810
 The gaping fissures, to receive the rains,
 The melting snows, and ever-dripping fogs.
 Strew'd bibulous above I see the sands,
 The pebbly gravel next, the layers then
 Of mingled moulds, of more retentive earths,
 The gutter'd rocks and mazy-running clefts,
 That, while the stealing moisture they transmit,
 Retard its motion, and forbid its waste.
 Beneath the incessant weeping of these drains,
 I see the rocky siphons stretch'd immense, 820
 The mighty reservoirs, of harden'd chalk,
 Or stiff compacted clay, capacious form'd.
 O'erflowing thence, the congregated stores,
 The crystal treasures of the liquid world,
 Through the stirr'd sands a bubbling passage burst ;
 And welling out around the middle steep,
 Or from the bottoms of the bosom'd hills,
 In pure effusion flow. United, thus,

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

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

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

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

And many a circle, many a short essay,
 Wheel'd round and round—in congregation full
 The figured flight ascends; and, riding high 860
 The aërial billows, mixes with the clouds.

Or where the Northern Ocean, in vast whirls,
 Boils round the naked melancholy isles
 Of farthest Thulé, and the Atlantic surge
 Pours in among the stormy Hebrides—
 Who can recount what transmigrations there
 Are annual made? what nations come and go?
 And how the living clouds on clouds arise,
 Infinite wings! till all the plume-dark air
 And rude-resounding shore are one wild cry? 870
 Here the plain harmless native his small flock,
 And herd diminutive of many hues,
 Tends on the little island's verdant swell,
 The shepherd's sea-girt reign; or, to the rocks
 Dire-clinging, gathers his ovarious food;
 Or sweeps the fishy shore; or treasures up
 The plumage, rising full, to form the bed
 Of luxury. And here awhile the muse,
 High hovering o'er the broad cerulean scene,
 Sees Caledonia, in romantic view: 880
 Her airy mountains, from the waving main,
 Invested with a keen diffusive sky,
 Breathing the soul acute; her forests huge,
 Incult, robust, and tall, by Nature's hand
 Planted of old; her azure lakes between,
 Pour'd out extensive, and of watery wealth
 Full; winding deep and green, her fertile vales—

With many a cool, translucent, brimming flood
 Wash'd lovely, from the Tweed (pure parent-stream,
 Whose pastoral banks first heard my Doric reed, 890
 With, sylvan Jed, thy tributary brook)
 To where the north-inflated tempest foams
 O'er Orca's or Berubium's * highest peak.
 Nurse of a people, in misfortune's school
 Train'd up to hardy deeds; soon visited
 By learning, when before the Gothic rage
 She took her western flight. A manly race,
 Of unsubmitting spirit, wise and brave;
 Who still through bleeding ages struggled hard
 (As well unhappy Wallace can attest, 900
 Great patriot-hero ! ill-requited chief !)
 To hold a generous, undiminish'd state—
 Too much in vain ! Hence of unequal bounds
 Impatient, and by tempting glory borne
 O'er every land, for every land their life
 Has flow'd profuse, their piercing genius plann'd,
 And swell'd the pomp of peace their faithful toil :
 As from their own clear north, in radiant streams,
 Bright over Europe bursts the boreal morn.

Oh ! is there not some patriot, in whose power 910
 That best, that godlike luxury is placed,
 Of blessing thousands, thousands yet unborn,
 Through late posterity ? some, large of soul,
 To cheer dejected industry, to give
 A double harvest to the pining swain,
 And teach the labouring hand the sweets of toil ?

* Duncansbay Head.

How by the finest art the native robe
 To weave ; how, white as hyperborean snow,
 To form the lucid lawn ; with venturous oar
 How to dash wide the billow, nor look on, 920
 Shamefully passive, while Batavian fleets
 Defraud us of the glittering finny swarms
 That heave our friths, and crowd upon our shores ;
 How all-enlivening trade to rouse, and wing
 The prosperous sail from every growing port,
 Uninjured, round the sea-encircled globe ;
 And thus, in soul united as in name,
 Bid Britain reign the mistress of the deep !
 Yes, there are such. And full on thee, Argyle,*
 Her hope, her stay, her darling, and her boast, 930
 From her first patriots and her heroes sprung,
 Thy fond imploring country turns her eye ;
 In thee, with all a mother's triumph, sees
 Her every virtue, every grace combined ;
 Her genius, wisdom, her engaging turn,
 Her pride of honour, and her courage tried,
 Calm and intrepid, in the very throat
 Of sulphurous war, on Taisniere's dreadful field.
 Nor less the palm of peace inwreathes thy brow :
 For, powerful as thy sword, from thy rich tongue 940
 Persuasion flows, and wins the high debate ;
 While mix'd in thee combine the charm of youth,
 The force of manhood, and the depth of age.
 Thee, Forbes,† too, whom every worth attends,

* John, Second Duke of Argyle.

† Duncan Forbes, of Culloden, Lord President of Court of Session.

As truth sincere, as weeping friendship kind—
 Thee, truly generous, and in silence great,
 Thy country feels through her reviving arts,
 Plann'd by thy wisdom, by thy soul inform'd ;
 And seldom has she felt a friend like thee.

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

Meantime, light shadowing all, a sober calm
 Fleeces unbounded ether ; whose least wave
 Stands tremulous, uncertain where to turn
 The gentle current ; while, illumined wide, 960
 The dewy-skirted clouds imbibe the sun,
 And through their lucid veil his soften'd force
 Shed o'er the peaceful world. Then is the time
 For those whom wisdom and whom nature charm
 To steal themselves from the degenerate crowd,
 And soar above this little scene of things ;
 To tread low-thoughted vice beneath their feet ;
 To soothe the throbbing passions into peace,
 And woo lone quiet in her silent walks.

Thus solitary, and in pensive guise, 970
 Oft let me wander o'er the russet mead,
 And through the sadden'd grove, where scarce is heard
 One dying strain, to cheer the woodman's toil.

Haply some widow'd songster pours his plaint,
 Far, in faint warblings, through the tawny copse ;
 While congregated thrushes, linnets, larks,
 And each wild throat, whose artless strains so late
 Swell'd all the music of the swarming shades,
 Robb'd of their tuneful souls, now shivering sit
 On the dead tree, a dull despondent flock ! 980
 With not a brightness waving o'er their plumes,
 And nought save chattering discord in their note.
 Oh ! let not, aim'd from some inhuman eye,
 The gun the music of the coming year
 Destroy ; and harmless, unsuspecting harm,
 Lay the weak tribes a miserable prey,
 In mingled murder, fluttering on the ground !
 The pale descending year, yet pleasing still,
 A gentler mood inspires ; for now the leaf
 Incessant rustles from the mournful grove— 990
 Oft startling such as, studious, walk below,
 And slowly circles through the waving air.
 But should a quicker breeze amid the boughs
 Sob, o'er the sky the leafy deluge streams ;
 Till, choked and matted with the dreary shower,
 The forest-walks, at every rising gale,
 Roll wide the wither'd waste, and whistle bleak.
 Fled is the blasted verdure of the fields ;
 And, shrunk into their beds, the flowery race
 Their sunny robes resign. Even what remain'd 1000
 Of stronger fruits falls from the naked tree ;
 And woods, fields, gardens, orchards, all around
 The desolated prospect thrills the soul.

He comes ! he comes ! in every breeze the Power
 Of philosophic Melancholy comes !
 His near approach the sudden-starting tear,
 The glowing cheek, the mild dejected air,
 The soften'd feature, and the beating heart,
 Pierced deep with many a virtuous pang, declare.
 O'er all the soul his sacred influence breathes ; 1010
 Inflames imagination ; through the breast
 Infuses every tenderness ; and far
 Beyond dim earth exalts the swelling thought.
 Ten thousand thousand fleet ideas, such
 As never mingled with the vulgar dream,
 Crowd fast into the mind's creative eye.
 As fast the correspondent passions rise,
 As varied, and as high ; devotion raised
 To rapture, and divine astonishment ;
 The love of Nature unconfin'd, and, chief, 1020
 Of human race ; the large ambitious wish
 To make them blest ; the sigh for suffering worth
 Lost in obscurity ; the noble scorn
 Of tyrant pride ; the fearless great resolve ;
 The wonder which the dying patriot draws,
 Inspiring glory through remotest time ;
 The awaken'd throb for virtue, and for fame ;
 The sympathies of love and friendship dear ;
 With all the social offspring of the heart.
 Oh ! bear me then to vast embowering shades, 1030
 To twilight groves, and visionary vales,
 To weeping grottos and prophetic glooms,
 Where angel forms athwart the solemn dusk

Tremendous sweep, or seem to sweep, along;
 And voices more than human, through the void
 Deep-sounding, seize the enthusiastic ear.

Or is this gloom too much? Then lead, ye powers,
 That o'er the garden and the rural seat
 Preside, which shining through the cheerful land
 In countless numbers blest Britannia sees, 1040
 Oh! lead me to the wide-extended walks,
 The fair majestic paradise of Stowe! *
 Not Persian Cyrus on Ionia's shore
 E'er saw such sylvan scenes, such various art
 By genius fired, such ardent genius tamed
 By cool judicious art—that, in the strife,
 All-beauteous Nature fears to be outdone.
 And there, O Pitt! thy country's early boast,
 There let me sit beneath the shelter'd slopes,
 Or in that temple † where, in future times, 1050
 Thou well shalt merit a distinguish'd name;
 And, with thy converse blest, catch the last smiles
 Of Autumn beaming o'er the yellow woods.
 While there with thee the enchanted round I walk,
 The regulated wild, gay fancy then
 Will tread in thought the groves of Attic land;
 Will from thy standard taste refine her own,
 Correct her pencil to the purest truth
 Of Nature, or, the unimpassion'd shades
 Forsaking, raise it to the human mind. 1060
 Or if hereafter she, with juster hand,

* The seat of the Lord Viscount Cobham.—T.

† The Temple of Virtue in Stowe Gardens.—T.

Shall draw the tragic scene, instruct her thou,
 To mark the varied movements of the heart,
 What every decent character requires,
 And every passion speaks—oh ! through her strain
 Breathe thy pathetic eloquence ! that moulds
 The attentive senate, charms, persuades, exalts,
 Of honest zeal the indignant lightning throws,
 And shakes corruption on her venal throne.
 While thus we talk, and through Elysian vales 1070
 Delighted rove, perhaps a sigh escapes :
 What pity, Cobham,* thou thy verdant files
 Of order'd trees shouldst here inglorious range,
 Instead of squadrons flaming o'er the field,
 And long-embattled hosts ! when the proud foe,
 The faithless, vain disturber of mankind,
 Insulting Gaul, has roused the world to war ;
 When, keen once more within their bounds to press
 Those polish'd robbers, those ambitious slaves,
 The British youth would hail thy wise command, 1080
 Thy temper'd ardour, and thy veteran skill.

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

* Sir Richard Temple, created Lord Cobham in 1714.

Shows her broad visage in the crimson'd east. 1090
 Turn'd to the sun direct, her spotted disk,
 Where mountains rise, umbrageous dales descend,
 And caverns deep, as optic tube descries,
 A smaller earth, gives all his blaze again,
 Void of its flame, and sheds a softer day.
 Now through the passing cloud she seems to stoop,
 Now up the pure cerulean rides sublime.
 Wide the pale deluge floats, and streaming mild
 O'er the skied mountain to the shadowy vale,
 While rocks and floods reflect the quivering gleam, 1100
 The whole air whitens with a boundless tide
 Of silver radiance, trembling round the world.
 But when half-blotted from the sky, her light,
 Fainting, permits the starry fires to burn
 With keener lustre through the depth of heaven—
 Or quite extinct her deaden'd orb appears,
 And scarce appears, of sickly, beamless white—
 Oft in this season, silent from the north
 A blaze of meteors shoots: ensweeping first
 The lower skies, they all at once converge 1110
 High to the crown of heaven, and all at once
 Relapsing quick, as quickly re-ascend,
 And mix and thwart, extinguish and renew—
 All ether coursing in a maze of light.
 From look to look, contagious through the crowd,
 The panic runs, and into wondrous shapes
 The appearance throws : armies in meet array,
 Throng'd with aërial spears, and steeds of fire ;
 Till, the long lines of full-extended war

In bleeding fight commix'd, the sanguine flood 1120
 Rolls a broad slaughter o'er the plains of heaven.
 As thus they scan the visionary scene,
 On all sides swells the superstitious din,
 Incontinent; and busy frenzy talks
 Of blood and battle; cities overturn'd,
 And late at night in swallowing earthquake sunk,
 Or hideous wrapt in fierce ascending flame;
 Of sallow famine, inundation, storm;
 Of pestilence, and every great distress;
 Empires subvers'd, when ruling fate has struck 1130
 The unalterable hour: even Nature's self
 Is deem'd to totter on the brink of time.
 Not so the man of philosophic eye
 And inspect sage; the waving brightness he
 Curious surveys, inquisitive to know
 The causes and materials, yet unfix'd,
 Of this appearance beautiful and new.

Now black, and deep, the night begins to fall,
 A shade immense! Sunk in the quenching gloom,
 Magnificent and vast, are heaven and earth. 1140
 Order confounded lies; all beauty void,
 Distinction lost; and gay variety
 One universal blot; such the fair power
 Of light, to kindle and create the whole.
 Drear is the state of the benighted wretch,
 Who then, bewilder'd, wanders through the dark,
 Full of pale fancies and chimeras huge,
 Nor visited by one directive ray,

AUTUMN.

147

From cottage streaming, or from airy hall.
 Perhaps, impatient as he stumbles on, 1150
 Struck from the root of slimy rushes, blue
 The wild-fire scatters round, or gather'd, trails
 A length of flame deceitful o'er the moss—
 Whither decoy'd by the fantastic blaze,
 Now lost and now renew'd, he sinks absorb'd,
 Rider and horse, amid the miry gulf ;
 While still, from day to day, his pining wife
 And plaintive children his return await,
 In wild conjecture lost. At other times,
 Sent by the better genius of the night, 1160
 Innocuous, gleaming on the horse's mane,
 The meteor sits, and shows the narrow path
 That winding leads through pits of death, or else
 Instructs him how to take the dangerous ford.
 The lengthen'd night elapsed, the morning shines
 Serene, in all her dewy beauty bright,
 Unfolding fair the last autumnal day.
 And now the mounting sun dispels the fog ;
 The rigid hoar-frost melts before his beam ;
 And, hung on every spray, on every blade 1170
 Of grass, the myriad dew-drops twinkle round.

Ah see where, robb'd and murder'd, in that pit
 Lies the still-heaving hive ! at evening snatch'd,
 Beneath the cloud of guilt-concealing night,
 And fix'd o'er sulphur : while, not dreaming ill,
 The happy people, in their waxen cells,
 Sat tending public cares, and planning schemes

Of temperance, for Winter poor—rejoiced
 To mark, full-flowing round, their copious stores.
 Sudden the dark oppressive steam ascends ; 1180
 And, used to milder scents, the tender race,
 By thousands, tumbles from their honey'd domes,
 Convolved, and agonising in the dust.
 And was it then for this you roam'd the Spring,
 Intent from flower to flower? for this you toil'd,
 Ceaseless, the burning Summer-heats away?
 For this in Autumn search'd the blooming waste,
 Nor lost one sunny gleam? for this sad fate?
 O man! tyrannic lord! how long, how long
 Shall prostrate Nature groan beneath your rage, 1190
 Awaiting renovation? When obliged,
 Must you destroy? Of their ambrosial food
 Can you not borrow, and, in just return,
 Afford them shelter from the wintry winds;
 Or, as the sharp year pinches, with their own
 Again regale them on some smiling day?
 See where the stony bottom of their town
 Looks desolate and wild; with here and there
 A helpless number, who the ruin'd state
 Survive, lamenting weak, cast out to death. 1200
 Thus a proud city, populous and rich,
 Full of the works of peace, and high in joy,
 At theatre or feast, or sunk in sleep
 (As late, Palermo, was thy fate), is seized
 By some dread earthquake, and convulsive hurl'd
 Sheer from the black foundation, stench-involved,
 Into a gulf of blue sulphureous flame.

Hence every harsher sight. For now the day,
 O'er heaven and earth diffused, grows warm and high;
 Infinite splendour ! wide-investing all. 1210
 How still the breeze ! save what the filmy threads
 Of dew evaporate brushes from the plain.
 How clear the cloudless sky ! how deeply tinged
 With a peculiar blue ! the ethereal arch
 How swell'd immense ! amid whose azure throned
 The radiant sun how gay ! how calm below
 The gilded earth ! the harvest treasures all
 Now gather'd in, beyond the rage of storms,
 Sure to the swain ; the circling fence shut up,
 And instant Winter's utmost rage defied ; 1220
 While, loose to festive joy, the country round
 Laughs with the loud sincerity of mirth,
 Shook to the wind their cares. The toil-strung youth,
 By the quick sense of music taught alone,
 Leaps wildly graceful in the lively dance.
 Her every charm abroad, the village-toast,
 Young, buxom, warm, in native beauty rich,
 Darts not unmeaning looks ; and, where her eye
 Points an approving smile, with double force
 The cudgel rattles, and the wrestler twines. 1230
 Age too shines out, and, garrulous, recounts
 The feats of youth. Thus they rejoice, nor think
 That, with to-morrow's sun, their annual toil
 Begins again the never-ceasing round.

Oh ! knew he but his happiness, of men
 The happiest he ; who far from public rage,

Deep in the vale, with a choice few retired,
 Drinks the pure pleasures of the rural life !
 What though the dome be wanting, whose proud gate,
 Each morning, vomits out the sneaking crowd 1240
 Of flatterers false, and in their turn abused?
 Vile intercourse ! What though the glittering robe,
 Of every hue reflected light can give,
 Or floating loose, or stiff with mazy gold,
 The pride and gaze of fools ! oppress him not ?
 What though, from utmost land and sea purvey'd,
 For him each rarer tributary life
 Bleeds not, and his insatiate table heaps
 With luxury and death ? What though his bowl
 Flames not with costly juice ; nor, sunk in beds 1250
 Oft of gay care, he tosses out the night,
 Or melts the thoughtless hours in idle state ?
 What though he knows not those fantastic joys
 That still amuse the wanton, still deceive ;
 A face of pleasure, but a heart of pain ;
 Their hollow moments undelighted all ?*
 Sure peace is his ; a solid life, estranged
 To disappointment and fallacious hope :
 Rich in content, in Nature's bounty rich,
 In herbs and fruits ; whatever greens the Spring 1260
 When heaven descends in showers, or bends the bough
 When Summer reddens and when Autumn beams,

* Cf. Keats's

" A heart high-sorrowful and cloy'd,
 A burning forehead, and a parching tongue."

—*Ode on a Grecian Urn.*

Or in the wintry glebe whatever lies
 Conceal'd, and fattens with the richest sap—
 These are not wanting; nor the milky drove,
 Luxuriant, spread o'er all the lowing vale;
 Nor bleating mountains; nor the chide of streams,
 And hum of bees, inviting sleep sincere
 Into the guiltless breast, beneath the shade,
 Or thrown at large amid the fragrant hay; 1270
 Nor aught besides of prospect, grove, or song,
 Dim grottos, gleaming lakes, and fountain clear.
 Here too dwells simple truth; plain innocence,
 Unsullied beauty, sound unbroken youth,
 Patient of labour, with a little pleased;
 Health, ever-blooming, unambitious toil,
 Calm contemplation, and poetic ease.

Let others brave the flood in quest of gain,
 And beat for joyless months, the gloomy wave.
 Let such as deem it glory to destroy, 1280
 Rush into blood, the sack of cities seek,
 Unpierced, exulting in the widow's wail,
 The virgin's shriek, and infant's trembling cry.
 Let some, far distant from their native soil,
 Urged or by want or harden'd avarice,
 Find other lands beneath another sun.
 Let this through cities work his eager way
 By legal outrage and establish'd guile,
 The social sense extinct; and that ferment
 Mad into tumult the seditious herd, 1290
 Or melt them down to slavery. Let these
 Ensnare the wretched in the toils of law,

Fomenting discord, and perplexing right,
 An iron race ! and those, of fairer front,
 But equal inhumanity, in courts,
 Delusive pomp, and dark cabals, delight ;
 Wreathe the deep bow, diffuse the lying smile,
 And tread the weary labyrinth of state.
 While he, from all the stormy passions free
 That restless men involve, hears, and but hears, 1300
 At distance safe, the human tempest roar,
 Wrapt close in conscious peace. The fall of kings,
 The rage of nations, and the crush of states,
 Move not the man who, from the world escaped,
 In still retreats, and flowery solitudes,
 To Nature's voice attends, from month to month,
 And day to day, through the revolving year ;
 Admiring, sees her in her every shape ;
 Feels all her sweet emotions at his heart ;
 Takes what she liberal gives, nor thinks of more. 1310
 He, when young Spring protrudes the bursting gems,
 Marks the first bud, and sucks the healthful gale
 Into his freshen'd soul ; her genial hours
 He full enjoys ; and not a beauty blows,
 And not an opening blossom breathes, in vain.
 In Summer he, beneath the living shade,
 Such as o'er frigid Tempè wont to wave,
 Or Hæmus cool, reads what the muse, of these
 Perhaps, has in immortal numbers sung ;
 Or what she dictates writes : and oft, an eye 1320
 Shot round, rejoices in the vigorous year.
 When Autumn's yellow lustre gilds the world,

And tempts the sickled swain into the field,
 Seized by the general joy, his heart distends
 With gentle throes ; and, through the tepid gleams
 Deep-musing, then he best exerts his song.
 Even Winter wild to him is full of bliss.
 The mighty tempest, and the hoary waste,
 Abrupt and deep, stretch'd o'er the buried earth,
 Awake to solemn thought. At night the skies, 1330
 Disclosed, and kindled, by refining frost,
 Pour every lustre on the exalted eye.
 A friend, a book, the stealing hours secure,
 And mark them down for wisdom. With swift wing,
 O'er land and sea imagination roams ;
 Or truth, divinely breaking on his mind,
 Elates his being, and unfolds his powers ;
 Or in his breast heroic virtue burns.
 The touch of kindred, too, and love he feels ;
 The modest eye, whose beams on his alone 1340
 Ecstatic shine ; the little strong embrace
 Of prattling children, twined around his neck,
 And, emulous to please him, calling forth
 The fond parental soul. Nor purpose gay,
 Amusement, dance, or song, he sternly scorns ;
 For happiness and true philosophy
 Are of the social still and smiling kind.
 This is the life which those who fret in guilt,
 And guilty cities, never knew ; the life
 Led by primeval ages, uncorrupt, 1350
 When angels dwelt, and God himself, with man.*

* Ll. 1234-1351 are really a graceful transcript of the concluding

O Nature ! all-sufficient ! over all !
 Enrich me with the knowledge of thy works ;
 Snatch me to Heaven ; thy rolling wonders there,
 World beyond world, in infinite extent,
 Profusely scatter'd o'er the blue immense,
 Show me ; their motions, periods, and their laws,
 Give me to scan. Through the disclosing deep
 Light my blind way : the mineral strata there ;
 Thrust, blooming, thence the vegetable world ; 1360
 O'er that the rising system, more complex,
 Of animals ; and, higher still, the mind,
 The varied scene of quick-compounded thought,
 And where the mixing passions endless shift—
 These ever open to my ravish'd eye ;
 A search, the flight of time can ne'er exhaust !
 But if to that unequal—if the blood,
 In sluggish streams about my heart forbid
 That best ambition—under closing shades,
 Inglorious, lay me by the lowly brook, 1370
 And whisper to my dreams. From Thee begin,
 Dwell all on Thee, with Thee conclude my song ;
 And let me never, never stray from Thee !

passage of Virgil's second Georgic ; they form the chief debt of Thomson to his great master.

WINTER.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

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 wander'd through your rough domain; 10

Trod the pure virgin snows, myself as pure ;
 Heard the winds roar, and the big torrent burst ;
 Or seen the deep-fermenting tempest brew'd
 In the grim evening sky. Thus pass'd the time,
 Till through the lucid chambers of the south
 Look'd out the joyous Spring—look'd out and smiled.

To thee, the patron of her first essay,
 The muse, O Wilmington! * renews her song.
 Since has she rounded the revolving year:
 Skimm'd the gay Spring ; on eagle-pinions borne, 20
 Attempted through the Summer blaze to rise ;
 Then swept o'er Autumn with the shadowy gale ;
 And now among the wintry clouds again,
 Roll'd in the doubling storm, she tries to soar ;
 To swell her note with all the rushing winds ;
 To suit her sounding cadence to the floods ;
 As is her theme, her numbers wildly great :
 Thrice happy, could she fill thy judging ear
 With bold description and with manly thought !
 Nor art thou skill'd in awful schemes alone, 30
 And how to make a mighty people thrive ;
 But equal goodness, sound integrity,
 A firm, unshaken, uncorrupted soul
 Amid a sliding age, and burning strong,
 Not vainly blazing, for thy country's weal—
 A steady spirit, regularly free ;
 These, each exalting each, the statesman light
 Into the patriot ; these, the public hope

* Sir Spencer Compton, created Earl of Wilmington in 1730.

WINTER.

157

And eye to thee converting, bid the muse
Record what envy dares not flattery call.

40

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 through 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 unwish'd; 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 furrow'd land,
Fresh from the plough, the dun-discolour'd flocks,
Untended spreading, crop the wholesome root.
Along the woods, along the moorish fens,
Sighs the sad genius of the coming storm;

50

60

And up among the loose disjointed cliffs,
 And fractured mountains wild, the brawling brook
 And cave, presageful, send a hollow moan, 70
 Resounding long in listening fancy's ear.

Then comes the father of the tempest forth,
 Wrapt in black glooms. First, joyless rains obscure
 Drive through the mingling skies with vapour foul ;
 Dash on the mountain's brow, and shake the woods
 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, 80
 Each to his home, retire ; save those that love
 To take their pastime in the troubled air,
 Or skimming flutter round the dimply pool.
 The cattle from the untasted fields return,
 And ask, with meaning low, their wonted stalls,
 Or ruminatè 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 90
 Recounts his simple frolic : much he talks,
 And much he laughs, nor recks the storm that blows
 Without, and rattles on his humble roof.

Wide o'er the brim, with many a torrent swell'd,
 And the mix'd ruin of its banks o'erspread,
 At last the 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, 100
 Calm, sluggish, silent; till again, constrain'd
 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 astonish'd, and astonish'd sings! 110
 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,
 Hush'd 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, stain'd—red fiery streaks 120
 Begin to flush around. The reeling clouds
 Stagger with dizzy poise, as doubting yet
 Which master to obey; while, rising slow,
 Blank in the leaden-colour'd east, the moon
 Wears a wan circle round her blunted horns.

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.
 Snatch'd in short eddies, plays the wither'd leaf; 130
 And on the flood the dancing feather floats.
 With broaden'd nostrils to the sky upturn'd,
 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 plummy race,
 The tenants of the sky, its changes speak.
 Retiring from the downs, where all day long
 They pick'd their scanty fare, a blackening train 140
 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 press'd, with broken tide
 And blind commotion heaves; while from the shore,
 Eat into caverns by the restless wave 150
 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

WINTER.

161

Descends the ethereal force, and with strong gust
Turns from its bottom the discolour'd deep.
Through the black night that sits immense around,
Lash'd into foam, the fierce-conflicting brine
Seems o'er a thousand raging waves to burn. 160
Meantime the mountain-billows, to the clouds
In dreadful tumult swell'd, surge above surge,
Burst into chaos with tremendous roar,
And anchor'd navies from their stations drive,
Wild as the winds, across the howling waste
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 170
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 loosen'd 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. 180
Low waves the rooted forest, vex'd, and sheds
What of its tarnish'd honours yet remain,
Dash'd down and scatter'd, by the tearing wind's
Assiduous fury, its gigantic limbs.
Thus struggling through the dissipated grove,

11

The whirling tempest raves along the plain;
 And, on the cottage thatch'd or lordly roof
 Keen fastening, shakes them to the solid base.
 Sleep frightened flies ; and round the rocking dome,
 For entrance eager, howls the savage blast. 190
 Then too, they say, through all the burden'd air,
 Long groans are heard, shrill sounds, and distant
 sighs,

That, utter'd by the demon of the night,
 Warn the devoted wretch of woe and death.

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

As yet '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 ! 210
 Where are ye now ? and what is your amount ?
 Vexation, disappointment, and remorse.
 Sad, sickening thought ! and yet deluded man,
 A scene of crude, disjointed visions past,

And broken slumbers, rises still resolved,
With new-flush'd hopes, to run the giddy round.

Father of light and life ! thou Good Supreme !
Oh, teach me what is good ! teach me Thyself !
Save me from folly, vanity, and vice,
From every low pursuit ; and feed my soul 220
With knowledge, conscious peace, and virtue pure—
Sacred, substantial, never-fading bliss !

The keener tempests 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 congeal'd.
Heavy they roll their fleecy world along,
And the sky saddens with the gather'd storm.
Through the hush'd air the whitening shower descends,
At first thin-wavering ; till at last the flakes 230
Fall broad, and wide, and fast, dimming the day
With a continual flow. The cherish'd fields
Put on their winter-robe of purest white.
'Tis brightness all, save where the new snow melts
Along the mazy current. Low the woods
Bow their hoar heads ; and, ere the languid sun
Faint from the west emits his evening ray,
Earth's universal face, deep-hid and chill,
Is one wide dazzling waste, that buries wide
The works of man. Drooping, the labourer-ox 240
Stands cover'd o'er with snow, and then demands
The fruit of all his toil. The fowls of heaven,
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 250
 Against the window beats ; then brisk alights
 On the warm hearth ; then, hopping o'er the floor,
 Eyes all the smiling family askance,
 And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is ;
 Till, more familiar grown, the table-crumbs
 Attract his slender feet. The foodless wilds
 Pour forth their brown inhabitants. The hare,
 Though timorous of heart, and hard beset
 By death in various forms—dark snares, and dogs,
 And more unpitying men—the garden seeks, 260
 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 wither'd herb through heaps of snow.
 Now, shepherds, to your helpless charge be kind ;
 Baffle the raging year, and fill their pens
 With food at will ; lodge them below the storm,
 And watch them strict : for from the bellowing east,
 In this dire season, oft the whirlwind's wing
 Sweeps up the burden of whole wintry plains 270
 At one wide waft, and o'er the hapless flocks,
 Hid in the hollow of two neighbouring hills,
 The billowy tempest whelms ; till, upward urged,

The valley to a shining mountain swells,
Tipp'd with a wreath high-curling in the sky.

As thus the snows arise, and foul and fierce
All Winter drives along the darken'd air,
In his own loose-revolving fields the swain
Disaster'd stands ; sees other hills ascend,
Of unknown, joyless brow ; and other scenes, 280
Of horrid prospect, shag the trackless plain ;
Nor finds the river, nor the forest, hid
Beneath the formless wild ; but wanders on
From hill to dale, still more and more astray,
Impatient flouncing through the drifted heaps,
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 feign'd 290
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 thron'g the busy shapes into his mind
Of cover'd pits, unfathomably deep,
A dire descent ! beyond the power of frost ;
Of faithless bogs ; of precipices huge, 300
Smooth'd up with snow ; and what is land, unknown,
What water, of the still unfrozen spring,
In the loose marsh or solitary lake,

Where the fresh fountain from the bottom boils.
 These check his fearful steps ; and down he sinks
 Beneath the shelter of the shapeless drift,
 Thinking o'er all the bitterness of death,
 Mix'd with the tender anguish Nature shoots
 Through the wrung bosom of the dying man—
 His wife, his children, and his friends unseen. 310
 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 snows, a stiffen'd corse, 320
 Stretch'd 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, 330
 By shameful variance betwixt man and man ;
 How many pine in want and dungeon-glooms,

Shut from the common air, and common use
 Of their own limbs ; how many drink the cup
 Of baleful grief, or eat the bitter bread
 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, 340
 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 join'd,
 How many, rack'd with honest passions, droop
 In deep-retired distress ; how many stand
 Around the death-bed of their dearest friends,
 And point the parting anguish. Thought fond man
 Of these, and all the thousand nameless ills,
 That one incessant struggle render life, 350
 One scene of toil, of suffering, and of fate ;
 Vice in his high career would stand appall'd,
 And heedless rambling impulse learn to think ;
 The conscious heart of charity would warm,
 And her wide wish benevolence dilate ;
 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, touch'd with human woe, redressive search'd 360
 Into the horrors of the gloomy jail,

* The Jail Committee, in the year 1729.—T.

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;
 Snatch'd the lean morsel from the starving mouth;
 Tore from cold wintry limbs the tatter'd weed;
 Even robb'd them of the last of comforts, sleep; 370
 The free-born Briton to the dungeon chain'd,
 Or, as the lust of cruelty prevail'd,
 At pleasure mark'd him with inglorious stripes;
 And crush'd out lives, by secret barbarous ways,
 That for their country would have toil'd or bled.
 O great design! if executed well,
 With patient care and wisdom-temper'd zeal.
 Ye sons of mercy! yet resume the search;
 Drag forth the legal monsters into light,
 Wrench from their hands oppression's iron rod, 380
 And bid the cruel feel the pains they give.
 Much still untouch'd remains; in this 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, 390

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 ranging 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, 400
 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 soften'd gaze,
 Here bleeds, a hapless, undistinguish'd prey.
 But if, apprised of the severe attack,
 The country be shut up, lured by the scent,
 On churchyards drear (inhuman to relate !) 410
 The disappointed prowlers fall, and dig
 The shrouded body from the grave ; o'er which,
 Mix'd with foul shades and frighted ghosts, they howl.

Among those hilly regions where, 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, 420
 And sometimes whole brigades of marching troops,
 Or hamlets sleeping in the dead of night,
 Are deep beneath the smothering ruin whelm'd.

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, shelter'd, solitary scene,
 Where ruddy fires and beaming tapers join 430
 To cheer the gloom. There studious let me sit,
 And hold high converse with the mighty dead,
 Sages of ancient time, as gods revered,
 As gods beneficent, who bless'd mankind
 With arts, with arms, and humanised 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, 440
 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 undamp'd

WINTER.

171

Preserving still that quick peculiar fire,
 Whence in the laurell'd field of finer arts, 450
 And of bold freedom, they unequal'd shone,
 The pride of smiling Greece and humankind.
 Lycurgus then, who bow'd beneath the force
 Of strictest discipline, severely wise,
 All human passions. Following him I see,
 As at Thermopylæ he glorious fell,
 The firm devoted chief, * who proved by deeds
 The hardest lesson which the other taught.
 Then Aristides lifts his honest front ;
 Spotless of heart, to whom the unflattering voice 460
 Of freedom gave the noblest name of Just ;
 In pure majestic poverty revered ;
 Who, even his glory to his country's weal
 Submitting, swell'd a haughty rival's † fame.
 Rear'd by his care, of softer ray appears
 Cimon sweet-soul'd ; whose genius, rising strong,
 Shook off the load of young debauch ; abroad
 The scourge of Persian pride, at home the friend
 Of every worth and every splendid art ;
 Modest and simple in the pomp of wealth. 470
 Then the last worthies of declining Greece,
 Late call'd to glory, in unequal times,
 Pensive appear. The fair Corinthian boast,
 Timoleon, temper'd happy, mild and firm,
 Who wept the brother, while the tyrant bled :
 And, equal to the best, the Theban pair, ‡

* Leonidas.—T. † Themistocles.—T.

‡ Pelopidas and Epaminondas.—T.

Whose virtues, in heroic concord join'd,
 Their country raised to freedom, empire, fame.
 He, too, with whom Athenian honour sunk,
 And left a mass of sordid lees behind, 480
 Phocion the Good ; in public life severe,
 To virtue still inexorably firm ;
 But when, beneath his low illustrious roof,
 Sweet peace and happy wisdom smooth'd his brow,
 Not friendship softer was, nor love more kind.
 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,— 490
 Aratus, who awhile relumed the soul
 Of fondly lingering liberty in Greece ;
 And he, her darling, as her latest hope,
 The gallant Philopœmen, who to arms
 Turn'd the luxurious pomp he could not cure ;
 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 500
 Their dearest country they too fondly loved.
 Her better founder first, the light of Rome,
 Numa, who soften'd her rapacious sons ;
 Servius the king who laid the solid base
 On which o'er earth the vast republic spread.
 Then the great consuls venerable rise,—

The public father* who the private quell'd,
 As on the dread tribunal, sternly sad ;
 He, whom his thankless country could not lose,
 Camillus, only vengeful to her foes ; 510
 Fabricius, scorner of all-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 call'd, and honour's dire command ;
 Scipio, the gentle chief, humanely brave,
 Who soon the race of spotless glory ran,
 And, warm in youth, to the poetic shade
 With friendship and philosophy retired ; 520
 Tully, whose powerful eloquence awhile
 Restrain'd the rapid fate of rushing Rome ;
 Unconquer'd Cato, virtuous in extreme ;
 And thou, unhappy Brutus, kind of heart,
 Whose steady arm, by awful virtue 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, 530
 Fair, mild, and strong, as is a vernal sun—
 'Tis Phœbus' self, or else the Mantuan swain !
 Great Homer too appears, of daring wing,
 Parent of song ! and equal by his side
 The British muse ; join'd hand in hand they walk,

* Marcus Junius Brutus.—T.

† Regulus.—T.

Darkling full up the middle steep to fame.
 Nor absent are those shades, whose skilful touch
 Pathetic drew the impassion'd heart, and charm'd
 Transported Athens with the moral scene ;
 Nor those who tuneful waked the enchanting lyre. 540

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 hallow'd 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, 550
 To raise the sacred hour, to bid it smile,
 And with the social spirit warm the heart ;
 For though not sweeter his own Homer sings,
 Yet is his life the more endearing song.

Where art thou, Hammond ?* thou the darling pride,
 The friend and lover, of the tuneful throng !
 Ah ! why, dear youth, in all the blooming prime
 Of vernal genius, where disclosing fast
 Each active worth, each manly virtue lay,
 Why wert thou ravish'd from our hope so soon ? 560
 What now avails that noble thirst of fame
 Which stung thy fervent breast, that treasured store
 Of knowledge early gain'd, that eager zeal

* James Hammond, equerry to Frederick, Prince of Wales ;
 author of poems in imitation of Tibullus.

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 virtue smile?
 Ah! only show'd, to check our fond pursuits,
 And teach our humbled hopes that life is vain!

570

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 call'd, 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 astonish'd eye.
 Then would we try to scan the moral world,
 Which, though to us it seems embroil'd, moves on
 In higher order, fitted and impell'd
 By wisdom's finest hand, and issuing all
 In general good. The sage historic muse
 Should next conduct us through the deeps of time;
 Show us how empire grew, declined, and fell,
 In scatter'd 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. And thus we talk'd,

580

590

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 doom'd,
 In powerless humble fortune, to repress
 These ardent risings of the kindling soul,
 Then, even superior to ambition, we 600
 Would learn the private virtues; how to glide
 Through shades and plains, along the smoothest stream
 Of rural life; or, snatch'd away by hope
 Through the dim spaces of futurity,
 With earnest eye anticipate those scenes
 Of happiness and wonder, where the mind,
 In endless growth and infinite ascent,
 Rises from state to state, and world to world.
 But when with these the serious thought is foil'd,
 We, shifting for relief, would play the shapes 610
 Of frolic fancy; and incessant form
 These rapid pictures, that assembled train
 Of fleet ideas, never join'd before,
 Whence lively wit excites to gay surprise;
 Or folly-painting humour, grave himself,
 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. 620
 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, snatch'd 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, 630
 Full of each theme, and warm with mix'd 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,
 Mix'd and evolved a thousand sprightly ways.
 The glittering court effuses every pomp ; 640
 The circle deepens ; beam'd from gaudy robes,
 Tapers, and sparkling gems, and radiant eyes,
 A soft effulgence o'er the palace waves ;
 While, a gay insect in his Summer shine,
 The fop light 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 650
 Holds to the world a picture of itself,

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

O thou whose wisdom, solid yet refined,
 Whose patriot virtues, and consummate skill
 To touch the finer springs that move the world,
 Join'd to whate'er the Graces can bestow,
 And all Apollo's animating fire, 660
 Give thee with pleasing dignity to shine
 At once the guardian, ornament, and joy
 Of polish'd life ; permit the rural muse,
 O Chesterfield, to grace with thee her song !
 Ere to the shades again she humbly flies,
 Indulge her fond ambition, in thy train
 (For every muse has in thy train a place)
 To mark thy various full-accomplish'd mind :
 To mark that spirit which, with British scorn,
 Rejects the allurements of corrupted power ; 670
 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-temper'd satire, smoothly keen,
 Steals through the soul, and without pain corrects.
 Or, rising thence with yet a brighter flame,
 O let me hail thee on some glorious day,

* A character in *The Conscious Lovers*, by Sir R. Steele.—T.

WINTER.

179

When to the listening senate ardent crowd 680
 Britannia's sons to hear her pleaded cause.
 Then dress'd by thee, more amiably fair,
 Truth the soft robe of mild persuasion wears ;
 Thou to assenting reason giv'st again
 Her own enlighten'd thoughts ; call'd 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. 690

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 strengthen'd bodies in its cold embrace
 Constringent ; feeds and animates our blood ;
 Refines our spirits, through the new-strung nerves 700
 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 710
 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 hook'd, or shaped
 Like double wedges, and diffused immense
 Through water, earth, and ether ? Hence at eve, 720
 Steam'd eager from the red horizon round,
 With the fierce rage of Winter deep-suffused,
 An icy gale, oft shifting, o'er the pool
 Breathes a blue film, and in its mid career
 Arrests the bickering stream. The loosen'd 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, 730
 The whole imprison'd 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 waterfall
 Swells in the breeze ; and with the hasty tread
 Of traveller the hollow-sounding plain
 Shakes from afar. The full ethereal round,

WINTER.

181

Infinite worlds disclosing to the view,
 Shines out intensely keen ; and, all one cope 740
 Of starry glitter, glows from pole to pole.
 From pole to pole the rigid influence falls,
 Through the still night, incessant, heavy, strong,
 And seizes Nature fast. It freezes on,
 Till morn, late-rising o'er the drooping world,
 Lifts her pale eye unjoyous. Then appears
 The various labour of the silent night—
 Prone from the dripping eave, and dumb cascade,
 Whose idle torrents only seem to roar,
 The pendent icicle ; the frost-work fair, 750
 Where transient hues and fancied figures rise ;
 Wide-spouted o'er the hill, the frozen brook,
 A livid tract, cold-gleaming on the morn ;
 The forest bent beneath the plummy 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, 760
 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
 Branch'd 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, 770
 The then gay land is madden'd all to joy.
 Nor less the northern courts, wide o'er the snow
 Pour a new pomp. Eager on rapid sleds
 Their vigorous youth in bold contention wheel
 The long-resounding course. Meantime, to raise
 The manly strife, with highly blooming charms,
 Flush'd by the season, Scandinavia's dames,
 Or Russia's buxom daughters glow around.

Pure, quick, and sportful, is the wholesome day;
 But soon elapsed. The horizontal sun 780
 Broad o'er the south hangs at his utmost noon ;
 And ineffectual strikes the gelid cliff;
 His azure gloss the mountain still maintains,
 Nor feels the feeble touch. Perhaps the vaie
 Relents a while to the reflected ray;
 Or from the forest falls the cluster'd snow,
 Myriads of gems, that in the waving gleam
 Gay-twinkle as they scatter. Thick around
 Thunders the sport of those who, with the gun,
 And dog impatient bounding at the shot, 790
 Worse than the season, desolate the fields,
 And, adding to the ruins of the year,
 Distress the footed or the feather'd game.

But what is this? Our infant Winter sinks,
 Divested of his grandeur, should our eye
 Astonish'd 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,
 Barr'd by the hand of Nature from escape, 800
 Wide roams the Russian exile. Nought around
 Strikes his sad eye, but deserts lost in snow;
 And heavy-loaded groves; and solid floods,
 That stretch athwart the solitary vast
 Their icy horrors to the frozen main;
 And cheerless towns far distant, never bless'd,
 Save when its annual course the caravan
 Bends to the golden coast of rich Cathay,*
 With news of humankind. Yet there life glows;
 Yet cherish'd there, beneath the shining waste, 810
 The furry nations harbour—tipp'd with jet,
 Fair ermines, spotless as the snows they press;
 Sables, of glossy black; and, dark-embrown'd,
 Or beauteous freak'd with many a mingled hue,
 Thousands besides, the costly pride of courts.
 There, warm together press'd, 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, 820
 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.

* The old name for China.—T.

There through the piny forest, half absorb'd,
 Rough tenant of these shades, the shapeless bear,
 With dangling ice all horrid, stalks forlorn,
 Slow-paced, and sourer as the storms increase ; 830
 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 polish'd slavery sunk,
 Drove martial horde on horde,‡ with dreadful sweep 840
 Resistless rushing o'er the enfeebled south,
 And gave the vanquish'd 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. 850
 Their reindeer form their riches. These their tents,
 Their robes, their beds, and all their homely wealth

* A small star near the Great Bear.—T.

† The north-west wind.—T.

‡ The wandering Scythian clans.—T.

Supply, their wholesome fare and cheerful cups.
 Obsequious at their call, the docile tribe
 Yield to the sled their necks, and whirl them swift
 O'er hill and dale, heap'd into one expanse
 Of marbled snow, 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, 860
 And vivid moons, and stars that keener play
 With double lustre from the glossy 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.
 Wish'd Spring returns; and from the hazy south,
 While dim Aurora slowly moves before,
 The welcome sun, just verging up at first,
 By small degrees extends the swelling curve;
 Till, seen at last for gay rejoicing months, 870
 Still round and round his spiral course he winds,
 And, 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 Niemi's* fairy mountains rise,

* M. de Maupertuis, in his book on the Figure of the Earth, after having described the beautiful lake and mountain of Niemi, in Lapland, says, "From this height we had 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.

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 employ'd,
 Their kind unblemish'd wives the fire prepare. 880
 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 Tornea's lake,
 And Hecla flaming through a waste of snow,
 And farthest Greenland, to the pole itself,
 Where, failing gradual, life at length goes out, 890
 The muse expands her solitary flight ;
 And, 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, 900
 With which he now oppresses half the globe.

* 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.

† The other hemisphere.—T.

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, 910
 As if old chaos was again return'd,
 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 chain'd,
 And bid to roar no more, a bleak expanse,
 Shagg'd o'er with wavy rocks, cheerless, and void
 Of every life, that from the dreary months
 Flies conscious southward. Miserable they, 920
 Who, here entangled in the gathering ice,
 Take their last look of the descending sun ;
 While, full of death, and fierce with tenfold frost,
 The long, long night, incumbent o'er their heads,
 Falls horrible. Such was the Briton's* fate,
 As with first prow (what have not Briton's dared ?)
 He for the passage sought, attempted since
 So much in vain, and seeming to be shut
 By jealous Nature with eternal bars.

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

In these fell regions, in Arzina caught, 930
 And to the stony deep his idle ship
 Immediate seal'd, he with his hapless crew,
 Each full-exerted at his several task,
 Froze into statues, to the cordage 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 enliven'd by the distant sun,
 That rears and ripens man, as well as plants,
 Here human nature wears its rudest form. 940
 Deep from the piercing season sunk in caves,
 Here by dull fires, and with unjoyous cheer,
 They waste the tedious gloom. 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 quiver'd savage to the chase.

What cannot active government perform, 950
 New-moulding man? Wide-stretching from these shores,
 A people savage from remotest time,
 A huge neglected empire, one vast mind,
 By heaven inspired, from Gothic darkness call'd.
 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.

WINTER.

189

Ye shades of ancient heroes, ye who toil'd
 Through long successive ages to build up
 A labouring plan of state, behold at once
 The wonder done ! Behold the matchless prince,
 Who left his native throne, where reign'd till then
 A mighty shadow of unreal power ;
 Who greatly spurn'd the slothful pomp of courts ;
 And, roaming every land, in every port
 His sceptre laid aside, with glorious hand
 Unwearied plying the mechanic tool ;
 Gather'd the seeds of trade, of useful arts,
 Of civil wisdom, or of martial skill. 970
 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 join'd ;
 The astonish'd Euxine hears the Baltic roar ;
 Proud navies ride on seas that never foam'd
 With daring keel before ; and armies stretch
 Each way their dazzling files, repressing here
 The frantic Alexander of the north, 980
 And awing there stern Othman's shrinking sons.
 Sloth flies the land, and ignorance, and vice,
 Of old dishonour proud : it glows around,
 Taught by the royal hand that roused the whole,
 One scene of arts, of arms, of rising trade ;
 For what his wisdom plann'd, and power enforced,
 More potent still, his great example show'd.

Muttering, the winds at eve, with blunted point,

Blow hollow-blustering from the south. Subdued,
 The frost resolves into a trickling thaw. 990
 Spotted the mountains shine; loose sleet descends,
 And floods the country round. The rivers swell,
 Of bonds impatient. Sudden from the hills,
 O'er rocks and woods, in broad brown cataracts,
 A thousand snow-fed torrents shoot at once;
 And, where they rush, the wide-resounding plain
 Is left one slimy waste. Those sullen seas,
 That wash'd the ungenial pole, will rest no more
 Beneath the shackles of the mighty north,
 But, rousing all their waves, resistless heave. 1000
 And, hark! the lengthening roar continuous runs
 Athwart the rifted deep: at once it bursts,
 And piles a thousand mountains to the clouds.
 Ill fares the bark, with trembling wretches charged,
 That, toss'd 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, 1010
 The roar of winds and waves, the crush of ice,
 Now ceasing, now renew'd with louder rage,
 And in dire echoes bellowing round the main?
 More to embroil the deep, Leviathan
 And his unwieldy train, in dreadful sport,
 Tempest the loosen'd brine; while through the gloom,
 Far from the bleak inhospitable shore,
 Loading the winds, is heard the hungry howl

Of famish'd monsters, there awaiting wrecks.
 Yet Providence, that ever-waking eye, 1020
 Looks down with pity on the feeble toil
 Of mortals lost to hope, and lights them safe,
 Through all this dreary labyrinth of fate.

'Tis done ! dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
 And reigns tremendous o'er the conquer'd 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, 1030
 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 vanish'd ! Virtue sole survives,
 Immortal, never-failing friend of man, 1040
 His guide to happiness on high.—And see !
 'Tis come, the glorious morn, the second birth
 Of heaven and earth ! Awakening Nature hears
 The new-creating word, and starts to life,
 In every heighten'd 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, 1050
 Confounded in the dust, adore that Power
 And Wisdom oft arraign'd : 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 1060
 Of superstition's scourge ; why licensed pain,
 That cruel spoiler, that embosom'd foe,
 Embitter'd all our bliss. Ye good distress'd ?
 Ye noble few ! who here unbending stand
 Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up awhile
 And what your bounded view, which only saw
 A little part, deem'd evil, is no more :
 The storms of wintry time will quickly pass,
 And one unbounded Spring encircle all.

A HYMN.

THESE, as they change, Almighty Father ! these
 Are but the varied God. The rolling year
 Is full of Thee. Forth in the pleasing Spring
 Thy beauty walks, Thy tenderness and love.
 Wide flush the fields ; the softening air is balm ;

Echo the mountains round; the forest smiles;
 And every sense, and every heart is joy.
 Then comes Thy glory in the Summer months,
 With light and heat refulgent. Then Thy sun
 Shoots full perfection through the swelling year; 10
 And oft Thy voice in dreadful thunder speaks;
 And oft at dawn, deep noon, or falling eve,
 By brooks and groves, in hollow-whispering gales.
 Thy bounty shines in Autumn unconfined,
 And spreads a common feast for all that lives.
 In Winter, awful Thou! with clouds and storms
 Around Thee thrown, tempest o'er tempest roll'd,
 Majestic darkness! on the whirlwind's wing
 Riding sublime, Thou bidd'st the world adore,
 And humblest Nature with Thy northern blast. 20

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

With transport touches all the springs of life.

Nature, attend ! join every living soul,
Beneath the spacious temple of the sky,
In adoration, join and ardent raise

One general song ! To Him, ye vocal gales, 40

Breathe soft, whose spirit in your freshness breathes :

Oh, talk of Him in solitary glooms,

Where, o'er the rock, the scarcely waving pine

Fills the brown shade with a religious awe !

And ye, whose bolder note is heard afar,

Who shake the astonish'd world, lift high to heaven

The impetuous song, and say from whom you rage.

His praise, ye brooks, attune, ye trembling rills ;

And let me catch it as I muse along.

Ye headlong torrents, rapid and profound ; 50

Ye softer floods, that lead the humid maze

Along the vale ; and thou, majestic main,

A secret world of wonders in thyself,

Sounds His stupendous praise ; whose greater voice

Or bids you roar, or bids your roarings fall.

Soft roll your incense, herbs, and fruits, and flowers,

In mingled clouds to Him, whose sun exalts,

Whose breath perfumes you, and whose pencil paints.

Ye forests, bend, ye harvests, wave, to Him ;

Breathe your still song into the reaper's heart, 60

As home he goes beneath the joyous moon.

Ye that keep watch in heaven, as earth asleep

Unconscious lies, effuse your mildest beams,

Ye constellations, while your angels strike,

Amid the spangled sky, the silver lyre.

Great source of day, best image here below
 Of thy Creator, ever pouring wide,
 From world to world, the vital ocean round,—
 On Nature write with every beam His praise.
 The thunder rolls: be hush'd the prostrate world, 70
 While cloud to cloud returns the solemn hymn.
 Bleat out afresh, ye hills; ye mossy rocks,
 Retain the sound; the broad responsive low,
 Ye valleys, raise; for the Great Shepherd reigns,
 And His unsuffering kingdom yet will come.
 Ye woodlands all, awake: a boundless song
 Burst from the groves; and when the restless day,
 Expiring, lays the warbling world asleep,
 Sweetest of birds, sweet Philomela, charm
 The listening shades, and teach the night His praise. 80
 Ye chief, for whom the whole creation smiles,
 At once the head, the heart, and tongue of all,
 Crown the great hymn! In swarming cities vast,
 Assembled men, to the deep organ join
 The long-resounding voice, oft breaking clear,
 At solemn pauses, through the swelling bass;
 And, as each mingling flame increases each,
 In one united ardour rise to heaven.
 Or, if you rather choose the rural shade,
 And find a fane in every sacred grove, 90
 There let the shepherd's flute, the virgin's lay,
 The prompting seraph, and the poet's lyre,
 Still sing the God of Seasons, as they roll.
 For me, when I forget the darling theme,
 Whether the blossom blows, the Summer ray

Russets the plain, inspiring Autumn gleams,
 Or Winter rises in the blackening east,
 Be my tongue mute, my fancy paint no more,
 And, dead to joy, forget my heart to beat !

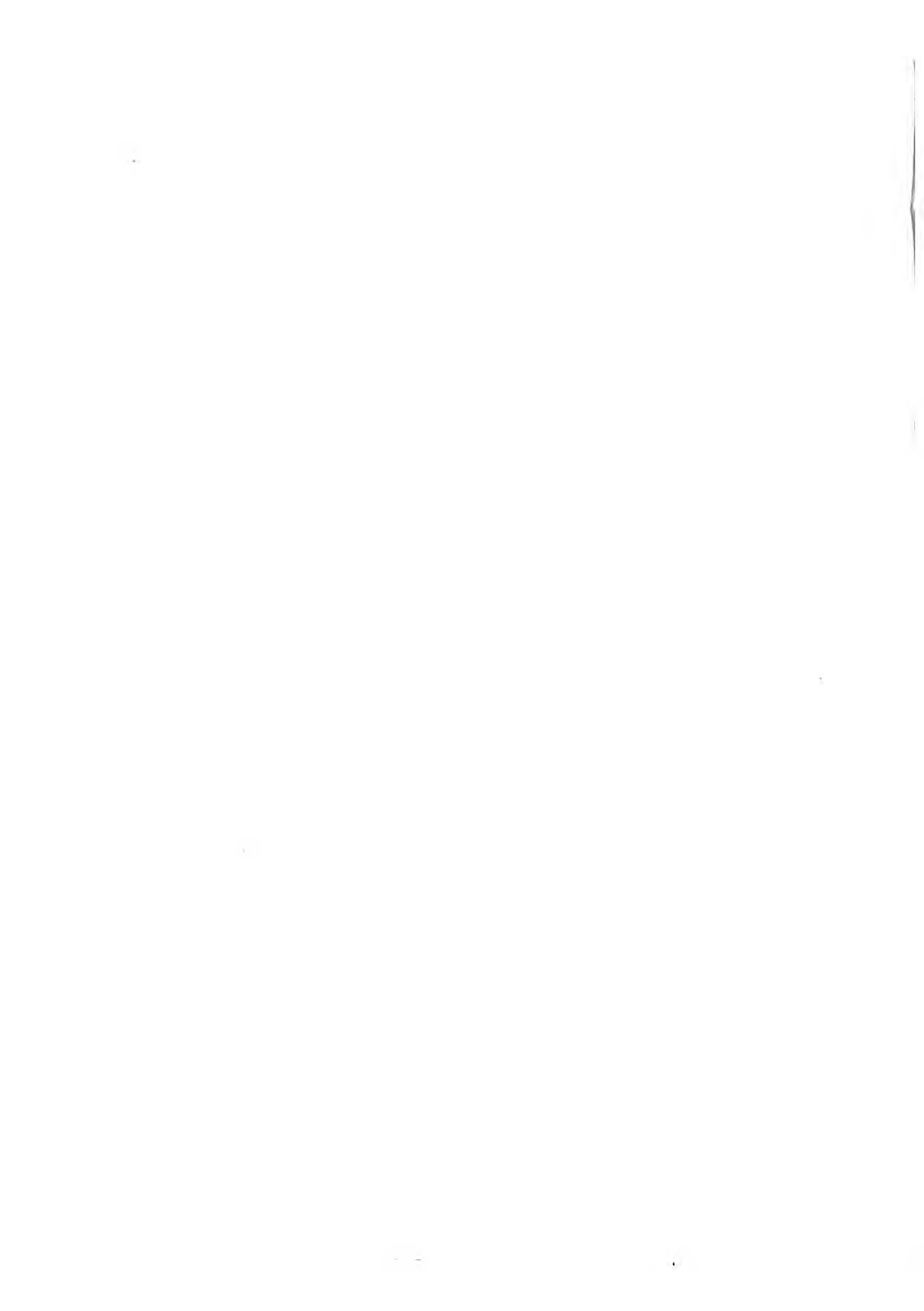
Should fate command me to the farthest verge 100
 Of the green earth, to distant barbarous climes,
 Rivers unknown to song ; where first the sun
 Gilds Indian mountains, or his setting beam
 Flames on the Atlantic isles ; 'tis nought to me ;
 Since God is ever present, ever felt,
 In the void waste as in the city full ;
 And where He vital spreads, there must be joy.
 When even at last the solemn hour shall come,
 And wing my mystic flight to future worlds,
 I cheerful will obey ; there, with new powers, 110
 Will rising wonders sing. I cannot go
 Where Universal Love not smiles around,
 Sustaining all yon orbs, and all their sons ;
 From seeming evil still educing good,
 And better thence again, and better still,
 In infinite progression. — But I lose
 Myself in Him, in Light ineffable !
 Come, then, expressive Silence, muse His praise.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE:

An Allegorical Poem.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS poem being writ in the manner of Spenser, the obsolete words, and a simplicity of diction in some of the lines which borders on the ludicrous, were necessary to make the imitation more perfect. And the style of that admirable poet, as well as the measure in which he wrote, are, as it were, appropriated by custom to all allegorical poems writ in our language; just as in French the style of Marot, who lived under Francis I., has been used in tales and familiar epistles by the politest writers of the age of Louis XIV.



THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

EXPLANATION OF THE OBSOLETE WORDS USED IN THIS POEM.

Archimage, *the chief, or greatest, of magicians or enchanters.*

Apaid, *paid.*

Appal, *affright.*

Atween, *between.*

Aye, *always.*

Bale, *sorrow, trouble, misfortune.*

Benempt, *named.*

Blazon, *painting, displaying.*

Breme, *cold, raw.*

Carol, *to sing songs of joy.*

Caurus, *the north-east wind.*

Certes, *certainly.*

Dan, *a word prefixed to names.*

Destly, *skilfully.*

Depainted, *painted.*

Drowsy-head, *drowsiness.*

Eath, *easy.*

Eftsoons, *immediately, often, afterwards.*

Eke, *also.*

Fays, *fairies.*

Gear (or Geer), *furniture, equipage, dress.*

Glaive, *sword (Fr.).*

Glee, *joy, pleasure.*

Han, *have.*

Hight, *named, called; and sometimes it is used for is called. See Canto I., Stanza vii.*

Idless, *idleness.*

Imp, *child, or offspring; from the Saxon impan, to graft or plant.*

Kest, *for cast.*

Lad, *for led.*

Lea, *a piece of land, or meadow.*

Libbard, *leopard.*

Lig, *to lie.*

Lithe, *loose, lax.*

Losel, *a loose, idle fellow.*

Louting, *bowing, bending.*

Mell, *mingle.*

Moe, *more.*

Moil, *labour.*

Mote, *might*.
 Muchel (or Mochel), *much, great*.
 Nathless, *nevertheless*.
 Ne, *nor*.
 Needments, *necessaries*.
 Noursling, *a child that is nursed*.
 Noyance, *harm*.
 Perdie (Fr. *par Dieu*), *an old oath*.
 Prankt, *coloured, adorned gaily*.
 Prick'd through the forest, *rode through the forest*.
 Sear, *dry, burnt up*.
 Sheen, *bright, shining*.
 Sicker, *sure, surely*.
 Smackt, *savoured*.
 Soot, *sweet, or sweetly*.
 Sooth, *true, or truth*.
 Stound, *misfortune, pang*.
 Sweltry, *sultry, consuming with heat*.
 Swink, *to labour*.
 Thrall, *slave*.
 Transmew'd, *transformed*.
 Unkempt (Lat. *incomptus*), *unadorned*.

Vild, *vile*.
 Ween, *to think, be of opinion*.
 Weet, *to know; to weet, to wit*.
 Whilom, *ere-while, formerly*.
 Wight, *man*.
 Wis (for Wist), *to know, think, understand*.
 Wonne (a Noun), *dwelling*.
 Wroke, *wreakt*.

N. B.—The letter Y is frequently placed in the beginning of a word, by Spenser, to lengthen it a syllable, and en at the end of a word, for the same reason, as withouten, casten, etc.

Yborn, *born*.
 Yblent (or blent), *blended, mingled*.
 Yclad, *clad*.
 Ycleped, *called, named*.
 Yfere, *together*.
 Ymolten, *melted*.
 Yode (*preter. tense of yede*), *went*.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

CANTO I.

*The Castle hight of Indolence,
And its false luxury;
Where for a little time, alas!
We lived right jollily.*

I.

O MORTAL man, who livest here by toil,
Do not complain of this thy hard estate:
That like an emmet thou must ever moil,
Is a sad sentence of an ancient date;
And, certes, there is for it reason great;
For, though sometimes it makes thee weep and wail,
And curse thy star, and early drudge and late,
Withouten that would come an heavier bale,—
Loose life, unruly passions, and diseases pale.

II.

In lowly dale, fast by a river's side,
With woody hill o'er hill encompass'd round,
A most enchanting wizard did abide,
Than whom a fiend more fell is nowhere found.
It was, I ween, a lovely spot of ground;

10

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And there a season atween June and May,
Half pranked with spring, with summer half imbrown'd,
A listless climate made, where, sooth to say,
No living wight could work, ne cared even for play.

III.

Was nought around but images of rest :
Sleep-soothing groves, and quiet lawns between ; 20
And flowery beds, that slumbrous influence kest,
From poppies breathed ; and beds of pleasant green,
Where never yet was creeping creature seen.
Meantime unnumber'd glittering streamlets play'd,
And hurled everywhere their waters sheen ;
That, as they bicker'd through the sunny glade,
Though restless still themselves, a lulling murmur made.

IV.

Join'd to the prattle of the purling rills,
Were heard the lowing herds along the vale,
And flocks loud-bleating from the distant hills, 30
And vacant shepherds piping in the dale ;
And now and then sweet Philomel would wail,
Or stock-doves plain amid the forest deep,
That drowsy rustled to the sighing gale ;
And still a coil the grasshopper did keep :
Yet all these sounds yblent inclined all to sleep.

V.

Full in the passage of the vale, above,
A sable, silent, solemn forest stood ;
Where nought but shadowy forms were seen to move,

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 203

As Idless fancied in her dreaming mood : 40
And up the hills, on either side, a wood
Of blackening pines, aye waving to and fro,
Sent forth a sleepy horror through the blood ;
And where this valley winded out below,
The murmuring main was heard, and scarcely heard, to
flow.

VI.

A pleasing land of drowsy-head it was ;
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,
For ever flushing round a summer sky.
There eke the soft delights, that witchingly 50
Instil a wanton sweetness through the breast,
And the calm pleasures, always hover'd nigh ;
But whate'er smackt of noyance, or unrest,
Was far, far off expell'd from this delicious nest.*

VII.

The landskip such, inspiring perfect ease,
Where INDOLENCE (for so the wizard hight)
Close-hid his castle 'mid embowering trees,
That half shut out the beams of Phœbus bright,
And made a kind of checker'd day and night.
Meanwhile, unceasing at the massy gate, 60
Beneath a spacious palm, the wicked wight
Was placed ; and to his lute of cruel fate
And labour harsh complain'd, lamenting man's estate.

* Cf. with Stanzas 1.-VI. Tennyson's "Lotos-eaters," Stanzas 1.-V.

VIII.

Thither continual pilgrims crowded still,
 From all the roads of earth that pass there by:
 For, as they chanced to breathe on neighbouring hill,
 The freshness of this valley smote their eye,
 And drew them ever and anon more nigh;
 Till clustering round the enchanter false they hung,
 Ymolten with his syren melody; 70
 While o'er the enfeebling lute his hand he flung,
 And to the trembling chords these tempting verses sung:

IX.

“Behold! ye pilgrims of this earth, behold!
 See all but man with unearn'd pleasure gay:
 See her bright robes the butterfly unfold,
 Broke from her wintry tomb in prime of May!
 What youthful bride can equal her array?
 Who can with her for easy pleasure vie?
 From mead to mead with gentle wing to stray,
 From flower to flower on balmy gales to fly, 80
 Is all she has to do beneath the radiant sky.

X.

“Behold the merry minstrels of the morn,
 The swarming songsters of the careless grove;
 Ten thousand throats that, from the flowering thorn,
 Hymn their good God, and carol sweet of love,
 Such grateful kindly raptures them emove!

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 205

They neither plough nor sow ; ne, fit for flail,
E'er to the barn the nodding sheaves they drove ;
Yet theirs each harvest dancing in the gale,
Whatever crowns the hill, or smiles along the vale. 90

XI.

“ Outcast of Nature, man ! the wretched thrall
Of bitter-dropping sweat, of sweltry pain,
Of cares that eat away the heart with gall,
And of the vices, an inhuman train,
That all proceed from savage thirst of gain :
For when hard-hearted Interest first began
To poison earth, Astræa left the plain ;
Guile, violence, and murder, seized on man,
And, for soft milky streams, with blood the rivers ran.

XII.

“ Come, ye who still the cumbrous load of life 100
Push hard up-hill ; but as the farthest steep
You trust to gain, and put an end to strife,
Down thunders back the stone with mighty sweep,
And hurls your labours to the valley deep,
For ever vain : come, and, withouten fee,
I in oblivion will your sorrows steep,
Your cares, your toils ; will steep you in a sea
Of full delight : O come, ye weary wights, to me !

XIII.

“ With me, you need not rise at early dawn,
To pass the joyless day in various stounds ; 110

206 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Or, louting low, on upstart fortune fawn,
And sell fair honour for some paltry pounds ;
Or through the city take your dirty rounds,
To cheat, and dun, and lie, and visit pay,
Now flattering base, now giving secret wounds ;
Or prowl in courts of law for human prey,
In venal senate thief, or rob on broad highway.

XIV.

“ No cocks, with me, to rustic labour call,
From village on to village sounding clear ;
To tardy swain no shrill-voiced matrons squall ; 120
No dogs, no babes, no wives, to stun your ear ;
No hammers thump ; no horrid blacksmith sear,
Ne noisy tradesman your sweet slumbers start
With sounds that are a misery to hear :
But all is calm as would delight the heart
Of Sybarite of old,—all nature, and all art.

XV.

“ Here nought but candour reigns, indulgent ease,
Good-natured lounging, sauntering up and down :
They who are pleased themselves must always please ;
On others' ways they never squint a frown, 130
Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town.
Thus, from the source of tender indolence,
With milky blood the heart is overflown,
Is soothed and sweeten'd by the social sense ;
For interest, envy, pride, and strife, are banish'd hence.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 207

XVI.

“ What, what is virtue, but repose of mind,
A pure ethereal calm, that knows no storm ;
Above the reach of wild ambition’s wind,
Above those passions that this world deform,
And torture man, a proud malignant worm ? 140
But here, instead, soft gales of passion play,
And gently stir the heart, thereby to form
A quicker sense of joy ; as breezes stray
Across the enliven’d skies, and make them still more gay.

XVII.

“ The best of men have ever loved repose :
They hate to mingle in the filthy fray ;
Where the soul sours, and gradual rancour grows,
Embitter’d more from peevish day to day.
Even those whom fame has lent her fairest ray,
The most renown’d of worthy wights of yore, 150
From a base world at last have stolen away :
So Scipio, to the soft Cumæan shore
Retiring, tasted joy he never knew before.

XVIII.

“ But if a little exercise you choose,
Some zest for ease, ’tis not forbidden here.
Amid the groves you may indulge the muse,
Or tend the blooms, and deck the vernal year ;
Or, softly stealing, with your watery gear,
Along the brooks, the crimson-spotted fry
You may delude: the whilst amused you hear 160

208 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Now the hoarse stream, and now the zephyr's sigh,
Attuned to the birds, and woodland melody.

XIX.

“ O grievous folly ! to heap up estate,
Losing the days you see beneath the sun ;
When sudden comes blind unrelenting fate,
And gives the untasted portion you have won,
With ruthless toil and many a wretch undone,
To those who mock you gone to Pluto's reign,
There with sad ghosts to pine, and shadows dun ;
But sure it is of vanities most vain, 170
To toil for what you here untoiling may obtain.”

XX.

He ceased. But still their trembling ears retain'd
The deep vibrations of his witching song,
That, by a kind of magic power, constrain'd
To enter in, pell-mell, the listening throng.
Heaps pour'd on heaps, and yet they slipp'd along,
In silent ease: as when beneath the beam
Of summer-moons, the distant woods among,
Or by some flood all silver'd with the gleam,
The soft-embodied fays through airy portal stream. 180

XXI.

By the smooth demon so it order'd was,
And here his baneful bounty first began :
Though some there were who would not further pass,
And his alluring baits suspected han.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 209

The wise distrust the too fair-spoken man.
Yet through the gate they cast a wishful eye.
Not to move on, perdie, is all they can ;
For, do their very best, they cannot fly ;
But often each way look, and often sorely sigh.

XXII.

When this the watchful wicked wizard saw, 190
With sudden spring he leap'd upon them straight ;
And soon as touch'd by his unhallow'd paw,
They found themselves within the cursed gate,
Full hard to be repass'd, like that of fate.
Not stronger were of old the giant crew,
Who sought to pull high Jove from regal state ;
Though feeble wretch he seem'd, of sallow hue :
Certes, who bides his grasp will that encounter rue.

XXIII.

For whomsoe'er the villain takes in hand,
Their joints unknit, their sinews melt apace ; 200
As lithe they grow as any willow-wand,
And of their vanish'd force remains no trace :
So when a maiden fair, of modest grace,
In all her buxom blooming May of charms,
Is seized in some losel's hot embrace,
She waxeth very weakly as she warms,
Then sighing yields her up to love's delicious harms.

XXIV.

Waked by the crowd, slow from his bench arose
 A comely, full-spread porter, swoln with sleep:
 His calm, broad, thoughtless aspect breathed repose; 210
 And in sweet torpor he was plunged deep,
 Ne could himself from ceaseless yawning keep;
 While o'er his eyes the drowsy liquor ran,
 Through which his half-waked soul would faintly peep.
 Then, taking his black staff, he call'd his man,
 And roused himself as much as rouse himself he can.

XXV.

The lad leap'd lightly at his master's call.
 He was, to weet, a little roguish page,
 Save sleep and play who minded nought at all,
 Like most the untaught striplings of his age. 220
 This boy he kept each band to disengage,
 Garters and buckles; task for him unfit,
 But ill becoming his grave personage,
 And which his portly paunch would not permit;
 So this same limber page to all performed it.

XXVI.

Meantime the master-porter wide display'd
 Great store of caps, of slippers, and of gowns;
 Wherewith he those who enter'd in array'd,
 Loose as the breeze that plays along the downs,
 And waves the summer-woods, when evening frowns. 230

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 211

O fair undress, best dress ! it checks no vein,
But every flowing limb in pleasure drowns,
And heightens ease with grace. This done, right
fain,
Sir Porter sat him down, and turn'd to sleep again.

XXVII.

Thus easy robed, they to the fountain sped,
That in the middle of the court up-threw
A stream, high-spouting from its liquid bed,
And falling back again in drizzly dew :
There each deep draughts, as deep he thirsted, drew.
It was a fountain of nepenthe rare : 240
Whence, as Dan Homer sings, huge pleasaunce grew,
And sweet oblivion of vile earthly care ;
Fair gladsome waking thoughts, and joyous dreams more
fair.

XXVIII.

This rite perform'd, all inly pleased and still,
Withouten tromp was proclamation made :
“ Ye sons of Indolence, do what you will ;
And wander where you list, through hall or glade !
Be no man's pleasure for another stay'd :
Let each as likes him his best hours employ,
And curst be he who minds his neighbour's trade ! 250
Here dwells kind ease and unreproug joy :
He little merits bliss who others can annoy.”

XXIX.

Straight of these endless numbers, swarming round,
 As thick as idle motes in sunny ray,
 Not one eftsoons in view was to be found,
 But every man stroll'd off his own glad way.
 Wide o'er this ample court's blank area,
 With all the lodges that thereto pertain'd,
 No living creature could be seen to stray ;
 While solitude and perfect silence reign'd: 260
 So that to think you dreamt you almost was constrain'd.

XXX.

As when a shepherd of the Hebrid Isles,
 Placed far amid the melancholy main,
 (Whether it be lone fancy him beguiles ;
 Or that aërial beings sometimes deign
 To stand embodied, to our senses plain),
 Sees on the naked hill, or valley low,
 The whilst in ocean Phœbus dips his wain,
 A vast assembly moving to and fro ;
 Then all at once in air dissolves the wondrous show. 270

XXXI.

Ye gods of quiet and of sleep profound,
 Whose soft dominion o'er this castle sways,
 And all the widely silent places round,
 Forgive me, if my trembling pen displays
 What never yet was sung in mortal lays.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 213

But how shall I attempt such arduous string,
I who have spent my nights and nightly days
In this soul-deadening place, loose-loitering?
Ah! how shall I for this uprear my moulted wing?

XXXII.

Come on, my muse, nor stoop to low despair, 280
Thou imp of Jove, touch'd by celestial fire!
Thou yet shalt sing of war and actions fair,
Which the bold sons of Britain will inspire;
Of ancient bards thou yet shalt sweep the lyre;
Thou yet shalt tread in tragic pall the stage,
Paint love's enchanting woes, the hero's ire,
The sage's calm, the patriot's noble rage,
Dashing corruption down through every worthless age.

XXXIII.

The doors, that knew no shrill alarming bell,
Ne cursed knocker plied by villain's hand, 290
Self-open'd into halls, where who can tell
What elegance and grandeur wide expand,
The pride of Turkey and of Persia land?
Soft quilts on quilts, on carpets carpets spread,
And couches stretch'd around in seemly band;
And endless pillows rise to prop the head;
So that each spacious room was one full-swelling bed.

XXXIV.

And everywhere huge cover'd tables stood,
With wines high-flavour'd and rich viands crown'd;

214 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Whatever sprightly juice or tasteful food 300
On the green bosom of this earth are found,
And all old ocean genders in his round,
Some hand unseen these silently display'd,
Even undemanded by a sign or sound :
You need but wish, and, instantly obey'd,
Fair ranged the dishes rose, and thick the glasses play'd.

XXXV.

Here freedom reign'd, without the least alloy ;
Nor gossip's tale, nor ancient maiden's gall,
Nor saintly spleen durst murmur at our joy,
And with envenom'd tongue our pleasures pall 310
For why? there was but one great rule for all ;
To wit, that each should work his own desire,
And eat, drink, study, sleep, as it may fall,
Or melt the time in love, or wake the lyre,
And carol what, unbid, the muses might inspire.

XXXVI.

The rooms with costly tapestry were hung,
Where was inwoven many a gentle tale ;
Such as of old the rural poets sung,
Or of Arcadian or Sicilian vale :
Reclining lovers, in the lonely dale, 320
Pour'd forth at large the sweetly-tortured heart ;
Or, sighing tender passion, swell'd the gale,

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 215

And taught charm'd echo to resound their smart ;
While flocks, woods, streams around, repose and peace
impart.

XXXVII.

Those pleased the most, where, by a cunning hand,
Depainted was the patriarchal age ;
What time Dan Abraham left the Chaldee land,
And pastured on from verdant stage to stage,
Where fields and fountains fresh could best engage.
Toil was not then. Of nothing took they heed, 330
But with wild beasts the sylvan war to wage,
And o'er vast plains their herds and flocks to feed :
Blest sons of nature they ! true golden age indeed !

XXXVIII.

Sometimes the pencil, in cool airy halls,
Bade the gay bloom of vernal landskips rise,
Or Autumn's varied shades imbrown the walls :
Now the black tempest strikes the astonish'd eyes ;
Now down the steep the flashing torrent flies ;
The trembling sun now plays o'er ocean blue,
And now rude mountains frown amid the skies : 340
Whate'er Lorraine light-touch'd with softening hue,
Or savage Rosa dash'd, or learned Poussin drew.

XXXIX.

Each sound too here to languishment inclined,
Lull'd the weak bosom, and induced ease.

216 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Aërial music in the warbling wind,
At distance rising oft, by small degrees,
Nearer and nearer came, till o'er the trees
It hung, and breathed such soul-dissolving airs,
As did, alas! with soft perdition please:
Entangled deep in its enchanting snares, 350
The listening heart forgot all duties and all cares.

XL.

A certain music, never known before,
Here lull'd the pensive, melancholy mind;
Full easily obtain'd. Behoves no more,
But sidelong to the gently-waving wind
To lay the well-tuned instrument reclined;
From which, with airy flying fingers light,
Beyond each mortal touch the most refined,
The god of winds drew sounds of deep delight:
Whence, with just cause, the Harp of Æolus it hight. 360

XLI.

Ah me! what hand can touch the string so fine?
Who up the lofty diapason roll
Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine,
Then let them down again into the soul?
Now rising love they fann'd; now pleasing dole
They breathed, in tender musings, through the heart;
And now a graver sacred strain they stole,
As when seraphic hands an hymn impart:
Wild warbling nature all, above the reach of art!

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 217

XLII.

Such the gay splendour, the luxurious state, 370
Of Caliphs old, who on the Tigris' shore,
In mighty Bagdat, populous and great,
Held their bright court, where was of ladies store ;
And verse, love, music, still the garland wore :
When sleep was coy, the bard, in waiting there,
Cheer'd the lone midnight with the muse's lore ;
Composing music bade his dreams be fair,
And music lent new gladness to the morning air.

XLIII.

Near the pavilions where we slept, still ran
Soft-tinkling streams, and dashing waters fell, 380
And sobbing breezes sigh'd, and oft began
(So work'd the wizard) wintry storms to swell,
As heaven and earth they would together mell :
At doors and windows, threatening, seem'd to call
The demons of the tempest, growling fell,
Yet the least entrance found they none at all ;
Whence sweeter grew our sleep, secure in massy hall.

XLIV.

And hither Morpheus sent his kindest dreams,
Raising a world of gayer tinct and grace ;
O'er which were shadowy cast Elysian gleams, 390
That play'd, in waving lights, from place to place,
And shed a roseate smile on Nature's face.

Not Titian's pencil e'er could so array,
 So fleece with clouds the pure ethereal space;
 Ne could it e'er such melting forms display,
 As loose on flowery beds all languishingly lay.

XLV.

No, fair illusions! artful phantoms, no!
 My muse will not attempt your fairy-land:
 She has no colours that like you can glow:
 To catch your vivid scenes, too gross her hand. 400
 But sure it is, was ne'er a subtler band
 Than these same guileful angel-seeming sprites,
 Who thus in dreams, voluptuous, soft, and bland,
 Pour'd all the Arabian heaven upon our nights,
 And bless'd them oft besides with more refined delights.

XLVI.

They were in sooth a most enchanting train,
 Even feigning virtue; skilful to unite
 With evil good, and strew with pleasure pain.
 But for those fiends whom blood and broils delight;
 Who hurl the wretch, as if to hell outright, 410
 Down, down black gulfs, where sullen waters sleep,
 Or hold him clambering all the fearful night
 On beetling cliffs, or pent in ruins deep;
 They, till due time should serve, were bid far hence to
 keep.

XLVII.

Ye guardian spirits, to whom man is dear,
 From these foul demons shield the midnight gloom!

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 219

Angels of fancy and of love, be near,
And o'er the blank of sleep diffuse a bloom !
Evoke the sacred shades of Greece and Rome,
And let them virtue with a look impart : 420
But chief, awhile, oh ! lend us from the tomb
Those long-lost friends for whom in love we smart,
And fill with pious awe and joy-mix'd woe the heart.

XLVIII.

Or are you sportive?—Bid the morn of youth
Rise to new light, and beam afresh the days
Of innocence, simplicity, and truth,
To cares estranged, and manhood's thorny ways.
What transport, to retrace our boyish plays,
Our easy bliss, when each thing joy supplied ;
The woods, the mountains, and the warbling maze 430
Of the wild brooks !—But, fondly wandering wide,
My muse, resume the task that yet doth thee abide.

XLIX.

One great amusement of our household was,
In a huge crystal magic globe to spy,
Still as you turn'd it, all things that do pass
Upon this ant-hill earth ; where constantly
Of idly-busy men the restless fry
Run bustling to and fro with foolish haste,
In search of pleasures vain that from them fly,
Or which, obtain'd, the caitiffs dare not taste : 440
When nothing is enjoy'd, can there be greater waste ?

L.

Of Vanity the Mirror this was call'd.
 Here you a muckworm of the town might see,
 At his dull desk, amid his ledgers stall'd,
 Eat up with carking care and penurie,
 Most like to carcase parch'd on gallow-tree.
 "A penny saved is a penny got :"
 Firm to this scoundrel-maxim keepeth he,
 Ne of its rigour will he bate a jot,
 Till it has quench'd his fire, and banished his pot. 450

LI.

Straight from the filth of this low grub, behold !
 Comes fluttering forth a gaudy spendthrift heir,
 All glossy gay, enamell'd all with gold,
 The silly tenant of the summer-air.
 In folly lost, of nothing takes he care ;
 Pimps, lawyers, stewards, harlots, flatterers vile,
 And thieving tradesmen him among them share :
 His father's ghost from limbo lake, the while,
 Sees this, which more damnation doth upon him pile.

LII.

This globe portray'd the race of learned men, 460
 Still at their books, and turning o'er the page,
 Backwards and forwards : oft they snatch the pen,
 As if inspired, and in a Thespian rage ;
 Then write, and blot, as would your ruth engage.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 221

Why, authors, all this scrawl and scribbling sore?
To lose the present, gain the future age,
Praised to be when you can hear no more,
And much enrich'd with fame when useless worldly store.

LIII.

Then would a splendid city rise to view,
With carts, and cars, and coaches roaring all : 470
Wide-pour'd abroad behold the giddy crew ;
See how they dash along from wall to wall !
At every door, hark how they thundering call !
Good Lord ! what can this giddy rout excite ?
Why, on each other with fell tooth to fall ;
A neighbour's fortune, fame, or peace to blight,
And make new tiresome parties for the coming night.

LIV.

The puzzling sons of party next appear'd,
In dark cabals and nightly juntos met ;
And now they whisper'd close, now shrugging
rear'd 480
The important shoulder ; then, as if to get
New light, their twinkling eyes were inward set.
No sooner Lucifer recalls affairs,
Than forth they various rush in mighty fret ;
When, lo ! push'd up to power, and crown'd their
cares,
In comes another set, and kicketh them downstairs.

LV.

But what most show'd the vanity of life,
 Was, to behold the nations all on fire,
 In cruel broils engaged, and deadly strife :
 Most Christian kings, inflamed by black desire, 490
 With honourable ruffians in their hire,
 Cause war to rage, and blood around to pour :
 Of this sad work when each begins to tire,
 They sit them down just where they were before,
 Till for new scenes of woe peace shall their force restore.

LVI.

To number up the thousands dwelling here,
 An useless were, and eke an endless task ;
 From kings, and those who at the helm appear,
 To gipsies brown in summer-glades who bask.
 Yea, many a man, perdie, I could unmask, 500
 Whose desk and table make a solemn show,
 With tape-tied trash, and suits of fools that ask
 For place or pension laid in decent row ;
 But these I passen by, with nameless numbers moe.

LVII.

Of all the gentle tenants of the place,
 There was a man of special grave remark : *
 A certain tender gloom o'erspread his face ;

* William Paterson, Thomson's deputy in the office of Surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands, and for some time the poet's amanuensis.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 223

Pensive, not sad ; in thought involved, not dark :
As soot this man could sing as morning-lark,
And teach the noblest morals of the heart ; 510
But these his talents were yburied stark ;
Of the fine stores he nothing would impart,
Which or boon nature gave, or nature-painting art.

LVIII.

To noon-tide shades incontinent he ran,
Where purls the brook with sleep-inviting sound ;
Or when Dan Sol to slope his wheels began,
Amid the broom he bask'd him on the ground,
Where the wild thyme and camomile are found :
There would he linger, till the latest ray
Of light sat trembling on the welkin's bound ; 520
Then homeward through the twilight shadows stray,
Sauntering and slow. So had he passed many a day.

LIX.

Yet not in thoughtless slumber were they pass'd ;
For oft the heavenly fire, that lay conceal'd
Beneath the sleeping embers, mounted fast,
And all its native light anew reveal'd.
Oft as he traversed the cerulean field,
And mark'd the clouds that drove before the wind,
Ten thousand glorious systems would he build,
Ten thousand great ideas fill'd his mind ; 530
But with the clouds they fled, and left no trace behind.

LX.

With him was sometimes join'd, in silent walk
 (Profoundly silent, for they never spoke),
 One shy'er still,* who quite detested talk.
 Oft, stung by spleen, at once away he broke,
 To groves of pine and broad o'ershading oak ;
 There, inly thrill'd, he wander'd all alone,
 And on himself his pensive fury wroke ;
 Ne ever utter'd word, save, when first shone
 The glittering star of eve, "Thank Heaven ! the day is
 done." 540

LXI.

Here lurk'd a wretch,† who had not crept abroad
 For forty years, ne face of mortal seen ;
 In chamber brooding like a loathly toad ;
 And sure his linen was not very clean.
 Through secret loop-holes, that had practised been
 Near to his bed, his dinner vile he took ;
 Unkempt and rough, of squalid face and mien ;
 Our castle's shame ! whence, from his filthy nook,
 We drove the villain out for fitter lair to look.

LXII.

One day there chanced into these halls to rove 550
 A joyous youth,‡ who took you at first sight :

* Dr. John Armstrong, author of *The Art of Preserving Health*.

† Henry Welby, an eccentric solitary of the period.

‡ John Forbes, son of Lord President Forbes.

Him the wild wave of pleasure hither drove,
 Before the sprightly tempest tossing light :
 Certes, he was a most engaging wight,
 Of social glee, and wit humane though keen,
 Turning the night to day and day to night :
 For him the merry bells had rung, I ween,
 If in this nook of quiet bells had ever been.

LXIII.

But not even pleasure to excess is good,
 What most elates then sinks the soul as low ; 560
 When spring-tide joy pours in with copious flood,
 The higher still the exulting billows flow,
 The farther back again they flagging go,
 And leave us grovelling on the dreary shore :
 Taught by this son of joy, we found it so ;
 Who, whilst he stay'd, kept in a gay uproar
 Our madden'd castle all, the abode of sleep no more.

LXIV.

As when in prime of June a burnish'd fly,
 Sprung from the meads, o'er which he sweeps along,
 Cheer'd by the breathing bloom and vital sky, 570
 Tunes up amid these airy halls his song,
 Soothing at first the gay reposing throng :
 And oft he sips their bowl ; or, nearly drown'd,
 He, thence recovering, drives their beds among,
 And scares their tender sleep, with trump profound ;
 Then out again he flies, to wing his mazy round.

LXV.

Another guest * there was, of sense refined,
 Who felt each worth, for every worth he had ;
 Serene yet warm, humane yet firm his mind,
 As little touch'd as any man's with bad : 580
 Him through their inmost walks the muses lad,
 To him the sacred love of nature lent,
 And sometimes would he make our valley glad ;
 Whenas we found he would not here be pent,
 To him the better sort this friendly message sent :

LXVI.

“ Come, dwell with us ! true son of virtue, come !
 But if, alas ! we cannot thee persuade
 To lie content beneath our peaceful dome,
 Ne ever more to quit our quiet glade ;
 Yet when at last thy toils, but ill apaid, 590
 Shall dead thy fire, and damp its heavenly spark,
 Thou wilt be glad to seek the rural shade,
 There to indulge the muse, and nature mark :
 We then a lodge for thee will rear in Hagley-Park.”

LXVII.

Here whilom ligg'd the Esopus† of the age ;
 But call'd by fame, in soul ypricked deep,

* Lyttelton.

† James Quin.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 227

A noble pride restored him to the stage,
And roused him like a giant from his sleep.
Even from his slumbers we advantage reap :
With double force the enliven'd scene he wakes, 600
Yet quits not Nature's bounds. He knows to keep
Each due decorum : now the heart he shakes,
And now with well-urged sense the enlighten'd judgment
takes.

LXVIII.

A bard here dwelt, more fat than bard beseems ;
Who,* void of envy, guile, and lust of gain,
On virtue still, and nature's pleasing themes,
Pour'd forth his unpremeditated strain,
The world forsaking with a calm disdain:
Here laugh'd he careless in his easy seat ;
Here quaff'd encircled with the joyous train ; 610
Oft moralising sage ; his ditty sweet
He loathed much to write, ne cared to repeat.

LXIX.

Full oft by holy feet our ground was trod,
Of clerks good plenty here you mote espy.
A little, round, fat, oily man of God, †
Was one I chiefly mark'd among the fry :
He had a roguish twinkle in his eye,
And shone all glittering with ungodly dew,

* Thomson. This stanza, with the exception of the first line, is usually ascribed to Lyttelton. Thomson says :—"The following lines of this stanza were writ by a friend of the author."

† Rev. Patrick Murdoch. He wrote Thomson's biography (1762).

228 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

If a tight damsel chanced to trippen by ;
Which when observed, he shrunk into his mew, 620
And straight would recollect his piety anew.

LXX.

Nor be forgot a tribe, who minded nought
(Old inmates of the place) but state affairs :
They look'd, perdie, as if they deeply thought ;
And on their brow sat every nation's cares.
The world by them is parcell'd out in shares,
When in the Hall of Smoke they congress hold,
And the sage berry sun-burnt Mocha bears
Has clear'd their inward eye : then, smoke-enroll'd,
Their oracles break forth mysterious as of old. 630

LXXI.

Here languid Beauty kept her pale-faced court :
Bevies of dainty dames, of high degree,
From every quarter hither made resort ;
Where, from gross mortal care and business free,
They lay, pour'd out in ease and luxury.
Or should they a vain show of work assume,
Alas! and well-a-day! what can it be?
To knot, to twist, to range the vernal bloom ;
But far is cast the distaff, spinning-wheel, and loom.

LXXII.

Their only labour was to kill the time ; 640
And labour dire it is, and weary woe.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 229

They sit, they loll, turn o'er some idle rhyme ;
Then, rising sudden, to the glass they go,
Or saunter forth, with tottering step and slow :
This soon too rude an exercise they find ;
Straight on the couch their limbs again they throw,
Where hours on hours they sighing lie reclined,
And court the vapoury god soft-breathing in the wind.

LXXIII.

Now must I mark the villany we found,
But, ah ! too late, as shall eftsoons be shewn. 650
A place here was, deep, dreary, underground ;
Where still our inmates, when unpleasing grown,
Diseased, and loathsome, privily were thrown.
Far from the light of heaven, they languish'd there,
Unpitied, uttering many a bitter groan ;
For of these wretches taken was no care :
Fierce fiends, and hags of hell, their only nurses were.

LXXIV.*

Alas the change ! from scenes of joy and rest,
To this dark den, where sickness toss'd alway.
Here Lethargy, with deadly sleep oppress'd, 660
Stretch'd on his back a mighty lubbard lay,
Heaving his sides, and snored night and day ;
To stir him from his traunce it was not eath,
And his half-open'd eyne he shut straightway :

* Stanzas LXXIV.-LXXVII. were written by Thomson's friend, Dr Armstrong.

230 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

He led, I wot, the softest way to death,
And taught withouten pain and strife to yield the breath.

LXXV.

Of limbs enormous, but withal unsound,
Soft-swoln and pale, here lay the Hydropsy :
Unwieldy man ! with belly monstrous round,
For ever fed with watery supply ; 670
For still he drank, and yet he still was dry.
And here a moping mystery did sit,
Mother of Spleen, in robes of various dye,
Who vexed was full oft with ugly fit ;
And some her frantic deem'd, and some her deem'd a wit.

LXXVI.

A lady proud she was, of ancient blood,
Yet oft her fear her pride made crouchen low :
She felt, or fancied in her fluttering mood,
All the diseases which the spittles know,
And sought all physic which the shops bestow, 680
And still new leeches and new drugs would try,
Her humour ever wavering to and fro ;
For sometimes she would laugh, and sometimes cry,
Then sudden waxed wroth, and all she knew not why.

LXXVII.

Fast by her side a listless maiden pined,
With aching head, and squeamish heart-burnings ;

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 231

Pale, bloated, cold, she seem'd to hate mankind,
Yet loved in secret all forbidden things.
And here the Tertian shakes his chilling wings;
The sleepless Gout here counts the crowing cocks, 690
A wolf now gnaws him, now a serpent stings;
Whilst Apoplexy cramm'd Intemperance knocks
Down to the ground at once, as butcher felleth ox.

CANTO II.

*The Knight of Arts and Industry,
And his achievements fair ;
That, by this Castle's overthrow,
Secured, and crowned were.*

I.

ESCAPED the castle of the sire of sin,
Ah ! where shall I so sweet a dwelling find ?
For, all around, without, and all within,
Nothing save what delightful was and kind,
Of goodness savouring and a tender mind,
E'er rose to view. But now another strain,
Of doleful note, alas ! remains behind :
I now must sing of pleasure turn'd to pain,
And of the false enchanter, Indolence, complain.

II.

Is there no patron to protect the Muse,
And fence for her Parnassus' barren soil ?
To every labour its reward accrues,
And they are sure of bread who swink and moil ;

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 233

But a fell tribe the Aonian hive despoil,
As ruthless wasps oft rob the painful bee :
Thus, while the laws not guard that noblest toil,
Ne for the Muses other meed decree,
They praised are alone, and starve right merrily.

III.

I care not, Fortune, what you me deny :
You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace ; 20
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her brightening face ;
You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve :
Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace,
And I their toys to the great children leave ;
Of fancy, reason, virtue, nought can me bereave.

IV.

Come, then, my Muse, and raise a bolder song ;
Come, lig no more upon the bed of sloth,
Dragging the lazy, languid line along, 30
Fond to begin, but still to finish loth,
Thy half-writ scrolls all eaten by the moth :
Arise, and sing that generous imp of fame,
Who, with the sons of softness nobly wroth,
To sweep away this human lumber came,
Or in a chosen few to rouse the slumbering flame.

v.

In Fairy-land there lived a knight of old,
 Of feature stern, Selvaggio well yclep'd,
 A rough, unpolish'd man, robust and bold,
 But wondrous poor : he neither sow'd nor reap'd, 40
 Ne stores in summer for cold winter heap'd ;
 In hunting all his days away he wore ;
 Now scorch'd by June, now in November steep'd,
 Now pinch'd by biting January sore,
 He still in woods pursued the libbard and the boar.

vi.

As he one morning, long before the dawn,
 Prick'd through the forest to dislodge his prey,
 Deep in the winding bosom of a lawn,
 With wood wild-fringed, he mark'd a taper's ray,
 That from the beating rain and wintry fray 50
 Did to a lonely cot his steps decoy ;
 There, up to earn the needments of the day,
 He found dame Poverty, nor fair nor coy :
 Her he compress'd, and fill'd her with a lusty boy.

vii.

Amid the greenwood shade this boy was bred,
 And grew at last a knight of muchel fame,
 Of active mind and vigorous lustyhed,
 THE KNIGHT OF ARTS AND INDUSTRY by name :
 Earth was his bed, the boughs his roof did frame ;
 He knew no beverage but the flowing stream ; 60

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 235

His tasteful well-earn'd food the silvan game,
Or the brown fruit with which the woodlands teem :
The same to him glad Summer, or the Winter breme.

VIII.

So pass'd his youthful morning, void of care,
Wild as the colts that through the commons run :
For him no tender parents troubled were ;
He of the forest seem'd to be the son ;
And certes had been utterly undone ;
But that Minerva pity of him took,
With all the gods that love the rural wonne, 70
That teach to tame the soil and rule the crook ;
Ne did the sacred Nine disdain a gentle look.

IX.

Of fertile genius, him they nurtured well
In every science and in every art,
By which mankind the thoughtless brutes excel,
That can or use, or joy, or grace impart,
Disclosing all the powers of head and heart.
Ne were the goodly exercises spared
That brace the nerves, or make the limbs alert,
And mix elastic force with firmness hard : 80
Was never knight on ground mote be with him compared.

X.

Sometimes, with early morn, he mounted gay
The hunter-steed, exulting o'er the dale,

And drew the roseate breath of orient day :
 Sometimes, retiring to the secret vale,
 Yclad in steel, and bright with burnish'd mail,
 He strain'd the bow, or toss'd the sounding spear,
 Or, darting on the goal, outstripp'd the gale,
 Or wheel'd the chariot in its mid career,
 Or strenuous wrestled hard with many a tough com-
 peer.

90

XI.

At other times he pried through Nature's store,
 Whate'er she in the ethereal round contains,
 Whate'er she hides beneath her verdant floor,
 The vegetable and the mineral reigns ;
 Or else he scann'd the globe, those small domains,
 Where restless mortals such a turmoil keep,
 Its seas, its floods, its mountains, and its plains ;
 But more he search'd the mind, and roused from sleep
 Those moral seeds whence we heroic actions reap.

XII.

Nor would he scorn to stoop from high pursuits 100
 Of heavenly Truth, and practise what she taught.
 Vain is the tree of knowledge without fruits.
 Sometimes in hand the spade or plough he caught,
 Forth-calling all with which boon earth is fraught ;
 Sometimes he plied the strong mechanic tool,
 Or rear'd the fabric from the finest draught ;
 And oft he put himself to Neptune's school,
 Fighting with winds and waves on the vex'd ocean pool.

XIII.

To solace then these rougher toils, he tried
To touch the kindling canvas into life ; 110
With Nature his creating pencil vied,
With Nature joyous at the mimic strife :
Or to such shapes as graced Pygmalion's wife
He hew'd the marble : or, with varied fire,
He roused the trumpet and the martial fife,
Or bade the lute sweet tenderness inspire,
Or verses framed that well might wake Apollo's lyre.

XIV.

Accomplish'd thus, he from the woods issued,
Full of great aims, and bent on bold emprise :
The work, which long he in his breast had brew'd, 120
Now to perform he ardent did devise ;
To wit, a barbarous world to civilise.
Earth was till then a boundless forest wild ;
Nought to be seen but savage wood, and skies :
No cities nourish'd arts, no culture smiled,
No government, no laws, no gentle manners mild.

XV.

A rugged wight, the worst of brutes, was man ;
On his own wretched kind he, ruthless, prey'd :
The strongest still the weakest over-ran ;
In every country mighty robbers sway'd, 130
And guile and ruffian force were all their trade.

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Life was not life, but rapine, want, and woe :
Which this brave knight, in noble anger, made
To swear, he would the rascal rout o'erthrow ;
For, by the powers divine, it should no more be so !

XVI.

It would exceed the purport of my song,
To say how this best sun, from orient climes
Came, beaming life and beauty all along,
Before him chasing indolence and crimes.
Still, as he pass'd, the nations he sublimes, 140
And calls forth arts and virtues with his ray :
Then Egypt, Greece and Rome, their golden times,
Successive, had ; but now in ruins grey
They lie, to slavish sloth and tyranny a prey.

XVII.

To crown his toils, Sir Industry then spread
The swelling sail, and made for Britain's coast.
A sylvan life till then the natives led,
In the brown shades and greenwood forest lost,
All careless rambling where it liked them most :
Their wealth the wild-deer bouncing through the
glade ; 150
They lodged at large, and lived at Nature's cost ;
Save spear and bow, withouten other aid ;
Yet not the Roman steel their naked breast dismay'd.

XVIII.

He liked the soil, he liked the clement skies,
He liked the verdant hills and flowery plains.
Be this my great, my chosen isle (he cries),
This, whilst my labours Liberty sustains,
This queen of ocean all assault disdains.
Nor liked he less the genius of the land,
To freedom apt and persevering pains, 160
Mild to obey, and generous to command,
Temper'd by forming Heaven with kindest, firmest hand.

XIX.

Here, by degrees, his master-work arose,
Whatever arts and industry can frame :
Whatever finish'd Agriculture knows,
Fair queen of arts ! from heaven itself who came,
When Eden flourish'd in unspotted fame :
And still with her sweet innocence we find,
And tender peace, and joys without a name,
That, while they rapture, tranquillise the mind : 170
Nature and art at once, delight and use, combined.

XX.

Then towns he quicken'd by mechanic arts,
And bade the fervent city glow with toil ;
Bade social Commerce raise renowned marts,
Join land to land, and marry soil to soil,
Unite the poles, and without bloody spoil

240 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Bring home of either Ind the gorgeous stores ;
Or, should despotic rage the world embroil,
Bade tyrants tremble on remotest shores,
While o'er the encircling deep Britannia's thunder
roars. 180

XXI.

The drooping muses then he westward call'd,
From the famed city* by Propontis Sea,
What time the Turk the enfeebled Grecian thrall'd ;
Thence from their cloister'd walks he set them free,
And brought them to another Castalie :
Where Isis many a famous nursling breeds ;
Or where old Cam soft paces o'er the lea
In pensive mood, and tunes his Doric reeds,
The whilst his flocks at large the lonely shepherd
feeds.

XXII.

Yet the fine arts were what he finish'd least. 190
For why? They are the quintessence of all,
The growth of labouring time, and slow increased ;
Unless, as seldom chances, it should fall,
That mighty patrons the coy sisters call
Up to the sunshine of uncumber'd ease,
Where no rude care the mounting thought may thrall,
And where they nothing have to do but please :
Ah ! gracious God ! thou know'st they ask no other fees.

* Constantinople.—T.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 241

XXIII.

But now, alas ! we live too late in time:
Our patrons now even grudge that little claim, 200
Except to such as sleek the soothing rhyme ;
And yet, forsooth, they wear Mæcenas' name,
Poor sons of puff'd-up vanity, not fame !
Unbroken spirits, cheer ! Still, still remains
The eternal patron, Liberty ; whose flame,
While she protects, inspires the noblest strains.
The best, and sweetest far, are toil-created gains.

XXIV.

Whenas the knight had framed in Britain-land,
A matchless form of glorious government ;
In which the sovereign laws alone command, 210
Laws stablish'd by the public free consent,
Whose majesty is to the sceptre lent :
When this great plan, with each dependent art,
Was settled firm and to his heart's content,
Then sought he from the toilsome scene to part,
And let life's vacant eve breathe quiet through the heart.

XXV.

For this he chose a farm in Deva's vale,*
Where his long alleys peep'd upon the main.
In this calm seat he drew the healthful gale,
Here mix'd the chief, the patriot, and the swain, 220
The happy monarch of his sylvan train !

* Chester.

242 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Here, sided by the guardians of the fold,
He walk'd his rounds, and cheer'd his blest domain
His days, the days of unstain'd nature, roll'd,
Replete with peace and joy, like patriarch's of old.

XXVI.

Witness, ye lowing herds, who lent him milk ;
Witness, ye flocks, whose woolly vestments far
Exceed soft India's cotton or her silk ;
Witness, with Autumn charged, the nodding car,
That homeward came beneath sweet evening's star, 230
Or of September moons the radiance mild.
Oh, hide thy head, abominable war !
Of crimes and ruffian idleness the child !
From heaven this life ysprung, from hell thy glories vild !

XXVII.

Nor, from his deep retirement banish'd was
The amusing care of rural industry.
Still, as with grateful change the seasons pass,
New scenes arise, new landskips strike the eye,
And all the enliven'd country beautify :
Gay plains extend where marshes slept before ; 240
O'er recent meads the exulting streamlets fly ;
Dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres' store ;
And woods imbrown the steep, or wave along the shore.

XXVIII.

As nearer to his farm you made approach,
He polish'd Nature with a finer hand :

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 243

Yet on her beauties durst not art encroach ;
'Tis art's alone these beauties to expand.
In graceful dance immingled, o'er the land,
Pan, Pales, Flora, and Pomona play'd :
Even here, sometimes, the rude wild common
 fann'd ; 250
An happy place ; where free, and unafraid,
Amid the flowering brakes each coyer creature stray'd.

XXIX.

But in prime vigour what can last for aye ?
That soul-enfeebling wizzard, Indolence,
I whilom sung, wrought in his works decay :
Spread far and wide was his curst influence ;
Of public virtue much he dull'd the sense,
Even much of private ; eat our spirit out,
And fed our rank luxurious vices : whence
The land was overlaid with many a lout ; 260
Not, as old fame reports, wise, generous, bold, and stout.

XXX.

A rage of pleasure madden'd every breast ;
Down to the lowest lees the ferment ran :
To his licentious wish each must be blest,
With joy be fever'd ; snatch it as he can.
Thus vice the standard rear'd ; her arrier-ban
Corruption call'd, and loud she gave the word.
“ Mind, mind yourselves ! why should the vulgar man,

244 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

The lacquey, be more virtuous than his lord?
Enjoy this span of life ! 'tis all the gods afford." 270

XXXI.

The tidings reach'd to where, in quiet hall,
The good old knight enjoy'd well-earn'd repose.
"Come, come, Sir Knight ! thy children on thee call ;
Come, save us yet, ere ruin round us close !
The demon Indolence thy toils o'erthrows."
On this the noble colour stain'd his cheeks,
Indignant, glowing through the whitening snows
Of venerable eld ; his eye full speaks
His ardent soul, and from his couch at once he
breaks.

XXXII.

"I will," (he cried) "so help me, God ! destroy 280
That villain Archimage."—His page then straight
He to him call'd, a fiery-footed boy,
Benempt Dispatch. "My steed be at the gate ;
My bard attend ; quick, bring the net of Fate."
This net was twisted by the sisters three ; *
Which when once cast o'er harden'd wretch, too late
Repentance comes : replevy † cannot be
From the strong iron grasp of vengeful destiny.

* Clotho, Atropos, and Lachesis.

† Rescue.

XXXIII.

He came, the bard, a little Druid wight,
 Of wither'd aspect ; but his eye was keen, 290
 With sweetness mix'd. In russet brown bedight,
 As is his sister * of the copses green,
 He crept along, unpromising of mien.
 Gross he who judges so. His soul was fair,
 Bright as the children of yon azure sheen.
 True comeliness, which nothing can impair,
 Dwells in the mind : all else is vanity and glare.

XXXIV.

Come ! (quoth the knight) a voice has reach'd mine
 ear,
 The demon Indolence threats overthrow
 To all that to mankind is good and dear: 300
 Come, Philomelus ! let us instant go,
 O'erturn his bowers, and lay his castle low !
 Those men, those wretched men ! who *will* be slaves,
 Must drink a bitter wrathful cup of woe :
 But some there be, thy song, as from their graves,
 Shall raise. Thrice happy he ! who without rigour
 saves !

XXXV.

Issuing forth, the knight bestrode his steed
 Of ardent bay, and on whose front a star

* The nightingale.

246 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Shone blazing bright : sprung from the generous
breed

That whirl of active day the rapid car, 310

He pranced along, disdainig gate or bar.

Meantime, the bard on milk-white palfrey rode ;

An honest sober beast, that did not mar

His meditations, but full softly trode :

And much they moralised as thus yfere they yode.

XXXVI.

They talk'd of virtue, and of human bliss.

What else so fit for man to settle well?

And still their long researches met in this,

This truth of truths, which nothing can refel : *

“ From virtue's fount the purest joys out-well, 320

Sweet rills of thought that cheer the conscous soul ;

While vice pours forth the troubled streams of hell,

The which, howe'er disguised, at last with dole

Will through the tortured breast their fiery torrents
roll.”

XXXVII.

At length it dawn'd, that fatal valley gay,

O'er which high wood-crown'd hills their summits rear.

On the cool height awhile our palmers stay,

And spite even of themselves their senses cheer ;

Then to the wizard's wonne their steps they steer.

* Refute.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 247

Like a green isle, it broad beneath them spread, 330
With gardens round, and wandering currents clear,
And tufted groves to shade the meadow bed,
Sweet airs and song ; and without hurry all seem'd glad.

XXXVIII.

“ As God shall judge me, knight, we must forgive,”
(The half-enraptured Philomelus cried)
“ The frail good man, deluded here to live,
And in these groves his musing fancy hide.
Ah ! nought is pure ! It cannot be denied,
That virtue still some tincture has of vice,
And vice of virtue. What should then betide, 340
But that our charity be not too nice ?
Come, let us those we can, to real bliss entice.”

XXXIX.

“ Ay, sicker,” (quoth the knight) “ all flesh is frail,
To pleasant sin and joyous dalliance bent ;
But let not brutish vice of this avail,
And think to scape deserved punishment.
Justice were cruel, weakly to relent ;
From mercy's self she got her sacred glaive :
Grace be to those who can, and will, repent ;
But penance long, and dreary, to the slave, 350
Who must in floods of fire his gross, foul spirit lave.”

XL.

Thus, holding high discourse, they came to where
The cursed carle was at his wonted trade,

248 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

Still tempting heedless men into his snare,
In witching wise, as I before have said.
But when he saw, in goodly gear array'd,
The grave majestic knight approaching nigh,
And by his side the bard so sage and staid,
His countenance fell ; yet oft his anxious eye
Mark'd them, like wily fox who roosted cock doth spy. 360

XLI.

Nathless, with feign'd respect, he bade give back
The rabble rout, and welcomed them full kind ;
Struck with the noble twain, they were not slack
His orders to obey, and fall behind.
Then he resumed his song ; and, unconfined,
Pour'd all his music, ran through all his strings :
With magic dust their eyne he tries to blind,
And virtue's tender airs o'er weakness flings.
What pity, base his song who so divinely sings !

XLII.

Elate in thought, he counted them his own, 370
They listen'd so intent with fix'd delight :
But they, instead, as if transmew'd to stone,
Marvell'd he could with such sweet art unite
The lights and shades of manners, wrong and right.
Meantime, the silly crowd the charm devour,
Wide-pressing to the gate. Swift, on the knight
He darted fierce, to drag him to his bower,
Who backening shunn'd his touch, for well he knew its
power.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 249

XLIII.

As in throng'd amphitheatre, of old,
The wary retiarius * trapp'd his foe ; 380
Even so the knight, returning on him bold,
At once involved him in the net of woe,
Whereof I mention made not long ago.
Enraged at first, he scorn'd so weak a jail,
And leap'd, and flew, and flounced to and fro ;
But when he found that nothing could avail,
He sat him felly down, and gnaw'd his bitter nail.

XLIV.

Alarm'd, the inferior demons of the place
Raised rueful shrieks and hideous yells around ;
Black stormy clouds deform'd the welkin's face, 390
And from beneath was heard a wailing sound,
As of infernal sprites in cavern bound.
A solemn sadness every creature strook ;
And lightnings flash'd, and horror rock'd the ground :
Huge crowds on crowds out-pour'd, with blemish'd
look,
As if on time's last verge this frame of things had shook.

XLV.

Soon as the short-lived tempest was yspent,
Steam'd from the jaws of vex'd Avernus' hole,
And hush'd the hubbub of the rabblement,
Sir Industry the first calm moment stole. 400

* A gladiator, who made use of a net, which he threw over his adversary.—T.

250 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

“ There must,” (he cried) “ amid so vast a shoal,
Be some who are not tainted at the heart,
Not poison’d quite by this same villain’s bowl:
Come, then, my bard, thy heavenly fire impart;
Touch soul with soul, till forth the latent spirit start.”

XLVI.

The bard obey’d ; and, taking from his side,
Where it in seemly sort depending hung,
His British harp, its speaking strings he tried ;
The which with skilful touch he deftly strung,
Till tinkling in clear symphony they rung. 410
Then, as he felt the Muses come along,
Light o’er the chords his raptured hand he flung,
And play’d a prelude to his rising song:
The whilst, like midnight mute, ten thousands round him
throng.

XLVII.

Thus, ardent, burst his strain : “ Ye hapless race,
Dire-labouring here to smother reason’s ray,
That lights our Maker’s image in our face,
And gives us wide o’er earth unquestion’d sway ;
What is the adored Supreme Perfection, say ?
What, but eternal never-resting soul, 420
Almighty power, and all-directing day ;
By whom each atom stirs, the planets roll ;
Who fills, surrounds, informs, and agitates the whole ?

XLVIII.

“ Come, to the beaming God your hearts unfold !
Draw from its fountain life ! ’Tis thence, alone,
We can excel. Up from unfeeling mould,
To seraphs burning round the Almighty’s throne,
Life rising still on life, in higher tone,
Perfection forms, and with perfection bliss.
In universal Nature this clear shown 430
Not needeth proof: to prove it were, I wis,
To prove the beauteous world excels the brute abyss.

XLIX.

“ Is not the field, with lively culture green,
A sight more joyous than the dead morass ?
Do not the skies, with active ether clean,
And fann’d by sprightly zephyrs, far surpass
The foul November fogs, and slumbrous mass,
With which sad Nature veils her drooping face ?
Does not the mountain-stream, as clear as glass,
Gay-dancing on, the putrid pool disgrace ? 440
The same in all holds true, but chief in human race.

L.

“ It was not by vile loitering in ease,
That Greece obtain’d the brighter palm of art :
That soft, yet ardent, Athens learn’d to please,
To keen the wit, and to sublime the heart,
In all supreme ! complete in every part !

252 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

It was not thence majestic Rome arose,
And o'er the nations shook her conquering dart :
For sluggard's brow the laurel never grows ;
Renown is not the child of indolent repose. 450

LI.

“ Had unambitious mortals minded nought,
But in loose joy their time to wear away ;
Had they alone the lap of dalliance sought,
Pleased on her pillow their dull heads to lay ;
Rude nature's state had been our state to-day ;
No cities e'er their towery fronts had raised,
No arts had made us opulent and gay ;
With brother-brutes the human race had grazed ;
None e'er had soar'd to fame, none honour'd been, none
praised.

LII.

“ Great Homer's song had never fired the breast 460
To thirst of glory, and heroic deeds ;
Sweet Maro's muse, sunk in inglorious rest,
Had silent slept amid the Mincian reeds :
The wits of modern time had told their beads,
And monkish legends been their only strains ;
Our Milton's Eden had lain wrapt in weeds,
Our Shakespear stroll'd and laugh'd with Warwick
swains,
Ne had my master Spenser charm'd his Mulla's plains.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 253

LIII.

“Dumb, too, had been the sage historic muse,
And perish'd all the sons of ancient fame ; 470
Those starry lights of virtue, that diffuse
Through the dark depth of time their vivid flame,
Had all been lost with such as have no name.
Who then had scorn'd his ease for others' good ?
Who then had toil'd, rapacious men to tame ?
Who in the public breach devoted stood,
And for his country's cause been prodigal of blood ?

LIV.

“But should to fame your hearts impervious be,
If right I read, you pleasure all require :
Then hear how best may be obtain'd this fee, 480
How best enjoy'd this nature's wide desire.
Toil, and be glad ! let Industry inspire
Into your quicken'd limbs her buoyant breath !
Who does not act, is dead ; absorb'd entire
In miry sloth, no pride, no joy he hath :
O leaden-hearted men, to be in love with death !

LV.

“Better the toiling swain ; oh, happier far !
Perhaps the happiest of the sons of men !
Who vigorous plies the plough, the team, or car ;
Who houghs the field, or ditches in the glen, 490
Delves in his garden, or secures his pen :
The tooth of avarice poisons not his peace ;

254 THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE.

He tosses not in sloth's abhorred den ;
From vanity he has a full release ;
And, rich in nature's wealth, he thinks not of increase.

LVI.

“ Good Lord ! how keen are his sensations all !
His bread is sweeter than the glutton's cates :
The wines of France upon the palate pall,
Compared with what his simple soul elates,
The native cup, whose flavour thirst creates. 500
At one deep draught of sleep he takes the night :
And for that heartfelt joy which nothing mates,
Of the pure nuptial-bed the chaste delight,
The losel is to him a miserable wight.

LVII.

“ But what avail the largest gifts of Heaven,
When sickening health and spirits go amiss ?
How tasteless then whatever can be given !
Health is the vital principle of bliss,
And exercise, of health. In proof of this,
Behold the wretch, who slugs his life away, 510
Soon swallow'd in disease's sad abyss ;
While he whom toil has braced, or manly play,
Has light as air each limb, each thought as clear as day.

LVIII.

“ O, who can speak the vigorous joys of health !
Unclogg'd the body, unobscured the mind :

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 255

The morning rises gay; with pleasing stealth,
The temperate evening falls serene and kind.
In health the wiser brutes true gladness find.
See! how the younglings frisk along the meads,
As May comes on, and wakes the balmy wind; 520
Rampant with life, their joy all joy exceeds:
Yet what but high-strung health this dancing pleasaunce
breeds?

LIX.

“ But here, instead, is foster'd every ill
Which or distemper'd minds or bodies know.
Come, then, my kindred spirits! do not spill
Your talents here. This place is but a show,
Whose charms delude you to the den of woe:
Come, follow me, I will direct you right,
Where pleasure's roses, void of serpents, grow,
Sincere as sweet; come, follow this good knight, 530
And you will bless the day that brought him to your sight.

LX.

“ Some he will lead to courts, and some to camps;
To senate some, and public sage debates,
Where, by the solemn gleam of midnight lamps,
The world is poised, and managed mighty states;
To high discovery some, that new-creates
The face of earth; some to the thriving mart;
Some to the rural reign, and softer fates;
To the sweet muses some, who raise the heart:
All glory shall be yours, all nature, and all art. 540

LXI.

"There are, I see, who listen to my lay ;
 Who wretched sigh for virtue, but despair.
 'All may be done, (methinks I hear them say)
 Even death despised by generous actions fair ;
 All, but for those who to these bowers repair,
 Their every power dissolved in luxury,
 To quit of torpid sluggishness the lair,
 And from the powerful arms of sloth get free.
 'Tis rising from the dead ! Alas ! it cannot be !'

LXII.

"Would you then learn to dissipate the band 550
 Of these huge threatening difficulties dire,
 That in the weak man's way like lions stand,
 His soul appal, and damp his rising fire ?
 Resolve ! resolve ! and to be men aspire !
 Exert that noblest privilege alone
 Here to mankind indulged : control desire ;
 Let godlike reason, from her sovereign throne,
 Speak the commanding word, *I will!* and it is done.

LXIII.

"Heavens ! can you, then, thus waste, in shameful
 wise,
 Your few important days of trial here ? 560
 Heirs of eternity ! yborn to rise
 Through endless states of being, still more near
 To bliss approaching, and perfection clear,

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 257

Can you renounce a fortune so sublime,
Such glorious hopes, your backward steps to steer,
And roll, with vilest brutes, through mud and slime?
No, no!—your heaven-touch'd hearts disdain the piteous
crime!"

LXIV.

"Enough! enough!" they cried. Straight from the
crowd
The better sort on wings of transport fly :
As when, amid the lifeless summits proud 570
Of Alpine cliffs, where to the gelid sky
Snows piled on snows in wintry torpor lie,
The rays divine of vernal Phœbus play ;
The awaken'd heaps, in streamlets from on high,
Roused into action, lively leap away,
Glad-warbling through the vales, in their new being gay.

LXV.

Not less the life, the vivid joy serene,
That lighted up these new-created men,
Than that which wings the exulting spirit clean,
When, just deliver'd from his fleshly den, 580
It soaring seeks its native skies agen.
How light its essence! how unclogg'd its powers!
Beyond the blazon of my mortal pen :
Even so we glad forsook these sinful bowers ;
Even such enraptured life, such energy was ours.

LXVI.

But far the greater part, with rage inflamed,
 Dire mutter'd curses, and blasphemed high Jove.
 "Ye sons of hate!" (they bitterly exclaim'd)
 "What brought you to this seat of peace and love?
 While with kind nature, here amid the grove, 590
 We pass'd the harmless sabbath of our time,
 What to disturb it could, fell men, emove
 Your barbarous hearts? Is happiness a crime?
 Then do the fiends of hell rule in yon heaven sublime."

LXVII.

"Ye impious wretches," (quoth the knight in wrath)
 "Your happiness behold!"—Then straight a wand
 He waved, an anti-magic power that hath,
 Truth from illusive falsehood to command.
 Sudden, the landskip sinks on every hand;
 The pure quick streams are marshy puddles found; 600
 On baleful heaths the groves all blacken'd stand;
 And, o'er the weedy, foul, abhorred ground,
 Snakes, adders, toads, each loathly creature crawls
 around.

LXVIII.

And here and there, on trees by lightning scathed,
 Unhappy wights who loathed life yhung;
 Or, in fresh gore and recent murder bathed,
 They weltering lay; or else, infuriate flung
 Into the gloomy flood, while ravens sung

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 259

The funeral dirge, they down the torrent roll'd :
These, by distemper'd blood to madness stung, 610
Had doom'd themselves ; whence oft, when night
controll'd

The world, returning hither their sad spirits howl'd.

LXIX.

Meantime a moving scene was open laid :
That lazar-house, I whilom in my lay
Depeinten have, its horrors deep display'd,
And gave unnumber'd wretches to the day,
Who tossing there in squalid misery lay.
Soon as of sacred light the unwonted smile
Pour'd on these living catacombs its ray,
Through the drear caverns stretching many a mile, 620
The sick up-raised their heads, and dropp'd their woes
awhile.

LXX.

“ O Heaven ! ” (they cried) “ and do we once more see
Yon blessed sun, and this green earth so fair ?
Are we from noisome damp of pesthouse free ?
And drink our souls the sweet ethereal air ?
O thou, or knight, or God, who holdest there
That fiend, oh keep him in eternal chains !
But what for us, the children of despair,
Brought to the brink of hell, what hope remains ?
Repentance does itself but aggravate our pains.” 630

LXXI.

The gentle knight, who saw their rueful case,
 Let fall adown his silver beard some tears.
 " Certes," (quoth he) "it is not even in grace,
 T' undo the past, and eke your broken years :
 Nathless, to nobler worlds repentance rears,
 With humble hope, her eye ; to her is given
 A power the truly contrite heart that cheers ;
 She quells the brand by which the rocks are riven ;
 She more than merely softens, she rejoices Heaven.

LXXII.

" Then patient bear the sufferings you have earn'd, 640
 And by these sufferings purify the mind ;
 Let wisdom be by past misconduct learn'd :
 Or pious die, with penitence resign'd ;
 And to a life more happy and refined,
 Doubt not, you shall, new creatures, yet arise.
 Till then, you may expect in me to find
 One who will wipe your sorrow from your eyes,
 One who will soothe your pangs, and wing you to the
 skies."

LXXIII.

They silent heard, and pour'd their thanks in tears.
 " For you," (resumed the knight with sterner tone) 650
 " Whose hard dry hearts the obdurate demon sears ;
 That villain's gifts will cost you many a groan ;
 In dolorous mansion long you must bemoan

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 261

His fatal charms, and weep your stains away;
Till, soft and pure as infant goodness grown,
You feel a perfect change : then, who can say
What grace may yet shine forth in Heaven's eternal
day?"

LXXIV.

This said, his powerful wand he waved anew :
Instant, a glorious angel train descends,
The charities, to wit, of rosy hue ; 660
Sweet love their looks a gentle radiance lends,
And with seraphic flame compassion blends.
At once, delighted, to their charge they fly :
When, lo ! a goodly hospital ascends ;
In which they bade each lenient aid be nigh,
That could the sick-bed smoothe of that unhappy fry.

LXXV.

It was a worthy, edifying sight,
And gives to human-kind peculiar grace,
To see kind hands attending day and night,
With tender ministry, from place to place. 670
Some prop the head ; some, from the pallid face
Wipe off the faint cold dews weak nature sheds ;
Some reach the healing draught : the whilst, to
chase
The fear supreme, around their soften'd beds,
Some holy man by prayer all opening heaven dispreeds.

LXXVI.

Attended by a glad acclaiming train,
 Of those he rescued had from gaping hell,
 Then turn'd the knight ; and, to his hall again
 Soft-pacing, sought of peace the mossy cell:
 Yet down his cheeks the gems of pity fell, 680
 To see the helpless wretches that remain'd,
 There left through delves* and deserts dire to yell :
 Amazed, their looks with pale dismay were stain'd,
 And, spreading wide their hands, they meek repentance
 feign'd.

LXXVII.

But ah ! their scorned day of grace was past :
 For (horrible to tell !) a desert wild
 Before them stretch'd, bare, comfortless, and vast ;
 With gibbets, bones, and carcasses defiled.
 There nor trim field nor lively culture smiled ;
 Nor waving shade was seen, nor fountain fair ; 690
 But sands abrupt on sands lay loosely piled,
 Through which they floundering toil'd with painful
 care,
 Whilst Phœbus smote them sore, and fired the cloudless
 air.

LXXVIII.

Then, varying to a joyless land of bogs,
 The sadden'd country a grey waste appear'd ;

* Dales.

THE CASTLE OF INDOLENCE. 263

Where nought but putrid streams and noisome fogs
For ever hung on drizzly Auster's beard ;
Or else the ground, by piercing Caurus sear'd,
Was jagg'd with frost, or heap'd with glazed snow :
Through these extremes a ceaseless round they
steer'd, 700
By cruel fiends still hurried to and fro,
Gaunt beggary, and scorn, with many hell-hounds moe.

LXXIX.

The first was with base dunghill rags yclad,
Tainting the gale, in which they flutter'd light ;
Of morbid hue his features, sunk, and sad ;
His hollow eyne shook forth a sickly light ;
And o'er his lank jaw-bone, in piteous plight,
His black rough beard was matted rank and vile ;
Direful to see ! a heart-appalling sight !
Meantime foul scurf and blotches him defile ; 710
And dogs, where'er he went, still barked all the while.

LXXX.

The other was a fell spiteful fiend :
Hell holds none worse in baleful bower below :
By pride, and wit, and rage, and rancour, keen'd ;
Of man, alike if good or bad, the foe :
With nose up-turn'd, he always made a show
As if he smelt some nauseous scent ; his eye
Was cold and keen, like blast from boreal snow ;
And taunts he casten forth most bitterly.
Such were the twain that off drove this ungodly fry. 720

LXXXI.

Even so through Brentford town, a town of mud,
An herd of bristly swine is prick'd along ;
The filthy beasts, that never chew the cud,
Still grunt, and squeak, and sing their troublous song,
And oft they plunge themselves the mire among :
But aye the ruthless driver goads them on,
And aye of barking dogs the bitter throng
Makes them renew their unmelodious moan ;
Ne ever find they rest from their unresting fone.*

* Foes.

ELEGIES.

ON THE DEATH OF HIS MOTHER.

YE fabled muses, I your aid disclaim,
Your airy raptures, and your fancied flame ;
True genuine woe my throbbing breast inspires,
Love prompts my lays, and filial duty fires ;
The soul springs instant at the warm design,
And the heart dictates every flowing line.
See ! where the kindest, best of mothers lies,
And death has shut her ever-weeping eyes ;
Has lodg'd at last peace in her weary breast,
And lull'd her many piercing cares to rest. 10
No more the orphan train around her stands,
While her full heart upbraids her needy hands !
No more the widow's lonely fate she feels,
The shock severe that modest want conceals,
The oppressor's scourge, the scorn of wealthy pride,
And poverty's unnumber'd ills beside.
For see ! attended by the angelic throng,
Through yonder worlds of light she glides along,
And claims the well-earn'd raptures of the sky,
Yet fond concern recalls the mother's eye ; 20

She seeks the helpless orphans left behind ;
 So hardly left ! so bitterly resign'd !
 Still, still ! is she my soul's divinest theme,
 The waking vision, and the wailing dream :
 Amid the ruddy sun's enlivening blaze
 O'er my dark eyes her dewy image plays,
 And in the dread dominion of the night
 Shines out again the sadly pleasing sight.
 Triumphant virtue all around her darts,
 And more than volumes every look imparts— 30
 Looks soft yet awful, melting yet serene,
 Where both the mother and the saint are seen.
 But ah ! that night—that torturing night remains ;
 May darkness dye it with its deepest stains,
 May joy on it forsake her rosy bowers,
 And screaming sorrow blast its baleful hours,
 When on the margin of the briny flood *
 Chill'd with a sad presaging damp I stood,
 Took the last look, ne'er to behold her more,
 And mix'd our murmurs with the wavy roar, 40
 Heard the last words fall from her pious tongue,
 Then, wild into the bulging vessel flung,
 Which soon, too soon conveyed me from her sight,
 Dearer than life, and liberty, and light !
 Why was I then, ye powers, reserved for this ?
 Nor sunk that moment in the vast abyss ?
 Devoured at once by the relentless wave,
 And whelm'd for ever in a watery grave ?
 Down, ye wild wishes of unruly woe !—

* On the shore at Leith, where he embarked for London.

SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

267

I see her with immortal beauty glow, 50
The early wrinkle care-contracted gone,
Her tears all wiped, and all her sorrows flown ;
The exalting voice of Heaven I hear her breathe,
To soothe her soul in agonies of death.
I see her through the mansions blest above,
And now she meets her dear expecting love.
Heart-cheering sight ! but yet, alas ! o'erspread
By the damp gloom of grief's uncheerful shade.
Come then of reason the reflecting hour,
And let me trust the kind o'erruling Power, 60
Who from the night commands the shining day,
The poor man's portion, and the orphan's stay.

SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF
SIR ISAAC NEWTON.

SHALL the great soul of Newton quit this earth,
To mingle with his stars ; and every muse,
Astonish'd into silence, shun the weight
Of honours due to his illustrious name ?
But what can man ?—Even now the sons of light,
In strains high-warbled to seraphic lyre,
Hail his arrival on the coast of bliss.
Yet am not I deterr'd, though high the theme,
And sung to harps of angels ; for with you,
Ethereal flames ! ambitious, I aspire 10

In Nature's general symphony to join.

And what new wonders can ye show your guest ?
Who, while on this dim spot, where mortals toil,
Clouded in dust, from motion's simple laws,
Could trace the secret hand of Providence
Wide-working through this universal frame.

Have ye not listen'd while he bound the suns
And planets to their spheres ? the unequal task
Of humankind till then. Oft had they roll'd
O'er erring man the year, and oft disgraced 20
The pride of schools, before their course was known
Full in its causes and effects to him,
All-piercing sage ! who sat not down and dream'd
Romantic schemes, defended by the din
Of specious words, and tyranny of names ;
But, bidding his amazing mind attend,
And with heroic patience years on years
Deep-searching, saw at last the system dawn,
And shine, of all his race, on him alone. 29

What were his raptures then ! how pure ! how strong !
And what the triumphs of old Greece and Rome,
By his diminish'd, but the pride of boys
In some small fray victorious ? when, instead
Of shatter'd parcels of this earth usurp'd
By violence unmanly, and sore deeds
Of cruelty and blood, Nature herself
Stood all-subdued by him, and open laid
Her every latent glory to his view.

All-intellectual eye, our solar round
First gazing through, he by the blended power 40

Of gravitation and projection saw
The whole in silent harmony revolve.
From unassisted vision hid, the moons
To cheer remoter planets numerous form'd,
By him in all their mingled tracts were seen.
He also fix'd our wandering queen of night,
Whether she wanes into a scanty orb,
Or, waxing broad, with her pale shadowy light,
In a soft deluge overflows the sky.

Her every motion clear-discerning, he 50
Adjusted to the mutual main, and taught
Why now the mighty mass of water swells
Resistless, heaving on the broken rocks,
And the full river turning ; till again
The tide revertive, unattracted, leaves
A yellow waste of idle sands behind.

Then breaking hence, he took his ardent flight
Through the blue infinite ; and every star,
Which the clear concave of a winter's night
Pours on the eye ; or astronomic tube, 60
Far-stretching, snatches from the dark abyss ;
Or such as farther in successive skies
To fancy shine alone,—at his approach
Blazed into suns, the living centre each
Of an harmonious system : all combined
And ruled unerring by that single power
Which draws the stone projected to the ground.

O unprofuse magnificence divine !
O wisdom truly perfect ! thus to call
From a few causes such a scheme of things, 70

Effects so various, beautiful, and great,
 An universe complete ! And, O beloved
 Of Heaven, whose well-purged, penetrative eye,
 The mystic veil transpiercing, inly scann'd
 The rising, moving, wide-establish'd frame !

He first of men with awful wing pursued
 The comet through the long elliptic curve,
 As round innumerable worlds he wound his way ;
 Till, to the forehead of our evening sky
 Return'd, the blazing wonder glares anew, 80
 And o'er the trembling nations shakes dismay.

The heavens are all his own ; from the wild rule
 Of whirling vortices and circling spheres,
 To their first great simplicity restored.

The schools astonish'd stood ; but found it vain
 To combat still with demonstration strong,
 And, unawaken'd, dream beneath the blaze
 Of truth. At once their pleasing visions fled,
 With the gay shadows of the morning mix'd,
 When Newton rose, our philosophic sun ! 90

The aërial flow of sound was known to him,
 From whence it first in wavy circles breaks,
 Till the touch'd organ takes the message in.
 Nor could the darting beam, of speed immense,
 Escape his swift pursuit and measuring eye.
 Even light itself, which everything displays,
 Shone undiscover'd, till his brighter mind
 Untwisted all the shining robe of day ;
 And, from the whitening undistinguish'd blaze,
 Collecting every ray into his kind, 100

To the charm'd eye educed the gorgeous train
 Of parent colours. First the flaming red
 Sprung vivid forth; the tawny orange next;
 And next delicious yellow; by whose side
 Fell the kind beams of all-refreshing green:
 Then the pure blue, that swells autumnal skies,
 Ethereal play'd; and then, of sadder hue,
 Emerged the deepen'd indigo, as when
 The heavy-skirted evening droops with frost;
 While the last gleamings of refracted light 110
 Died in the fainting violet away.

These, when the clouds distil the rosy shower,
 Shine out distinct adown the watery bow;
 While o'er our heads the dewy vision bends
 Delightful, melting on the fields beneath.
 Myriads of mingling dyes from these result,
 And myriads still remain;—infinite source
 Of beauty, ever blushing, ever new!

Did ever poet image aught so fair, 119
 Dreaming in whispering groves, by the hoarse brook?
 Or prophet, to whose rapture heaven descends?
 Even now the setting sun and shifting clouds,
 Seen, Greenwich, from thy lovely heights, declare,
 How just, how beauteous, the refractive law.

The noiseless tide of time, all bearing down
 To vast eternity's unbounded sea,
 Where the green islands of the happy shine,
 He stemm'd alone; and to the source (involved
 Deep in primeval gloom) ascending, raised
 His lights at equal distances, to guide 130

Historian, wilder'd on his darksome way.

But who can number up his labours? who
His high discoveries sing! when but a few
Of the deep-studying race can stretch their minds
To what he knew. In fancy's lighter thought,
How shall the muse, then, grasp the mighty theme?

What wonder thence that his devotion swell'd
Responsive to his knowledge? For could he,
Whose piercing mental eye diffusive saw
The finish'd university of things, 140
In all its order, magnitude, and parts,
Forbear incessant to adore that Power
Who fills, sustains, and actuates the whole?

Say, ye who best can tell, ye happy few,
Who saw him in the softest lights of life,
All unwithheld, indulging to his friends
The vast unborrow'd treasures of his mind,
Oh, speak the wondrous man! how mild, how calm,
How greatly humble, how divinely good,
How firm establish'd on eternal truth! 150
Fervent in doing well; with every nerve
Still pressing on, forgetful of the past,
And panting for perfection: far above
Those little cares and visionary joys
That so perplex the fond impassion'd heart
Of ever-cheated, ever-trusting man.

And you, ye hopeless, gloomy-minded tribe,
You who, unconscious of those nobler flights
That reach impatient at immortal life,
Against the prime endearing privilege 160

Of Being dare contend, say, can a soul
 Of such extensive, deep, tremendous powers,
 Enlarging still, be but a finer breath
 Of spirits dancing through their tubes a while,
 And then for ever lost in vacant air?

But hark ! methinks I hear a warning voice,
 Solemn as when some awful change is come,
 Sound through the world—'Tis done ; the measure's
 full ;

And I resign my charge. Ye mouldering stones,
 That build the towering pyramid, the proud 170
 Triumphal arch, the monument effaced
 By ruthless ruin, and whate'er supports
 The worshipp'd name of hoar antiquity,
 Down to the dust ! What grandeur can ye boast,
 While Newton lifts his column to the skies,
 Beyond the waste of time ? Let no weak drop
 Be shed for him. The virgin in her bloom
 Cut off, the joyous youth, and darling child,—
 These are the tombs that claim the tender tear
 And elegiac song. But Newton calls 180
 For other notes of gratulation high,
 That now he wanders through those endless worlds
 He here so well descried, and wondering talks,
 And hymns their Author, with his glad compeers.

Oh, Britain's boast ! whether with angels thou
 Sittest in dread discourse, or fellow-bless'd
 Who joy to see the honour of their kind ;
 Or whether, mounted on cherubic wing,
 Thy swift career is with the whirling orbs,

274 IN MEMORY OF MR. CONGREVE.

Comparing things with things, in rapture lost, 190
And grateful adoration, for that light
So plenteous ray'd into thy mind below,
From Light Himself; oh, look with pity down
On human-kind, a frail erroneous race!
Exalt the spirit of a downward world!
O'er thy dejected country chief preside,
And be her Genius call'd! her studies raise,
Correct her manners, and inspire her youth.
For, though depraved and sunk, she brought thee
forth,
And glories in thy name; she points thee out 200
To all her sons, and bids them eye thy star:
While, in expectance of the second life,
When time shall be no more, thy sacred dust
Sleeps with her kings, and dignifies the scene.

A POEM TO THE MEMORY OF
MR. CONGREVE.

OFT has the muse, with mean attempt employ'd
Her heaven-born voice to flatter prosperous guilt,
Or trivial greatness; often stoop'd her song
To soothe ambition in his frantic rage,
The dire destroyer, while a bleeding world
Wept o'er his crimes. Of this pernicious skill
Unknowing I, these voluntary lays

IN MEMORY OF MR. CONGREVE. 275

To genuine worth devote ; to worth by all
Confess'd and mourn'd ; to Congreve now no more.

First of the fairer kind ! by heaven adorn'd 10
With every nobler praise, whose smile can lift
The muse unknown to fame, indulgent now
Permit her strain, ennobled by a name
To all the better few, and chief to thee,
Marlborough,* ever sacred, ever dear.

Lamented shade ! in him the Comic Muse,
Parent of gay instruction, lost her loved,
Her last remaining hope ; and pensive now
Resigns to Folly, and his mimic rout
Her throne usurp'd : presage of darker times, 20
And deeper woes to come ! With taste declined
Fallen Virtue droops ; and, o'er the ill-omen'd age,
Unseen, unfear'd, impend the thousand ills
That wait on ignorance ; no Congreve now
To scourge our crimes, or laugh to scorn our fools,
A new and nameless herd. Nature was his,
Bold, sprightly, various, and superior art,
Curious to choose each better grace, unseen
Of vulgar eyes ; with delicacy free,
Though laboured, happy ; and though strong, refined. 30
Judgment, severely cool, o'erlook'd his toil,
And patient finish'd all ; each fair design
With freedom regular, correctly great,
A master's skilful daring. Closely wrought
His meaning fable, with deep art perplex'd,
With striking ease unravell'd ; no thin plot

* Henrietta, Duchess of Marlborough.

276 IN MEMORY OF MR. CONGREVE.

Seen through at once and scorn'd ; or ill-conceal'd
By borrowing aids of mimicry and farce.
His characters strong-featured, equal, just,
From finer nature drawn ; and all the mind 40
Through all her mazes traced ; each darker vice,
And darling folly, under each disguise,
By either sex assumed, of studied ease,
False friendship, loose serenity, vain wit,
Dull briskness, shallow depth, or coward rage.
Of the whole muse possess'd, his piercing eye
Discern'd each richer vein of genuine mirth,
Humour or wit ; where differing, where agreed ;
How counterfeited, or by folly's grin,
Or affectation's air ; and what their force 50
To please, to move, to shape the ravish'd scene,
With laughter unreprieved. To him the soul
In all his higher workings too was known,
What passions tumult there ; whence their prompt
spring,
Their sudden flood of rage, and gradual fall ;
Infinite motion ! source supreme of bliss
Or woe to man ; our heaven, or hell, below !
Such was his public name ; nor less allow'd
His private worth ; by nature made for praise.
A pleasing form ; a soul sincere and clear, 60
Where all the human graces mix'd their charms ;
Pure candour, easy goodness, open truth,
Spontaneous all ; where strength and beauty join'd
With wit indulgent ; humble in the height
Of envied honours ; and, but rarely found,

IN MEMORY OF MR. CONGREVE. 277

The unjealous friend of every rival worth.
Adorn'd for social life : each talent his
To win each heart ; the charm of happy ease,
Free mirth, gay learning, ever smiling wit,
To all endear'd, a pleasure without pain ; 70
What Halifax approved, and Marlborough mourns.

Not so the illiberal mind, where knowledge dwells,
Uncouth and harsh, with her attendant, pride,
Impatient of attention, prone to blame,
Disdaining to be pleased, condemning all,
By all condemn'd ; for social joys unfit,
In solitude self-cursed, the child of spleen.
Obliged, ungrateful ; unobliged, a foe ;
Poor, vicious, old, such fierce-eyed Asper was.*
Now meaner Cenus,† trivial with design, 80
Courts poor applause by levity of face,
And scorn of serious thought ; to mischief prompt,
Though impotent to wound ; profuse of wealth,
Yet friendless and unloved ; vain, flattering, false,
A vacant head, and an ungenerous heart.

But slighting these ignoble names, the muse
Pursues her favourite son, and sees him now,
From this dim spot enlarged, triumphant soar
Beyond the vale of Time, to better worlds,
Where all is new, all wondrous, and all blest ! 90
What art thou, Death ? by mankind poorly fear'd,
Yet period of their ills. On thy near shore,
Trembling they stand, and see through dreaded mists
The eternal port, unresolute to leave

* Perhaps John Dennis.

† Unidentified.

278 IN MEMORY OF MR. CONGREVE.

This various misery, these air-fed dreams
Which men call life and fame. Mistaken minds !
'Tis reason's prime aspiring, greatly just ;
'Tis happiness supreme, to venture forth
In quest of nobler worlds ; to try the deeps
Of dark futurity, with heaven our guide, 100
The unerring Hand that led us safe through time ;
That planted in the soul this powerful hope,
This infinite ambition of new life,
And endless joys, still rising, ever new.

These Congreve tastes, safe on the ethereal coast,
Join'd to the numberless, immortal quire
Of spirits blest. High-seated among these
He sees the public fathers of mankind,
The greatly good, those universal minds,
Who drew the sword, or plann'd the busy scheme 110
For liberty and right ; to check the rage
Of blood-stain'd tyranny, and save a world.
Such, high-born Marlborough, be thy sire divine
With wonder named ; fair freedom's champion he,
By Heaven approved : a conqueror without guilt ;
And such on earth his friend, and join'd on high
By deathless love, Godolphin's patriot worth,
Just to his country's fame, yet of her wealth
With honour frugal ; above interest great.
Hail ! men immortal. Social virtues, hail ! 120
First heirs of praise ! But I, with weak essay,
Wrong the superior theme ; while heavenly quires,
In strains high-warbled to celestial harps,
Resound your names : and Congreve's added voice

In heaven exalts what he admired below.
 With these he mixes, now no more to swerve
 From reason's purest law ; no more to please
 Borne by the torrents down, a sensual age.
 Pardon, loved shade, that I with friendly blame
 Slight-note thy error ; not to wrong thy worth, 130
 Or shade thy memory (far from my soul
 Be that base aim), but happy to deter,
 From flattering the gross vulgar, future pens,
 Powerful like thine in every grace, and skill'd
 To win the listening soul with virtuous charms ;
 If manly thought and wit refined may hope
 To please an age in aimless folly sunk,
 And sliding swift into the depths of vice.

Consuming pleasure leads the gay and young
 Through their vain round, and venal faith the old, 140
 Or avarice mean of soul ; instructive arts
 Pursued no more ; the general taste extinct,
 Or all debased ; even sacred liberty
 The great man's jest, and Britain's welfare named
 By her degenerate sons the poet's dream,
 Or fancy's air-built vision, gaily vain.
 Such the lost age ; yet still the muse can find,
 Superior and apart, a sacred band,
 Heroic virtues who ne'er bow'd the knee
 To sordid interest ; who dare greatly claim 150
 The privilege of men, unfearing truth,
 And freedom, heaven's first gift ; the ennobling bliss
 That renders life of price, and cheaply saved
 At life's expense ; our sum of happiness.

280 IN MEMORY OF MR. CONGREVE

On these the drooping muses fix their eyes ;
From these expect their ancient fame restored,
Nor will the hope be vain ; the public weal
With theirs fast-link'd ; a generous truth conceal'd
From narrow-thoughted power, and known alone
To souls of highest rank. With these the fair 160
Be join'd in just applause ; the brighter few,
Who, raised above gay folly, and the whirl
Of fond amusements, emulate thy praise,
Illustrious Marlborough ; pleased, like thee, to shine
Propitious on the muse ; whose charms inspire
Her noblest raptures, and whose goodness charms.

SONGS.

TO FORTUNE.*

FOR ever, Fortune, wilt thou prove
An unrelenting foe to love,
And when we meet a mutual heart,
Come in between, and bid us part ;

Bid us sigh on from day to day,
And wish, and wish the soul away ;
Till youth and genial years are flown,
And all the joy of life is gone.

But busy, busy still art thou,
To bind the loveless, joyless vow ;
The heart from pleasure to delude,
And join the gentle to the rude.

[For pomp, and noise, and senseless show,
To make us Nature's joys forego,
Beneath a gay dominion groan,
And put the golden fether on !]

* There are two versions of this song. In the first, Stanza v. does not appear ; in the second, Stanza iv. is omitted.

TO HER I LOVE.

For once, O Fortune, hear my prayer,
And I absolve thy future care ;
All other blessings I resign,
Make but the dear Amanda mine.

TO HER I LOVE.

TELL me, thou soul of her I love,
Ah ! tell me, whither art thou fled ;
To what delightful world above,
Appointed for the happy dead ?

Or dost thou, free, at pleasure roam,
And sometimes share thy lover's woe ;
Where, void of thee, his cheerless home
Can now, alas ! no comfort know ?

Oh ! if thou hover'st round my walk
While, under every well-known tree,
I to thy fancied shadow talk,
And every tear is full of thee ;

Should then the weary eye of grief,
Beside some sympathetic stream,
In slumber find a short relief,
Oh, visit thou my soothing dream !

[*The following songs are from the "Masque of Alfred."*]

TO PEACE.

O PEACE ! the fairest child of Heaven,
To whom the sylvan reign was given,
The vale, the fountain, and the grove,
With every softer scene of love :
Return, sweet Peace, and cheer the weeping swain !
Return, with ease and pleasure in thy train.

CONTENTMENT.

IF those who live in shepherd's bower,
Press not the rich and stately bed ;
The new-mown hay and breathing flower
A softer couch beneath them spread.

If those who sit at shepherd's board,
Soothe not their taste by wanton art ;
They take what Nature's gifts afford,
And take it with a cheerful heart.

If those who drain the shepherd's bowl,
No high and sparkling wines can boast ;
With wholesome cups they cheer the soul,
And crown them with the village toast.

RULE, BRITANNIA!

If those who join in shepherd's sport,
 Gay-dancing on the daisied ground,
 Have not the splendour of a court ;
 Yet love adorns the merry round.

 RULE, BRITANNIA! *

WHEN Britain first, at Heaven's command,
 Arose from out the azure main,
 This was the charter of the land,
 And guardian angels sang this strain :
 " Rule, Britannia, rule the waves ;
 Britons never will be slaves."

The nations, not so bless'd as thee,
 Must, in their turns, to tyrants fall ;
 While thou shalt flourish great and free,
 The dread and envy of them all.
 " Rule," etc.

* Both internal and external evidence are in favour of Thomson's authorship of "Rule, Britannia!" Sentiment, language, rhythm, all suggest his hand. The literary mystification which attributes the song to Mallet does not bear analysis. Mallet himself never claimed it, and the fact that he obtained Bolingbroke's help in preparing a garbled copy of the song for his own edition of *Alfred*, published in 1751, strongly argues against any plea in his behalf. Mallet's version of the ode differs from the original after Stanza II.

Still more majestic shalt thou rise
 More dreadful from each foreign stroke ;
 As the loud blast that tears the skies
 Serves but to root thy native oak.
 "Rule," etc.

Thee haughty tyrants ne'er shall tame ;
 All their attempts to bend thee down
 Will but arouse thy generous flame,
 But work their woe, and thy renown.
 "Rule," etc.

The four substituted stanzas (the work of Bolingbroke) are here given as an item of literary curiosity: their poetical value is of the slightest.

Should war, should faction shake thy isle,
 And sink to poverty and shame,
 Heaven still shall on Britannia smile,
 Restore her wealth, and raise her name.

As the loud blast that tears thy skies,
 Serves but to root thy native oak ;
 Still more majestic shalt thou rise,
 From foreign, from domestic stroke.

How blest the prince, reserved by fate,
 In adverse days to mount thy throne !
 Renew thy once triumphant state,
 And on thy grandeur build his own.

His race shall long, in time to come,
 So heaven ordains, thy sceptre wield ;
 Revered abroad, beloved at home ;
 And be, at once, thy sword and shield.

To thee belongs the rural reign ;
Thy cities shall with commerce shine ;
All thine shall be the subject main ;
And every shore it circles thine.
“ Rule,” etc.

The Muses, still with freedom found,
Shall to thy happy coast repair ;
Bless'd isle ! with matchless beauty crown'd,
And manly hearts to guard the fair.
“ Rule,” etc.

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