

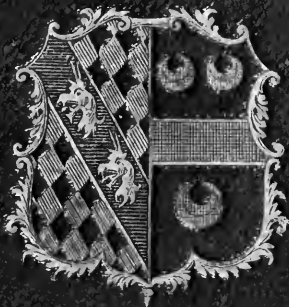
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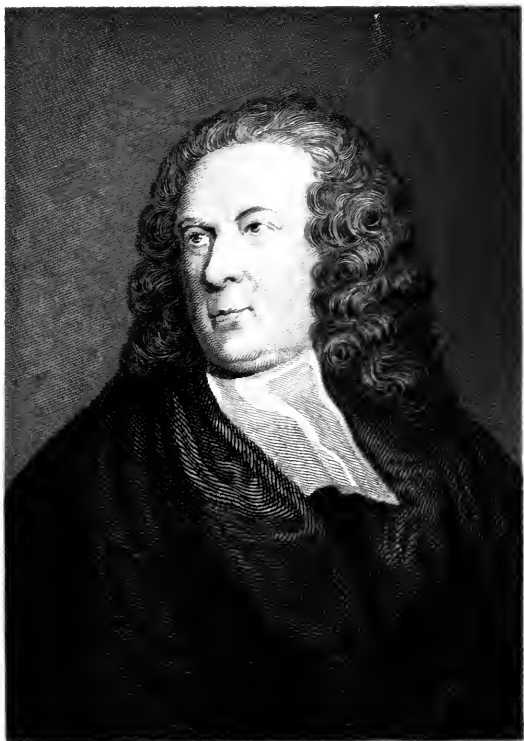
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EDWARD YOUNG, ESQ.

Portrait of Edward Young, Esq. by Sir Godfrey Kneller, 1700.

NIGHT THOUGHTS

ON

LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY;

AND

A Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job.

BY THE

REV. EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.,

SOMETIME RECTOR OF WELWYN, HERTS.

REVISED AND COLLATED WITH THE EARLY QUARTO EDITIONS.

WITH A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR
BY DR. DORAN.

ILLUSTRATED

THIRD EDITION.

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PREFACE.

To the principal poem in this volume—a work which has won for its author an imperishable fame—I have given the simple title of the “Night Thoughts.” The prefix which it usually bears, is “The Complaint.” But this inappropriate epithet was adopted in consequence of the peculiar mode in which the work made its appearance. Each Night was published, at intervals of several months, as a complete pamphlet, in royal quarto, stitched in blue paper covers; and embellished with a fine view of Welwyn churchyard, where the author is seen pursuing his nocturnal studies under the influences of a bright moon and a serene sky. All of them had a distinct title in addition to the “Night Thoughts,” except the Second, which had merely, “Night the Second, on Time, Death, Friendship.” As the Second had no special title, Dodsley, who was a more successful bookseller than poet, made “The Complaint” serve as its general title, as it had done for that of the First Night. The work having early assumed a desultory and uncertain character, as will afterwards be shown, the publisher was induced to prefix the same general but incongruous title to the subsequent pamphlets, for the purpose of securing uniformity. But by this act he perpetrated a sad anomaly; as will be seen by a perusal of the titles of the other Nights, which were severally,—“Narcissa,” “The Christian Triumph,” “The Relapse,” “The Infidel Reclaimed, Part I.,” “The Infidel Reclaimed, Part II.,” “Virtue’s Apology,” and “The Consolation.” To none of these can “The Complaint” be considered an appropriate adjunct, except perhaps to “The Relapse.” But “NIGHT THOUGHTS” was the name which Dr. Young, in his correspondence, uniformly gave to his grand poem, and

by which, it is evident, he wished it always to be designated; for when he had collected together his different "pieces in four volumes," deeming them "to be the most excusable of all that he had formerly written," he announced "the Works," on the title of each volume, not as those of DR. YOUNG, but "of THE AUTHOR OF THE NIGHT THOUGHTS."

In these several parts, the various Nights must have been very popular, and obtained a large circulation. I possess two perfect copies; the nine parts, when bound together, making a thick quarto volume. One of them consists principally of first impressions; and I find, after comparing them, that the First, Second, and Third Nights had reached the *fifth* edition in 1744. The Fourth Night appeared in 1748: In the preface the author made this announcement:—"Since the Fourth Night finishes one principal and important theme, it will be a proper pausing-place for the reader, and the writer too. *And it is uncertain whether Providence or Indination will permit him to go any further.*" Dodsley, having very naturally interpreted this passage to intimate an intention of discontinuing the work, proceeded immediately to publish the Four Nights in an octavo volume, and, for the first time, with a consecutive paging. The sale in this form was rapid. I have two copies, differing from each other in the numbering of the pages: one is the *fifth* edition, and the other the *sixth*; but both were published before the close of 1743. The very accurate octavo edition of the nine Nights, which issued from Richardson's press in 1749, was the *eighth* of the poem in a complete form; and it had as an appendage the "Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job."

Some misunderstanding must have arisen between Young and Dodsley in 1744, after the appearance of "Night the Sixth;" for the Seventh, Eighth, and Ninth Nights were "printed for G. HAWKINS, at Milton's Head, between the two Temple-Gates, Fleet-street; and sold by

M. COOPER, at the Globe in Paternoster Row." It is probable, that, as Young had seemed desirous of consolidating his remaining Nights into a kind of poetical treatise on the evidences of Christianity, Dodsley had refused to give him as large a sum for the copyright of the Sixth Night, as he had done for any of its predecessors, and had offered him still less for the Seventh. As a tradesman, the publisher was right in the judgment to which he seems to have come; for though the succeeding three Nights embody one of the ablest and most original defences of the principles and influences of Christianity that had ever appeared in our language, yet they are destitute of those strong claims on our natural sympathies which their gifted author had contrived, with consummate skill, to intertwine, in the preceding five Nights, between his arguments and his appeals. Night the Sixth had in consequence assumed a form of cold abstraction, unrelieved by those personal and affecting allusions; and its successors promised to be equally didactic. Under these circumstances, therefore, no one could have been surprised had Dodsley thus decided. The "Night Thoughts," published in two thin octavos, usually bound together, appeared to be the property of these two rival firms, till, a few years afterwards, Dodsley's name is seen prefixed to the whole work in one volume.

In preparing this edition for the press, I have had the advantage of consulting, at my leisure, all the early impressions now enumerated, with many others of a subsequent date; especially one of great excellence, a trade-book,* (published in 1796,) in which the editor restored to the text all the verses which Young had deleted in his several revisions. But I have pursued another course: As the edition of 1762 had the benefit of the author's final emendations, it

* The proprietors were "T. Longman; J. Dodsley; C. Dilly; F. and C. Rivington; W. Otridge and Son; T. Cadell, Jun., and W. Davies; and Hookham and Carpenter."

has, with the foregoing exception, been universally acknowledged as the received text; and as such I have adopted it, and have given, in foot-notes, those passages which he had either suppressed or altered. For these, and for a few other brief notes, all of which are subscribed with the word EDITOR, I am accountable.

JAMES NICHOLS.

46, HOXTON-SQUARE,
March 1st, 1853.

CONTENTS.

	Page.
PREFACE	iii
LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.....	xiii

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

NIGHT I.—ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.....	5
II.—ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP	21
III.—NARCISSA	47
IV.—THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.....	67
V.—THE RELAPSE	97
VI.—THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. PART I.	131
VII.—THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED. PART II.....	161
VIII.—VIRTUE'S APOLOGY	213
IX.—THE CONSOLATION	259

A PARAPHRASE ON PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB.....	335
INDEX.....	357

THE
LIFE OF EDWARD YOUNG, LL.D.
BY DR. DORAN.

IN the month of June, 1681, the drought that prevailed throughout England increased the gloom which already reigned in every district of the kingdom save at Whitehall and Hampton-Court. At the latter palace, especially, Charles II. was keeping high revel. Meanwhile, men sat sullenly within their homes, conversing of the universal distress and the national degradation; of the plots by which political partisans got rid of their adversaries; of the scaffolds raised rather for martyrs than criminals; and of the bold speech of Halifax in the senate, that had secured to the Duke of York the royal inheritance, which he was destined to forfeit as James II.

In the month and year above-named there was somewhat of excitement in the little rectory-house of Upham, in Hampshire. The excitement ended in joy and congratulations, for the rector's good wife had presented her husband with a boy; and the reverend gentleman kissed, with dignified emotion, his only son and intended namesake. Charles was then king, and Dryden was the laureate.

The child that day born, in the reign of Charles II., died an old man, very full of years, under the sceptre of George III. There are some aged loiterers who still wonderingly tarry at old-fashioned hearths near Welwyn, whose youthful eyes had looked upon Edward Young, when the latter was near upon the limits of his earthly career.

Edward Young had himself, in his early childhood at Upham, gazed upon men of many winters, whose births dated from the period of the first Stuart who ruled in England. Thus one person forms the link of communication between individuals who lived respectively in the reign of James I. and of Queen Victoria.

The summer of 1681, celebrated for its drought, was followed by a winter as famous for its severity. But this winter was forgotten in the more renowned and terrible rigours of that of 1683, when the frost set in a day before Algernon Sidney's execution, in December, and continued till the 4th of February in the following year. The latter day was that on which the Earl of Danby was brought from the Tower to Westminster, after his five years' imprisonment. At half the hearths in England men were discoursing of little else than the crowded fair on the frozen Thames, the coaches running on the ice, and the roasting of oxen whole. At Upham the conversation admitted of diversity; and the good rector and his lady could talk complacently of the honour that had fallen on the little Edward when the Princess Anne took upon herself the responsibilities of sponsorship, and became his godmother.

The father of Edward was, at this period, entirely undistinguished beyond the localities of Upham and of Salisbury, where, as the versatile Bishop Sprat remarked, he held the poorest prebendal stall (that of Gillingham Minor) in the cathedral. He was of a Berkshire family of some standing, and was a Christian gentleman and scholar. Sprat, who was fonder of wit than of divinity, gave his own emphatic admiration to a Latin sermon which the rector of Upham preached before him at the episcopal visitation in 1686. The sermon, which was on the "Idea of Christian Love," enjoyed the singular distinction of being translated into English verse. It was poetized at the suggestion of Waller when he was dying of dropsy, and quoting Virgil on the uncomfortable condition of human life; and it was pub-

lished, with laudatory verses to and from "that excellent poetess," Mrs. Anne Wharton.

Sixteen years after the publication of this sermon, the Rev. Edward Young, who had, in the mean time, been successively raised to the offices of dean of Sarum and chaplain to "William and Mary," published his collected sermons in two volumes, dedicating them to Lord Bradford, to whose good offices it is believed he owed, in great part, his preferment. His now well-known deserts, however, may claim some share in that result. He was no longer an undistinguished man. His Discourses upon Nature and Grace had already, in 1699, been printed by Bowyer, in White-Friars, at what had once been the George Tavern, the scene of a portion of Shadwell's "Squire of Alsatia." During the short remainder of his life he enjoyed considerable literary reputation, added to that which he had acquired for excellencies of even brighter quality. He died in 1705, aged sixty-two years and some months. Bishop Burnet alluded, in a sermon, to the suddenness of the catastrophe and the merit of the sufferer. "Death," said he, "has been of late walking round us, and making breach upon breach upon us, and has now carried away the head of this body with a stroke; so that he whom you saw a week ago distributing the holy mysteries, is now laid in the dust. But he still lives in the many excellent directions he has left us, both how to live and how to die." With such an eulogy the praise awarded to him in the inscription on his tomb, as *Vir cum primis eruditus, probus, integer*, is in strict accordance.

At the period of the dean's death, his son, the future poet, was a member of Corpus Christi College, Oxford. Like his father, he had been, in his boyhood, on the foundation at Winchester School, where the brother of Colley Cibber was his schoolfellow. He should, in due time, have proceeded to a scholarship in New College, Oxford; but, of the seventy fellows and scholars who are elected from

many his wit may have slain there, it is hard to say; but Edward Young received all its points on his buckler, and smote his philosophical adversary with right good-will. Tindal acknowledged that, while he could always find a ready answer to the objections of "the other boys," because he knew whither they had gone for their arguments, he could not overcome Young, who was always encountering him with something original. Such direct testimony is better than that, not opposite, indeed, but somewhat disqualifying, evidence which has been filtered to us from Pope, through Warburton and Ruffhead. According to Pope, "Young had much of a sublime genius, though without common sense; so that his genius, having no guide, was perpetually liable to degenerate into bombast. This made him pass for a foolish youth, the sport of peers and poets; but his having a very good heart enabled him to support the clerical character, when he assumed it, first with decency, and afterwards with honour."

In the year 1710, when Thomas Marquis of Wharton (the father of Philip) was lord lieutenant of Ireland, and Addison was secretary, Young is supposed to have held some office in the household of the viceroy, or to have been under-secretary to Addison. In the dearth of original documents relating to Young, a letter found in the Sloane mss. in the British Museum, was eagerly seized as a proof of this conjecture. It was addressed to M. Desmaiseaux, an eminent French Protestant refugee, well known as the editor of Bayle; and was first published in "the Gentleman's Magazine" for 1782, p. 224. It was evidently written by a man of business, long accustomed to official phraseology; and the production was ascribed to the right author, in a subsequent Number of that Magazine, (p. 433,) by a gentleman of his acquaintance, who says, "The writer of it was the late Mr. Young, of the Tax-Office; who, as it is well known among his friends, was under-secretary to Mr. Addison in Ireland, in the year 1709-10. I have fre-

quently heard him mention Eustace Budgell's being next under him in office."

In SPENCE'S "Anecdotes" we are informed, on the authority of Dr. Young, that "it was the Marquis of Wharton who first got Addison a seat in the House of Commons; and soon after carried him down with him to Winchenden. Addison was charmed with his son, (afterwards Duke of Wharton,) not only as his patron's son, but for the uncommon degree of genius that appeared in him. He used to converse and walk often with him. One day the little lord led him to see some of their fine running horses. There were very high gates to the fields; and at the first of them his young friend fumbled in his pockets, and seemed vastly concerned that he could not find the key. Addison said it was no matter, he could easily climb over it: As he said this, he began mounting the bars; and when he was on the very top of the gate, the little lord whips out his key, and sets the gate a swinging, and so for some time kept this great man in that ridiculous situation."

In the year 1712, Young first appeared before the public as a candidate for honour, poetical and otherwise. The political necessities of the times had rendered an increase in the members of the peerage an object of much importance. The measure, however, was not effected without much attendant indignation on the part of the anti-ministerial faction. A dozen new lords were called to the Upper House on the same day. Of these, ten were creations, two were sons of peers, in whose paternal titles their own would one day merge. Among the former was Mr. Granville, the grandson of the famous old Sir Bevil Granville, who fell in the *mélée* at Lansdowne, in 1643.

In the reign of Queen Anne, the ministry sometimes effectually silenced their opponents by making them peers; and four of those now created had been the fiercest adversaries of the government. Granville was one of these; and he was speedily further advanced to the office of lord privy

seal. The poets at once assailed him with gigantic weight and varied quality of rhyme. Pope, indeed, sang to Lansdowne, on the plea that "Granville commands." Tickell addressed him on the "Prospect of Peace;" and Young, who recollected how Addison had profited by penning metrical addresses to Somers, put forth his "maiden venture," and published it, in 1713, in the hugest of folio forms, and in the most stupendous of types. It is in as modest and unflattering a strain as poets could then use when writing to their patrons.

The dramatic criticism in this poem is in every way admirable. It shows that Young was then looking towards the stage for fame. His phrasing, however, exhibits those pernicious involutions from which he never freed, nor cared to free, himself. Here we have, "He grasps my hand, my hand he grasps;" just as, nearly half a century later, he wrote,

"Canst thou, O Night! indulge one labour more?
One labour more indulge."

With vices of phrasing, there are, also, vices of sentiment. It is only an epicure who could weep because

"Alarms from loaden boards all pleasure chased,
And robb'd the rich Burgundian grape of taste."

But his anxiety for peace was much less than his anxiety to secure the good-will of his patron, of whom he says, in connexion with his newly-coronetted fellows,—

"Lo! one great day calls forth ten mighty peers:
Produce ten Granvilles in five thousand years."

This is a swelling challenge indeed; and, while the world is meditating upon the perils of accepting it, the panegyrist extends his eulogy, and, among other virtues, he hints that, to the lords whom he especially praises, is given that of becoming fathers of none but virtuous children. The privilege, as history shows, was, however, most assuredly not in

their patent. The superlative peers begot some positively indifferent sons.

Our author is precise, as well as laudatory. He fixes the year of Granville's creation as

“That noted year Europa sheathed her sword,
When this great man was first saluted lord.”

Europa, then, must have been easily cowed: as for the words themselves, they remind me of

*L'an que le Sieur de Benserade
N'ulla point à son ambassade.*

The lines, however, in this poem to

“That youthful Harrison, whose tuneful skill
Made Woodstock-Park scarce yield to Cooper's-Hill,”

as Tickell well described him, are fine and full of feeling. They are connected, moreover, with the biography of the author; for they allude to counsel which Harrison gave, and which Young did not follow.

Young's literary labour, in 1713, produced some metrical praise of Addison's "Cato," of no value whatever. His tragedy of "Busiris" was also written in this year; but, as it was not produced till 1719, I will defer speaking of it until I come to the record of that year. His industry was further exemplified by the completion of his poem, "The Last Day." It must be admitted that Young, while he was a persevering student, cultivated his learned leisure in praiseworthy companionship with the Muses; and that, if he was now and then to be found among those who celebrated the "swopping mallard" of All Souls every night in the year, he was not forgetful of the better ends for which Archbishop Chichely had founded the College itself.

Moore, in speaking of the various attitudes, and ways, and tricks that authors have in writing, notices some who could write only standing still, others who wore the floor out, "measuring a line at every stride," and some, again, who poured out rhymes by the dozen while they rode:—

“Herodotus wrote most in bed ;
 And Richerand, a learn'd physician,
 Declares the clock-work of the head
 Goes best in that reclined position.
 If you consult Montaigne and Pliny on
 The subject, 't is their joint opinion,
 That Thought its richest harvest yields
 Abroad among the woods and fields,” &c.

Young had not yet adopted the system of Henry Stephens, who composed as he rode abroad : he had, nevertheless, a way of his own. He is described, at this time, as shutting out the sunlight, creating in his room an artificial night even at high noon, and writing amid all the inspiration that he could derive from the gloomy memorials of death which formed the ornaments of his study. Mr. Rawlinson informs us, that “when the Doctor was deeply engaged in writing one of his tragedies, the Duke of Wharton procured a human skull, fixed a candle in it, and gave it to him as the most proper lamp by which to write tragedy.”

The “Last Day” is said to have been partly written in 1710. There is in it some confusion of details, and some incongruous mixing of little things with great. The figures are ambitious, but not always successful. For the following, of a proclaiming angel, for instance, he would seem to have gone to the workshop of a carver of tombstones :—

“When, lo ! a mighty trump, one half conceal'd
 In clouds, one half to mortal eye reveal'd,” &c.

Some of the sentiments are opposed to those subsequently written by him in his “Night Thoughts :” I would specify that wherein he says, that “This is the scene of combat, not of rest.” We perhaps find a reminiscence and an “experience” of his college life in the seriousness with which, not only in the “Last Day,” but in many others of his productions, he places Beauty among the greatest tempters that man has to withstand, and, in partnership

with man, among the greatest sinners. Thus, at the resurrection, "Beauty hides her face." I do not find that plagiarists are even hinted at as offenders: if such had been the case, I presume that Young would not have rifled Shirley's poetical storehouse, to take from it the passage in which he asks,—

" And shall the victor now
Boast the proud laurels on his loaded brow ? "

There are incidents in poetry and painting in which the greatest artists must fail when they attempt to realize what is beyond human conception. Such is the uniting of the scattered limbs of the dead. Young's description is not appalling, but pantomimic. In far better taste is that of the re-union of soul and body; and there is something of the ring of true metal in his sketch of Westminster-Abbey,

" Where passing slaves o'er sleeping monarchs tread."

The true artist is again to be recognised in the graphic picture of the resurrection. There is something not far from sublimity in the congregating of souls at the bar of the Supreme Judge; and the author could, perhaps, have reached sublimity itself, had he touched on the delight of encountering ancient worthies there, less in the precise spirit of a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and more in that of a philosophical divine. But then how masterly are touches like the following! when, treating of the assembling at the final tribunal, he suddenly bursts forth with the query and the injunction,—

" And thou, my soul, (O fall to sudden prayer,
And let the thought sink deep!) shalt thou be there ? "

Indeed, delight and disappointment go hand in hand throughout this poem, full as it is of merits and defects. We no sooner acknowledge that he has lent an additional bliss to his heaven, by admitting there the mutual recognition of those who knew each other upon earth, than we

find the bliss changed to eternal penalty, by his extending this power of recognition to the saved and those whom they have loved, but whose lot is among the sons of perdition. So the picture of the trembling eagerness of those who are about to pass the threshold of eternal bliss is spoiled, by comparing it with the less heavenly anxiety of a bridegroom, who is in ecstasy at receiving his bride at the altar, and in mortal fear lest something should happen to snatch her from him.

This poem was printed at Oxford, by permission of the vice-chancellor. Young dedicated it to Queen Anne, in acknowledgment of indulgences received, but which are not further named. The style of the dedication is that of flattery gone mad; a Chinese sovereign would almost blush at hearing himself so bepraised. Lin Sin, who forbade his ministers to trouble him with any of the affairs of his empire, was never insulted in more awkwardly-stupendous bombast. Swift accounted for such bombast by saying, that Young and the paid writers of the court "could not err on flattery's side." And as for the absurd imagery of the dedication, why, said the dean,

" Young *must* torture his invention
To flatter knaves, or lose his pension."

Of any fixed pension, however, settled on our poet, there is no documentary record till the year 1725. In the mean time he had to strive for it, and to deserve it. His next attempt, in 1713, was presented to the world in the poem of the "Force of Religion; or, Vanquished Love." The subject is founded on the execution of Lady Jane Grey and her husband, Lord Guildford. The former, as represented by our poet, has not sufficient dignity; while the latter has a superabundance of uxoriousness. A very little alteration of words would give to his speeches the over-warm tone of the ridiculous husbands in Foote's farces or Congreve's plays. His grief is not half so lively at losing his wife as

at being deprived, by her death, of the dear delights he loved. His anticipations have no religious aspect; and his retrospect is busied with alluding to matters that, at such a moment, might well have been forgotten. The poet himself partakes of the feeling which he attributes to Guildford. He evidently thinks poor "Queen Jane" but a very indifferent heroine after great Queen Anne; and, with little of the air of a man who is desirous of showing the force of religion, he maccaronically alludes to the ladies, with an assurance that, in their beauty, accomplishments, youth, and fortune, men see revealed "all of heaven that men below may view."

The action of the married and unhappy pair is described to the reader with the minuteness of a stage direction in a German comedy; and therein their reality is lost, making of them scenic actors, for whom our sympathy is too slothful to be aroused. In his "Last Day," Young had used the expression of "the pious violence of prayer." The players in the "Critic," when they *did* get a good idea, never knew how to make enough of it: so Young repeats, in his very next poem, the phrase that flattered his ear; and here we have it but slightly altered, under the intimation that "We force the gates of heaven by fervent prayer,"—a line that will probably remind my readers of that of another author, who tells us that "Heaven is forced by violence of song." But all minor faults are forgotten in the magnificent invocation and prayer with which the poem closes; a magnificence, however, which is again diminished when we find Queen Anne once more dragged in, and presented to the audience as the regent especially commissioned to "bear the Almighty's sceptre o'er the north." Poor Anne! flattery must have been more fatal to her than Hollands; but she and her family had long been used to it. When her step-mother gave somewhat premature birth to the son of her father, James II., an Oxford man and poet, like Young, rushed into exactly the sort of adulation that

Young would have used, and perhaps had learned from him. The courteous rhymers said,—

“No tedious travail was for thee design’d :

Why shouldst thou feel the curse that blest all mankind ?”

The reason, I think, might be found in a book of old date, had not this *versificator regis*, as marks the true son of song, cared more for fiction than for truth.

In 1714 Young took the degree of B.C.L. ; the honour of the year was made to pass for labour, and nothing in addition illustrated the period, save his lines on the death of the queen. All that the fashionable Mead could devise failed to rescue great Anne from the common lot. Had she died a few weeks earlier, the octogenarian Sophia, electress of Hanover, and granddaughter of James I., would have died queen of Great Britain, which was one of her most cherished wishes. But, as the court-preacher said to Louis XIV., we are “*nearly all of us mortal* ;” and kings, queens, and electresses do not form the exception. Sophia died more suddenly than Anne ; and Young lost thereby the opportunity of indulging in a fine frenzy of antithesis. As it was, he made, of his threnodia for the deceased queen, a panegyric of the newly-enthroned king. Sorrow and congratulation are admirably balanced. So are the respective merits of the two sovereigns. Argyle and Marlborough overcame the enemies of England in the field ; but the “*millions*” so subdued owed their subjection to “*Anna’s prayer*.” She is also celebrated as the mother of her people, and something more than the mother of the church, on which she showered welcome first-fruits and tenths. But the encomium on the new monarch is even more extravagant than that upon the old ; and, if Anne is commended beyond her deserts, George is bepraised beyond all reason. The new king had, of course, done nothing to warrant eulogy ; but Young, in a prophetic fury, assured the nation that it was triply blessed in such a king.

The year 1715 is unmarked by any production on the part of our author. It was the year of the first rebellion; and the Muses, with whatever alacrity they may celebrate war, are, in modern times, at least, wont to be mute while the conflict is raging.

In the mean time, Young was busy and joyous at Oxford. The University had lately been enriched by a bequest from Colonel Codrington. The gallant soldier had left to the students at All-Souls six thousand pounds' worth of books; and, when the foundation of the Codrington library was laid, on the 20th of June, 1716, Young was selected to write and deliver the Latin oration. It is a somewhat inflated production, with a very swelling English dedication inscribed (on his publishing the address at the request of the heir) to the ladies of the Codrington family. To this production was confined all the literary labour of the year 1716. At the end of the year, or early in that which followed, we find him in the company of the young Marquis of Wharton, who had previously broken the hearts of his noble parents by his sudden and imprudent marriage; and with whom he proceeded to Ireland, or joined the noble profligate in that portion of the royal dominions.

It was probably during this visit that Young and his aristocratic friend encountered Swift. "I remember," says the first-named, in his letter on "Original Composition" to Richardson, "as I and others were taking, with Swift, an evening walk, about a mile out of Dublin, he stopped short. We passed on; but, perceiving he did not follow us, I went back, and found him fixed as a statue, and earnestly gazing upward at a noble elm, which, in its uppermost branches, was much withered and decayed. Pointing at it, he said, 'I shall be like that tree: I shall die at top!'"

From this period till 1719 we know little of Young's proceedings. It may have been during a portion of the time between the visit to Ireland and the death of Wharton's son, that Young resided in the family of the Marquis of Exeter as

private tutor to Lord Burleigh. This is the more probable, as, on the 24th of March, 1719, the duke granted Young an annuity, (I do not find the amount specified,) out of consideration, as Wharton himself says, that the public good is advanced by the encouragement of learning and the polite arts; that his grace had derived pleasure from "Dr." Young's attempts therein; and that, for the love the duke bore him, so was his bounty offered. Lord Exeter had promised Young an annuity of £100 *per annum*, if he would continue tutor to Lord Burleigh; but Young declined the office at the solicitation of the duke, and on his grace's assurance that he should be well provided for. As to the duke's intimation in the bond, dated March, 1719, that he had derived pleasure from "Dr." Young's attempts in poetry, I do not see how that could well be; for "Mr." Young did not take his doctor's degree until the 10th of June of that same year. The degree, however, may have been assumed by anticipation, or by some academical usage to us unknown.

It was a busy year with him. It is marked, in addition to his having become Wharton's annuitant, by his *Lines to Tickell on the Death of Addison*, by the *Paraphrase on Job*, and by the completion and production of the tragedy of *Busiris*, written, for the most part, in 1713.

Tickell and Young, in 1719, were still close friends. They mutually communicated their verses to each other; and now, in return for the "*Royal Progress*," Young addressed to Tickell the lines on Addison that Tickell had approved.

The *Paraphrase on Part of Job*, that burning lecture against vanity, is preceded by a dedication that is *steeped* in vanity. It is addressed to Lord Chancellor Parker; a stranger, whom the writer praises for virtues of which he knew nothing, and to whom he talks in praise of a retirement from which *he* would evidently be glad to escape. Young became ashamed of the dedication; but he always entertained a highly favourable opinion of the fragmentary

poem. I think this poem betrays the author's growing intercourse with the play-house and theatrical people. He speaks in the very spirit of a stage-manager when he alludes to having added a mountain, a comet, and the sun, besides a peacock and a lion, to the properties already employed in the scriptural drama. Nay, we recognise the very manner of a modern manager when the author, magnificently scorning to ask the indulgence of the audience for his omissions, additions, and transpositions, complacently addresses himself to the judicious, and confidently asks from *them* the sanction of their applause.

Young's earliest tragedy, "Busiris," is written in a stilted and inflated style, and bears all the marks of a juvenile production. The plot of the piece is void of ingenuity; but there is little that is borrowed in it, save the haughty message sent by Busiris to the Persian ambassador, which is the same as that returned by the Ethiopian prince to Cambyses, in the third book of Herodotus. Of the phrasing, and, indeed, of the incidents, of this tragedy Fielding made excellent fun in his mock tragedy of "Tom Thumb." The sovereigns and courtiers of Egypt give little trouble to be converted into Arthur and Dollabella, Noodle, Doodle, the great little prince, and Huncamunca. The travestie is rich and facile; not least so in that passage mimicking the various addresses to the sun, who is bid to rise no more, but hide his face and put the world in mourning. On these Fielding remarks, that "the author of 'Busiris' is extremely anxious to prevent the sun's blushing at any indecent object; and, therefore, on all such occasions, he addresses himself to the sun, and desires him to keep out of the way." It was dedicated to the Duke of Newcastle, the patron of Eusden, the laureat, "because the late instances he had received of his grace's undeserved and uncommon favour, in an affair of some consequence, foreign to the theatre, had taken from him the privilege of choosing a patron." If this favour consisted in rewarding Young for

writing for the court, the favour *may* have been undeserved, but it was by no means uncommon.

In 1720, our author submitted no work of his own for public approval; but, in the following year, his tragedy of the "Revenge" began slowly to secure the approval which has never yet been questioned.

The success of this second tragedy was, however, by no means equal to that of the first. It was only played six consecutive nights; and Young received but £50 for it. To Marlowe's "Lust's Dominion," and to Mrs. Behn's "Abd Lazar," Young is said to have been indebted for his plot. In the thirty-seventh number, vol. i., of the "Guardian," the author is stated to have been supplied with the materials for his play in the following relation of a series of misfortunes, which had then but recently happened in Spain. "Don Alonzo, a Spanish nobleman, had a virtuous and beautiful wife, with whom he had lived some years in great tranquillity. He was not, however, free from the faults usually imputed to his nation; he was proud, suspicious, and impetuous. He kept a Moor in his house, whom, at a complaint from his lady, he had punished, for a small offence, with the utmost severity. The slave vowed revenge, and communicated his resolution to one of the lady's women, with whom he had lived in a criminal way. This creature, also, hated her mistress; for she feared she was observed by her. She therefore undertook to make Alonzo jealous, by insinuating that the gardener was often admitted to his lady in private, and promising to make him an eye-witness of it. At a proper time, agreed on between her and the Morisco, she sent a message to the gardener, that his lady, having some hasty message to give him, would have him come that moment to her in her chamber. In the mean time, she placed Alonzo in a private room that he might observe who passed that way. It was not long before he saw the gardener appear. Alonzo had not patience, but, following him into the apartment,

struck him, at one blow with a dagger, to the heart; then, dragging his unfortunate lady by the hair, without inquiring farther, he instantly killed her. There he paused, looking on the dead bodies with all the agitation of a demon of revenge; when the girl who had occasioned these terrors, distracted with remorse, threw herself at his feet, and, in a voice of lamentation, without sense of the consequences, repeated all her guilt. Alonzo was overwhelmed with all the violent passions at one instant, and uttered the broken voices and emotions of each of them, for a moment, until, at last, he recollected himself enough to vent his agony of love, anger, disdain, revenge, and remorse, by murdering the maid, the Moor, and himself."

Young has not taken any great liberties with the plot as he thus found it. Where he has done so, the story is dignified and improved, save, perhaps, in the closing lines of contrition uttered by the Moor. Yet in no part of this play do I find, as one of Young's biographers has said, that "the author is superior even to Shakspeare." The machinery by which Iago moves Othello is quite as natural as any employed by Zanga to excite Alonzo to murder his wife upon their nuptial night. But, however this may be, it must be acknowledged that the action of the tragedy never flags, that the interest is well maintained, that the situations are highly dramatic, and that the language is equal to the subject,—expressive, and abounding in poetical beauty. The epilogue was supplied by "a Friend," one of that sort from whom men proverbially pray to be saved. It is, from beginning to end, a mass of uncleanness, without wit to render the dose less disgusting, or the poison less deadly. The Duke of Wharton found a better friend in Young himself, who dedicated the tragedy to his *roué*, but liberal, patron. The dedication is a species of testimony to character such as guilty persons sometimes receive from their good-natured, but unscrupulous, friends. Young

assures his grace, that he leads a virtuous pastoral life, such as your town-rakes know nothing of; that he is given to study, and that he is a perfect master of all history, as well as of many languages; that he is as well skilled in men as in books, and that he "can carry from his studies such a life into conversation that wine seems only an interruption to wit;" that he is, in fact, an Admirable Crichton, with an excellence which that wonderful gentleman had *not*, namely, "so sweet a disposition that no one ever wished his abilities less, but such as flattered themselves with the hope of shining when near him." The poet even makes the peer his *collaborateur* in the piece, and acknowledges that he not only "suggested the most beautiful incident, but made all possible provision for the success of the whole." Young had, at all events, reason for admiring Wharton's style. The duke, in the month of March of this year, 1721, had given him a bond for £600, for travelling expenses incurred by Young on various occasions, and particularly, it would seem, to meet the serious outlay which the ambitious poet had made in standing as candidate for Cirencester, where *he* lost his election, and *we*, unfortunately, the incidents of it. The bond of 1721 further expressed, in so many words, that it was partly given in consideration of Young's not taking two livings, of £200 and £400, in the gift of All Souls' College, on his grace's promise of serving and advancing him in the world. In those days a man with his qualifications and connexions had no difficulty to encounter on presenting himself to a bishop as a candidate for holy orders. But Young did not avail himself of this privilege till seven years afterwards.

The tragedy of the "Revenge" still keeps the stage, and modern poets have borrowed from it. Lord John Russell, in his "Don Carlos," for instance, has taken from it an incident which, however, he has spoiled, though I have not space to show how. The incident itself is comprised in the following passage, where reason is given

for the grovelling Cordoba's hatred of the Spanish Prince :—

“Don Carlos then was choleric ; he struck
In some short fit of passion his attendant ;
Forgot it, and believed it was forgiven.”

The elder Sheridan, who often acted the principal character in the “Revenge,” has been guilty of a singular mistake connected with it. In the fourth of his “Lectures on Elocution,” that on emphasis, he says, “By means of emphasis what passes in the mind is often shown in a few words, which otherwise would require great circumlocution. Of which take the following instance in the play of ‘All for Love :’—

——— ‘The fault was mine
To place thee there, where only thou couldst fail.’ ”

My readers will see, by turning to the play, that these lines are not in “All for Love,” but that they are in the “Revenge.” But inaccuracy of quotation on the part of critics is nothing uncommon. Thus, Courtney Melmoth reviewed the “Night Thoughts” with very critical acerbity and general severity. He compared them with *the* poem by Milton, and he undertook to show, what nobody doubted, that Milton was the superior poet. He drew a parallel, for this purpose, by comparing Young’s picture of Melancholy, which I need not repeat, with the following :—

——— “Sweetest Melancholy !
Welcome, with folded arms and eyes,
A sigh that piercing mortifies,
A tongue chain’d up without a sound,
A look that’s fasten’d to the ground,” &c., &c.

which lines, whatever may be their merit, certainly prove nothing with regard to the quality of Milton, inasmuch as they were written by Beaumont and Fletcher.

The year 1722 appears to have been partly spent at

Eastbury, in Dorsetshire, the seat of Mr. Dodington, afterwards Lord Melcombe, where wit and Burgundy abounded, and where he was much in the company of Voltaire, and other wits. Voltaire on one occasion had severely criticized Milton's allegorical description of Death and Sin, because they were non-existents; when Young uttered the celebrated couplet:—

“Thou art so witty, profligate, and thin,
Thou seem'st a Milton with his *Death* and *Sin*.”

Dr. Joseph Warton says, in reference to this interview:—
“Nobody ever said more brilliant things in conversation, than Dr. Young. The late Lord Melcombe informed me, that when he and Voltaire were on a visit to his lordship at Eastbury, the English poet was far superior to the French, in the variety and novelty of his *bon-mots* and repartees.” But it has been well observed in favour of the Frenchman, that he was trying to cope with his competitor in English, with which he was then imperfectly acquainted.

Voltaire, says Spence, like the French in general, showed the greatest complaisance outwardly, and had the greatest contempt for us inwardly. He consulted Dr. Young about his Essay in English, and begged him to correct any gross faults which he might find in it. The Doctor gravely commenced the task, and marked the passages which he considered most liable to censure; but when he went to explain himself about them, Voltaire could not avoid laughing in his face.

Young was also a frequent guest at Mr. Dodington's house in Hammersmith. On one of his visits, as the poet returned to the drawing-room, after contemplating a storm of rain and wind in the garden, his host remarked that it was a dreadful night: “No, sir,” said the poet, “it is a fine night: the Lord is abroad.”

No production of Young's was offered to the public during this and the two following years. The intermediate

period would seem to have been passed in preparation for his Satires; and while the poet participated in the gaities of the dissipated London world, he was something more than a sharer in its frivolities. He walked amid the crowd "taking notes," which astonished, gladdened, or mortified, the party-coloured public when they were printed. This season of mingled relaxation and study was further pleasantly marked by the grant of a second annuity of £100 from Wharton; who was indefatigable in all his pursuits, whether profligate or political. He wrote much, spoke much, and spent much; the last in greater degree than the other two put together. His once princely estate became so embarrassed, that it fell into the still more destructive guardianship of Chancery, and the duke was reduced to the allowance of twelve hundred *per annum*, (paid him by trustees,) and to his chances at the gambling table. Companionship with a peer of such tainted loyalty was a strange thing in Young, who was never weary of flinging poetical incense in the eyes of all of Brunswick's line. He probably was not sorry when Wharton went abroad, although that event was followed by the duke's turning Papist; a convert of whom the Romish Church had about as much reason to be proud as it had, according to Evelyn, when it was joined by such disinterested personages as Dryden and (according to report) Nell Gwynn. The new follower of the pope, of course, became the zealous adherent of the Pretender. It was a career which, doubtless, furnished Young with many an illustration for his Lorenzo,—that half real and half imaginative character, for whose especial benefit the poet would seem to have penned those sad "Night Thoughts," which were not all meditated upon by night, nor all written in sober sadness.

While Wharton was in exile abroad, Savage—that wayward poet who would take no counsel, and reckless man who could keep no friend—was on his way, through dissipation and murder, to Newgate. Young visited him in

his distress, as he did afterwards in his confinement, on several occasions; and, as he was the dispenser of a vicarious consolation intrusted to him by others, he was probably also at those times his own almoner. Spence says, "Mr. Pope desired Dr. Young to forward five guineas to poor Savage, when he was in Newgate for the death of Sinclair. The doctor was so good as to carry it himself; and Mr. Pope afterwards told him, that if Savage should be in want of necessaries, he had five more ready for his service."

Savage was never ashamed of any of his faults or follies; but he was weak enough to blush at having made an attempt to gain an honest livelihood by appearing as an actor in his own play of "Sir Thomas Overbury." The natural son of the Countess of Macclesfield thought it more consistent with his dignity to live upon the alms of others, while he abused the generosity whereby he lived, than to stoop to maintain existence by any regular and honourable labour. It was in one of his moments (and they were continually recurring) of abject distress, that his wearied friends once more appealed to the public charity in his behalf. Lady Mary Wortley Montague listened to the appeal, and transmitted to the clever, but heartless, *roué* the pecuniary aid of which he stood in the most urgent need. Young was the minister of her liberality. In a letter, dated March 1st, 1725-26, he says: "I have seen Mr. Savage, who is extremely sensible of the honour your ladyship did him by me. You was, I find, too modest of your opinion of the present you pleased to make him, if Mr. Savage may be allowed to be a judge in the case. I am obliged to go down to-morrow to Wycombe election, which is on Thursday. As soon as I return, I will wait on your ladyship, with the trifle you pleased to ask, which I had done before, but I have been, and still am, in all the uneasiness a cold can give." The bounty to Savage was the purchase-price for his flattery; and to his "Miscellaneous Poems," few of which were written by himself, he

prefixed a dedication to Lady Mary, wherein, after the fashion of needy poets to exalted patrons, he be-praised her in this wise: "Since our country has been honoured with the glory of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your soul, it no longer remains a doubt whether your sex have strength of mind in proportion to their sweetness. There is something in your verses as distinguished as your air. They are as strong as truth, as deep as reason, as clear as innocence, and as smooth as beauty; they contain a nameless and peculiar mixture of force and grace, which is at once so movingly serene, and so majestically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear anywhere but in your eyes and writings."—The Ispahanees are, of all the mendacious Persians, the most given to mendacity; and it is common with them, when about to violate veracity with even more than their usual unscrupulousness, to preface the premeditated falsehood by asserting, "You may believe me; for, *though* a Persian, yet I am going to tell the truth." In some such spirit, Savage added the following to the dedication which was paid for with the money sent by the hands of Young:—"As fortune is not more my enemy than I am the enemy of flattery, I know not how I can forbear this application of your ladyship, because there is scarce a possibility that I should say more than I believe, when I am speaking of your EXCELLENCE."

Between the years 1725 and 1727, Young wrote and published his Satires. In the year 1726 he produced the "Instalment," which procured for him his pension from George I.; and, in 1728, he wrote his "Ode to Ocean," "An Ode to the King," and "A Discourse on Lyric Poetry." Of these latter and less immortal (*verbo venia detur*) productions, I will speak first.

The "Instalment," or *Installation*, as we should now call it, was addressed to Walpole. Sir Robert had been the patron of Young, and Young now became the pensioner of the Court. The "Instalment" is but a bungling pro-

duction, wherein ministers long deceased descend from their celestial seats in heaven, powdered like beaux, and purple-winged, like cherubs, to instal upon earth a statesman, to whom Young says,—

“ O, how I long, enkindled by the theme,
In deep Eternity to launch thy name !

and he adds :—

“ My breast, O Walpole, glows with grateful fire.
The streams of royal bounty, turn'd by thee,
Refresh the dry domains of poesy.”

This may, perhaps, refer to the promise of a pension, which now became a golden reality. The following is a copy of the warrant for the payment of the annual royal bounty. It is in the Audit Office Enrolments, “ M. p. 529,” and runs thus :—

“ GEORGE R.—Our will and pleasure is, and we do hereby direct and require, that an annual pension of Two Hundred Pounds be established and paid by you from Lady Day, 1725, unto Edward Young, Doctor of Laws, during Our Pleasure, by quarterly payments, in such and the like manner, &c., &c.

“ Given at our Court at St. James's, the 3d day of May, 1726, in the 12th year of our reign.

“ By His Majesty's Command,

“ R. WALPOLE,

“ WILL. YONGE,

“ WM. STRICKLAND.

“ *To our trusty and well-beloved Walter Chetwynd, Esq.*”

Young thought well of his Odes ; but posterity will refuse to endorse the sentiment. The “ Ode to Ocean ” was suggested by a passage in the speech from the new king to the Parliament, recommending the manning of the fleet by voluntary enrolment, if that could be accomplished, and

pointing out how disabled sailors might be better provided for than they had hitherto been. The author waited in vain for all Parnassus to rush forth in praise ; but, finding that Helicon was silent, Hippocrene unruffled, and Pegasus unsummoned, *he* hastened to fulfil the duty :—

“ What ! none aspire ?
I snatch the lyre,
 And plunge into the foaming wave ! ”

Here the Nereids receive him with all their wonted applause and too liberal hospitality, “ They spread in air their bosoms fair ; ” while their verdant tresses, like the tails of Nancy Lake’s horses, hang down behind. It is difficult to imagine that the author of the nervous Satires could descend to such an inn-window contrast as that described in the words,—

“ When all serene,
 How *sweet* the scene !—
 How *dreadful* when the billows roll ! ”

There is more in the same style in this very long ode ; and when we get to the end of it, we are fully prepared to exclaim, with the author, “ This long enjoyment is distress ! ”

The “ Ode to the King ” is neither better nor worse than that addressed to Ocean. The “ Essay on Lyric Poetry ” is precisely on the same level ; its nymphs and poetesses of old are all in hoops and sacks, like the nymphs of the Mall of Young’s own time. Nor do the author’s subsequent attempts at the ode increase our admiration for him, or for his work. In the “ Sea Piece,” dedicated to Voltaire, we have the following queer image,—

“ But *where* ’s his dolphin ? Know’st thou where ?
 May that be found *in thee*, Voltaire ! ”—

a wish for which the philosopher would hardly be grateful to the poet. The complacency of the latter is remarkable

in the passage wherein he bids the sons of Etna, charmed by the magic of his song,—in which there is no sorcery, to “drop the feign’d thunder, and attempt the true.” The recipe for making real thunder for the use of Britain, and the terror of her enemies, the author proceeds to communicate to the sooty and attending Cyclopes. The ingredients for the concoction are flight, flame, night, terror, northern roars, groans, and death; add to these a phial full “of wrong’d Britannia’s wrath,” and there is your thunder splendid, guaranteed as genuine, and warranted to disagree with the Gauls!—Of the author’s remaining ode, “The British Sailor’s Prayer before Engagement,” I will only say, that even the naval chaplains of that day, who, like Fielding’s Newgate Ordinary, “patronized punch, the rather that it was a liquor not spoken against in scripture,” were strangers to all petitions framed in similar style and spirit.

But from these laborious triflings of mistaken genius, let us turn to those productions which proclaim the master, and confer on him immortality. The Satires will live for ever, because, in description, they are true reflexes of the times, and in sentiment applicable to all other ages; individual in allusion, yet general of application.

They were written by one whose true vocation, strange as it may seem, was satire. I question if the stupendous flattery of his dedications be not themselves pure satire. Young could write little without betraying this natural inclination of his mind and powers. Even his deathless “Night Thoughts,” devoted to meditations upon the grave, and judgment, and life beyond, commence with a pointed epigram levelled at the selfishness of the world. And what a world it was in which he was now living!—and how heartily he could lash the vices of all excepting his patrons! The third Satire is dedicated to Bubb Dodington; and, of course, thereby is implied that the clever Bubb was a stranger to the offences upon which the author pours the full shower of his wrath and wit. Such, how-

ever, was not the case. Bubb Dodington, with Lord Le Despenser, Lord Sandwich, and others, was one of the "Franciscans of Medmenham Abbey," a Buckinghamshire club, whose orgies surpassed in costly iniquity any thing ever known in the metropolis. And yet the metropolitan iniquity hardly admitted of being excelled. The streets were perilous for peaceable citizens, against whose coming drunken beaux, under disordered periwigs, lay in wait, like Bedouins for a caravan. Young's own physician, mentioned with grateful adjunct, more than once, in his poems, the illustrious Mead, was drawn into this fashion of mutual murder, and fought with his fellow-physician, Woodward, beneath the portal of Gresham College. As the latter slipped and fell, the chivalric Mead lowered his sword, and exclaimed, "Take your life, and begone!" "Umph!" said Woodward, rising with a growl, "as long as I have not to take your physic!" The mere slaying of watchmen and chairmen at this period was looked upon as the pardonable frolic of gentlemen who could not be bound by any imperative and impertinent canon levelled against murder. The clubs betray in their names the natures of the men who were members of them. The "Bold Bucks" adopted the fashion of the old literary academies, or clubs of reviewers, in Italy, of Tasso's time, and flourished under a device. Their motto was, "Blind and Bold Love;" and beneath it they committed hideous atrocities, at thought of which the grossest nature—being still human—might shudder in mingled terror and disgust. No man could become a Bold Buck who did not make profession of atheism.

While Young was engaged on his Satires, amid such inspiration as he could draw from male society like that just described, and from female society that was often not far behind in crime, a royal proclamation had, not long previously, been issued against the "rakehelly clubs," as they were designated, and against the wearing of swords.

The sentence against Savage, for killing Sinclair in a drunken midnight broil, at a coffee-house, near Charing Cross, was, perhaps, the consequence of the violation, on his part, of the proclamation, and was directed less against him as an actual offender, than as an example to deter against all future offence. What royalty found so difficult to accomplish in the metropolis, the despotic Beau Nash, who also administered to Savage's necessities, achieved without any difficulty whatever, in his own peculiar kingdom at Bath. He suppressed swords at once by a decree, in which they were stigmatised as "marks of uncivilization." I need not remind the readers of Thucydides, that, some thousands of years ago, the citizens of Greece abandoned the wearing of the sword for similar reasons,—namely, that it was unworthy of polished and civilized society.

In the Satires of Young we find a picture-gallery of his contemporaries, wherein the portraits are not all, indeed, of equal merit, nor equally true; but where all are, at least, striking, and well drawn. In those under the head of "Love of Fame," how dashingly he etches the fop affecting the polite disease with which he is *not* afflicted; Delia refusing an offer, "though her loved lord has four half-months been dead;" the lordling who "stands for fame on his forefathers' feet;" and Belus, who "in cost and grandeur will outdo Chandos!"—that Chandos whose descendant, in our own day, learned so little through the lesson afforded him by his ancestor's ruin, and who is a living example of the pithy saying, that "experience, like the stern-lights of a ship, only illumines the track we have crossed."

The allusion to him who *builds* himself a name, by rearing a magnificent pile, and, when all is perfection,

"Lo! my lord to some small corner runs,
And leaves state-rooms to strangers and to duns,"

is by no means a mere random allusion. The Earl of Egmont was then building himself just such a vast and

majestically-comfortless mansion. His lordship opened it, in 1728, with a masked ball, which was graced by the attendance of the Prince of Wales. There was an immense crush, and the most splendid misery; but, amid it all, the host was wanting. He had, in fact, left his countess to receive the company, on the plea that he himself detested masquerades. The court talked of it, with many a comment; and the conclusion was, that the earl was a vulgar country squire, mean enough to go to bed with the lamb and to get up with the lark. This very sort of squire is aptly depicted in the same Satire.

In the second we find the picture of the florist, who sees no use whatever in teeming earth and vernal skies, except it be to help to grow what then was most in fashion,—the gaudy tulip. The mere lovers of merely fine books come no better off than the senseless worshippers of scentless flowers. The author strikes unsparingly the man whose “Epictetus is a perfect beau,” and who cares less for the jewel than for the casket. Not more sparingly does he assail the perfumed fop, conscious of his “learned heels,” and the sloven, whose vestments are “valued like leopards’; as their spots appear.” The definition of wit, in this Satire, shows how thoroughly Young understood it and its uses. The similes are close and sparkling; and, if in wit they abound, so also do they not lack ingenuity.

The third Satire resumes the attack on the critics which had been begun in the first. The shallow members of that class were never more sorely mauled. But the indignation of the author is not confined to these pretenders alone. Others come in for their just share; such as those who affect familiarity with lords whom they do not know, or who pretend to be dying for beauties they have never seen, who accept the parentage of foul libels, who welcome the fame of living uncleanly, who, pretending to be absent, “take a memorandum to forget,” and who find sweetness in Italian music simply because it is dear:—

“ *Their tastes would lessen if the prices fell,
And Shakspeare's wretched stuff do quite as well.*”

The fourth Satire, too, is most wittily severe upon real and affected infidels; as it is against those fashionable idlers who “do nothing” with the most unimpeachable grace. This series of poems indicates familiarity with a wide circle of “life,” great power of observation, and, with a few exceptions, equal power of tersely expressing what has been observed. I do not like, indeed, the author's conclusion that, among the advantages attendant upon “a writer in polite letters,” may be reckoned the admission his calling gives him to the society of his superiors; for it is putting his vocation on an entirely false basis. Indisputable, however, is his other dictum, that “a fool at forty is a fool indeed!” None had better reason for saying so than he; for he largely intermingled with the world, saw much, and shared in some, of its folly, and was ashamed of it, when, in after years, he talked over the matter at quiet Welwyn.

It was probably at this period of his life that an incident happened which has been often told, but which will bear re-telling. Dr. Young was escorting a party of ladies to Vauxhall. The gay company were in a boat; and the doctor was doing his happy best to amuse them by playing on the flute. He ceased for a moment, as a boat passed them full of officers. One of the latter peremptorily bade him pipe on; and, as high words arose, and the ladies became alarmed, the flutist, to allay their pretty fears, resumed his strain, while the officers gently dipped their oars, and laughed along in company. The doctor, however, was a man of spirit, and took the revenge that a man might justifiably take upon a fop. After he had seen his fair friends landed in the Gardens and comfortably attended, he slipped away, sought out the constringer of his unwilling melody, and, after reminding him that he had compelled a stranger to play the flute against that stranger's will, told him that he must now, upon peril of flagellation, dance a

measure, in order to gratify the player. After some demur, the saltatory *amende* was paid; and Dr. Young, at least, left the ground perfectly "satisfied."

The Satires which appeared at intervals, subsequently to those above-named, were especially devoted to "Women," although published under the general heading of "The Universal Passion; or, the Love of Fame." This series of portraits may be said to be even more perfect than those which we have before inspected. There is Clarinda, looking delightfully with all her might; Zara, who deceives mankind and hides behind her face; while that fearful Xantippe expresses her discontent, by day, by smashing her china, and intimates it by night, when she "shakes the curtains with her kind advice." Delia, the charioteer, belongs to the past century:—

"Graceful as John, she moderates the reins,
And whistles sweet her diuretic strains."

But we have a lady not exclusively appertaining to the last, nor characteristic, we will hope, of any, century, yet perhaps to be found in all, in that young Sempronia, whose fidelity to her youthful lover only lasts till,

"With one acre more,
In steps deform'd, debauch'd, diseased three-score."

Among the crowd that pass before our vision, there come pre-eminently out that fine and delicate lady who cannot stand by day, but who *can* dance all night; Cynthia, who goes with the fashionable owls to bed; and Fulvia, (rather out of drawing,) to whom

"Green fields, and shady groves, and crystal springs,
And larks, and nightingales, are odious things."

Added to these, as exhibiting marks of truth in themselves, and merit in their painter, I may point out the married pair of wits, who live three days in peace, and divorce themselves upon a quarrel touching Durfey's poetry and Bunyan's prose; Phoebe, living upon the memory of yester-

day's, and the anticipation of to-morrow's, pleasure, but who, in the mean time, is miserable to-day; Flavia, the importunate, who breaks her heart when Strephon coldly slumbers; the young ladies who prefer astronomy to love; others who are nothing if they are not blasphemingly religious, who clear up sacred mysteries gratis, and who even thank their Maker that their cards are good. These are all admirably drawn. Not inferior to them is the dashing Liberia, who loves a rake. There are, too, that deliciously languid lady, who may still be found in every parish, and who is quite unequal to the task of supporting herself;—that audacious Thalestris, who dares to name what nature dares to give, for whom “By Jove!” is far too Heathen an oath, and who, accordingly, “upon the Christian system is profane;”—and Lyce, the old coquette, who

“Carries in her face
Memento mori to each public place.”

The more pleasing Portia charmingly illustrates the truthful sentiment, that even grey hairs can engage, and that “virtue's the paint that can with wrinkles shine.” We are introduced to a continued series in the sixth Satire, a series as varied, distinct, truthful, and suggestive. First, Lavinia, “to church as constant as to Drury-Lane,” a sketch for which I think Lady Wortley Montague may have sat, seeing, as she says, in a letter to the Countess of Bute, that “I confess I remember to have dressed for St. James's chapel with the same thoughts that your daughters will have at the Opera.” The Lavinias and Lady Marys of the day, at church, would

“Talk away
To God Himself, and fondly think they *pray*.
But sweet their accent, and their air refined;
For they're before their Maker—and mankind.”

In Drusa, too, there is something of the Lady M. W. Montague:—

“When from the sheets her lovely form she lifts,
She begs you just would turn you while she shifts;”

an example of delicacy which was not at all uncommon in the days of Drusa and her original.

The whole series of Satires is epigrammatic in style, and the Satires on Women more so than the others of the series. As an example, I may quote Lucia, in whom one folly is thus summarily disposed of:—

“Lucia thinks happiness consists in state :
She weds an idiot, but she eats in plate.”

The Melania, never pleased, and the Aspasia, ever proud ;
the always-planning Julia, who

“For her own breakfast will project a scheme,
Nor take her tea without a stratagem;”

Syrena, who “with a vengeance doth commend or blame;”
Brunetta, (the favourite of Johnson,) “who scorns on trifles
to bestow her care;” Alice, the female sloven; Isabella,
fond of fame; and Cleora, for whose perfections we are
bidden to inquire at the Bank;—are all treated with epi-
grammatic point. But Young could paint as graphically
as he could point epigrammatically. Thus the following
lines, descriptive of Memmia, would not be unworthy of the
author of the “Rape of the Lock:”—

“Her two red lips affected zephyrs blow,
To cool the Bohea, and inflame the beau;
While one white finger and a thumb conspire
To lift the cup, and make the world admire.”

Swift said of these Satires that they should have been either more angry or more merry. To me, if I may so say, and with deference, they appear to contain a sufficiency both of mirth and indignation. Young himself declared, in his preface, that the best way to cure the follies and vices of the day was by laughing at them; a course which he did not adopt in the “Night Thoughts,” though, even there, I can detect him constantly on the point of breaking

from wrath into ridicule, of changing from Heraclitus to Democritus, and of laying down the mask of *Jean qui pleure*, to assume that of *Jean qui rit*. Mirthful as he is in his Satires, he is angry enough when he calls on Juvenal for his severer rage,

“To lash the ranker follies of our age:”

and this rage falls witheringly, in the last Satire, on the gamestresses, the adulteresses, the female drunkards, and the she-atheists. The scourge is especially inflicted unsparingly on the latter, “who start at feathers from an insect fly,” and who are “a match for nothing but the Deity.” But folly is immortal; and Satire may scotch the snake, but cannot kill it. Thus, when a godless nymph is made to ask,

“Shall pleasures of a short duration chain
A lady's soul in everlasting pain?”

and when nymphs and swains of St. James's and the Mall devoutly depose Jehovah,

“The Pure, the Just; and set up, in His stead,
A deity that's perfectly well-bred,”

we find that the infidelity of the last century is of the same complexion as the unbelief of this; and that Mr. Frank Newman, in his “Phases of Faith,” simply advances in prose what Young's atheists have already asserted in verse. Young thought he had cured all such sentiment as this, by laughing at it: but, of course, he had not even remedied the follies, much less the greater vices, of the day. The dress of the ladies, for instance, was as ridiculous in 1778, as it had been half a century before, in 1728. “About ten days ago,” says Horace Walpole, writing in the year 1778, “I wanted a housemaid, and one presented herself very well recommended. I said, ‘But, young woman, why do you leave your present place?’ She said she could not support the hours she kept; that her lady never went to bed till three or four o'clock in the morning. ‘Bless me,

child,' said I, 'why you tell me you live with a bishop's wife; and I never heard that Mrs. North gamed or raked so late.' 'No, sir,' said she; 'but she is three hours undressing.' Upon my word, the edifice that takes three hours to demolish, must, at least, be double the time in fabricating. Would not you, for once, sit up till morning to see the destruction of the pyramid and distribution of the materials?" Thus absurd fashions survived not only the Satires of Young, but the subsequent Satires of Pope. Even the terrible portraiture of the effects of gambling made by the former had no effect upon the prevalence of that fatal pursuit. But Young himself was something of a gamester. His dedications were throws for fortune; and, when he was successful, he boasted of it in compliment, as he does at the close of the sixth Satire, in equivocal flattery to Queen Caroline:—

"Her favour is diffused to that degree,—

Excess of goodness!—it has dawn'd on me;"

which, certainly, is as much as saying that in his case it had been misapplied.

But flattery had attained its *acmé*, when in 1726 Young added a seventh Satire, and inscribed it to Sir Robert Walpole. Its theme is essentially political, yet it contains some good reflections on "the Love of Fame and its cause," commencing with this adulatory couplet:—

"On this last labour, this my closing strain,

Smile, Walpole! or the Nine inspire in vain."

Its closing stanzas are in the same lavish strain:—

"What felt thy Walpole, pilot of the realm?

Our Palinurus slept not at the helm:

His eye ne'er closed, long since inured to wake,

And out-watch every star for Brunswick's sake.

But, now, what joys that gloom of heart dispel,

No powers of language but his own can tell;

His own, which nature and the graces form,

At will to raise or hush the civil storm."

In Goldsmith's time these Satires had fallen below their originally great reputation. They merit, however, complete restoration to public favour. In spite of some uncouth rhymes and awkward phrases, they contain lines of great elegance, wit sparkling and rapid, ease of expression, indisputable common sense, and an endless good-nature, even when the scourge is being most lustily applied. The publication of the Satires brought much both of profit and fame to their author. Spence tells us,—“A little after Dr. Young had published his ‘Universal Passion,’ the Duke of Wharton made him a present of two thousand pounds for it. When one of the duke's friends, who was surprised at the largeness of the present, cried out on hearing it, ‘What! two thousand pounds for a poem?’ the duke smiled, and said it was the best bargain he ever made in his life, for it was fairly worth four thousand.”

Croft, who relates this anecdote, on the authority of Mr. Rawlinson, adds:—“By ‘the Universal Passion’ Young acquired no vulgar fortune,—more than three thousand pounds. A considerable sum of his previous savings had already been swallowed up in the South Sea. For this he took the vengeance of an author: his Muse makes poetical use, more than once, of a *South-Sea dream*.”

Three years after the appearance of the last Satire, there was published, in the “Gentleman's Magazine” for February, 1731, a little poem, entitled “The Session of the Poets for 1730:” at this session Dulness is supposed to preside for the purpose of choosing a laureate. From the following lines in it we may conclude that Young's contemporaries did not consider that his Satires lacked severity of spirit:—

“With torches, flambeaux, and abundance of fire,
 Young entered the hall, but was bid to retire.
 She confess'd that his plays might pass for good things;
 But his Satire too much abounded with stings.”

We are now approaching the period when Young, at the mature age of forty-seven, received ordination. He had

previously been engaged in his tragedy of "The Brothers," in the composition of which he appears to have been assisted by suggestions on the part of Lady Wortley Montague. Writing to that celebrated lady, he says, "A great cold and a little intemperance has (*sic*) given me such a face as I am ashamed to show, though I much want to talk with your ladyship; for my theatrical measures are broken. 'Mariamne' brought its author above £1,500; 'The Captives,' above £1,000; and 'Edwin,' now in rehearsal, has already, before acting, brought its author above £1,000. Mine, when acted, will not more than pay for the paper on which it is written. I will wait on your ladyship, and explain farther. Only this at present: *For the reason mentioned*, I am determined to suppress my play, for this season at least. The concern you showed for its success is my apology for this account, which were otherwise very impertinent." And again: "The more I think of your criticisms, the more I feel the just force of them. I will alter those which are alterable: those which are not, I beg you to make a secret of, and to make an experiment on the sagacity of the town, which, I think, may possibly overlook what you have observed; for the players, and Mr. Dodington, (neither of whom were backward in finding fault, or careless in attention,) took no notice of the flaw in Demetrius's honour or Erixene's conduct; and I would fain have their blindness continue till my business is done.....Your alteration in the fourth act will be of exceeding advantage in more views than one.....But that I am satisfied you want no inducement to assist me as much as you can, I should add, that I had more depending on the success of this particular piece than your ladyship imagines."

What Young might have had "depending on the success" of his play, is not now known: he, at all events, suppressed it, not only for the current season, but did not give it to the stage till thirty years afterwards. The especial reason hinted at in the above correspondence was his entering the church.

During his particular studies for ordination, Pope is said, half in jest, to have recommended him to master, if possible, the difficulties of Thomas Aquinas; and Young addressed himself so seriously to the hopeless work, as to put in peril the existence of that common-sense which Pope was already too disposed to deny in him. It is more certain, that, shortly after his entering the church, he was appointed chaplain to George II., and preached before the king in the chapel royal at St. James's. This locality had not much of a sacred character in it. Burnet had been obliged to introduce the fashion of high-backed pews, in order to check the indecorous conduct of irreverent ensigns and frivolous maids of honour. The queen herself thought little of interrupting the solemnity of the service by her loud talking; while the king would sometimes show contempt as profound for the worship in which he was not engaged, by falling asleep! Young found his powers of oratory treated with a similar disregard; and when, on looking around him, at the end of a polished phrase, he observed sovereign and subjects surrendered to uncourteous slumber, the ruffled dignity of the susceptible new chaplain sustained a shock which manifested itself by his bursting into tears.

The philosophy he lacked for himself, he now undertook to teach others; and he "improved," as it would now be called, the death of his royal master, in 1728, by producing the first part of a didactic prose work, entitled, "A true Estimate of Human Life." He dedicated it to the queen, and promised a second part; but the promise was not kept; and the "true estimate," a sort of prose poem, or sermon constantly on the point of running into blank verse, and written with equal force and affectation, was never brought to a conclusion. It abounds in melancholy, though he had promised to give the bright side of humanity in it. It is reported of him, that, on being asked why he had not kept his promise, he confessed that he was unable to find a bright side to life. "I know of but one solid pleasure

in life," he says in his "True Estimate," "and that is duty."

On the 30th of January, 1728-9, he preached before the House of Commons, on the martyrdom of Charles I. He published his discourse, under the title of "An Apology for Princes; or, the Reverence due to Government." The preacher told the House quite as many useful truths as it had ever listened to in the days of John Owen and Stephen Marshall. The sermon attacked the sins of the age with courageous and eloquent boldness. When Sydney Smith preached on the same subject at Bristol cathedral, he drew from the event then commemorating a moral and a warning for princes. Young addressed his moral and monition to the people; but his application was generally made; and in "the people" he contemplated the nation, from the throne to the cottage. Whatever vices there prevailed, he attacked them mercilessly; and before the senate he spoke as unreservedly of the common sins to which all were abandoned, as Sydney Smith himself had done, when, in his farewell-sermon at Berkeley chapel, he took leave of a very fashionable and very frivolous congregation with the startling text of, "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

In the year 1730 our author appeared once more, with indifferent success, in a very indifferent lyric, entitled, *Imperium Pelagi*, written in celebration of the return of George II. from Hanover, and of the peace which excited no little discussion in the public mind. It is an inflated production; but its good author fondly thought that Pindar might have envied him the honour of such a piece.

In 1730 appeared the "Epistles to Pope." They are serious compositions, rich in virtuous indignation against vicious authors, "the black militia of the pen," and such as a chaplain might write who had an eye upon preferment. The author had said, not long before, in one of his more jocund satires, "Smile, Walpole, or the muse inspires in vain;" he now disregarded the inspiration of the statesman,

without having obtained that of the muse. "O Pope, I burst!" and, "Run souse against his chaps!" are phrases that would have drawn tears from the Euphuists; and some of the rhymes would have been any thing but *exquisite* torture to that fine-spoken society. For a poet, ever seeking a patron; for a pensioner, looking for increase of income; and for a clergyman, who was sharply inquiring after preferment,—there is more than an usual display of independence in these poems. His Clodio, in the first epistle, is partly a reminiscence of the Duke of Wharton; but the line, "Even George's praise is dated from the Mint," may have had other application than that visible on the surface. Much that is addressed by the author to the writers of the age, is equally applicable to himself, although he deems his greater power called upon to chastise them. He, too, when disposed to lash vice in high places, could be tamed by the bags of a state Ulysses; and, although he was now in the vein to say, that "*Christian* ministers of state are few," he, too,—or would he have so held fellowship with Wharton who fed, or showered praise on Walpole who fee-ed, him?—troubled himself little whether such peer or minister of state were "Turk, Pagan, or Jew." He was as far from being serious when he said, "'Tis arrant simony to sing for gold," as he was when he penned the maxim in the same epistle, implying that "it shows a generous mind to wink at flaws;" and he who professed to give in song a praise unpurchaseable by gold, sang for a pension.

If Young wrote these epistles to show his fitness for preferment, he did not fail in his object. He had hitherto lived upon his fellowship, his annuity, his royal pension, and the proceeds of his pen. In July, 1730, he was rendered more independent by being presented, on the part of his college, to the living of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire. He was then in his fiftieth year; and the three hundred pounds *per annum*, with other perquisites attached to the rectory, which fell to him, gave him security, although they

could not altogether communicate content. About this period, he wrote the following letter (undated) to Mrs. Howard, the king's mistress :—

“MADAM,

Monday Morning.

“I KNOW His Majesty's goodness to his servants, and his love of justice in general, so well, that I am confident, if His Majesty knew my case, I should not have any cause to despair of his gracious favour to me. Abilities, good manners, service, age, want, sufferings, and zeal for His Majesty,—these, Madam, are the proper points of consideration in the person that humbly hopes His Majesty's favour. As to *abilities*, all I can presume to say is, I have done the best I could to improve them. As to *good manners*, I desire no favour, if any just objection lies against them. As for *service*, I have been near seven years in His Majesty's, and never omitted any duty in it; which few can say. As for *age*, I am turned of fifty. As for *want*, I have no manner of preferment. As for *sufferings*, I have lost £300 *per annum*, by being in His Majesty's service; as I have shown in a representation which His Majesty has been so good as to read and consider. As for *zeal*, I have written nothing without showing my duty to their Majesties, and some pieces are dedicated to them. This, Madam, is the short and true state of my case. They that make their court to the ministers, and not to their Majesties, succeed better. If my case deserves some consideration, and you can serve me in it, I humbly hope and believe you will. I shall, therefore, trouble you no further; but beg leave to subscribe myself, with truest respect and gratitude,

“Yours, &c.,

“EDWARD YOUNG.

“P.S. I have some hope that my Lord Townshend is my friend; if therefore soon, and before he leaves the Court, you had an opportunity of mentioning me, with that

favour you have been so good to show, I think it would not fail of success; and, if not, I shall owe you more than any."

It is difficult to fix the date of this letter, and even its object has been diversely stated. It has been considered, by some, as an application to George II. for a continuation of the pension granted him by George I. But the writer speaks of having been seven years in the king's service; and his pension could only have been in temporary peril at the accession, in 1728, when he was but forty-seven years of age. He may have meant seven years in the royal service, that is, a writer in support of government; and *that* he was suspected of being as early as 1724. This would bring the date of the letter to 1731, in which year he had "turned of fifty," and, according to one at least of his biographers, was presented to Welwyn. It may have been just previous to this presentation that the writer who sneers at people "making court to the ministers," proffered respect and promised gratitude to the mistress! If we date this letter seven years after the king's accession, namely, 1735, there would be no truth in the writer's assertion that he had "no manner of preferment." As to the allusion to the loss of £300 *per annum*, it is supposed to refer to some college-living which Young might have taken, had he gone up earlier for ordination. Welwyn supplied him with exactly that sum, which he is thus said to have sacrificed.

In May, 1731, or, according to Croft, in April, 1732, Young married the Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Lichfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. The first wife of the Duke of Wharton's father was Lady Anne Wharton, formerly Miss Lee, of Ditchley, and a friend of Young's father. Lady "Betty," as the widow of Colonel Lee is sometimes called, was equally the friend of Young himself; and when they married, friendship only made the

union which love afterwards briefly, but bountifully, blessed.

When Flaxman married Anne Denman, Sir Joshua Reynolds peevishly told the former that he was ruined for an artist. The old bachelor proved but a sorry prophet. Marriage, however, for the time, *did* mar Young as a poet; and, during a happy union of ten years' continuance, he produced but two pieces; one, the "Sea Piece," dedicated to Voltaire; the other, in 1734, "The Foreign Address, or the best Argument for Peace," a long and wearying ode, in which he takes as long and wearying a farewell of the "shell which Clio gave, and kings applaud," never again to torture the patience of the public with parodies upon Pindar.

In the mean time, he kept in graceful retirement at Welwyn. His household lived by rule; prayer opened and closed each passing day; comfort was united with elegance; and much polished courtesy was there, with something approaching to parsimony. The spirit of gravity influenced him; but he was not indifferent to that of gaiety. In his garden he placed a sun-dial, with the inscription, *Eheu, fugaces!* The thieves proved the soundness of the maxim, as he observed laughingly, by carrying off the dial soon after he had put it up. Here, also, he erected an arbour, with a painting which only looked like the seat that it was *not*, and which bore the admonitory or compensating motto, *Invisibilia non decipiunt*; while he founded the "assembly" at Welwyn, and laid out the bowling-green, where men, and maidens too, might practise at bowls.

He was once walking in his garden at Welwyn, with Lady Betty and another lady on either side of him, when a servant summoned him into the house, where a gentleman was waiting to see him. The poet showed little inclination to go; whereon the ladies insisted, and led him, each taking a hand, to his garden-gate. As he turned from them, he is said to have made the following *impromptu* :—

“ Thus Adam look'd, when from the garden driven ;
And thus disputed orders sent from Heaven.
Like him I go, and yet to go am loath ;
Like him I go, for angels drove us both.
Hard was his fate, but mine still more unkind :
His Eve went with him ; but *mine* stays behind.”

Once when riding across a rugged and dirty country to visit his friend Dr. Potter, the eldest son of the Archbishop, Young had experienced both difficulty and danger in getting over the last part of his journey :—“ Whose field was that I crossed ?” said the poet to his host, pointing to a peculiarly heavy and ill-drained piece of ground. “ Mine,” said Potter. “ Good,” rejoined Young : “ it is truly Potter's field to bury strangers in.”

We discover much truth in his views of worldly enjoyments, as expressed, with the authority of a Christian philosopher, in a letter to his friend Richardson :—“ Since the things of this life—from their mixture, repetition, defectiveness, and (in age) short duration—are unable to satisfy, we must aid their *natural* by a *moral* pleasure. We must season them with a spice of religion, to make them more palatable. We must consider, that it is God's will that we should be content and pleased with them : and thus the *thinness* of the natural pleasure, by our sense of joining an obedience to Heaven to it, will become much more *substantial* and satisfactory.”

He occasionally left Welwyn, to drink the Bath waters, and mingle with the Bath company ; but he had faith in the efficacy of the Welwyn waters too : in fact, he was a little given to the making and taking of nostrums, believing profoundly in the sovereign virtue of tar-water, and recommending Richardson, with much earnestness, to make the same from “ Norway tar, of a deep brown, and pretty thin.” At Bulstrode, the seat of the Duke of Portland, he was a frequent and welcome visitor. He was there accounted a man of wisdom, integrity, benevolence, and candour,

utterly unacquainted with intrigue or cabal, lively of imagination, sparkling of conversation, witty himself, and the cause of wit in others.

The happy home of Young at Welwyn was made temporarily glad, in 1733, by the birth of a son, to whom was given the name of Frederick, in honour of the Prince of Wales, who was his god-father; but it was too soon saddened by deaths which made his hearth desolate. His wife had a daughter, of her first marriage. This daughter, whom Young "wore in his heart," was married to the Honourable Mr. Temple, son of Lord Palmerston. She had been but fifteen months married when she was attacked by consumption; Young accompanied her on her way to Nice, where it was hoped the course of the disease might be checked; but the young bride fell a victim to it at Lyons, ere she had reached the proposed end of her journey. She was interred, with "maimed rites," in unconsecrated ground, bigotry refusing her a more honoured grave. Her husband subsequently married the daughter of Sir John Barnard; but he, too, died in 1740; and, in the succeeding year, he was followed by Lady Elizabeth Young. Thus were taken from the poet the Narcissa, the Philander, and the Lucia, of his "Night Thoughts." It was partly to console himself for their loss that, at threescore years of age, and something beyond, he addressed himself to the composition of the great work on which his reputation mainly rests. The characters here named, however, are not strict copies of their loved originals. Young gave scope to his mournful fancy, and, in character as well as chronology, he kept no closer to truth than he was bound to do by the elastic and liberal laws of poetry. Narcissa is, no doubt, the pale reflection of his daughter-in-law; but not more so than Lorenzo is the "counterfeit presentment" of Wharton.

The "Night Thoughts" appeared between the years 1741 and 1745; and they at once earned for the author

that imperishable fame which he so earnestly desired.* The perusal of them influenced the genius of Klopstock ; and the Rev. Charles Wesley was wont to say, that no writings were so useful to him, the holy scriptures excepted. Whatever they may have taught the English poet, they did not teach him mercy. "I allow you a month longer," he says, in a letter to his daughter "Sally," "to get the fourth Night by heart." A hard task for a young lady!

To a man who had run through such a career as the Duke of Wharton's, how applicable are most of the lines in the "Night Thoughts" which have reference to Lorenzo! For example :—

"Lorenzo, Fortune makes her court to thee :
Thy fond heart dances while the syren sings."

"Not more sincere can be
Lorenzo's smile than my compassion for him."

"Lorenzo, while thou may'st,
Provide more fair support, or sink for ever."

"Lorenzo, thou canst wake at midnight too,
Though not on morals bent.....
Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon,
And the sun's noontide blaze prime dawn of day!
In thy nocturnal rove, one moment halt
"Twixt stage and stage of riot and cabal."

"Thou art no novice in theology," is perhaps an allusion to his alleged reasons for perversion.

"Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest
Truths which, contested, put thy parts to shame."

* There is a German translation of great merit. Colardeau translated the first book into French rhymed verse. Letourneur put the whole into French blank verse, which Chateaubriand says is superior to the original! With few merits, this translation continues to be a popular work. Grimm, who always maintained that Young revered Voltaire, criticised "The *Twenty-four* Nights of Edward Young!" A good specimen of the critic's correctness!

“ Instinct and passions of the nobler kind
Lie suffocated there.”

“ Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.”

“ When I behold a genius bright and base,
Of towering talents and terrestrial aims,
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,
The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,
With rubbish mixt, and glittering in the dust.”

“ Why with levities
Now wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight ? ”

These are but samples from a mass whence full and overflowing measure may be gathered; and I submit that, for whomsoever they were intended, their application to Wharton is most natural and warrantable. The reader is referred to the text for many other passages equally appropriate to Wharton's career and to Young's experience of it.

To return to the “Night Thoughts.” Although some have called its sublimity “fustian,” and its melancholy artificial, its combinations grotesque, its phraseology involved, and its reasoning sometimes confused, it stands, on the whole, as a monument of the inexhaustible wit (in the proper sense of the word) and genius of the author. Its moral was expressly directed against that of Pope in the “Essay on Man,” wherein the world was taught to be content with the present, without troubling itself about the hereafter. A great portion of Pope's poem consists merely of a versified translation of Pascal's Thoughts and Maxims; but the sentiments of Young are, with but one or two exceptions, entirely original. Too many of the similes are drawn from the play-house and the stage; from the actors, dressed and undressed: even Death himself, on one occasion, appears as a door-keeper. These betray something of Young's pursuits; and they certainly too often detract from the grandeur of a sentiment wherein the poet most desired to be successful. The references to his own

personal discomforts, too, are hardly consistent with the general scope of his theme :—

“From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose,
I wake.”

“Dark, though not blind, like thee, Mæonides :”

They paint the poet in an attitude in which he wished posterity to look upon him ; but they serve to mar his poem. Pope acknowledged, in rhyme, his obligation to Arbuthnot ; Young may, therefore, be excused for helping to immortalize Mead. Let us only hope that the poets paid their physicians in solid gold as well as golden verse.

There is scarcely a page in the mournful theme of the “Night Thoughts” that does not exhibit the author’s powers and bent for satire. This has been objected to, and, perhaps, unfairly. With greater show of reason has exception been taken to the arguments respecting solitude : the sum of all shows as much *against* as *for* indulgence in solitude. A careful examination of the different passages, however, will show that the author has only taken a poet’s licence to say, in wide and varied terms, what Dryden has expressed in brief and nervous prose : “Such only can enjoy the country who are capable of *thinking* when they are there : then they are prepared for solitude, and, in that, solitude is prepared for them.”

The majestic melancholy that reigns throughout this poem is, however, too often interrupted by trivial, satirical, or sarcastic passages, to admit of our belief that the author was much in love with the sadness he commends. We have little faith in his sincere admiration for entire solitude, when we find him turning away from its eulogy, in order to shower down thick and ungraceful praise upon the Duchess of Portland, who had been figuring as the Moon at a fancy-ball given by a duke. We do not, indeed, doubt his love for his step-daughter, although there is some ground for suspicion even on this head, when we find

him mingling Narcissa's mournful strain with Norfolk's masquerade.

It is a fact, however, that Young made melancholy "modish." Young gentlemen could, like Prince Arthur, become sad as night, out of mere wantonness. His poem is said to have induced physicians to prohibit delicate patients from perusing it. Beattie, writing to the Duchess of Gordon, trusts that her grace will not think of reading so dull a book as Young's "Night Thoughts." The grave gentleman gallantly protests that the lady is far too bright for such sad themes; that the author only intoxicates people, and that intoxication of any sort is prejudicial to health. He asserts, moreover, that the poet was himself too wise to be sad, and that, when he commended mournful meditation, he was himself as gay as it was his wont to be. "Believe me," he adds,—

"Believe me, the shepherd but feigns;
He's wretched, to show he has wit."

There is, no doubt, some truth in this.

Although Young occasionally wrote by night, he has himself told us that some of his praise of the nocturnal hour was penned in the broad sunlight of open day. But, even if his eulogy of late hours for thought were sincere, I should still dispute its being well-founded. He says, indeed,—

"Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.
The conscious Moon, through every distant age,
Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall
On Contemplation's eye a purging ray.
.....Auspicious Midnight, hail!"

This is finely expressed; but it would have been as easy to write in praise of the day, and the panegyric would have been better merited. The moon can hold a lamp to mischief as well as to wisdom; and he who watches overmuch by night will be the less fitted to work in man's and nature's hour by day. In much of Young's praise of night

there is involved a species of religious feeling that is akin to Quietism ; as if salvation were to be won by thinking, and virtue consisted in sleeplessness. I am more disposed to accept the sentiments in the "Last Day," wherein he says,—

"None are supinely good ; through care, and pain,
And various arts, the steep ascent we gain.
This is the scene of combat, not of rest :
Man's is laborious happiness at best.
On this side death his dangers never cease ;
His joys are joys of conquest, not of peace."

No doubt of it. Happiness comes by labour ; and, if thought helps to accomplish it, half an hour of contemplation, in presence of God's calm morning sky and the rising sun, is worth a whole winter of long nights spent in meditation with the moon.

They who would see how Night may be made hideous, as easily as Young has made it attractive, should read Nahum Tate's translation of Fracastorius, wherein he paints "Night's foulest birth and terror of mankind." It is not every poet, however, who can fittingly celebrate the dawn ; Yalden, for instance, praises Morning with the yawning air of a man who has been up all night, and is longing for bed. Young's praise of Night, at least, wears the air of sincerity, although it may be unsound in itself, and more pleasant to read than safe to follow.

In the "Night Thoughts" will be found no inconsiderable helps towards completing a portrait of the poet. There are passages scattered here and there which have especial reference to his social position, and which, much as he inculcates grateful content, show that he had little gratification, and less satisfaction, in being left without higher preferment than the rectory at Welwyn. But these passages are minor blemishes, and do not mar the grand argument which he sustains for immortality, and the noble endeavours which he makes to render men more worthy

of their high destiny. His religious teaching is complete, ardent, truthful, sincere, and unanswerable; and fully proves, as he himself says, that

“ Important truths, in spite of verse, may please.”

Notwithstanding the imperfections, and, in some sense, the incompleteness, of this poem, it has in it the spirit which will keep it immortal. They who contemplate the figure of the Apollo Belvidere, unconsciously assume the erectness of the statue at which they gaze but to admire; and yet the godlike archer lacks his arrow and his bow: So with regard to Young's great poem, though some attributes of poetry be now and then missing, though something be occasionally wanting to make up perfection, yet the perusal of it will impart to us a portion of the Divine spirit which it presents to the mind's eye, and enable us not only to comprehend the majesty that is before us, but also to supply that which is only suggested.

The poem had no sooner been completed than the satirists fell upon it with eager alacrity. A sample of the manner in which the mimics fastened upon it, will show, even better than criticism, the prominent faults with which it was partially disfigured. The peculiarities of the author were thus amusingly imitated by William Whithead, son of a baker at Cambridge, and sometime poet-laureat. The lines exist in manuscript in the British Museum; and their circulation is said to have excited, or rather added to, the already ample wrath of the bruising Churchill.

“ O Night, dark Night, wrapp'd round in Stygian gloom,
 Thy riding-hood opaque, wove by the hands
 Of Clotho and of Atropos! those hands
 That spun my thread of life! how near its end!
 Ah, wherefore, silent goddess, shouldst thou wake
 My terrors thus? E'en Silence sounds alarms
 To me; and Darkness dazzles my weak mind.
 Hark! 't is the death-watch! Posts themselves can speak
 Death's language. Stop, O stop, insatiable worm!
 I feel thy summons. To my fellow-worms

Thou bidd'st me hasten. I obey thy call.
 And wherefore should I live? Vain Life to me
 Is but a tatter'd garment, a pitch'd rag,
 That ill defends me from the cold of age.
 Cramp'd are my faculties, my eyes are dim.
 No music charms my ear, nor meats my taste.
 The females fly me! and my very wife,
 Poor woman! knows me not. . . .
 Ye fluttering, idle vanities of life,
 Where are ye flown? The birds, that used to sing
 Amid my spreading branches, now forsake
 The lifeless trunk, and find no shelter there.
 What's Life, what's Death, thus coveted and fear'd?
 Life is a fleeting shadow! Death's no more!
 Death's a dark lantern; Life's a candle's end
 Stuck on a save-all, soon to end in stench.
 Foh! Death's a jakes, and Life's the alley green*
 That leads to't, where, perchance, from either side,
 A sweet-briar hedge, or shrubs of broader leaf,
 And more commodious, breathe their treacherous sweets.
 Death follows Life, and stops it ere it reach
 The topmost spoke of Fortune's envied wheel.
 Wheel! Life's a wheel; and each man is the ass
 That turns it, oft receiving, in the end,
 But water or rank thistles for his pains.
 "And yet, LORENZO, if consider'd right,
 A Life of Labour is a Life of Ease.
 Pain is true Joy, and Want is Luxury.
 Vain Mirth's an opera-tune, a tortured sigh,
 Groans moderated by the Tyrant's Bull,
 The breath of Eunuchs: it dismembers bliss,
 Makes man not man, and castrates real joy!
 Would you be merry? seek some charnel-house
 Where Death inhabits. Give a ball to Death,
 A doomsday-ball, and lead up Holbein's dance.
 How weak, how strong, how gentle, how severe,
 Are Laughter's chains, that gall a willing world!
 The noisy idiot shakes her bells at all:
 Not e'en the Bible or the 'Night Thoughts' 'scape.
 Fools spare not Heaven itself, O Young, nor thee!"

* "Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire."—NIGHT IX.

In these lines we find a felicitous imitation of the manner in which Young could hunt a simile to death, of his violent antitheses, and of his mixture of the sublime with the ridiculous. There is scarcely a line in them the types of which my readers will not find in the poem which they so cleverly caricature.

There was one other imitator of Young, however, whose mimicry of the original ringing of the changes is, perhaps, even more happy than that of Whitehead. I allude to Kidgell, the author of "The Card." In that work, Young, under the pseudonym of Dr. Elwes, is represented as running away from Montreuil, in company with a Madame Valence, who subsequently robs her reverend lover, and elopes with sharper Trench; whereupon the poet thus writes:—

“ Valence, inconstant, lovely, fair eloper,—
 Yet why inconstant? for inconstancy
 Is but the absence of the constant mind.
 And can the constant mind inconstant be?
 As well may the great wheel of heavenly light
 Be motionless; as well the fixed stars
 Twirl in their orbs eccentric. O Valence,
 Thou still art lovely then! Alas! but why?
 Loveliness is the art of being loved;
 And being loved, the sign of loveliness.
 If lovely, then beloved; if not beloved,
 Not lovely: lovely not, as if one said,
 Beloved not. Word of horrid emphasis!
 Valence, and not beloved, is not Valence.

“ By reflecting much

We oft reflect too little.

Fair fugitive, and fugitive as fair,
 And fair as fugitive! implored, return,
 And be the thing you seem. Alas, alas!
 My very mistress knows me not!”

In 1745 he wrote a kind of supplement to the "Ninth Night," under the title of "Reflections on the Public Situation of the Kingdom," and dedicated it to the Duke

of Newcastle. But his "Reflections" on that stirring and critical year do not appear to have marred the poet's repose, or to have interfered with his enjoyments. In a letter to Richardson, of that year's date, we do indeed find him remarking, that "evils fly so near and thick about us, that I am half persuaded that we should aim at little more than negative good here, and positive in another scene." This accords with his "Reflections" on the season. He passed a portion of that eventful time at Tunbridge Wells; and Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu has drawn two or three clever sketches of him that are worth reproducing. In 1745 the Wells were frequented by a motley crowd of English, Irish, and Scotch; Hungarians, Italians, French, and Portuguese; Jews, Papists, Puritans, and Presbyterians; fine ladies, poets, and players. As representatives of the latter were Mrs. E. Montagu, Dr. Young, and Colley Cibber. "I have great joy in Dr. Young," (says that learned lady, writing to the Duchess of Portland, the Cynthia of the Third Night,) "whom I disturbed in a reverie. At first he started, then bowed, then fell back into a surprise; then began a speech, relapsed into his astonishment two or three times, forgot what he had been saying; began a new subject, and so went on. I told him your grace desired he would write longer letters; to which he cried 'Ha!' most emphatically, and I leave you to interpret what it meant. He has made a friendship with one person here, whom I believe you would not imagine to have been made for his bosom friend. You would, perhaps, suppose it was a bishop, or dean, a prebend, a pious preacher, a clergyman of exemplary life; or, if a layman, of most virtuous conversation, one that had paraphrased St. Matthew, or wrote comments on St. Paul.....You would not guess that this associate of the doctor's was—old Cibber! Certainly, in their religious, moral, and civil character, there is no relation; but in their dramatic capacity there is some."—Mrs. Montagu was not aware that Cibber, whom Young

had named not disparagingly in his Satires, was the brother of his old school-fellow; but to return to our hero. "The waters," says Mrs. Montagu, "have raised his spirits to a fine pitch, as your grace will imagine, when I tell you how sublime an answer he made to a very vulgar question. I asked him how long he stayed at the Wells: he said, As long as my rival stayed;—as long as the sun did." Among the visitors at the Wells were Lady Sunderland, (wife of Sir Robert Sutton,) and her sister, Mrs. Tichborne. "He did an admirable thing to Lady Sunderland: on her mentioning Sir Robert Sutton, he asked her where Sir Robert's lady was; on which we all laughed very heartily, and I brought him off, half ashamed, to my lodgings, where, during breakfast, he assured me he had asked after Lady Sunderland, because he had a great honour for her; and that, having a respect for her sister, he designed to have inquired after her, if we had not put it out of his head by laughing at him. You must know, Mrs. Tichborne sat next to Lady Sunderland. It would have been admirable to have had him finish his compliment in that manner."

Young was much courted by the ladies at Tunbridge, and no little jealousy was excited among *Les Femmes Savantes* for the possession of one who was better worth having than Trissotin or Vadius. "His expressions," says Mrs. Montagu, "all bear the stamp of novelty, and his thoughts of sterling sense. He practises a kind of philosophical abstinence.....He carried Mrs. Rolt and myself to Tonbridge, five miles from hence, where we were to see some fine old ruins.....First, rode the doctor on a tall steed, decently caparisoned in dark grey; next, ambled Mrs. Rolt on a hackney horse;.....then followed your humble servant on a milk-white palfrey. I rode on in safety, and at leisure to observe the company, especially the two figures that brought up the rear. The first was my servant, valiantly armed with two uncharged pistols; the last was the doctor's man, whose uncombed hair so resembled

the mane of the horse he rode, one could not help imagining they were of kin, and wishing, for the honour of the family, that they had had one comb betwixt them. On his head was a velvet cap, much resembling a black saucepan, and on his side hung a little basket.—At last we arrived at the King's Head, where the loyalty of the doctor induced him to alight; and then, knight-errant-like, he took his damsels from off their palfreys, and courteously handed us into the inn." After seeing the lions, and visiting the "parson," who was in canonical dishabille, to wit, "a grey-striped calamanco night-gown, a wig that once was white, but, by the influence of an uncertain climate, turned to a pale orange, a brown hat, encompassed by a black hat-band, a band somewhat dirty, that decently retired under the shadow of his chin, and a pair of grey stockings well mended with blue worsted,"—the party returned to the Wells; and "the silver Cynthia held up her lamp in the heavens" the while. "The night silenced all but our divine doctor, who sometimes uttered things fit to be spoken in a season when all nature seems to be hushed and hearkening. I followed, gathering wisdom as I went, till I found, by my horse's stumbling, that I was in a bad road, and that the blind was leading the blind. So I placed my servant between the doctor and myself; which he not perceiving, went on in a most philosophical strain, to the great admiration of my poor clown of a servant, who, not being wrought up to any pitch of enthusiasm, nor making any answer to all the fine things he heard, the doctor, wondering I was dumb, and grieving I was so stupid, looked round and declared his surprise."

Spence furnishes us with additional testimony of Young's simplicity and absence of mind, by narrating how he once dined with Pope off a broiled blade-bone of mutton, which he enjoyed so much that he inquired the name of the dish, and the method of its cooking, in order that he might introduce the novelty into his own household.

The poets of the day were not celebrated for their extensively practical information. I think it is Horace Walpole who tells how three of the great sons of song, on passing a growing crop, disputed as to whether it was wheat, oats, or barley; and, on referring to an unlettered clown who was grinning at their elbow, found it was rye. So is there a story of Rousseau, who was, in the summer of 1768, botanizing near Grenoble, in company with a lawyer named Bovier. As the friends stood still for a moment, Jean Jacques began plucking some berries from a shrub, and eating. Bovier, knowing them to be poisonous, gazed on the botanist with a respectfully-silent horror. Some other friends coming up, exclaimed that the fruit was deadly; whereupon the irascible philosopher became wrathful, as was his wont, and forthwith published to the world that society had entered into a conspiracy against him, and had attempted to poison him by means of these mortal berries. In the absence of mind, or the ignorance, here displayed, there is something that reminds us of Young. The latter was essentially an absent man. It will be remembered how once, writing to Tonson and Lintot, he misdirected both letters; and how the latter, receiving the letter intended for Tonson, found Lintot described in it as a dishonest knave with whom no author would willingly have dealings. "He is an absent man, you know," says Richardson, writing of Young in 1754. "He is another uncontrollable, therefore unaccountable. He has been in town, somewhere behind the Royal Exchange, for three weeks, without letting me know a syllable of the matter till the very day that, ready-booted, he called in Salisbury-court, leaving word—I was out—that he was very desirous of seeing me at Welwyn. He is an absent man, you know."

In reference to his artless manners Croft observes: "Of Edward Young an anecdote which wanders among readers is not true, *that he was Fielding's Parson Adams*. The original of that famous painting was *William Young*, who

was a clergyman : he supported an uncomfortable existence by translating for the booksellers from the Greek ; and, if he did not seem to be his own friend, was at least no man's enemy. Yet the facility with which this report has gained belief in the world, argues, were it not sufficiently known, that the author of the 'Night Thoughts' bore some resemblance to Adams."

When Young, in 1754, produced his "Centaur not Fabulous," Walpole said of it, "Dr. Young has published a new book, on purpose, he says himself, of telling a story he has known these forty years. Mr. Addison sent for the young Lord Warwick, as he was dying, to show in what peace a Christian could die." Walpole added a story of Addison, which, if true, would have disgraced the memory of the great essayist ; but the falseness of which has been demonstrated by Miss Aikin in her Life of Addison. The Altamont of the "Centaur" has nothing in common with the Altamont of the "Night Thoughts." The original of the former was George, Earl of Euston, son of the Duke of Grafton. He married, in 1741, the fair Dorothy Boyle, and murdered her, by his brutality, the year after. He ill-used her on the day after their wedding. He turned her mother out of his house ; and, when her father challenged him in consequence, he would gladly have killed him in a duel if he could, but mutual friends prevented the meeting. Dorothea was gentle of temper, her beauty was irresistible, her fortune large. There is a portrait of her at Chiswick, on which is the following inscription : "Lady Dorothy Boyle, born May 14th, 1724. She was the comfort and joy of her parents, the delight of all who knew her angelic temper, and the admiration of all who saw her beauty. She was married October 10th, 1741, and delivered by death from misery, May 2d, 1742. This picture was drawn, seven years after her death, (from memory,) by her most affectionate mother, Dorothy Burlington."

The "Centaur," in which Altamont plays so conspicuous

a part, sparkles with wit; and in every phrase there is an echo of wisdom. We are surprised, however, to find that the didactic author could write such a dedication as the one originally prefixed to this work, and addressed to Lady —. It abounds in figures of lascivious centaurs and salacious nymphs; there are laughing references to the intrigues of married gods, with allusions to ancient mythology and to the prevailing manners of his own times, in which the shamelessness of the latter is demonstrated in the easy and outspoken freedom with which they are compared with the former. We may not be less vicious in our generation; but we are wiser in censuring vice without entering into details. As to the "Centaur," if we can overlook the occasional offences against good taste,—the faults of a time which saw no fault in *them*,—we shall find both profit and pleasure in perusing the brilliant wisdom with attention. It is "morals made easy" for the especial advantage of an immoral public. It passed through many editions, and was generally regarded as one of the most effective scourges applied to the crying vices of that licentious age. But the author is his own best apologist:—"The mixture of levity with solemnity in these Letters makes you apprehensive of its exposing the writer to censure or ridicule. Yet how is it possible to write on so dreadfully-mixed a subject as *the ways of man*, without being agitated by the most contradictory emotions!—His follies, fantastically wrong, so ludicrously absurd! his capacities for virtue and happiness so noble! his vices so shocking, their consequence so deplorable!—So earnestly desirous I am of waking him from that dream, in which he nods on the brink of eternal ruin, that if nothing can do it but my own disgrace, (my own buffoonery, as perhaps he will think it,) I rejoice to fall so low. If he will but laugh (*with me*) at himself, he is freely welcome to laugh *at me* as much as he sees cause. It is not his applause, but his welfare, that is sought. *Amendment* is the point in view. Would you, my

friend, judge aright of men? Ask not *WHAT* they have done, but *WHY*; or their characters will be still in the dark."

If we apply this rule of judging to Young himself, and ask *the reason* of an action in which he was engaged about this time, the best reply which we can obtain is that which was given by one of his biographers:—"He perhaps thought the occasion might sanctify the means; and, not thinking so unfavourably of the stage as other good men have done, he committed the monstrous absurdity of giving the proceeds of a play for the propagation of the gospel!" That tragedy of "The Brothers" which he had written some thirty years before, he then withdrew, under the apprehension that it might stand in the way of his clerical preferment; but, now that he was likely to be left at Welwyn without farther promotion, he surrendered it to the players. He was immediately immersed in the very thickest of theatrical squabbles, to the disgrace of his clerical profession. George Anne Bellamy, that capricious beauty on whom the delighted town showered fortune, who rode one day in gilded chariots, and the next was lying on the lowest of the steps at Westminster-bridge, wrapped in misery and contemplating suicide,—the irresistible Bellamy was then the idol of the world of fashion; and Young readily acceded to her request that she might read "The Brothers" to the players. The request rendered Garrick furious, although it was grounded on the young lady's personal knowledge of the author. The green-room was in an uproar. Roscius claimed the principal part for Mrs. Pritchard; and, when "George Anne" poutingly offered to surrender the character assigned her by the doctor, Young vehemently opposed it with an emphatic "No, no!" Miss Bellamy accordingly read the piece, and assumed the liberty of criticizing it. She expressly objected to the line, "I will speak to you in thunder," as not being in a concatenation with the delicacy that was to be expected from the fine lady who utters it. The reverend author pro-

tested that it was the most forcible line in the piece; but Miss Bellamy thought it would be more so if it were improved by the introduction of "lightning" as well as thunder. The good doctor was something nettled at the lady's wit; and he declared that "The Brothers" was the best piece he had ever written. "I am afraid, doctor," rejoined the lady, pertly, "that you will do with me as the archbishop of Toledo did with Gil Blas on a similar occasion. But I cannot help reminding you of a tragedy called 'The Revenge.'" The author took the remark in considerable dudgeon; but the sparkling young actress, who sincerely esteemed him, exerted all her powers to smooth the plumage that her wit had ruffled; and she did this with such effect, that the doctor, after offering to cancel the line objected to, invited himself to dine with her, and did so in company with Garrick and rough Quin.

"The Brothers" was acted to thin houses for eight nights, and then quietly shelved. The author realized £400 by it; to which adding, from his private purse, £600 more, he gave the handsome sum of £1,000 to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. The author was displeased alike with the town and with the players. The truth is, however, that the fault lay as much with himself as with either. The play was not original, but taken, without acknowledgment, from various sources. A great portion is almost literally translated from the French piece, *Persée et Démétrius*. Many of the speeches are taken, piecemeal, from Livy. The contest, in the third act, is splendidly phrased; but the *dénoûment* is so confused and incomplete, that Young was obliged to add an epilogue to explain what was supposed to take place at and after the fall of the curtain! Garrick substituted a coarse epilogue, which was spoken by sprightly Kitty Clive, who loved to give coarseness all its point; but it could not save the piece, while it seriously offended the author. Since then "The Brothers" has descended into that oblivion which fittingly enfolds nearly

all the classical tragedies of the last century. It is not without its beauties; but it does not picture the period it affects to portray. The "sir" and "madam" sound as harshly as the "*citizen Agamemnon*," which the French Republic introduced into Racine's plays; and the epithets are only one degree less absurd than the *Oui, Milor*, which Voltaire's Beersheba addresses to King David.

The four years which succeeded that in which "The Brothers" appeared were passed chiefly in retirement at Welwyn; and, when Young was not suffering from sleepless nights, or was not low-spirited at the thoughts of his decaying sight, he seems to have maintained a cheerful household. His house was often full of friends; and the company was as often heterogeneously made up. Long ere this period, however, he had lost two of his dearest friends, who had first met beneath his friendly roof. I allude to Pope and Aaron Hill. The latter was one of Young's favourites. He was the architect of his own fortune. Of a good Wiltshire family, and left destitute by an improvident father, Hill, at fifteen, left Westminster, where he enjoyed a fair reputation, and started alone for Constantinople, where he sought out Lord Paget, a distant relation, whom he had never seen, and whom his bold decision chanced to please. Lord Paget provided him with a tutor, sent him on his travels, treated him as a son, died, and—left him nothing. Hill loved work too well to be exposed to want. He became travelling tutor to Sir William Wentworth, and began a literary career by writing a very indifferent History of the Ottoman Empire. His second attempt was, at least, more profitable. His complimentary poem, "*Camillus*," was addressed to Lord Peterborough; and that noble lord, in return, made the aspiring poet his private secretary. Hill subsequently wrote the tragedy of "*Elfrid*" for Booth, and the opera of "*Rinaldo*," which contained the first English words to which Handel wedded immortal music. He then became director of the king's

theatre, and enjoyed the usual mis-fortune of directors ; but he escaped ruin by marrying an heiress. His next project was for raising a company, with a capital of £20,000, in order to ex-press olive-oil from beech-nuts. It failed, of course, as did succeeding projects for planting Carolina, and improving the growth of timber in Scotland. He died in the very moment of the earthquake of February, 1749-50.

Young loved the society of Hill ; but death had now deprived the hearth at Welwyn not only of *his* presence, but of that of many a once familiar face. Troubles took their place. He had once employed, as his curate, a young man named Kidgell. They had quarrelled ; and Kidgell revenged himself, in 1755, by publishing a novel called "The Card." In it the doctor is represented as a man given to build sham ruins, and quarrelling with the bricklayer touching the expense ; as one but slightly acquainted with modern languages, but inordinately fond of quoting scraps of Latin ; and who did not like clever curates, who put the rector in the shade. He is further described as parsimonious, and as going about in a gown which was nothing more than "a dirty remnant of tattered crape, which remembered him B.A., together with a rag of muslin, judiciously adapted to the dress, by way of band." The housekeeper, Mrs. Hallows, under the name of Fusby, is depicted as an artful woman, who had mastered the doctor by studying his caprices and ruling them, who wished to appear younger than she was, who beat the servants, and who was accustomed to "drinking a drop of juniper by way of hartshorn." How far this was caricature or slander, cannot be determined ; but the description which Kidgell gives of the doctor's man agrees exactly with the picture drawn of him by Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu. On the other hand, Mrs. Hallows is spoken of, by those who knew her, as a lady of piety, virtue, and accomplishments, respected by the doctor, and esteemed by his friends.

In January, 1758, Young proceeded to Bath, where he drank the waters, and rejoiced in "getting sleep after two sleepless months." In June, of the same year, he preached a very brief sermon before the king at Kensington. Before he published it, he asked Richardson if it would be *mean* of him to notice, in the dedication, his long services and his neglected condition. Richardson thought not; but he suggested that the hint ought to be delicately carried to Leicester-House, particularly as the "Night Thoughts" contained more than one innuendo that the doctor's merits had gone unrewarded. The latter, however, lost no time in endeavouring to achieve the desired consummation; and, a month after he had preached before the king, he applied to Dr. Secker, Archbishop of Canterbury. His Grace, however, made answer to "good Dr. Young," that he wondered that more suitable return of his great merits had not been made by persons in power; but that he, "Thomas Cant.," neither knew how to assist him at court, where the prelate enjoyed little influence, nor was likely to do any thing but impede the petitioner's fortunes by exercising, without encouragement, the little influence he *did* possess. The primate ends with an exquisitely acute, nay, agonizing, piece of satire, addressed to one who had, in poetry at least, asserted so withering a contempt for mere worldly greatness and advantages. "Your fortune and your reputation set you above the need of advancement, and your sentiments above that concern for it, on your own account; which, on that of the public, is sincerely felt by your brother, Thomas Cant." The advancement so coveted never came. It is said to have been impeded by the poet's political leaning towards the person and party of Frederick, Prince of Wales. Ten years after the death of the latter, the princess dowager appointed the still eager candidate for advancement her "clerk of the closet." This occurred in 1761, when he was fourscore years of age, powerless for the duties, yet proud of the poor honour. Just before, Hil-

desley, bishop of Sodor and Man, wrote of him to Richardson:—"I am sorry to hear the account you give of Dr. Young's impending misfortune (loss of sight). You do me the honour to join me with yourself in calling him *our* friend. It is an honour I should be very proud of sufficient title to. The friendship of so valuable a person in every respect, I was ever indeed ambitious to obtain and cultivate, whilst he was my neighbour for upwards of twenty years;* and for that end have often intruded upon him. The impertinence of my frequent visits to him, however, was amply rewarded; forasmuch as, I can truly say, he never received me but with agreeable, open complacency; and I never left him but with profitable pleasure and improvement. He was, one or other, the most modest, the most patient of contradiction, and the most informing and entertaining, I ever conversed with,—at least of any man who had so just pretensions to pertinacity and reserve. I hope to hear a better account of him; for he is a man, I think, of singular importance to the Christian world: I pray Heaven may think so too."

His last effort marked by any vigour appeared the year after the sermon preached before the king. This was the well-written Letter on "Original Composition," addressed to Richardson, at whose house Young read it in presence of Johnson, whom he met there for the first time. In 1762, he closed the catalogue of his works with his poem on Resignation, a production in which we shall look in vain for the beauties discerned by Johnson,† or for the great defects censured by the critics. It was written to console

* When Hildesley was vicar of the parish of Hitchin, near Welwyn.

† "His last poem was 'Resignation;' in which he made, as he was accustomed, an experiment of a new mode of writing, and succeeded better than in his 'Ocean' or his 'Merchant.' It was very falsely represented as a proof of decayed faculties. There is Young in every stanza, such as he often was in the highest vigour."—JOHNSON'S "Lives of the English Poets."

Mrs. Boscawen for the death of her husband, the gallant admiral; and there was something chivalrous in the old minstrel who somewhat feebly, yet not unmusically withal, swept the strings of his well-worn lyre, that his song might give comfort to the fair afflicted. As Croft has tried hard to injure the memory of Young, it becomes a pleasing duty to give an extract from that part of his narrative which is devoid of palpable malignity, and which serves to neutralize many of his ungenerous innuendoes:—"In 1762, a short time before his death, Young published 'Resignation.' Notwithstanding the manner in which it was really forced from him by the world, criticism has treated it with no common severity. If it shall be thought not to deserve the highest praise,—by whom, on the other side of fourscore, (except by Newton, and by Waller,) has praise been merited? To Mrs. Montagu, the famous champion of Shakspeare, I am indebted for the history of 'Resignation.'"

I prefer to give this lady's account in her own words; which I am happy in being enabled to present in the form of a recent valuable communication to the "Gentleman's Magazine,"* by Peter Cunninghame, Esq., who copied from the original her reply to Croft's inquiries:—

"Sandleford, September 17th, 1782.

"MRS. MONTAGU presents her compliments to Mr. Croft, and would have returned an answer to his letter sooner, but, being in the country, it was delayed on its way to her. In regard to 'Resignation,' the matter which gave occasion to that poem was simply this: Mrs. Montagu having observed that Mrs. Boscawen, in her great and just grief for the loss of the admiral, seemed to find some consolation in reading Dr. Young's 'Night Thoughts,' she wished to give her an opportunity of conversing with him, having herself always thought his unbounded genius appeared to greater advantage in *the companion* than *the author*. *The Christian* was

* For February, 1853.

in him a character more inspired, more enraptured, more sublime, than *the poet*; and in his ordinary conversation,—

‘—letting down the golden chain from high,
He drew his audience upward to the sky.’

Mrs. M. therefore proposed to Mrs. Boscawen and Mrs. Carter to go with her to Welwyn: it is unnecessary to add that the visit answered every expectation.

“Mrs. Montagu is very sorry it is not in her power to furnish Mr. Croft with any important circumstances in Dr. Young’s life; but he was sunk into the vale of years and quiet retreat, before she had the honour and happiness of his acquaintance;* and, his contemplation being then chiefly intent on things ‘above the visible diurnal sphere,’ he rarely talked of the earlier and more active part of his life. From others she has heard many things greatly to his credit; particularly an act of uncommon liberality to his lady’s daughter by her first husband; but as they were delivered to her in the vague relations of common discourse, she cannot speak of them with such certainty and precision as Mr. Croft’s purpose requires. This deficiency she greatly laments, not only on account of the honour they would have done to the memory of her departed friend, but likewise for the sake of the world, to whom they would have held forth patterns of right and noble conduct. Though right and wrong are declared and made known to us by higher wisdom than human wisdom, yet, such is the perverseness of mankind, they are more apt to be influenced by the example of persons celebrated for their parts than by pure precept; for the same reason, in an unbelieving age, the interests of religion are connected with the character of a man so distinguished for piety as Dr. Young. Though unable to assist Mr. Croft, she must ever respect him for endeavouring to get information from

* Yet she knew him nearly forty years prior to this. See her amusing account of him at Tunbridge Wells, in p. lxviii.

Dr. Young's friends concerning him, instead of collecting from the whispers of calumny idle tales by which to blast the memory of a good man, and prevent the edification of a good example.

"To Herbert Croft, Esq., Southampton-Row, London."

"While the poet and the Christian were applying this comfort," says Croft, "Young had himself occasion for comfort, in consequence of the sudden death of Richardson, who was printing the former part of the poem."

In the same year, (1762,) he was requested by his publishers* to select those portions of his writings which he might be wishful for posterity to regard as the only genuine and accredited productions of "the Author of the Night Thoughts." The brief "advertisement" which he prefixed to the selection has been generally admired for its modesty and simplicity. But his powers of discrimination must have been at that time greatly enfeebled: for while he considered it a grievous scandal to acknowledge his early and intimate connexion with the profligate Duke of Wharton, and on that account excluded from his collection the dedication of "Busiris" to his Grace; he tolerated the insertion of the obscene epilogue to that tragedy, and the equally reprehensible one suffixed to "the Revenge,"—two pieces which, without adverting to his own casual lapses, have proved intolerable obstructions to those benevolent biographers who are desirous of depicting him, in the decline of life, as the model of a consistent Christian and of a sound divine.

Soon after the completion of "Resignation," warnings fell thick upon the aged author. He had long been unable to fulfil the duties of his sacred office; yet he was more inclined, like Baxter, to linger and serve heaven upon

* The proprietors of his "Works," according to the title-page, were D. Browne, C. Hitch, and L. Hawes, A. Millar, J. and R. Tonson, J. Rivington, S. Crowder and Co., C. Corbett, J. Jackson, R. and J. Dodsley, and J. Richardson.

earth, than to sigh, like Baxter's great adversary, John Owen, to be relieved of all service here, and be summoned hence to heaven. He had, indeed, written, in 1761, to his friend Newcome, by an amanuensis, an assurance that he had no desire to live over again one of his *past* years; but that he was not unconcerned to reckon some future years, is seen in the doubt expressed that Newcome himself had attained the advanced period of eighty-seven. "I want *considerably* of that age," he says. He fancied that he and Newcome were of about the same standing, and was not willing that the latter should count too fast. He could not yet be fourscore and seven: "If it be worth your while," he added, "satisfy me in that particular."

He who had beaten Voltaire in sparkling wit at Bubb Dodington's, who had charmed Warton by the brilliancy of his conversation and the fervour of his piety, and had somewhat shocked the grave Mrs. Carter by his endless vivacity, is said to have passed the last three years of his life at Welwyn in much of that kind of dejection which sometimes accompanies old age. "He was too well-bred a man," said Frederick Young of his father, "not to be cheerful in company; but he was gloomy when alone. He never was cheerful after my mother's death; and he had met with many disappointments." Whether for good or for ill, Mrs. Hallows reigned supreme; but neither household nor church seemed to have profited by the ascendancy. A change of eighteen servants in one year betokens a troubled home; and allusions made by his curate, Mr. Jones, to doubtful speculative opinions, to "strange things not greatly to his credit," to "persons here whose word and honour cannot be depended on," and to measures proposed which the very ill-paid curate could by no means approve, augur ill for the well-being of the flock.

Such was the sad condition of affairs, as depicted by Mr. Jones, when, in 1765, Young was overtaken by his last illness. Though his cheerfulness had declined, his wit

remained unabated. A friend chanced to speak to him of the decease of a person who had long been in a decline, and who "was quite worn to a shell before he died." "I dare say," was the remark of the moribund poet; "but what has become of the kernel?" These expressions of his wit only came at intervals between paroxysms of pain which, at length, slew him; and he died on the night of Good Friday, the 5th of April, 1765, about an hour before midnight; and, on the following Friday, he was buried in the chancel of the church, close by the remains of his lady, and under the communion-table which had been ornamented by her graceful needle-work. "His pall was supported by the rectors and vicars of the neighbouring parishes. The *mourners* were his son, his nephew, and other near relatives, most of the bearers, and the whole town of Welwyn."

He bequeathed a thousand pounds to Mrs. Hallows, with an injunction to her, as well as to his executors, to destroy all his manuscripts as soon as he was dead. He also left a legacy to his "friend, Henry Steevens, a hatter at the Temple Gate;" and the remainder of his property was given to his son.

Much vituperation has been unjustly vented against Young in reference to the treatment of his son. Yet, even with the slight information which we possess on this subject, his conduct seems capable of extenuation, if not of complete exculpation. In some very respectable families, untoward events occur, more frequently the results of passion than of reason or charity, which puzzle both friends and relations; but if a stranger attempts to intermeddle with them, he usually finds himself unable to explain their origin, and the circumstances by which they are attended, or to account for the motives by which the parties have been actuated. Yet all such matters may be satisfactorily solved, by a philosopher, on the general principles of human nature. Let us try the experiment in this affair.

When Lady Elizabeth Young died, her son was about eight years of age. Her daughter, Miss Caroline Lee,* the younger sister of Narcissa, had the entire management of his domestic concerns till the period of her marriage with Major Haviland, with whom she went to reside in Ireland. Frederick is conjectured then to have been upwards of twelve years old; and had always passed his vacations from Winchester most agreeably in the society and under the kind superintendence of his half-sister. On his next visit, he found the place of his beloved mother and sister occupied by a stranger;—an excellent maiden lady, well advanced in years, but destitute of those endearing attractions connected with affectionate relationship, which had previously enchained him to the home of his boyhood. Youthful spirit displays itself more early in some subjects than in others; and Frederick Young soon felt the noble blood, which he derived from his mother, stirred up to resent what he conceived to be an undue assumption of authority, by one whom he regarded in the light of a menial. The first outbreaks of insubordination were probably curbed or kindly overlooked; and a return to the duties of a public school would be hailed by him, as it has been by many others, as a happy escape from domestic tyranny. While disclosing to his companions, in the confidence of school-friendship, the real or supposed wrongs and insults by which he had been annoyed, he undoubtedly found many generous sympathizers, who would applaud his spirit, and provide him with weapons for future resistance. In a subsequent visit to Welwyn, he furnished fresh instances of what the housekeeper called “insubordination;” when she appealed to the worthy rector, who seems to have taken a strong constitutional view of upholding existing

* This is the young lady, mentioned by Mrs. Montagu in a preceding page, (lxxxi.) to whom Young performed “an act of uncommon liberality,”—most probably in augmenting her marriage-dowry.

authority. The consequence was, that his son then, or soon afterwards, left his father's house, and went to reside with his cousin ; by whom and by other relations he would be commended for his conduct. No longer under parental control, the young gentleman chose gay associates, and was guilty of numerous indiscretions, which grieved his father, and served still more to alienate them from each other. This culpable estrangement continued many years. But as soon as Frederick Young heard that his father was on his death-bed, he hastened to the rectory to entreat forgiveness. Of the result of that visit, Dr. Young's curate, whom he appointed executor to his Will, gives the following account :—" I have now the pleasure to acquaint you, that the late Dr. Young, though he had for many years kept his son at a distance from him, yet has now at last left him all his possessions, after the payment of certain legacies : so that the young gentleman, who bears a fair character and behaves well, as far as I can hear or see, will, I hope, soon enjoy and make a prudent use of a very handsome fortune."

This summary of grievances is derived chiefly from those who avowed themselves to be the father's detractors, and the comrades and defenders of the son. What is there in it which has not been the misfortune, if not the fault, of other parents, less "unaccountable" and eccentric than Young is shown by Richardson and Mrs. Montagu to have been? Let him therefore have the benefit of being judged by the same rules, as those which we apply to other men in similar circumstances. It will then be evident, that, though a man of mighty mind, he was subject to some of the unamiable infirmities of our nature, and suffered himself to be unduly irritated by the waywardness of a boy, whom he had not the temper or the tact to manage.

But the crowning accusation of Young's enemies is—his refusal to admit his son to an interview when he was in dying circumstances. Those writers, however, who have

on this account loaded his memory with obloquy, are greatly in error when they reason on the false assumption, that he was as capable of reflection and decision on the couch of death, as he had been in the days of his hale and mature age : whereas all existing evidence goes to the disproof of this surmise. Mr. Jones the curate, who was of opinion that his son ought to have been ushered into his presence, has himself furnished us with proofs why this course would have been improper. Opiates, he says, had frequently been administered to him, during the preceding fortnight, "to render him less susceptible of pain ; though what effect the frequent use of them may by degrees have upon him, I know not." A youthful friend, some years after Young's decease, thus describes his conduct on that solemn occasion :—"Of the last hours of this excellent man I can only give one passage : That when his son arrived to pay the last duties, he sent to him his blessing and forgiveness ; with an assurance, that he did not refuse to see him from any remains of resentment, but that his bodily pain was so exquisite that he was unable to bear so affecting a meeting ; and that he would find, by his last Will, that *he had always considered him as his son, and never meant to carry his displeasure to the grave.*" This was not a momentary feeling, but an unceasing thoughtfulness, for his son's welfare ; as will appear from a casual expression in one of Richardson's letters to Lady Bradshaigh, ten years before the death of Young, when his tragedy of "the Brothers" was unsuccessful : "He, finding it did not answer his expectations as to profits, took them to himself, (not £400,) and gave a thousand guineas to the Society for propagating the Gospel. I had some talk with him on this great action. 'I always,' said he, 'intended to do something handsome by this Society. *Had I deferred it to my demise, I should have given away my son's money.*'"

What is there in Young's conduct which detracts from the sincerity of his affections? It was a prudential absti-

nence; which is of constant occurrence among relations; among those who have been on the most affectionate terms with the dying, as well as among those who have been long estranged from each other. Having scarcely known a day's sickness during a long life, Young had at length been attacked by acute disease, which proved to be mortal. Exercised with paroxysms of strong pain, in the intervals between them he had to endure a sense of lassitude and weakness which was equally harassing. A man of eighty-five, on the verge of the grave,—“the daughters of music having been brought low, and the grass-hopper itself having become a burden,”—might safely offer these circumstances in excuse for declining such a distressing interview as that which was proposed.

But though all this may be justly urged in favour of Young at that sad crisis, yet every right-hearted man must feel that his refusal to see his penitent child, and to whisper his dying blessing, will always be regarded by posterity as a great blemish in his character. On the contrary, no son ever showed himself more amiable than Frederick Young, when in deep sorrow he meekly accepted the tardy blessing, conveyed to him in the cold utterance of a stranger; and then gratefully erected a tablet to the memory of his father, with the significant inscription:—

M. S.

OPTIMI PARENTIS

HUJUS ECCLESIE RECTORIS,

ET ELIZABETHÆ

FEMINÆ PRÆNOBILI,

CONJUGI EJUS PRÆSTANTISSIMÆ,

PIO ET GRATISSIMO ANIMO,

HOC MARMOR POSUIT

F. Y.

FILIUS SUPERSTES.

The reader will not fail to observe the deep feeling couched under the expression, *Et Elizabethæ Fœminæ præ-*

nobili, conjugii ejus præstantissimæ; and may trace in it the natural regrets of the young gentleman, that his noble mother had not been spared to be the affectionate guide of his boyhood.

The estimate of Young's religious character, and of his conduct as a clergyman, will vary according to the differing views of those who engage in the investigation. An evangelical clergyman, of great mental vigour, has drawn the portrait of the author of "the Night Thoughts" in these colours:—

"Young is, of all other men, one of the most striking examples of the sad disunion of Piety from Truth. If we read his most true, impassioned, and impressive estimate of the world and of religion, we shall think it impossible that he was uninfluenced by his subject. It is, however, a melancholy fact, that he was hunting after preferment at eighty years old, and felt and spoke like a disappointed man. The Truth [of the Gospel] was pictured on his mind in most vivid colours. He felt it while he was writing. He felt himself on a retired spot; and he saw Death, the mighty hunter, pursuing the unthinking world. He saw redemption—its necessity and its grandeur; and, while he looked on it, he spoke as a man would speak whose mind and heart are deeply engaged. Notwithstanding all this, the view did not reach his heart. Had I preached in his pulpit with the fervour and interest that his *Night Thoughts* discover, he would have been terrified. He told a friend of mine, who went to him under religious fears, that *he must go more into the world.*" *

But this perhaps is too severe a standard by which to try the personal piety of Dr. Young. He was one of the class of divines who are described in the *Spectator*, and in other writings of those times; and the advice which he tendered to Mr. Cecil's friend, who suffered "under religious fears," though not so soothing and salutary as that which Christ himself has delivered in the New Testament, was of the kind

* CECIL'S "Remains."

then in vogue among most of his clerical brethren. They were men in whose orthodoxy no flaw could be detected; but they seem never to have understood, or too soon to have forgotten, the design and tendency of the gospel, which

“Lays the rough path of peevish nature even,
And opens in each breast a little heaven.”

The commendable improvement in the morals of the great body of the clergy, and the increasing consistency between their faith and their practice, are pleasing traits by which the present age is as much distinguished, as it is by our astonishing progress in the arts and sciences. But we are not to depreciate the piety of our grandfathers, and of those who were their spiritual instructors, because their training and their privileges were inferior to ours. Young had been a man of the world, and had spent the best part of his life in gay society. At the advanced age of forty seven he entered on the duties of a clergyman with apparently very inadequate preparation for the sacred office; yet, from youth to old age, he is represented as having ably maintained and zealously defended the essential verities of the Christian religion, in all companies, and against all adversaries. Though he cannot be said to have been in all points such a clergyman as our best wishes would have made him, yet we prefer to take our estimate of the soundness and maturity of his religious attainments from the very satisfactory correspondence with his friend Richardson,—from the sentiments embodied in his latest poem, (on *Resignation*,)—and from the testimony of Mrs. Montagu in a preceding page, (lxxxii.) and of Dr. Joseph Warton, who declares, “Dr. Young was one of the most amiable and benevolent of men, most exemplary in his life, and sincere in his religion.” This is evidence incidentally given by those virtuous and gifted persons who had known him long and intimately, and who had, within four years of his decease, enjoyed opportunities of personal intercourse with him, and admired his ripening piety.

The taste of critics has also differed much, while severally adjudicating upon the merits of Young as a poet and a man of genius. Not attempting to enter on a discussion concerning the relative value of their contradictory opinions, I feel more inclined to record my assent, with a slight modification or two, to the judgment delivered by two eminent writers, in one of our most popular Magazines. The first says,

“In no volume of our sacred poetry is the efficacy of a Christian’s faith more powerfully demonstrated. It has been objected to the *Elegy* of Gray, that we cannot read it without a sensation of despondency. But the Muse of Young is not obnoxious to a like censure: the sweetest tones of her harp are awakened to accompany the departing Christian; the fairest flowers of her garden are scattered upon his tomb. An angel of peace sits ever, in his verse, by the pillow of the righteous.

“Perhaps no man ever wrote so much, and yet borrowed so little [as Dr. Young]. His materials, like his style, belong to himself alone. Unlike his great predecessor Milton, his footsteps are rarely or never to be traced in the paths of the old mythology, or among the flowers of the old Tuscan song. His illustrations are all furnished by deep meditation, and watchful observance of manners and life. He is one of the most original, because one of the most thoughtful, of poets.”*

The other critic justly observes: “With all his faults of taste, and they were many, Young was a striking, a noble, an original writer. He is the greatest didactic poet in our language; and, after Shakspeare and Milton, the most sublime. His fertility is exhaustless, his brilliancy is unquenchable, his strength invincible by fatigue. He has (so to speak) the same unwieldy gait that marks the intellectual motion of Ben Jonson. But, like that illustrious dramatist, he has also the giant’s stature. His poem—for when

* FRASER’S “Magazine,” vol. xiv. p. 674.

we speak of Young, we speak of the author of the *Night Thoughts*—is a mine of gold : dig where we will, a rich vein rewards our toil.

Do we seek for sentences sharpened into epigrams? They are there.

For thoughts of vivid force and beauty? They stud every page.

For grand and startling descriptions? Michael Angelo might have modelled from his lines.

For images of thrilling terror and mysterious solemnity? Dante would have found many to light up his *Inferno*.

For glimpses of human nature under its darker aspect? Rochefoucauld would have applauded him.

“When Boswell said, that he esteemed the *Night Thoughts* as a mass of the greatest and richest poetry that human genius had ever produced, he only displayed his want of discrimination : It contains the principle of immortality,—if we may employ the metaphor,—but only in fragments. It has been the misfortune of Young to be criticised by persons who never read, in all probability, twenty pages of his writings.”*

Impartial and apparently severe as some of my brief criticisms on the author's minor poems have been, I may be allowed to conclude this sketch of his Life with the declaration, that in the high character which these two judicious writers have given of the productions of Young's mental powers, they seem to confine themselves within the bounds of truth and sobriety ; and that the ample praise which they have bestowed on him does not err in excess, but is barely that which is due to his obvious merits as one of our great poets, and a man of transcendent genius, whose taste and judgment were occasionally overbalanced by the exuberance of his imagination.

JOHN DORAN.

February 2d, 1853.

* FRASER'S "Magazine," vol. xxiii. p. 415.

NIGHT THOUGHTS

ON

LIFE, TIME, FRIENDSHIP, DEATH,
AND IMMORTALITY:

IN NINE NIGHTS.

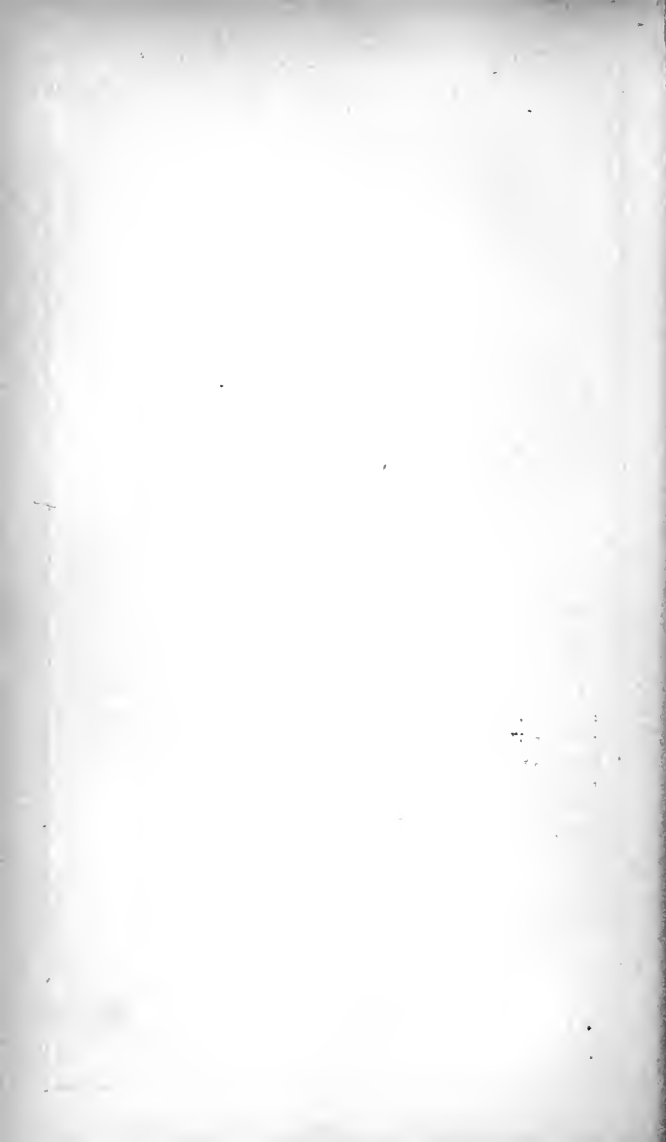
Sunt lachrymæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.—VIRGILIUS.



PREFACE.

As the occasion of this poem was real, not fictitious; so the method pursued in it was rather imposed by what spontaneously arose in the author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed: which will appear very probable from the nature of it; for it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is from long narrations to draw short morals. Here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.*

* The Night Thoughts were originally published in separate quarto pamphlets, one Night in each, at intervals of six or eight months, from the year 1741 to 1745. No introduction was prefixed to any of the first three Nights; but the Fourth had one; and when the author collected the best of his Works, and published them in four volumes, he transferred this paragraph from the Fourth Night to the First, as a brief preface to the whole of the Night Thoughts.—EDRR.



NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT I.

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE ARTHUR
ONSLow, ESQ., SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.







Night, sable goddess! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world.

Night 1 line 18.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

NIGHT I.

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

Tired Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep !
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where Fortune smiles ; the wretched he forsakes ;
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsullied with a tear. 5

From short (as usual) and disturb'd repose
I wake : how happy they who wake no more !
Yet that were vain, if dreams infest the grave.
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous ; where my wreck'd desponding thought, 10
From wave to wave of fancied misery,
At random drove, her helm of reason lost :
Though now restored, 't is only change of pain,
(A bitter change !) severer for severe.
The Day too short for my distress ; and Night, 15
E'en in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

NIGHT, sable goddess ! from her ebon throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden sceptre o'er a slumbering world. 20
Silence, how dead ! and darkness, how profound !
Nor eye, nor listening ear, an object finds ;
Creation sleeps. 'T is as the general pulse
Of life stood still, and Nature made a pause ;
An awful pause ! prophetic of her end. 25

And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd :
Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

SILENCE and Darkness! solemn sisters! twins
From ancient Night, who nurse the tender thought
To reason, and on reason build resolve, 30
(That column of true majesty in man,
Assist me: I will thank you in the grave;
The grave your kingdom: *there* this frame shall fall
A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.
But what are ye?— 35

THOU, who didst put to flight
Primeval Silence, when the morning stars,
Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball;—
O THOU, whose Word from solid darkness struck
That spark, the sun! strike wisdom from my soul; 40
My soul, which flies to Thee, her trust, her treasure,
As misers to their gold, while others rest.

THROUGH this opaque of Nature and of soul,
This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind, 45
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe,
Lead it through various scenes of life and death;
And from each scene the noblest truths inspire.
Nor less inspire my conduct than my song:
Teach my best reason, reason; my best will 50
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm resolve
Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear:
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

THE bell strikes *one*. We take no note of time 55
But from its loss. To give it then a tongue
Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,
I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,

It is the knell of my departed hours.
 Where are they? With the years beyond the flood. 60
 It is the signal that demands despatch :
 How much is to be done ! My hopes and fears
 Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge
 Look down—on what? A fathomless abyss,
 A dread eternity ! how surely *mine* ! 65
 And can eternity belong to me,
 Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour ?

How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
 How complicate, how wonderful is man !
 How passing wonder HE who made him such ! 70
 Who centred in our make such strange extremes !
 From different natures marvellously mix'd,
 Connexion exquisite of distant worlds !
 Distinguish'd link in being's endless chain !
 Midway from nothing to the Deity ! 75
 A beam ethereal, sullied and absorb'd !
 Though sullied and dishonour'd, still Divine !
 Dim miniature of greatness absolute !
 An heir of glory ! a frail child of dust !
Helpless immortal ! insect *infinite* ! 80
 A worm ! a god !—I tremble at myself,
 And in myself am lost ! At home a stranger,
 Thought wanders up and down, surprised, aghast,
 And wondering at her own. How reason reels !
 O what a miracle to man is man, 85
 Triumphantly distress'd ! what joy ! what dread !
 Alternately transported and alarm'd !
 What can preserve my life ? or what destroy ?
 An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave ;
 Legions of angels can't confine me there. 90

'T IS past conjecture ; all things rise in proof :
 While o'er my limbs Sleep's soft dominion spread,

What though my soul fantastic measures trod
 O'er fairy fields ; or mourn'd along the gloom
 Of pathless woods ; or, down the craggy steep 95
 Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool ;
 Or scaled the cliff ; or danced on hollow winds,
 With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain ?
 Her ceaseless flight, though devious, speaks her nature
 Of subtler essence than the trodden clod ; 100
 Active, aërial, towering, unconfined,
 Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall.
 E'en silent Night proclaims my soul immortal :
 E'en silent Night proclaims eternal day.
 For human weal, Heaven husbands all events ; 105
 Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

WHY then *their* loss deplore that are not lost ?
 Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around
 In infidel distress ? Are angels there ?
 Slumbers, raked up in dust, ethereal fire ? 110
 They live ! they greatly live a life on earth
 Unkindled, unconceived ; and from an eye
 Of tenderness let heavenly pity fall
 On me, more justly number'd with the dead.
 This is the desert, this the solitude : 115
 How populous, how vital is the grave !
 This is creation's melancholy vault,
 The vale funereal, the sad cypress-gloom ;
 The land of apparitions, empty shades !
 All, all on earth is shadow, all beyond 120
 Is substance ; the reverse is Folly's creed :
 How solid all, where change shall be no more !

THIS is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
 The twilight of our day, the vestibule :
 Life's theatre as yet is shut, and Death, 125
 Strong Death, alone can heave the massy bar,

This gross impediment of clay remove,
 And make us embryos of existence free.
 From real life but little more remote
 Is he, not yet a candidate for light, 130
 The future embryo, slumbering in his sire.
 Embryos we must be till we burst the shell,
 Yon ambient azure shell, and spring to life,
 The life of gods (O transport!) and of man.

YET man (fool man!) *here* buries all his thoughts; 135
 Inters celestial hopes without one sigh;
 Prisoner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,
Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by Heaven
 To fly at infinite; and reach it there
 Where seraphs gather immortality, 140
 On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God.
 What golden joys ambrosial clustering glow
 In His full beam, and ripen for the just,
 Where momentary ages are no more!
 Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire!
 And is it in the flight of threescore years 146
 To push eternity from human thought,
 And smother souls immortal in the dust?
 A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
 Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness, 150
 Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,
 At aught this scene can threaten, or indulge,
 Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,
 To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

WHERE falls this censure? It o'erwhelms myself. 155
 How was my heart incrust'd by the world!
 O how self-fetter'd was my grovelling soul!
 How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round
 In silken thought, which reptile Fancy spun,
 Till darken'd Reason lay quite clouded o'er 160

With soft conceit of endless comfort here,
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies !

Night visions may befriend (as sung above) :
Our *waking* dreams are fatal. How I dreamt
Of things impossible ! (could sleep do more ?) 165
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change !
Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave !
Eternal sunshine in the storms of life !
How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
With gorgeous tapestries of pictured joys ! 170
Joy behind joy, in endless perspective !
Till at Death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
Starting I woke, and found myself undone.
Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture ? 175
The cobwebb'd cottage, with its ragged wall
Of mouldering mud, is royalty to me !
The spider's most attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliss ; it breaks at every breeze. 180

O YE blest scenes of permanent delight !
Full above measure ! lasting beyond bound !
A perpetuity of bliss *is* bliss.
Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy, 185
And quite unparadise the realms of light.
Safe are you lodg'd above these rolling spheres ;
The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour, 190
And rarely for the better ; or the best
More mortal than the common births of fate.
Each Moment has its sickle, emulous
Of Time's enormous scythe, whose ample sweep

Strikes empires from the root ; each Moment plays 195
 His little weapon in the narrower sphere
 Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down
 The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss! sublunary bliss!—proud words, and vain!
 Implicit treason to Divine decree! 200
 A bold invasion of the rights of Heaven!
 I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.
 O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,
 What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!

DEATH! great proprietor of all! 't is thine 205
 To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
 The sun himself by thy permission shines ;
 And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.

Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
 Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean? 210
 Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?
 Insatiate archer! could not *one* suffice?

Thy shaft flew *thrice* ; and thrice my peace was slain ;
 And thrice, ere thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.
 O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament 215

Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?
 How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile,
 Precarious courtesy! not Virtue's sure,
 Self-given, solar ray of sound delight. 220

In every varied posture, place, and hour,
 How widow'd every thought of every joy!
 Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!
 Through the dark postern of time long elapsed,
 Led softly by the stillness of the night, 225
 Led like a murderer, (and such it proves!)
 Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;

In quest of wretchedness perversely strays ;
 And finds all desert now ; and meets the ghosts
 Of my departed joys ; a numerous train ! 230
 I rue the riches of my former fate ;
 Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament ;*
 I tremble at the blessings once so dear ;
 And every pleasure pains me to the heart.

YET why complain ? or why complain for one ? 235
 Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,
 The single man ? Are *angels* all beside ?
 I mourn for millions : 't is the common lot ;
 In this shape, or in that, has Fate entail'd
 The mother's throes on all of woman born, 240
 Not more the children, than sure heirs, of Pain.

WAR, Famine, Pest, Voleano, Storm, and Fire,
 Intestine Broils, Oppression with her heart
 Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind.
 God's image, disinherited of day, 245
Here, plunged in mines, forgets a sun was made.
There, beings, deathless as their haughty lord,
 Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life ;
 And plough the winter's wave, and reap despair.
 Some, for hard masters, broken under arms, 250
 In battle lopp'd away, with half their limbs,
 Beg bitter bread through realms their valour saved,
 If so the tyrant, or his minion, doom.
 Want, and incurable Disease, (fell pair !)
 On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize 255
 At once, and make a refuge of the grave.
 How groaning hospitals eject their dead !
 What numbers groan for sad admission there !
 What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,

* " Sweet comfort's blasted clusters make me sigh,"
 is the reading of the early quarto impressions.—EDIT.

Solicit the cold hand of Charity! 260
 To shock us more,—solicit it in vain!
 Ye silken sons of Pleasure! since in pains
 You rue more modish visits, visit here,
 And breathe from your debauch: give, and reduce
 Surfeit's dominion o'er you: but so great 265
 Your impudence, you blush at what is right.

HAPPY, did sorrow seize on such alone!
 Not Prudence can defend, or Virtue save;
 Disease invades the chastest temperance;
 And punishment the guiltless; and alarm, 270
 Through thickest shades, pursues the fond of peace.
 Man's caution often into danger turns,
 And his guard, falling, crushes him to death.
 Not Happiness itself makes good her name;
 Our very wishes give us not our wish. 275
 How distant oft the thing we dote on most
 From that for which we dote, felicity!
 The smoothest course of nature has its pains;
 And truest friends, through error, wound our rest.
 Without misfortune, what calamities! 280
 And what hostilities, without a foe!
 Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth.
 But endless is the list of human ills,
 And sighs might sooner fail than cause to sigh.

A PART how small of the terraqueous globe 285
 Is tenanted by man! the rest a waste,
 Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands;
 Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death!
 Such is earth's melancholy map! But, far
 More sad! this earth is a true map of man. 290
 So bounded are its haughty lord's delights
 To Woe's wide empire; where deep troubles toss,
 Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,

Ravenous calamities our vitals seize,
And threatening fate wide opens to devour. 295

WHAT then am I, who sorrow for myself?
In age, in infancy, from others' aid
Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind:
That Nature's first, last lesson to mankind:
The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels. 300

More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts;
And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.
Nor Virtue, more than Prudence, bids me give
Swollen thought a second channel; who divide,
They weaken too, the torrent of their grief. 305

Take then, O world! thy much-indebted tear:
How sad a sight is human happiness
To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour!
O thou, whate'er thou art, whose heart exults!
Wouldst thou I should congratulate thy fate? 310

I know thou wouldst; thy pride demands it from me.
Let thy pride pardon, what thy nature needs,
The salutary censure of a friend.
Thou happy wretch! by blindness art thou blest;
By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles. 315

Know, smiler, at thy peril art thou pleased;
Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.
Misfortune, like a creditor severe,
But rises in demand for her delay;
She makes a scourge of past prosperity, 320
To sting thee more, and double thy distress.

LORENZO, Fortune makes her court to thee.
Thy fond heart dances, while the siren sings.
Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;
I would not damp, but to secure, thy joys. 325
Think not that fear is sacred to the storm:
Stand on thy guard against the smiles of Fate.

Is Heaven tremendous in its frowns? Most sure ;
 And in its favours formidable too :
 Its favours here are trials, not rewards ; 330
 A call to duty, not discharge from care ;
 And should alarm us full as much as woes ;
 Awake us to their cause and consequence ;*
 And make us tremble, weigh'd with our desert ;
 Awe Nature's tumult, and chastise her joys, 335
 Lest, while we clasp, we kill them ; nay, invert
 To worse than simple misery their charms.
 Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,
 Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd,
 With rage envenom'd rise against our peace. 340
 Beware what earth calls happiness ; beware
 All joys, but joys that never can expire.
 Who builds on less than an immortal base,
 Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

MINE died with thee, PHILANDER! thy last sigh 345
 Dissolved the charm ; the disenchanted earth
 Lost all her lustre. Where her glittering towers?
 Her golden mountains, where? All darken'd down
 To naked waste ; a dreary vale of tears :
 The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece 350
 Of out-cast earth, in darkness! what a change
 From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,
 (Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd
 Thy glowing cheek! ambition, truly great,
 Of virtuous praise. Death's subtle seed within, 355
 (Sly, treacherous miner!) working in the dark,
 Smiled at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd
 The worm to riot on that rose so red,
 Unfaded ere it fell; one moment's prey!

* "O'er our scann'd conduct give a jealous eye."

This verse follows in all the early quarto editions.—EDIT.

MAN's foresight is conditionally wise ; 360
 LORENZO! wisdom into folly turns
 Oft the first instant its idea fair
 To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye!
 The present moment terminates our sight ;
 Clouds, thick as those on doomsday, drown the next ; 365
 We penetrate, we prophesy in vain.
 Time is dealt out by particles ; and each,
 Ere mingled with the streaming sands of life,
 By Fate's inviolable oath is sworn
 Deep silence, "where eternity begins." 370
 By Nature's law, what may be, may be *now* ;
 There's no prerogative in human hours.
 In human hearts what bolder thought can rise
 Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn ?
 Where is to-morrow? In another world. 375
 For numbers this is certain ; the reverse
 Is sure to none ; and yet on this *Perhaps*,
 This *Peradventure*, infamous for lies,
 As on a rock of adamant we build
 Our mountain-hopes ; spin out * eternal schemes, 380
 As we the Fatal Sisters could out-spin,
 And, big with life's futurities, expire.
 Not e'en PHILANDER had bespoke his shroud.
 Nor had he cause ; a warning was denied :
 How many fall as sudden, not as safe ! 385
 As sudden, though for years admonish'd home !
 Of human ills the last extreme beware ;
 Beware, LORENZO ! a slow-sudden death.
 How dreadful that deliberate surprise !
 Be wise to-day, 't is madness to defer ; 390
 Next day the fatal precedent will plead ;

* This is the reading of all the authentic editions, from 1741 to 1749,
 as well as of the edition which Young himself superintended in 1762.
 Some modern impressions have substituted "*our*."—EDIT.

Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life.
 Procrastination is the thief of time ;
 Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
 And to the mercies of a moment leaves 395
 The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
 If not so frequent, would not this be strange ?
 That 't is so frequent, this is stranger still.

OF man's miraculous mistakes, this bears
 The palm, "That all men are about to live," 400
 For ever on the brink of being born.

All pay themselves the compliment to think
 They one day shall not drivel ; and their pride
 On this reversion takes up ready praise,
 At least their own ; their future selves applauds ; 405
 How excellent that life they ne'er will lead !

Time lodged in their own hands is folly's vails ;
 That lodged in Fate's, to wisdom they consign ;
 The thing they can't but purpose they postpone.
 'T is not in folly not to scorn a fool ; 410
 And scarce in human wisdom to do more.

All promise is poor dilatory man,
 And that through every stage : when young, indeed,
 In full content we sometimes nobly rest,
 Unanxious for ourselves ; and only wish, 415
 As duteous sons, our fathers were more wise.

At thirty, man suspects himself a fool ;
 Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan ;
 At fifty, chides his infamous delay,
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve ; 420
 In all the magnanimity of thought
 Resolves, and re-resolves ; then dies the same.

AND why? Because he thinks himself immortal.
 All men think all men mortal but themselves ;
 Themselves, when some alarming shock of Fate 425

Strikes through their wounded hearts the sudden dread.
 But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
 Soon close; where pass'd the shaft, no trace is found.
 As from the wing no scar the sky retains,
 The parted wave no furrow from the keel, 430
 So dies in human hearts the thought of death.
 E'en with the tender tear which Nature sheds
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
 Can I forget PHILANDER? That were strange.
 O my full heart!—But should I give it vent, 435
 The longest night, though longer far, would fail,
 And the lark listen to my midnight song.

THE sprightly lark's shrill matin wakes the morn;
 Grief's sharpest thorn hard pressing on my breast,
 I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer 440
 The sullen gloom, sweet Philomel! like thee,
 And call the stars to listen: every star
 Is deaf to *mine*, enamour'd of *thy* lay.
 Yet be not vain; there are who thine excel,
 And charm through distant ages. Wrapt in shade, 445
 Prisoner of darkness! to the silent hours,
 How often I repeat their rage Divine,
 To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe!
 I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire;
 Dark, though not blind, like thee, Mæonides! 450
 Or, Milton, thee! Ah! could I reach your strain!
 Or his who made Mæonides our own!
 Man, too, he sung: *immortal* man I sing:
 Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life;
 What now but immortality can please? 455
 O had he press'd his theme, pursued the track
 Which opens out of darkness into day;
 O had he mounted on his wing of fire,
 Soar'd where I sink, and sung *immortal* man;
 How had it bless'd mankind, and rescued me! 460

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT II.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL
OF WILMINGTON.



NIGHT II.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP.

"WHEN the cock crew, he wept,"—smote by that eye
 Which looks on me, on all : that Power who bids
 This midnight sentinel, with clarion shrill,
 (Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,)

Rouse souls from slumber, into thoughts of heaven. 5
 Shall I too weep? Where then is fortitude?
 And, fortitude abandon'd, where is man?
 I know the terms on which he sees the light :
 He that is born is listed ; life is war,
 Eternal war with woe. Who bears it best, 10
 Deserves it least.—On other themes I'll dwell.
 LORENZO! let me turn my thoughts on thee,
 And thine on themes may profit ; profit there
 Where most thy need : themes, too, the genuine growth
 Of dear PHILANDER'S dust. He thus, though dead, 15
 May still befriend.—What themes? *Time's wondrous price,*
Death, friendship, and PHILANDER'S *final scene*.*

So could I touch these themes as might obtain
 Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengaged,
 The good deed would delight me ; half-impress 20
 On my dark cloud an Iris ; and from grief
 Call glory.—Dost thou mourn PHILANDER'S fate?

* " Themes meet for man ! and meet at every hour ;
 But most at this, at midnight, ever clad
 In Death's own sables, silent as his realms,
 And prone to weep, profuse of dewy tears
 O'er Nature in her temporary tomb ! "

These five lines, in the early quarto editions, follow " Philander's final scene."—EDIT.

I know thou say'st it : says thy life the same ?
 He mourns the dead who lives as they desire.
 Where is that thrift,* that avarice of TIME, 25
 (O glorious avarice !) thought of death inspires,
 As rumour'd robberies endear our gold ?
 O Time ! than gold more sacred ; more a load
 Than lead to fools ; and fools reputed wise.
 What moment granted man without account ? 30
 What years are squander'd, Wisdom's debt unpaid !
 Our wealth in days all due to that discharge.
 Haste, haste, he lies in wait, he 's at the door,
 Insidious Death ! should his strong hand arrest,
 No composition sets the prisoner free. 35
 Eternity's inexorable chain
 Fast binds ; and vengeance claims the full arrears.

How late I shudder'd on the brink ! how late
 Life call'd for her last refuge in despair !
 That *time* is mine, O MEAD, to thee I owe ; 40
 Fain would I pay thee with *eternity*.
 But ill my genius answers my desire ;
 My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.
 Accept the will ;—*that* dies not with my strain.

FOR what calls thy disease, LORENZO ? Not 45
 For Æsculapian, but for moral aid.
 Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.
 Youth is not rich in time, it may be poor ;
 Part with it as with money, sparing ; pay
 No moment but in purchase of its worth ; 50
 And what its worth, ask death-beds ; they can tell.
 Part with it as with life, reluctant ; big
 With holy hope of nobler time to come ;
 Time higher-aim'd, still nearer the great mark

* "*Thirst*" is the reading of the collected Works in 1762.—EDRR.

Of men and angels, virtue more Divine. 55
 Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?
 (These Heaven benign in vital union binds :)
 And sport we like the natives of the bough,
 When vernal suns inspire? Amusement reigns
 Man's great demand : to trifle is to live : 60
 And is it then a trifle, too, to die ?

THOU say'st I preach, LORENZO! 'T is confess'd.
 What, if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?
 Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?
 Is it not treason to the soul immortal, 65
 Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?
 Will toys amuse when medicines cannot cure?
 When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes
 Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,
 (As lands and cities with their glittering spires, 70
 To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm
 Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there,)
 Will toys amuse? No; thrones will then be toys,
 And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

REDEEM we time?—Its loss we dearly buy. 75
 What pleads Lorenzo for his high-prized sports?
 He pleads time's numerous blanks; he loudly pleads
 The straw-like trifles on life's common stream.
 From whom those blanks and trifles but from thee?
 No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant. 80
 Virtue, or purposed virtue, still be thine;
 This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves
 In act no trifle, and no blank in time.
 This greatens, fills, immortalizes all;
 This the blest art of turning all to gold; 85
 This the good heart's prerogative to raise
 A royal tribute from the poorest hours;
 Immense revenue! every moment pays.

If nothing more than purpose in thy power,
 Thy purpose firm is equal to the deed : 90
 Who does the best his circumstance allows,
 Does well, acts nobly ; angels could no more.
 Our outward act, indeed, admits restraint ;
 'T is not in things o'er thought to domineer.
 Guard well thy thought ; our thoughts are heard in heaven.

ON all-important time, through every age, 96
 Though much, and warm, the wise have urged, the man
 Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.
 " *I've lost a day*"—the prince who nobly cried,
 Had been an emperor without his crown ; 100
 " Of Rome ?" say, rather, lord of human race :
 He spoke as if deputed by mankind.
 So should all speak : so Reason speaks in all.
 From the soft whispers of that god in man,
 Why fly to Folly, why to Frenzy fly, 105
 For rescue from the blessing we possess ?
 Time, the supreme !—time is eternity ;
 Pregnant with all eternity can give ;
 Pregnant with all that makes archangels smile.
 Who murders time, he crushes in the birth 110
 A power ethereal, only not adored.

AN ! how unjust to Nature and himself
 Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man !
 Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
 We censure Nature for a span too short ; 115
 That span too short we tax as tedious too ;
 Torture invention, all expedients tire,
 To lash the lingering moments into speed,
 And whirl us (happy riddance !) from ourselves.
 Art, brainless Art ! our furious charioteer, 120
 (For Nature's voice unstified would recall,)
 Drives headlong towards the precipice of death ;

Death, most our dread ; death thus more dreadful made.
 O what a riddle of absurdity !
 Leisure is pain ; takes off our chariot-wheels ; 125
 How heavily we drag the load of life !
 Blest leisure is our curse ; like that of Cain,
 It makes us wander ; wander earth around
 To fly that tyrant, Thought. As Atlas groan'd
 The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour. 130
 We cry for mercy to the next amusement ;
 The next amusement mortgages our fields ;
 Slight inconvenience ! Prisons hardly frown,
 From hateful time if prisons set us free.
 Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief, 135
 We call him cruel : years to moments shrink,
 Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd.
 To man's false optics (from his folly false)
 Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
 And seems to creep, decrepit with his age. 140
 Behold him, when pass'd by ; what then is seen
 But his broad pinions, swifter than the winds ?
 And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
 Rueful, aghast, cry out on his career.

LEAVE to thy foes these errors, and these ills ; 145
 To Nature just, their *cause* and *cure* explore.
 Not short Heaven's bounty, boundless our expense ;
 No niggard, Nature ; men are prodigals.*
 We waste, not use, our time ; we breathe, not live.
 Time *wasted* is existence, *used* is life. 150
 And bare existence man, to live ordain'd,

* " As bold Alphonsus threaten'd in his pride,
 We throw away our suns, as made for sport,
 And not to light us on our way to scenes
 Whose lustre turns *their* lustre into shade."

These illustrative lines appear in the early quarto editions.—EDIT.

Wrings and oppresses with enormous weight.
 And why? Since time was given for use, not waste,
 Enjoin'd to fly, with tempest, tide, and stars,
 To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man ; 155
 Time's use was doom'd a pleasure ; waste, a pain ;
 That man might feel his error, if unseen ;
 And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure ;
 Not, blundering, split on idleness for ease.
 Life's cares are comforts ; such by Heaven design'd ; 160
 He that has none, must make them, or be wretched.
 Cares are employments ; and without employ
 The soul is on a rack ; the rack of rest,
 To souls most adverse ; action all their joy.

HERE, then, the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds : 165
 Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.
 We rave, we wrestle with great Nature's plan ;
 We thwart the Deity ; and 't is decreed,
 Who thwart His will shall contradict their own.
 Hence our unnatural quarrel with ourselves ; 170
 Our thoughts at enmity ; our bosom-broil :
 We push Time from us, and we wish him back ;
 Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life ;
 Life we think long and short ; Death seek and shun ;
 Body and soul, like peevish man and wife, 175
 United jar, and yet are loath to part.

O THE dark days of vanity ! while here
 How tasteless, and how terrible when gone !
 Gone! they ne'er go ; when past, they haunt us still ;
 The spirit walks of every day deceased, 180
 And smiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
 Nor death nor life delight us. If time past,
 And time possess'd, both pain us, what can please ?
 That which the Deity to please ordain'd,—
 Time used. The man who consecrates his hours 185

By vigorous effort, and an honest aim,
At once he draws the sting of life and death ;
He walks with Nature, and her paths are peace.

OUR error's cause and cure are seen : see next
Time's *nature, origin, importance, speed ;* 190
And thy great *gain* from urging his career.—
All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,
He looks on time as nothing. Nothing else
Is truly man's : 't is Fortune's.—Time 's a god.
Hast thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence ? 195
For, or against, what wonders can he do !
And *will* : to stand blank neuter he disdains.
Not on those terms was Time (Heaven's stranger !) sent
On his important embassy to man.
LORENZO ! no ; on the long-destined hour, 200
From everlasting ages growing ripe,
That memorable hour of wondrous birth,
When the DREAD SIRE, on emanation bent,
And big with Nature, rising in his might,
Call'd forth Creation, (for then Time was born,) 205
By Godhead streaming through a thousand worlds :
Not on those terms, from the great days of heaven,
From old Eternity's mysterious orb,
Was Time cut off, and cast beneath the skies ;
The Skies, which watch him in his new abode, 210
Measuring his motions by revolving spheres ;
That horologe machinery Divine.
Hours, Days, and Months, and Years, his children, play
Like numerous wings around him, as he flies :
Or, rather, as unequal plumes, they shape 215
His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,
To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,
And join anew Eternity his sire ;
In his immutability to nest,
When worlds, that count his circles now, unhinged, 220

(Fate the loud signal sounding,) headlong rush
To timeless Night and Chaos, whence they rose.

WHY spur the speedy? Why with levities
New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight?
Know'st thou or what thou dost, or what is done? 225
Man flies from time, and time from man; too soon
In sad divorce this double flight must end;
And then, where are we? where, LORENZO, then
Thy sports? thy pomps?—I grant thee, in a state
Not unambitious; in the ruffled shroud, 230
Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath.
Has Death his fopperies? Then well may Life
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

YE well-array'd! ye lilies of our land!
Ye lilies male, who neither toil, nor spin, 235
(As sister lilies might,) if not so wise
As Solomon, more sumptuous to the sight!
Ye delicate! who nothing can support,
Yourselves most insupportable! for whom
The winter rose must blow, the Sun put on 240
A brighter beam in Leo; silky-soft
Favonius breathe still softer, or be chid;
And other worlds send odours, sauce, and song,
And robes, and notions, framed in foreign looms!
O ye LORENZOS of our age! who deem 245
One moment unamused a misery
Not made for feeble man; who call aloud
For every bauble drivell'd o'er by sense;
For rattles, and conceits of every cast,
For change of follies, and relays of joy, 250
To drag you patient through the tedious length
Of a short winter's day;—say, sages; say,
Wit's oracles; say, dreamers of gay dreams!

How will you weather an eternal night,
Where such expedients fail ?* 255

O TREACHEROUS Conscience! while she seems to sleep
On rose and myrtle, lull'd with siren song ;
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
On headlong appetite the slacken'd rein,
And give us up to licence, unrecall'd, 260

Unmark'd ;—see, † from behind her secret stand,
The sly informer minutes every fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.

Not the gross act alone employs her pen ;
She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band, 265

A watchful foe! the formidable spy,
Listening, o'erhears the whispers of our camp ;
Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
And steals our embryos of iniquity.

As all-rapacious usurers conceal 270

Their Doomsday-book from all-consuming heirs ;
Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats
Us spendthrifts of inestimable time ;

Unnoted, notes each moment misapplied ;
In leaves more durable than leaves of brass, 275

Writes our whole history ; which Death shall read
In every pale delinquent's private ear ;

And Judgment publish ; publish to more worlds
Than this ; and endless Age in groans resound.

LORENZO, such that sleeper in thy breast! 280

Such is her slumber ; and her vengeance such
For slighted counsel ; such thy future peace!

And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon?

* " Where such expedients fail? where Wit's a fool,
Mirth mourns, Dreams vanish, Laughter drops a tear."

This is the reading of the first quarto impression.—EDIT.

† In the early editions *As* is found instead of *See*.—EDIT.

BUT why on Time so lavish is my song?
 On this great theme kind Nature keeps a school, 285
 To teach her sons herself. Each night we die;
 Each morn are born anew: each day a life!
 And shall we kill each day? If trifling kills,
 Sure vice must butcher. O what heaps of slain
 Cry out for vengeance on us! Time destroy'd 290
 Is suicide, where more than blood is spilt.
 Time flies, Death urges, knells call, Heaven invites,
 Hell threatens: all exerts; in effort, all;
 More than creation labours!—labours more!
 And is there in creation what, amidst 295
 This tumult universal, wing'd despatch,
 And ardent energy, supinely yawns?—
 Man sleeps, and man alone; and man, whose fate,
 Fate irreversible, entire, extreme,
 Endless, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulf 300
 A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom
 All else is in alarm; man, the sole cause
 Of this surrounding storm!—and yet he sleeps,
 As the storm rock'd to rest. "Throw *years* away?"
 Throw *empires*, and be blameless. Moments seize; 305
 Heaven's on their wing: a moment we may wish
 When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day stand still,
 Bid him drive back his car,* and re-import
 The period past, re-give the given hour.
 LORENZO, more than miracles we want: 310
 LORENZO—O for yesterdays to come!

SUCH is the language of the man awake;
 His ardour such for what oppresses thee.

* "Bid him drive back his car, recall, retake
 Fate's hasty prey: implore him, Re-import
 The period past," &c.

This is the reading of the early quarto editions.—EDIT.

And is his ardour vain, LORENZO? No;
 That more than miracle the gods indulge: 315
 To-day is yesterday return'd; return'd
 Full-power'd to cancel, expiate, raise, adorn,
 And reinstate us on the rock of peace.
 Let it not share its predecessor's fate;
 Nor, like its elder sisters, die a fool. 320
 Shall it evaporate in fume? fly off
 Fuliginous, and stain us deeper still?
 Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?
 More wretched for the clemencies of Heaven?

WHERE shall I find him? Angels! tell me where. 325
 You know him: he is near you: point him out:
 Shall I see glories beaming from his brow,
 Or trace his footsteps by the rising flowers?
 Your golden wings, now hovering o'er him, shed
 Protection; now are waving in applause 330
 To that blest Son of Foresight! Lord of Fate!
 That awful Independent on To-morrow!
 Whose work is done; who triumphs in the past;
 Whose yesterdays look backwards with a smile;
 Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly; 335
 That common, but opprobrious lot! Past hours,
 If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,
 If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,
 All feeling of futurity benumb'd;
 All god-like passion for eternal quench'd; 340
 All relish of realities expired;
 Renounced all correspondence with the skies;
 Our freedom chain'd; quite wingless our desire;
 In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar;
 Prone to the centre; crawling in the dust; 345
 Dismounted every great and glorious aim;
 Embruted every faculty Divine;
 Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world:

The world, that gulf of souls, immortal souls,
 Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire 350
 To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
 On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters changed ;
 Though we from earth, ethereal they that fell.
 Such veneration due, O man, to man.

Who venerate themselves, the world despise. 355
 For what, gay friend, is this escutcheon'd world,
 Which hangs out DEATH in one eternal night ?
 A night that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
 And wraps our thought, at banquets, in the shroud.
 Life's little stage is a small eminence, 360
 Inch-high the grave above ; that home of man,
 Where dwells the multitude : we gaze around ;
 We read their monuments ; we sigh ; and while
 We sigh, we sink, and are what we deplored :
 Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot ! 365

Is Death at distance ? No : he has been on thee ;
 And given sure earnest of his final blow.
 Those hours that lately smiled, where are they now ?
 Pallid to thought, and ghastly ! drown'd, all drown'd
 In that great deep, which nothing disembogues ! 370
 And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.
 The rest are on the wing : how fleet their flight !
 Already has the fatal train took fire ;
 A moment, and the world 's blown up to thee,
 The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust. 375

'T is greatly wise to talk with our past hours ;*
 And ask them, what report they bore to Heaven ;

* "Time passes like a post: we nothing send
 But poor Bellerophon's express,—our doom."

In the early quarto editions, the paragraph commences with these two lines.—EDRT.

And how they might have borne more welcome news.
 Their answers form what men Experience call ;
 If Wisdom's friend, her best ; if not, worst foe. 380
 O reconcile them ! Kind Experience cries,
 " There's nothing here, but what as nothing weighs ;
 The more our joy, the more we know it vain,
 And by success are tutor'd to despair."
 Nor *is* it only thus, but *must be* so. 385
 Who knows not this, though grey, is still a child.
 Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,
 Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

ART thou so moor'd thou canst not disengage,
 Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes ? 390
 Since, by life's passing breath, blown up from earth,
 Light, as the summer's dust, we take in air
 A moment's giddy flight, and fall again ;
 Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,
 And sleep till Earth herself shall be no more ; 395
 Since, then, (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown,)
 We, sore amazed, from out earth's ruins crawl,
 And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,
 As man's own choice, (controller of the skies !)
 As man's despotic will, perhaps one hour, 400
 (O how omnipotent is time !) decrees ;
 Should not each warning give a strong alarm ?
 Warning, far less than that of bosom torn
 From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead !
 Should not each dial strike us as we pass, 405
 Portentous, as the written wall, which struck,
 O'er midnight bowls, the proud Assyrian pale,
 Erewhile high-flush'd with insolence and wine ?
 Like *that* the dial speaks ; and points to thee,
 LORENZO ! loath to break thy banquet up : 410
 " O man, thy kingdom is departing from thee ;
 And, while it lasts, is emptier than my shade."

Its silent language such : nor need'st thou call
 Thy Magi to decipher what it means.
 Know, like the Median, Fate is in thy walls : 415
 Dost ask, "How?" "Whence?" Belshazzar-like, amazed ?
 Man's make encloses the sure seeds of death ;
 Life feeds* the murderer. Ingrate! he thrives
 On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

BUT here, LORENZO, the delusion lies ; 420
 That *solar shadow*, as it measures life,
 It life resembles too : Life speeds away
 From point to point, though seeming to stand still.
 The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth :
 Too subtle is the movement to be seen ; 425
 Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.
 Warnings point out our danger ; gnomons, time :
 As these are useless when the sun is set ;
 So those, but when more glorious Reason shines.
 Reason should judge in all ; in Reason's eye, 430
 That *sedentary shadow* travels hard.
 But such our gravitation to the wrong,
 So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,
 'T is later with the wise than he's aware ;
 A WILMINGTON goes slower than the sun : 435
 And all mankind mistake their time of day ;
 E'en age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown
 In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's descent,
 We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.
 We take fair days in Winter for the Spring ; 440
 And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft
 Man must compute that age he cannot feel,
 He scarce believes he's older for his years.
 Thus, at life's latest eve, we keep in store

* "*Feels*" is the reading of the collected Works in 1762 ; but "*feeds*," in all the editions prior to that date, seems most in agreement with the context.—EDIT.

One disappointment sure, to crown the rest,— 445
The disappointment of a promised hour.

ON this, or similar, PHILANDER!—thou
Whose mind was moral as the Preacher's tongue,
And strong to wield all science worth the name;—
How often we talk'd down the summer's sun, 450
And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream!
How often thaw'd and shorten'd winter's eve,
By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth,
Best found, so sought; to the recluse more coy!
Thoughts disentangle, passing o'er the lip; 455
Clean runs the thread; if not, 't is thrown away,
Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song;
Song, fashionably fruitless; such as stains
The fancy, and unhallow'd passion fires;
Chiming her saints to Cytherea's fane. 460

KNOW'ST thou, LORENZO, what a friend contains?
As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flowers,
So men, from FRIENDSHIP, wisdom and delight;
Twins tied by Nature, if they part, they die.
Hast thou no friend to set thy mind * abroad? 465
Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up want air,
And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.
Had thought been all, sweet speech had been denied;
Speech, thought's canal! speech, thought's criterion too!
Thought in the mine may come forth gold or dross; 470
When coin'd in word, we know its real worth.
If sterling, store it for thy future use;
'T will buy thee benefit; perhaps, renown.
Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd:

* The reading of the early quarto editions, in this place, is *mine*; which seems to find some countenance in the sentence which follows: "Thought in the *mine* may come forth gold or dross."—EDIT.

Teaching we learn ; and giving we retain 475
 The births of intellect ; when dumb, forgot.
 Speech ventilates our intellectual fire ;
 Speech burnishes our mental magazine,
 Brightens for ornament, and whets for use.
 What numbers, sheathed in erudition, lie, 480
 Plunged to the hilts in venerable tomes,
 And rusted in ; who might have borne an edge,
 And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to speech ;
 If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue !
 'T is thought's exchange which, like the' alternate push
 Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum, 486
 And defecates the student's standing pool.

IN contemplation is his proud resource ?
 'T is poor as proud, by converse unsustain'd.
 Rude thought runs wild in contemplation's field ; 490
 Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit
 Of due restraint ; and emulation's spur
 Gives graceful energy, by rivals awed.
 'T is converse qualifies for solitude,
 As exercise for salutary rest. 495
 By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves ; *
 And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone.

WISDOM, though richer than Peruvian mines,
 And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,—
 What is she but the means of happiness ? 500
 That unobtain'd, than Folly more a fool ;
 A melancholy fool, without her bells.
 Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives

* “ By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves
 A lunar prince, or famish'd beggar dies ;
 And Nature's fool,” &c.

The precious end which makes our wisdom wise.*
 Nature, in zeal for human amity, 505
 Denies or damps an undivided joy.
 Joy is an import ; joy is an exchange ;
 Joy flies monopolists ; it calls for two ;
 Rich fruit, heaven-planted, never pluck'd by one !
 Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give 510
 To social man true relish of himself.
 Full on ourselves descending in a line,
 Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight :
 Delight intense is taken by rebound ;
 Reverberated pleasures fire the breast. 515

CELESTIAL Happiness, whene'er she stoops
 To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
 And one alone, to make her sweet amends
 For absent heaven,—the bosom of a friend ;
 Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft, 520
 Each other's pillow to repose Divine.
 Beware the counterfeit : in Passion's flame
 Hearts melt ; but melt like ice, soon harder froze.
 True love strikes root in Reason, Passion's foe :
 Virtue alone entenders us for life ; 525
 I wrong her much—entenders us for ever :
 Of Friendship's fairest fruits, the fruit most fair
 Is Virtue kindling at a rival fire,
 And emulously rapid in her race.
 O the soft enmity ! endearing strife ! 530
 This carries friendship to her noon-tide point,
 And gives the rivet of eternity.

FROM Friendship, which outlives my former themes,
 Glorious survivor of old Time and Death !

* " Friendship the means, and friendship richly gives
 The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise."

This is the reading of the early impressions.—EDIT.

From Friendship, thus, that flower of heavenly seed, 535
 The wise extract earth's most Hyblæan bliss,
 Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy.*

BUT for whom blossoms this Elysian flower?
 Abroad they find, who cherish it at home.

LORENZO, pardon what my love extorts, 540
 An honest love, and not afraid to frown.

Though choice of follies fasten on the great,
 None clings more obstinate, than fancy fond
 That sacred Friendship is their easy prey :

Caught by the wafture of a golden lure, 545
 Or fascination of a high-born smile.

Their smiles the great and the coquette throw out
 For others' hearts, tenacious of their own ;
 And we no less of ours, when such the bait.

Ye Fortune's cofferers, ye powers of wealth,† 550
 Can gold gain friendship? Impudence of hope!

As well mere man an angel might beget.
 Love, and love only, is the loan for love.

LORENZO! pride repress ; nor hope to find 555
 A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.

All like the purchase ; few the price will pay ;
 And this makes friends such miracles below.

WHAT, if (since daring on so nice a theme)

I show thee Friendship delicate as dear, 560
 Of tender violations apt to die ?

Reserve will wound it, and Distrust destroy.
 Deliberate on all things with thy friend.

* The early impressions contain the following additional lines :—

“ For Joy, from Friendship born, abounds in smiles :
 O store it in the soul's most golden cell ! ”—EDIT.

† “ You do your *rent-rolls* most felonious wrong
 By taking our attachment to *yourselves*.”

These verses occur in all the early editions.—EDIT.

But since friends grow not thick on every bough,
 Nor every friend unrotten at the core ;
 First, on thy friend, deliberate with thyself ; 565
 Pause, ponder, sift ; not eager in the choice,
 Nor jealous of the chosen : fixing, fix ;
 Judge before friendship ; then confide till death.
 Well for thy friend ; but nobler far for thee ;
 How gallant danger for earth's highest prize ! 570
 A friend is worth all hazards we can run.
 " Poor is the friendless master of a world :
 A world in purchase for a friend is gain."

So sung he : (angels hear that angel sing !
 Angels from friendship gather half their joy :) 575
 So sung PHILANDER, as his friend went round
 In the rich *ichor*, in the generous blood
 Of BACCHUS, purple god of joyous wit,
 A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.
 He drank long health and virtue to his friend ; 580
 His friend, who warm'd him more, who more inspired.
 Friendship's the wine of life ; but friendship new
 (Not such was his) is neither strong nor pure.
 O for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,
 And elevating spirit of a friend, 585
 For twenty summers ripening by my side ;
 All feculence of falsehood long thrown down ;
 All social virtues rising in his soul,
 As crystal clear, and smiling as they rise !
 Here nectar flows ; it sparkles in our sight ; 590
 Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.
 High-flavour'd bliss for gods ! on earth how rare !
 On earth how lost !—PHILANDER is no more.

THINK'ST thou the theme intoxicates my song ?
 Am I too warm ?—Too warm I cannot be. 595
 I loved him much ; but now I love him more.

Like birds, whose beauties languish, half conceal'd,
 Till, mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
 Expanded shine with azure, green, and gold ;
 How blessings brighten as they take their flight ! 600
 His flight PHILANDER took ; his upward flight,
 If ever soul ascended. Had he dropp'd,
 (That eagle genius !) O, had he let fall
 One feather as he flew, I then had wrote
 What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear, 605
 Rivals scarce damn, and ZOILUS reprove.
 Yet what I can, I must : it were profane
 To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
 And cast in shadows his illustrious close.
 Strange, the theme most affecting, most sublime, 610
 Momentous most to man, should sleep unsung !
 And yet it sleeps, by genius unawaked,
 Paynim or Christian, to the blush of wit.
 Man's highest triumph, man's profoundest fall,
 The death-bed of the just, is yet undrawn 615
 By mortal hand ; it merits a Divine !
 Angels should paint it, angels ever there ;
 There, on a post of honour, and of joy.

DARE I presume, then ? But PHILANDER bids ;
 And glory tempts, and inclination calls. 620
 Yet am I struck ; as struck the soul beneath
 Aërial groves' impenetrable gloom ;
 Or in some mighty ruin's solemn shade ;
 Or gazing by pale lamps on *high-born dust*,
 In vaults ; thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings ! 625
 Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.
 It is religion to proceed : I pause—
 And enter, awed, the temple of my theme.
 Is it his death-bed ? No : it is his shrine :
 Behold him there just rising to a god. 630





The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
Is privileged beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.

Night II line 63.

THE chamber where the good man meets his fate
 Is privileged beyond the common walk
 Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven.
 Fly, ye profane! if not, draw near with awe,
 Receive the blessing, and adore the chance 635
 That threw in this Bethesda your disease :
 If unrestored by this, despair your cure.
 For here resistless Demonstration dwells ;
 A death-bed 's a detector of the heart.
 Here tired Dissimulation drops her mask 640
 Through Life's grimace, that mistress of the scene !
 Here real and apparent are the same.
 You see the man ; you see his hold on heaven,
 If sound his virtue, as PHILANDER'S sound :
 Heaven waits not the last moment ; owns her friends 645
 On this side death ; and points them out to men,
 A lecture, silent, but of sovereign power !
 To vice, confusion ; and to virtue, peace.

WHATEVER farce the boastful hero plays,
 Virtue alone has majesty in death ; 650
 And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.
 PHILANDER ! he severely frown'd on thee :
 "No warning given ! unceremonious fate !
 A sudden rush from life's meridian joys !
 A wrench from all we love, from all we are ! 655
 A restless bed of pain ! a plunge opaque
 Beyond conjecture, feeble Nature's dread !
 Strong Reason's shudder at the dark unknown !
 A sun extinguish'd, a just opening grave !
 And, O ! the last, last—what ? (can words express, 660
 Thought reach it ?) the last—silence of a friend !" *
 Where are those horrors, that amazement where,

* "And O ! the last, last—what ? (can words express,
 Thought reach ?) the last, last—silence of a friend !"

This hideous group of ills, which singly shock,
Demand from man?—I thought him MAN till now.

THROUGH Nature's wreck, through vanquish'd agonies, 665
(Like the stars struggling through this midnight gloom,)

What gleams of joy, what more than human peace!

Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm?

No, not in death the mortal to be found.

His conduct is a legacy for all; 670

Richer than Mammon's for his single heir.

His comforters he comforts; great in ruin,

With unreluctant grandeur, *gives*, not *yields*,

His soul sublime; and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene! 675

Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?

His God sustains him in his final hour!

His final hour brings glory to his God!

Man's glory Heaven vouchsafes to call her own.

We gaze, we weep mix'd tears of grief and joy! 680

Amazement strikes, devotion bursts to flame!

Christians adore, and infidels believe!

As some tall tower, or lofty mountain's brow,

Detains the sun, illustrious from its height;

While rising vapours and descending shades, 685

With damps, and darkness, drown the spacious vale;

Undamp'd by doubt, undarken'd by despair,

PHILANDER thus augustly rears his head,

At that black hour which general horror sheds

On the low level of the' inglorious throng: 690

Sweet Peace, and heavenly Hope, and humble Joy,

Divinely beam on his exalted soul,

Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies,

With incommunicable lustre bright.*

* "LORENZO! such the good man's *misery*!

How dim the ray, the lustre *now* low pale,

Of tarnish'd pageantries, of wither'd joy,
 Of beggar'd opulence, disgraced renown,
 Deep-darken'd empire, conquest overcome!
 Envy's bright butts, the pant of every breast!
 Envy, the greatest idiot of all crimes!
 Who pains herself for that would pain her more.
 Is there on earth what can absolve her? Yes:
 One radiant mark,—the death-bed of the just:
 That gaze of angels, that glad fame of heaven,
 That joy to joy celestial!—O my soul,
 Bless'd, ravish'd with this providential scene!
 Heaven plans her gracious stratagems for all.
 A scene so strong to strike, so sweet to charm,
 So great to raise, so heavenly to inspire,
 So solid to support fair Virtue's throne,
 What transport thine to see, what zeal to sing!
 Sing first, and send it through the souls of men;
 And sent through theirs with ease, if from our own.
 Nor hast thou sung in vain: PHILANDEA hears,
 LORENZO feels, thy song. LORENZO feels,
 Or he, and not PHILANDEA, is the dead.
 Life, take thy chance. But, O for such an end!
 There point, my wishes! centre there, and burn.

SMILE you, ye poor dependents on a pulse?
 A pulse your salient god! as that decrees,
 Pleasur'd or pain'd, exalted or forlorn!—
 Smile on, and prove your misery by your smiles.
 As smiles mistaken, what tear half so sad?
 Is it your pride? Would you be praised for this?
 Scorn'd be the man who thinks himself a brute,
 Affronts his species, and his God blasphemes!
 Vile laughter, at whom Pity cannot laugh;
 Scorn'd of all but what deserves his scorn;
 Who thinks it is ingenious to be mad,
 And is quite fool enough to be a wit!
 Wits spare not Heaven, O WILMINGTON!—nor thee.”

In all the quarto editions, these verses close the Second Night. They were omitted in the eighth edition, 8vo., in 1749.—EDIT.



NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT III.

NARCISSA.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF
PORTLAND.

Ignoscen. la quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes.—VIRG.



NIGHT III.

NARCISSA.

FROM dreams, where Thought in Fancy's maze runs mad,
 To reason, that heaven-lighted lamp in man,
 Once more I wake; and at the destined hour,
 Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,
 I keep my assignation with my woe. 5

O, LOST to virtue, lost to manly thought,
 Lost to the noble sallies of the soul,
 Who think it solitude to be alone!
 Communion sweet! communion large and high!
 Our reason, guardian angel, and our God! 10
 Then nearest these, when others most remote;
 And all, ere long, shall be remote but these.
 How dreadful *then* to meet them all alone,
 A stranger, unacknowledged, unapproved!
 Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast: 15
 To win thy wish, creation has no more.
 Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend—
 But friends how mortal! dangerous the desire.*

TAKE PHŒBUS to yourselves, ye basking bards!
 Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head, 20

* "*Alone indeed* the banish'd from himself,
 By day's intrusions loud, and rude assaults,
 A tide of tumult, and a storm of tongues."

In the early quarto editions these verses formed the commencement of the next paragraph, but were omitted in the octavo impression of 1749.

—EDIT.

And reeling through the wilderness of joy ;
 Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason's chain,
 And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.
 My fortune is unlike, unlike my song,
 Unlike the deity my song invokes. 25
 I to Day's soft-eyed sister pay my court,
 (ENDYMION's rival !) and her aid implore ;
 Now first implored in succour to the Muse.

THOU who didst lately borrow CYNTHIA'S form,*
 And modestly forego thine own ! O thou 30
 Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire !
 Say, why not CYNTHIA, patroness of song ?
 As thou her crescent, she thy character
 Assumes ; still more a goddess by the change.

ARE there demurring wits, who dare dispute 35
 This revolution in the world inspired ?
 Ye train Pierian ! to the lunar sphere,
 In silent hour, address your ardent call
 For aid immortal ; less her brother's right.
 She, with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads 40
 The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain ;
 A strain for gods, denied to mortal ear.
 Transmit it heard, thou silver queen of heaven !
 What title, or what name, endears thee most ?
 "CYNTHIA," "CYLLENE," "PHOEBE?"—or dost hear, 45
 With higher gust, "fair PORTLAND of the skies ?" †

* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

† This noble and beautiful lady was the daughter of Edward, the second Earl of Oxford, and had been married to the Duke of Portland about seven years before this extravagant dedication to her was written. Young, witty, and learned, Her Grace seems to have disapproved of the curious niche in which the poet had placed her,—between "the communion sweet" with "our reason, guardian angel, and our God," and the affecting reflections on the death of Narcissa ; for she would not

Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,
 More powerful than of old Circean charm?
 Come; but from heavenly banquets with thee bring
 The soul of song, and whisper in mine ear 50
 The theft divine; or in propitious dreams
 (For dreams are thine) transfuse it through the breast
 Of thy first votary—but not thy last,
 If, like thy namesake, thou art ever kind.

AND kind thou wilt be, kind on such a theme; 55
 A theme so like thee, a quite lunar theme,
 Soft, modest, melancholy, female, fair!
 A theme that rose all pale, and told my soul
 'T was night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;
 A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp 60
 Than that which smote me from PHILANDER'S tomb.
 NARCISSA follows, ere his tomb is closed.
 Woes cluster; rare are solitary woes;
 They love a train; they tread each other's heel:
 Her death invades his mournful right, and claims 65
 The grief that started from my lids for him;
 Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,
 Or shares it ere it falls. So frequent Death,
 Sorrow he more than causes, he confounds;
 For human sighs his rival strokes contend, 70
 And make distress distraction. O PHILANDER!
 What was thy fate? A double fate to me;
 Portent and pain! a menace and a blow!
 Like the black raven hovering o'er my peace,
 Not less a bird of omen than of prey. 75

allow more than the initial letter of her name to be used. Our author, however, contrived to fix her identity, among her contemporaries, by the note, in which they were informed that she was the lady who "borrowed Cynthia's form" "at the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade;" and in the first octavo edition, of 1749, he ventured to designate her more particularly in this form, P———D.—EDIT.

It call'd NARCISSA long before her hour ;
 It call'd her tender soul by break of bliss,
 From the first blossom, from the buds of joy ;
 Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves
 In this inclement clime of human life. 80

SWEET harmonist! and beautiful as sweet!
 And young as beautiful! and soft as young!
 And gay as soft! and innocent as gay!
 And happy (if aught happy here) as good!
 For fortune fond had built her nest on high. 85
 Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,
 Transfix'd by Fate, (who loves a lofty mark,)
 How from the summit of the grove she fell,
 And left it unharmonious! all its charm
 Extinguish'd in the wonders of her song! 90
 Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,
 Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain
 (O to forget her!) thrilling * through my heart!

SONG, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy! this group
 Of bright ideas, flowers of paradise, 95
 As yet unforfeit, in one blaze we bind,
 Kneel, and present it to the skies; as all
 We guess of heaven: and these were all her own.
 And she was mine; and I was—*was* most bless'd—
 Gay title of the deepest misery! 100
 As bodies grow more ponderous robb'd of life;
 Good *lost* weighs more in grief, than *gain'd* in joy.
 Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,
 Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;
 And if in death still lovely, lovelier there; 105
 Far lovelier! Pity swells the tide of love.
 And will not the severe excuse a sigh?

* The first quarto impression has *trilling*.—EDIT.

Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep ;
 Our tears *indulged* indeed deserve our shame.
 Ye that e'er lost an angel, pity me ! 110

Soon as the lustre languish'd in her eye,
 Dawning a dimmer day on human sight ;
 And on her cheek, the residence of Spring,
 Pale Omen sat, and scatter'd fears around
 On all that saw ; (and who would cease to gaze, 115
 That once had seen ?) with haste, parental haste,
 I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid north,
 Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
 And bore her nearer to the Sun : the Sun
 (As if the Sun could envy) check'd his beam, 120
 Denied his wonted succour ; nor with more
 Regret beheld her drooping than the bells
 Of lilies ! fairest lilies, not so fair !

QUEEN lilies ! and ye painted populace
 Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives ; 125
 In morn and evening dew your beauties bathe,
 And drink the sun ; which gives your cheeks to glow,
 And outblush (mine excepted) every fair !
 You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,
 Which often cropp'd your odours, incense meet 130
 To thought so pure !* Ye lovely fugitives !
 Coeval race with man ! *for* man you smile ;
 Why not smile *at* him too ? You share indeed
 His sudden pass, but not his constant pain.

So man is made, nought ministers delight 135
 But what his glowing passions can engage ;

* "To thought so pure ; her flowery state of mind
 In joy unfallen. Ye lovely fugitives !"

This is the reading of the early quarto editions, and of the octavo, 1749.

—EDIT.

And glowing passions bent on aught below
 Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale ;
 And anguish, after rapture, how severe !
Rapture? Bold man, who tempts the wrath Divine, 140
 By plucking fruit denied to mortal taste,
 While *here*, presuming on the rights of heaven !
 For transport dost thou call on every hour,
 LORENZO? At thy friend's expense be wise :
 Lean not on earth ; 't will pierce thee to the heart ; 145
 A broken reed at best ; but oft a spear ;
 On its sharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.

TURN, hopeless thought ! turn from her :—Thought, repell'd,
 Resenting rallies, and wakes every woe.
 Snatch'd ere thy prime, and in thy bridal hour ! 150
 And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, smiled !
 And when high-flavour'd thy fresh opening joys !
 And when blind man pronounced thy bliss complete !
 And on a foreign shore, where strangers wept !
 Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still, 155
 Strangers to kindness, wept ; their eyes let fall
 Inhuman tears ; strange tears, that trickled down
 From marble hearts ! obdurate tenderness !
 A tenderness that call'd them more severe,
 In spite of Nature's soft persuasion steel'd. 160
 While Nature melted, Superstition raved :
 That mourn'd the dead ; and this denied a grave.

THEIR sighs incensed ; sighs foreign to the will !
 Their will, the tiger-suck'd, out-raged the storm.
 For, O the cursed ungodliness of zeal ! 165
 While *sinful flesh* relented, spirit nursed
 In blind Infallibility's embrace,
 The *sainted spirit* petrified the breast ;
 Denied the charity of dust to spread
 O'er dust ! a charity their dogs enjoy. 170

What could I do ? what succour, what resource ?
 With pious sacrilege a grave I stole ;
 With impious piety that grave I wrong'd ;
 Short in my duty ; coward in my grief !
 More like her murderer than friend, I crept 175
 With soft-suspended step, and, muffled deep
 In midnight darkness, whisper'd my last sigh.
 I whisper'd what should echo through their realms ;
 Nor writ her name, whose tomb should pierce the skies.
 Presumptuous fear ! how durst I dread her foes 180
 While Nature's loudest dictates I obey'd ?
 (Pardon necessity, blest shade !) Of grief
 And indignation rival bursts I pour'd ;
 Half execration mingled with my prayer ;
 Kindled at man, while I his God adored ; 185
 Sore grudged the savage land her sacred dust ;
 Stamp'd the cursed soil ; and with humanity
 (Denied NARCISSA) wish'd them all a grave.

Glows my resentment into guilt ? What guilt
 Can equal violations of the dead ? 190
 The dead how sacred ! sacred is the dust
 Of this heaven-labour'd form, erect, Divine !
 This heaven-assumed majestic robe of earth
 HE deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
 With azure bright, and clothed the sun in gold. 195
 When every passion sleeps that can offend ;
 When strikes us every motive that can melt ;
 When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,
 That strongest curb on insult and ill-will ;
 Then, spleen to dust ? the dust of innocence ? 200
 An angel's dust ?—*This* Lucifer transcends :
 When he contended for the patriarch's bones,
 'T was not the strife of malice, but of pride ;
 The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

FAR less than this is shocking in a race 205
 Most wretched but from streams of mutual love ;
 And uncreated but for love Divine ;
 And, but for love Divine, this moment lost,
 By fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.
 Man hard of heart to man ! of horrid things 210
 Most horrid ! 'mid stupendous, highly strange !
 Yet oft his courtesies are smoother wrongs ;
 Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
 And contumelious his humanity :
 What then his vengeance ? Hear it not, ye stars ! 215
 And thou, pale moon, turn paler at the sound ;
 Man is to man the sorest, surest ill.
 A previous blast foretells the rising storm ;
 O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall ;
 Volcanoes bellow ere they disembogue ; 220
 Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour ;
 And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire :
 Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,
 And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
 Is this the flight of fancy ? Would it were ! 225
 Heaven's Sovereign saves all beings, but himself,
 That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

FIRED is the muse ? and let the muse be fired :
 Who not inflamed, when what he speaks he feels,
 And in the nerve most tender,—in his friends ? 230
 Shame to mankind ! PHILANDER had his foes :
 He felt the truths I sing, and I in him :
 But he, nor I, feel more. Past ills, NARCISSA,
 Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart !
 Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs ; 235
 Pangs numerous, as the numerous ills that swarm'd
 O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clustering there
 Thick as the locust on the land of Nile,
 Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.

- Reflect, (if not forgot my touching tale,) 240
 How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd!
 An aspice each; and all a hydra-woe.
 What strong Herculean virtue could suffice?—
 Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?
 This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews; 245
 And each tear mourns its own distinct distress;
 And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands
 Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.
 A grief like this proprietors excludes:
 Not friends alone such obsequies deplore; 250
 They make mankind the mourner; carry sighs
 Far as the fatal Fame can wing her way;
 And turn the gayest thought of gayest age
 Down their right channel, through the vale of death.
- THE vale of death! that hush'd Cimmerian vale, 255
 Where darkness, brooding o'er unfinish'd fates,
 With raven wing incumbent, waits the day
 (Dread day!) that interdicts all future change!
 That subterranean world, that land of ruin!
 Fit walk, LORENZO, for proud human thought! 260
 There let my thought expatiate; and explore
 Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments,
 Of all most wanted and most welcome here.
 For gay LORENZO's sake, and for thy own,
 My soul, "the fruits of dying friends survey; 265
 Expose the vain of life; weigh life and death;
 Give death his eulogy; thy fear subdue;
 And labour that first palm of noble minds,
 A manly scorn of terror from the tomb."
- THIS harvest reap from thy NARCISSA's grave. 270
 As poets feign'd from AJAX' streaming blood
 Arose, with grief inscribed, a mournful flower;
 Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound.

And first, of dying friends ; what fruit from these ?*
 It brings us more than triple aid ; an aid 275
 To chase our thoughtlessness, fear, pride, and guilt.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
 To damp our brainless ardours, and abate
 That glare of life which often blinds the wise.
 Our dying friends are pioneers, to smooth 280

Our rugged pass to death ; to break those bars
 Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws
 Cross our obstructed way ; and thus to make
 Welcome, as safe, our port from every storm.
 Each friend by Fate snatch'd from us is a plume 285

Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,
 Which makes us stoop from our aerial heights,
 And, damp'd with omen of our own decease,
 On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,
 Just skim earth's surface, ere we break it up, 290

O'er putrid pride† to scratch a little dust,
 And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends
 Are angels sent on errands full of love ;
 For us they languish, and for us they die :
 And shall they languish, shall they die, in vain ? 295

Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hovering shades,
 Which wait the revolution in our hearts ?
 Shall we disdain their silent, soft address ;
 Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer ?
 Senseless, as herds that graze their hallow'd graves, 300
 Tread under foot their agonies and groans,
 Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths ?

* " Rich fruit this tempest in our bosom throws,
 Few minds will gather in our life's serene."

These two lines occur in the early quarto impressions.—EDIT.

† This, and not "*earth*," is the reading of all the early impressions.—EDIT.

LORENZO! no; the thought of death indulge;
 Give it its wholesome empire! let it reign,
 That kind chastiser of thy soul in joy! * 305
 Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
 And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast:
 Auspicious era! golden days, begin!
 The thought of death shall, like a god, inspire.
 And why not think on death? Is life the theme 310
 Of every thought, and wish of every hour,
 And song of every joy? Surprising truth!
 The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.
 To wave the numerous ills that seize on life
 As their own property, their lawful prey; 315
 Ere man has measured half his weary stage,
 His luxuries have left him no reserve,
 No maiden relishes, unbroach'd delights;
 On cold-served repetitions he subsists,
 And in the tasteless present chews the past; 320
 Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.
 Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years
 Have disinherited his future hours,
 Which starve on orts,† and glean their former field.

Live ever here, LORENZO!—Shocking thought! 325
 So shocking, they who wish disown it too;
 Disown from shame what they from folly crave.
 Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?
 For what live ever here?—With labouring step
 To tread our former footsteps? pace the round 330
 Eternal? to climb life's worn, heavy wheel,‡

* The reading of the early quarto editions, and of the first in octavo, is "to joy;" which, from the connexion of the argument, seems to be correct.—EDIT.

† "Oughts," which differs little in signification, is the reading of the early quarto impressions, and of the first in octavo.—EDIT.

‡ "To climb daily life's worn wheel," is the more prosaic reading of the early impressions.—EDIT.

Which draws up nothing new? to beat, and beat
 The beaten track? to bid each wretched day
 The former mock? to surfeit on the same,
 And yawn our joys? or thank a misery 335
 For change, though sad? to see what we have seen?
 Hear, till unheard, the same old slabber'd* tale?
 To taste the tasted, and at each return
 Less tasteful? o'er our palates to decant
 Another vintage? strain a flatter year, 340
 Through loaded vessels, and a laxer tone?
 Crazy machines, to grind earth's wasted fruits!
 Ill-ground, and worse-concocted! load, not life!
 The *rational* foul kennels of excess!
 Still streaming thoroughfares of dull debauch! 345
 Trembling each gulp, lest Death should snatch the bowl.

SUCH of our fine ones is the wish refined!
 So would they have it. Elegant desire!
 Why not invite the bellowing stalls and wilds?
 But such examples might their riot awe. 350
 Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,
 (Though on bright thought they father all their flights,
 To what are they reduced? To love and hate
 The same vain world; to censure and espouse
 This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool 355
 Each moment of each day; to flatter bad
 Through dread of worse; to cling to this rude rock,
 Barren, to them, of good, and sharp with ills,
 And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,
 And infamous for wrecks of human hope,— 360
 Scared at the gloomy gulf, that yawns beneath.
 Such are their triumphs, such their pangs of joy!

'T is time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.
 This hugg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?

* In the early quarto impressions this is written *slobber'd*.—EDIT.

One only ; but that one, what all may reach,— 365
 VIRTUE. She (wonder-working goddess !) charms
 That rock to bloom ; and tames the painted shrew ;
 And, what will more surprise, LORENZO ! gives
 To life's sick, nauseous iteration, change ;
 And straightens Nature's circle to a line. 370
 Believest thou this, LORENZO ? Lend an ear,
 A patient ear, thou 'lt blush to disbelieve.

A LANGUID, leaden iteration reigns,
 And ever must, o'er those whose joys are joys
 Of sight, smell, taste ; the cuckoo-seasons sing 375
 The same dull note to such as nothing prize
 But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,
 To doting sense indulge. But nobler minds,
 Which relish fruits unripen'd by the sun,
 Make their days various ; various as the dyes 380
 On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.
 On minds of dove-like innocence possess'd,
 On lighten'd minds, that bask in Virtue's beams,
 Nothing hangs tedious ; nothing old revolves
 In that for which they long, for which they live. 385
 Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heavenly hope,
 Each rising morning sees still higher rise ;
 Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents,
 To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame ;
 While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel 390
 Rolling beneath their elevated aims,
 Makes their fair prospect fairer every hour ;
 Advancing virtue in a line to bliss ;
 Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire !
 And bliss, which Christian schemes alone insure ! 395

AND shall we then, for Virtue's sake, commence
 Apostates, and turn infidels for joy ?
 A truth it is few doubt, but fewer trust,

"He sins against this life who slights the next."
 What is this life? How few their favourite know! 400
 Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
 By passionately loving life we make
 Loved life unlovely, hugging her to death.
 We give to Time Eternity's regard ;
 And, dreaming, take our passage for our port. 405
 Life has no value as an end, but means ;
 An end deplorable, a means Divine !
 When 't is our all, 't is nothing ; worse than nought ;
 A nest of pains : when held as nothing, much.
 Like some fair humourists, life is most enjoy'd 410
 When courted least ; most worth, when disesteem'd :
 Then 't is the seat of comfort, rich in peace ;
 In prospect richer far ; important, awful !
 Not to be mention'd but with shouts of praise !
 Not to be thought on but with tides of joy ! 415
 The mighty basis of eternal bliss !

WHERE now the barren rock, the painted shrew ?
 Where now, LORENZO, life's eternal round ?
 Have I not made my triple promise good ?
 Vain is the world ; but only to the vain. 420
 To what compare we then this varying scene,
 Whose worth ambiguous rises, and declines,
 Waxes, and wanes ? (In all propitious, Night
 Assists me here.) Compare it to the Moon ;
 Dark in herself, and indigent ; but rich 425
 In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere.
 When gross guilt interposes, labouring Earth,
 O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy ;
 Her joys, at brightest, pallid to that font
 Of full effulgent glory, whence they flow. 430

NOR is that glory distant. O, LORENZO !
 A good man and an angel ! these between

How thin the barrier! What divides their fate?
 Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year:
 Or if an age, it is a moment still; 435
 A moment, or eternity's forgot.
 Then be what once they were who now are gods;
 Be what PHILANDER was, and claim the skies.
 Starts timid Nature at the gloomy pass?
 "The soft transition" call it; and be cheer'd: 440
 Such it is often, and why not to thee?
 To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise;
 And may itself procure what it presumes.
 Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduced;
 Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown. 445
 "Strange competition!"—True, LORENZO! strange!
 So little life can cast into the scale.

LIFE makes the soul dependent on the dust;
 Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
 Through chinks, styled organs, dim Life peeps at light; 450
 Death bursts the' involving cloud, and all is day;
 All eye, all ear, the disembodied power.
 Death has feign'd evils Nature shall not feel;
 Life, ills substantial, Wisdom cannot shun.
 Is not the mighty mind, that son of heaven, 455
 By tyrant Life dethroned, imprison'd, pain'd?
 By Death enlarged, ennobled, deified?
 Death but entombs the body; Life, the soul.

"Is Death then guiltless? How he marks his way
 With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine,— 460
 Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!
 With various lustres these light up the world,
 Which Death puts out, and darkens human race."
 I grant, LORENZO, this indictment just:
 The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror,— 465
 Death humbles these; more barbarous Life, the man.

Life is the triumph of our mouldering clay ;
 Death, of the spirit infinite, Divine.
 Death has no dread but what frail Life imparts ;
 Nor Life true joy but what kind Death improves. 470
 No bliss has Life to boast, till Death can give
 Far greater ; Life's a debtor to the grave,—
 Dark lattice, letting in eternal day.

LORENZO! blush at fondness for a life
 Which sends celestial souls on errands vile, 475
 To cater for the sense ; and serve at boards,
 Where every ranger of the wilds, perhaps
 Each reptile, justly claims our upper hand.
 Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,
 In all the dainties of a brute bemired! 480

LORENZO! blush at terror for a death
 Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,
 Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,
 And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,
 And eternize the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.* 485
 What need I more? O Death, the palm is thine.

THEN welcome, Death, thy dreaded harbingers,
 Age and Disease : Disease, though long my guest,—
 That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life ;
 Which, pluck'd a little more, will toll the bell 490
 That calls my few friends to my funeral ;
 Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,
 While Reason and Religion, better taught,
 Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb
 With wreath triumphant. Death is victory ; 495
 It binds in chains the raging ills of life :

* "O feast indeed luxurious! Earth, vile earth,
 In all the glories of a God array'd!"

Lust and Ambition, Wrath* and Avarice,
 Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
 That ill's corrosive, cares importunate,
 Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine. 500
 Our day of dissolution!—name it right;
 'Tis our great pay-day; 't is our harvest, rich
 And ripe. What, though the sickle, sometimes keen,
 Just scars us as we reap the golden grain?
 More than thy balm, O Gilead, heals the wound. 505
 Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep dismal groan,
 Are slender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays
 For mighty gain: the gain of each, a life!
 But O, the last the former so transcends,
 Life dies, compared; Life lives beyond the grave. 510

AND feel I, Death, no joy from thought of thee?
 Death, the great counsellor, who man inspires
 With every nobler thought, and fairer deed!
 Death, the deliverer, who rescues man!
 Death, the rewarder, who the rescued crowns! 515
 Death, that absolves my birth; a curse without it!
 Rich Death, that realizes all my cares,
 Toils, virtues, hopes; without it, a chimera!
 Death, of all pain the period, not of joy!
 Joy's source and subject still subsist unhurt,— 520
 One in my soul, and one in her great Sire;
 Though the four winds were warring for my dust.
 Yes, and from winds, and waves, and central night,
 Though prison'd there, my dust too I reclaim,
 (To dust when drop proud Nature's proudest spheres,) 525
 And live entire. Death is the crown of life:
 Were death denied, poor man would live in vain;
 Were death denied, to live would not be life;
 Were death denied, e'en fools would wish to die.

* Instead of *Wrath*, the quarto has *Rage*.—EDIT.

Death wounds to cure : we fall ; we rise ; we reign ! 530
Spring from our fetters ; fasten in the skies,
Where blooming Eden withers in our sight :
Death gives us more than was in Eden lost.
This King of Terrors is the Prince of Peace.
When shall I die to vanity, pain, death ? 535
When shall I die ?—when shall I live for ever ?

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT IV.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

CONTAINING OUR ONLY CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH, AND
PROPER SENTIMENTS OF HEART ON THAT INESTIMABLE
BLESSING.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO THE HONOURABLE MR. YORKE.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PREFACE.

As the occasion of this poem was real, not fictitious ; so the method pursued in it was rather imposed by what spontaneously arose in the author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed : which will appear very probable from the nature of it ; for it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is from long narrations to draw short morals. Here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.*

It is evident from the First Night, where three deaths are mentioned, that the plan is not yet completed ; for two only of those three have yet been sung. But, since this Fourth Night finishes one principal and important theme, naturally arising from all three, namely, the subduing our fear of death, it will be a proper pausing-place for the reader, and the writer too. And it is uncertain whether Providence, or inclination, will permit him to go any farther.

* All the early editions, both in quarto and octavo, retained this preface, as it stands here, at the commencement of the Fourth Night. But when the author collected together "the most excusable of all the pieces that he had formerly written," he prefixed this paragraph to the First Night, as a suitable preface to the entire poem, and the other two were omitted.—EDIT.

I say "inclination," for this thing was entered on purely as a refuge under uneasiness, when more proper studies wanted sufficient relish to detain the writer's attention to them. And that reason (thanks be to Heaven) ceasing, the writer has no farther occasion—I should rather say "excuse"—for giving-in so much to the amusements, amid the duties, of life.

NIGHT IV.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

A MUCH-INDEBTED Muse, O YORKE! intrudes.
 Amid the smiles of Fortune, and of youth,
 Thine ear is patient of a serious song.
 How deep implanted in the breast of man
 The Dread of Death! I sing its sovereign cure. 5

WHY start at Death? Where is he? Death arrived
 Is past; not come, or gone, he's never here.
 Ere hope, sensation fails; black-boding man
 Receives, not suffers, Death's tremendous blow.
 The knell, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave; 10
 The deep, damp vault, the darkness, and the worm:—
 These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
 The terrors of the living, not the dead.
 Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch,
 Man makes a Death which Nature never made; 15
 Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
 And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.

BUT were Death frightful, what has Age to fear?
 If prudent, Age should meet the friendly foe,
 And shelter in his hospitable gloom. 20
 I scarce can meet a monument but holds
 My younger: every date cries, "Come away."
 And what recalls me? Look the world around,
 And tell me what: the wisest cannot tell.
 Should any born of woman give his thought 25
 Full range on just dislike's unbounded field;—
 Of things, the vanity; of men, the flaws;

Flaws in the best ; the many, flaw all o'er ;
 As leopards, spotted ; or as Ethiops, dark ;
 Vivacious ill ; good dying immature ; 30
 (How immature, NARCISSA'S marble tells !)
 And at its death bequeathing endless pain ;—
 His heart, though bold, would sicken at the sight,
 And spend itself in sighs for future scenes.

BUT grant to Life (and just it is to grant 35
 To lucky Life) some perquisites of joy ;
 A time there is, when, like a thrice-told tale,*
 Long-rifled Life of sweet can yield no more,
 But from our comment on the comedy,
 Pleasing reflections on parts well-sustain'd, 40
 Or purposed emendations where we fail'd,
 Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,
 When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,
 Toss Fortune back her tinsel, and her plume,
 And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene. 45

WITH me, that time is come ! my world is dead ;
 A new world rises, and new manners reign :
 Foreign comedians, a spruce band, arrive,
 To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.
 What a pert race starts up ! The strangers gaze, 50
 And I at them : my neighbour is unknown ;
 Nor that the worst : ah me ! the dire effect
 Of loitering here, of Death defrauded long !
 Of old so gracious, (and let that suffice,)
 My very master knows me not.— 55

SHALL I dare say, peculiar is the fate ?
 I've been so long remember'd, I'm forgot.

* " And that of no great moment or delight."

This line occurs in the early quarto editions.—EDIT.

- An object ever pressing dims the sight,
 And hides behind its ardour to be seen.
 When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint, 60
 They drink it as the nectar of the great ;
 And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow !
 Refusal ! canst thou wear a smoother form ?
- INDULGE me, nor conceive I drop my theme :
 Who cheapens life, abates the fear of death. 65
 Twice-told the period spent on stubborn Troy,
 Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege ;
 Ambition's ill-judged effort to be rich.
 Alas ! Ambition makes my little less ;
 Embittering the possess'd. Why wish for more ? 70
 Wishing of all employments is the worst ;
 Philosophy's reverse, and health's decay :
 Were I as plump as stall'd Theology,
 Wishing would waste me to this shade again.
 Were I as wealthy as a South-Sea dream, 75
 Wishing is an expedient to be poor.
 Wishing, that constant hectic of a fool,
 Caught at a court ; purged off by purer air,
 And simpler diet ; gifts of rural life !
- BLESS'D be the Hand Divine, which gently laid 80
 My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.
 The world's a stately bark, on dangerous seas,
 With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril.
 Here, on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
 I hear the tumult of the distant throng, 85
 As that of seas remote, or dying storms ;
 And meditate on scenes more silent still ;
 Pursue my theme, and fight the fear of Death.
 Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,
 Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff, 90
 Eager Ambition's fiery chase I see ;

I see the circling hunt, of noisy men,
 Burst Law's enclosure, leap the mounds of Right,
 Pursuing, and pursued, each other's prey ;
 As wolves, for rapine ; as the fox, for wiles ; 95
 Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

WHY all this toil for triumphs of an hour ?
 What, though we wade in wealth, or soar in fame ?
 Earth's highest station ends in, " Here he lies :"
 And " Dust to dust " concludes her noblest song. 100
 If this song lives, posterity shall know
 One, though in Britain Lorn, with courtiers bred,
 Who thought e'en gold might come a day too late ;
 Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
 For future vacancies in Church or State ; 105
 Some avocation deeming it—to die ;
 Unbit by rage canine of dying rich ;
 Guilt's blunder, and the loudest laugh of hell !

O MY coëvals ! remnants of yourselves !
 Poor human ruins, tottering o'er the grave ! 110
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
 Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil ?
 Shall our pale, wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,
 Trembling at once with eagerness and age, 115
 With avarice and convulsions grasping hard ?
 Grasping at air ! for what has earth beside ?
 Man wants but little ; nor that little long :*

* Upwards of twenty years after this verse was written, Goldsmith seems unconsciously to have adopted it, with a slight variation, in his simple ballad of " Edwin and Angelina," which first appeared in his " Vicar of Wakefield :"—

" Man wants but little here below ;
 Nor wants that little long."—EDIT.

How soon must he resign his very dust,
Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour ! 120
Years unexperienced rush on numerous ills ;
And soon as man, expert from time, has found
The key of Life, it opes the gates of Death.

WHEN in this vale of years I backward look,
And miss such numbers, numbers too of such, 125
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,
And stricter on their guard, and fitter far
To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe
I still survive. And am I fond of life,

Who scarce can think it possible I live ? 130
Alive by miracle ; or, what is next,
Alive by MEAD ! if I am still alive,
Who long have buried what gives life to live,—
Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.

Life's lee is not more shallow than impure 135
And vapid : Sense and Reason show the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O THOU great Arbiter of Life and Death !
Nature's immortal, immaterial Sun !
Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth 140

From darkness, teeming darkness, where I lay
The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath
The dust I tread on ; high to bear my brow,
To drink the spirit of the golden day,
And triumph in existence ; and couldst know 145

No motive but my bliss ; and hast ordain'd
A rise in blessing !—with the patriarch's joy,
Thy call I follow to the land unknown ;
I trust in Thee, and know in whom I trust :
Or life, or death, is equal ; neither weighs ; 150
All weight in this—O let me live to Thee !

THOUGH Nature's terrors thus may be repress'd,
 Still frowns grim Death ; guilt points the tyrant's spear.
 And whence all human guilt ? From Death forgot.
 Ah me ! too long I set at nought the swarm 155
 Of friendly warnings which around me flew ;
 And smiled unsmitten. Small my cause to smile !
 Death's admonitions, like shafts upwards shot,
 More dreadful by delay,—the longer ere
 They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound. 160
 O think how deep, LORENZO ! here it stings :
 Who can appease its anguish ? How it burns !
 What hand the barb'd, envenom'd thought can draw ?
 What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,
 And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb ? 165

WITH joy,—with grief, that healing hand I see ;
 Ah ! too conspicuous ! it is fix'd on high.
On high ?—What means my frenzy ? I blaspheme !
 Alas ! how low ! how far beneath the skies !
 The skies it form'd ; and now it bleeds for me— 170
 But bleeds the balm I want,—yet still it bleeds ;
 Draw the dire steel—ah no !—the dreadful blessing
 What heart or can sustain, or dares forego ?
 There hangs all human hope ; that nail supports
 The falling universe : that gone, we drop ; 175
 Horror receives us, and the dismal wish
 Creation had been smother'd in her birth—
 Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust ;
 When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne !
 In heaven itself can such indulgence dwell ? 180
 O what a groan was there ! a groan not His.
 He seized our dreadful right ; the load sustain'd ;
 And heaved the mountain from a guilty world.
 A thousand worlds, so bought, were bought too dear :
 Sensations new in angels' bosoms rise, 185
 Suspend their song, and make a pause in bliss.

O FOR their song, to reach my lofty theme !
 Inspire me, Night ! with all thy tuneful spheres ;*
 Whilst I with seraphs share seraphic themes,
 And show to men the dignity of man ; 190
 Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.
 Shall Pagan pages glow celestial flame,
 And Christian languish ? On our hearts, not heads,
 Falls the foul infamy. My heart, awake !
 What can awake thee, unawaked by this, 195
 " Expended Deity on human weal ?"
 Feel the great truths, which burst the tenfold night
 Of Heathen error, with a golden flood
 Of endless day. To feel, is to be fired ;
 And to believe, LORENZO, is to feel. 200

THOU most indulgent, most tremendous Power !
 Still more tremendous, for Thy wondrous love,
 That arms, with awe more awful, Thy commands ;
 And foul transgression dipp'd in sevenfold guilt :
 How our hearts tremble at Thy love immense ! 205
 In love immense, inviolably just !
 Thou, rather than Thy justice should be stain'd,
 Didst stain the cross ; and work of wonders far
 The greatest, that Thy Dearest far might bleed.

BOLD thought ! shall I dare speak it, or repress ? 210
 Should man more execrate or boast the guilt
 Which roused such vengeance, which such love inflamed ?
 O'er guilt (how mountainous !) with outstretch'd arms,
 Stern Justice, and soft-smiling Love, embrace,
 Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne, 215
 When seem'd its majesty to need support,
 Or that, or man, inevitably lost :
 What but the fathomless of thought Divine

* " Much rather THOU, who dost those spheres inspire !"
 This line is found in all the quarto impressions.—EDIT.

- Could labour such expedient from despair,
 And rescue both? Both rescue! both exalt! 220
 O how are both exalted by the deed!
 The wondrous deed! or shall I call it more?
 A wonder in Omnipotence itself!
 A mystery no less to gods than men!
- NOT thus our infidels the' Eternal draw,— 225
 A God all o'er, consummate, absolute,
 Full-orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:
 They set at odds Heaven's jarring attributes,
 And with one excellence another wound;
 Maim Heaven's perfection, break its equal beams, 230
 Bid Mercy triumph over—God himself,
 Undeified by their opprobrious praise:
 A God all mercy, is a God unjust.
- YE brainless wits, ye baptized infidels!
 Ye worse for mending, wash'd to fouler stains! 235
 The ransom was paid down; the fund of Heaven,
 Heaven's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,
 Amazing and amazed, pour'd forth the price,
 All price beyond: though curious to compute,
 Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum: 240
 Its value vast, ungrasp'd by minds create,
 For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.
- AND was the ransom paid? It was: and paid
 (What can exalt the bounty more?) for you.
 The Sun beheld it—No, the shocking scene 245
 Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;
 Not such as this, not such as Nature makes;
 A midnight Nature shudder'd to behold;
 A midnight new! a dread eclipse, (without
 Opposing spheres,) from her Creator's frown! 250
 Sun! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain? or start

At that enormous load of human guilt
 Which bow'd His blessed head, o'erwhelm'd His cross,
 Made groan the centre, burst earth's marble womb
 With pangs, strange pangs! deliver'd of her dead? 255
 Hell howl'd; and Heaven that hour let fall a tear;
 Heaven wept, that men might smile! Heaven bled, that
 man
 Might never die!—

AND is devotion virtue? 'T is compell'd:
 What heart of stone but glows at thoughts like these? 260
 Such contemplations mount us, and should mount
 The mind still higher; nor ever glance on man
 Unraptured, uninflamed.—Where roll my thoughts
 To rest from wonders? Other wonders rise;
 And strike where'er they roll: my soul is caught; 265
 Heaven's sovereign blessings, clustering from the Cross,
 Rush on her in a throng, and close her round,
 The prisoner of amaze! In His bless'd life
 I see the path, and in His death the price,
 And in His great ascent the proof supreme, 270
 Of immortality.—And did He rise?
 Hear, O ye nations! Hear it, O ye dead!
 He rose! He rose! He burst the bars of death.
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates,
 And give the King of Glory to come in! 275
 Who is the King of glory? He who left
 His throne of glory for the pang of death.
 Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates,
 And give the King of glory to come in!
 Who is the King of Glory? He who slew 280
 The ravenous foe that gorged all human race!
 The King of Glory, He whose glory fill'd
 Heaven with amazement at His love to man;
 And with Divine complacency beheld
 Powers most illumined wilder'd in the theme! 285

THE theme, the joy, how then shall man sustain?
 O the burst gates, crush'd sting, demolish'd throne,
 Last gasp, of vanquish'd Death! Shout, Earth and Heaven,
 This sum of good to man! whose nature then
 Took wing, and mounted with Him from the tomb. 290
 Then, then I rose; then first humanity
 Triumphant pass'd the crystal ports of light,
 (Stupendous guest!) and seized eternal youth,
 Seized in our name. E'er since, 't is blasphemous
 To call man mortal. Man's mortality 295
 Was then transferr'd to Death; and Heaven's duration
 Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,
 This child of dust.—Man, all immortal, hail!
 Hail, Heaven, all lavish of strange gifts to man!
 Thine all the glory; man's the boundless bliss. 300

WHERE am I rapt by this triumphant theme,
 On Christian joy's exulting wing, above
 The' Aonian mount?—Alas, small cause for joy!
 What, if to pain immortal? if extent
 Of being, to preclude a close of woe? 305
 Where, then, my boast of immortality?
 I boast it still, though cover'd o'er with guilt:
 For guilt, not innocence, His life He pour'd;
 'T is guilt alone can justify His death;
 Nor that, unless His death can justify 310
 Relenting guilt in Heaven's indulgent sight.
 If, sick of folly, I relent, He writes
 My name in heaven with that inverted spear
 (A spear deep dipp'd in blood!) which pierced His side,
 And open'd there a font for all mankind 315
 Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink and live:
 This, only this, subdues the fear of death.

AND what is this?—Survey the wondrous cure:
 And at each step let higher wonder rise!

" Pardon for infinite offence ; and pardon 320
 Through means that speak its value infinite !
 A pardon bought with blood ; with blood Divine !
 With blood Divine of Him I made my foe !
 Persisted to provoke ! though woo'd and awed,
 Bless'd and chastised, a flagrant rebel still ! 325
 A rebel, 'midst the thunders of His throne !
 Nor I alone ; a rebel universe !
 My species up in arms ; not one exempt !
 Yet for the foulest of the foul He dies :
 Most joy'd, for the redeem'd from deepest guilt ! 330
 As if our race were held of highest rank ;
 And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man ! "

BOUND, every heart ! and every bosom, burn !
 O what a scale of miracles is here !
 Its lowest round high-planted on the skies ; 335
 Its towering summit lost beyond the thought
 Of man or angel ! O that I could climb
 The wonderful ascent, with equal praise !
 Praise ! flow for ever, (if astonishment
 Will give thee leave,) my praise ! for ever flow ; 340
 Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heaven
 More fragrant than Arabia sacrificed,
 And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

So dear, so due to Heaven, shall Praise descend,
 With her soft plume (from plausible angel's wing 345
 First pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,
 Thus diving in the pockets of the great ?
 Is Praise the perquisite of every paw,
 Though black as hell, that grapples well for gold ?
 O love of gold ! thou meanest of amours ! 350
 Shall Praise her odours waste on VIRTUE's dead.
 Embalm the base, perfume the stench of guilt.
 Earn dirty bread by washing Ethiops fair,

Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,
 A scavenger in scenes where vacant posts, 355
 Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect
 Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones
 Return, apostate Praise! thou vagabond!
 Thou prostitute! to thy first love return;
 Thy first, thy greatest, once unrivall'd theme. 360

THERE flow redundant; like Meander, flow
 Back to thy fountain; to that parent Power
 Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,
 The soul to be. Men homage pay to men;
 Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow 365
 In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
 Of guilt to guilt; and turn their backs on Thee,
 Great Sire! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing;
 To prostrate angels an amazing scene!
 O the presumption of man's awe for man!— 370
 Man's Author, End, Restorer, Law, and Judge!
 Thine, all; Day thine, and thine this gloom of Night,
 With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds.
 What night eternal, but a frown from Thee?
 What heaven's meridian glory, but Thy smile? 375
 And shall not praise be Thine? not human praise,
 While Heaven's high host on hallelujahs live?

O MAY I breathe no longer than I breathe
 My soul in praise to Him who gave my soul,
 And all her infinite of prospect fair, 380
 Cut through the shades of hell, great Love, by thee,
 O most adorable, most unadored!
 Where shall that praise begin which ne'er should end?
 Where'er I turn, what claim on all applause!
 How is Night's sable mantle labour'd o'er! 385
 How richly wrought with attributes Divine!
 What wisdom shines, what love! This midnight pomp,

This gorgeous arch with golden worlds inlaid !
 Built with Divine ambition ! nought to Thee ;
 For others this profusion. Thou, apart, 390
 Above, beyond ! O tell me, mighty Mind,
 Where art Thou ? Shall I dive into the deep ?
 Call to the sun, or ask the roaring winds,
 For their Creator ? Shall I question loud
 The thunder, if in that the' Almighty dwells ? 395
 Or holds HE furious storms in straighten'd * reins,
 And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car ?

WHAT mean these questions ?—Trembling I retract ;
 My prostrate soul adores the present God.
 Praise I a distant Deity ? He tunes 400
 My voice (if tuned) ; the nerve that writes, sustains :
 Wrapt in His being, I resound His praise :
 But though past all diffused, without a shore,
 His essence ; local is His throne (as meet)
 To gather the dispersed ; (as standards call 405
 The listed from afar ;) to fix a point,
 A central point, collective of His sons,
 Since finite every nature but His own.

THE nameless He, whose nod is Nature's birth ;
 And Nature's shield, the shadow of His hand ; 410
 Her dissolution, His suspended smile !
 The great First-Last ! pavilion'd high He sits
 In darkness, from excessive splendour born,
 By gods unseen, unless through lustre lost.
 His glory, to created glory, bright 415

* The early editions have *straightened*, in the signification of "stretched ;" for every one who is accustomed to any form of chariot-
 eering knows, that when his reins are *at full stretch*, and pulled *quite
 straight*, he has the greatest power over the steeds which he is trying to
 guide or restrain.—EDIT.

As that to central horrors ; He looks down
On all that soars, and spans immensity.

THOUGH Night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,
Boundless Creation! what art thou? A beam,
A mere effluvium of His majesty. 420
And shall an atom of this atom-world
Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of Heaven?
Down to the centre should I send my thought
Through beds of glittering ore, and glowing gems,
Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay ; 425
Goes out in darkness. If, on towering wing,
I send it through the boundless vault of stars ;
The stars, though rich, what dross their gold to Thee,
Great, good, wise, wonderful, eternal King !
If to those *conscious stars* Thy throne around, 430
Praise ever pouring, and imbibing bliss,
And ask their strain ; they want it, more they want,
Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,
Languid their energy, their ardour cold :
Indebted still, their highest rapture burns, 435
Short of its mark, defective, though Divine.

STILL more,—this theme is man's, and man's alone ;
Their vast appointments reach it not : they see
On earth a bounty not indulged on high,
And downward look for Heaven's superior praise ! 440
First-born of ether, high in fields of light,
View man, to see the glory of your God !
Could angels envy, they had envied here ;
And some did envy : and the rest, though gods,
Yet still gods unredeem'd, (there triumphs man, 445
Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies,)
They less would feel, though more adorn, my theme.
They sung Creation (for in that they shared) ;
How rose in melody that child of love !

Creation's great superior, man! is thine; 450
 Thine is *Redemption*. They just gave the key;
 'T is thine to raise and eternize the song,
 Though human, yet Divine; for should not this
 Raise man o'er man, and kindle seraphs here?
 Redemption! 't was creation more sublime; 455
 Redemption! 't was the labour of the skies;
 Far more than labour,—it was Death in heaven.
 A truth so strange, 't were bold to think it true,
 If not far bolder still to disbelieve. 459

HERE pause, and ponder. Was there death in heaven?
 What then on earth? on earth, which struck the blow?
 Who struck it? Who?—O how is man enlarged,
 Seen through this medium! How the pigmy towers!
 How counterpoised his origin from dust!
 How counterpoised to dust his sad return! 465
 How voided his vast distance from the skies!
 How near he presses on the seraph's wing!
 Which is the seraph? which the born of clay?
 How this demonstrates, through the thickest cloud
 Of guilt and clay condensed, the son of Heaven; 470
 The double son; the made, and the re-made!
 And shall Heaven's double property be lost?
 Man's double madness only can destroy.
 To man the bleeding Cross has promised all;
 The bleeding Cross has sworn eternal grace; 475
 Who gave His life, what grace shall He deny?
 O ye, who from this Rock of Ages leap,
 Disdainful,* plunging headlong in the deep!
 What cordial joy, what consolation strong,
 Whatever winds arise, or billows roll, 480
 Our interest in the Master of the storm!

* This is the reading of the early quarto and octavo impressions. In the collected Works, (1762.) it is changed into *apostates*.—EDRR.

Cling there, and in wreck'd Nature's ruins smile,
While vile apostates tremble in a calm.

"MAN, know thyself!" All wisdom centres there ;
To none man seems ignoble but to man. 485

Angels that grandeur men o'erlook admire ;
How long shall human nature be their book,
Degenerate mortal, and unread by thee ?
The beam dim Reason sheds shows wonders there ;
What high contents, illustrious faculties ! 490
But the grand comment, which displays at full
Our human height, scarce sever'd from Divine,
By Heaven composed, was publish'd on the Cross.

Who looks on that, and sees not in himself
An awful stranger, a terrestrial god ? 495

A glorious partner with the Deity
In that high attribute, immortal life ?
If a God bleeds, He bleeds not for a worm :
I gaze, and, as I gaze, my mounting soul
Catches strange fire, Eternity ! at thee ; 500
And drops the world,—or rather, more enjoys.

How changed the face of Nature ! how improved !
What seem'd a chaos, shines a glorious world ;
Or what a world, an Eden ; heighten'd all !
It is another scene, another self ; 505

And still another, as time rolls along ;
And that a self far more illustrious still.
Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades
Unpierced by bold Conjecture's keenest ray,
What evolutions of surprising fate ! 510

How Nature opens, and receives my soul
In boundless walks of raptur'd thought ! where gods
Encounter and embrace me ! What new births
Of strange adventure, foreign to the sun ;
Where what now charms, perhaps whate'er exists, 515
Old Time and fair Creation, are forgot !

Is this extravagant? Of man we form
 Extravagant conception, to be just :
 Conception unconfined wants wings to reach him :
 Beyond its reach the Godhead only more. 520
 He, the great Father, kindled at one flame
 The world of rationals ; one spirit pour'd
 From Spirit's awful fountain ; pour'd Himself
 Through all their souls ; but not in equal stream ;
 Profuse or frugal of the' inspiring God, 525
 As His wise plan demanded ; and, when past
 Their various trials in their various spheres,
 If they continue rational, as made,
 Resorbs them all into Himself again ;
 His throne their centre, and His smile their crown. 530

WHY doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,
 Though yet unsung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold ?
 Angels are men of a superior kind ;
 Angels are men in lighter habit clad,
 High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight ; 535
 And men are angels loaded for an hour,
 Who wade this miry vale, and climb, with pain
 And slippery step, the bottom of the steep.
 Angels their failings, mortals have their praise ;
 While here, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd, 540
 And summon'd to the glorious standard soon,
 Which flames eternal crimson through the skies.
 Nor are our brothers thoughtless of their kin,
 Yet absent ; but not absent from their love.

MICHAEL has fought our battles ; RAPHAEL sung 545
 Our triumphs ; GABRIEL on our errands flown,
 Sent by the SOVEREIGN : and are these, O man,
 Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn
 The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute ?

RELIGION's all. Descending from the skies 550
 To wretched man, the goddess in her left

Holds out this world, and in her right the next.
 Religion! the sole voucher man is man ;
 Supporter sole of man above himself ;
 E'en in this night of frailty, change, and death, 555
 She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.
 Religion! Providence! an after-state!
 Here is firm footing; here is solid rock ;
 This can support us : all is sea besides ;
 Sinks under us ; bestorms, and then devours. 560
 His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
 And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick, polluted air,
 Darkness, and stench, and suffocating damps,
 And dungeon-horrors, by kind Fate discharged, 565
 Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
 Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise,
 His heart exults, his spirits cast their load ;
 As if new-born, he triumphs in the change ;
 So joys the soul, when, from inglorious aims, 570
 And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth
 Of ties terrestrial, set at large, she mounts
 To Reason's region, her own element,
 Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

RELIGION! thou the soul of happiness, 575
 And, groaning Calvary, of thee! There shine
 The noblest truths ; there strongest motives sting ;
 There sacred violence assaults the soul ;
 There nothing but compulsion is forborne.
 Can love allure us, or can terror awe? 580
 He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun ;
 He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.
 If in His love so terrible, what then
 His wrath inflamed, His tenderness on fire ?
 Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires ! 585

Can prayer, can praise avert it?—Thou, my all!
 My theme, my inspiration, and my crown!
 My strength in age, my rise in low estate!
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth, my world!
 My light in darkness, and my life in death! 590
 My boast through time, bliss through eternity!
 Eternity, too short to speak Thy praise,*
 Or fathom Thy profound of love to man!
 To man of men the meanest, e'en to me;
 My Sacrifice, my God!—what things are these? 595

WHAT then art THOU? By what name shall I call Thee?
 Knew I the name devout archangels use,
 Devout archangels should the name enjoy,
 By me unrivall'd: thousands more sublime,
 None half so dear as that which, though unspoke, 600
 Still glows at heart. O how Omnipotence
 Is lost in Love! Thou great PHILANTHROPIST!
 Father of angels, but the friend of man!
 Like JACOB, fondest of the younger born!
 Thou, who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand 605
 From out the flames, and quench it in Thy blood!
 How art Thou pleased, by bounty to distress,
 To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
 Too big for birth! to favour, and confound!
 To challenge and to distance all return! 610
 Of lavish love stupendous heights to soar,
 And leave Praise panting in the distant vale!
 Thy right too great defrauds Thee of Thy due;
 And sacrilegious our sublimest song.
 But since the naked will obtains Thy smile, 615
 Beneath this monument of praise unpaid,

* Young seems to have borrowed this phrase from the last verse of his friend Addison's "Hymn on Providence:"—

"For, O! eternity's too short
 To utter all Thy praise."—EDMT.

And future life symphonious to my strain,
 (That noblest hymn to Heaven,) for ever lie
 Entomb'd my Fear of Death! and every fear,
 The dread of every evil, but Thy frown. 620

WHOM see I yonder so demurely smile?
 Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.
 Ye Quietists, in homage to the skies!
 Serene, of soft address! who mildly make
 An unobtrusive tender of your hearts, 625

Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,
 But for the blessing wrestle not with Heaven!
 Think you my song too turbulent, too warm?
 Are passions, then, the Pagans of the soul?
 Reason alone baptized? alone ordain'd 630

To touch things sacred? O for warmer still!
 Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my powers:
 O for an humbler heart, and prouder song!
 THOU, my much-injured theme! with that soft eye
 Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look 635
 Compassion to the coldness of my breast,
 And pardon to the winter in my strain.

O YE cold-hearted, frozen formalists!
 On such a theme, 't is impious to be calm;
 Passion is reason, transport temper, here. 640

Shall Heaven, which gave us ardour, and has shown
 Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
 What smooth emollients in theology
 Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors preach,
 That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise? 645

Rise odours sweet from incense uninflamed?
 Devotion, when lukewarm, is undevout;
 But when it glows, its heat is struck to heaven;
 To human hearts her golden harps are strung;
 High heaven's orchestra chants Amen to man. 650

HEAR I, or dream I hear, their distant strain,
 Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of heaven,
 Soft-wafted on celestial Pity's plume,
 Through the vast spaces of the universe,
 To cheer me in this melancholy gloom? 655
 O when will Death, (now stingsless,) like a friend,
 Admit me of their choir? O when will Death
 This mouldering, old partition-wall throw down?
 Give beings, one in nature, one abode?
 O Death Divine! that giv'st us to the skies! 660
 Great Future! glorious Patron of the Past
 And Present! when shall I thy shrine adore?
 From Nature's continent, immensely wide,
 Immensely bless'd, this little isle of life,
 This dark, incarcerating colony, 665
 Divides us. Happy day that breaks our chain!
 That manumits; that calls from exile home;
 That leads to Nature's great metropolis,
 And re-admits us, through the guardian hand
 Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne, 670
 Who hears our Advocate, and, through his wounds
 Beholding man, allows that tender name.
 'T is this makes Christian triumph a command;
 'T is this makes joy a duty to the wise:
 'T is impious in a good man to be sad. 675

SEEST thou, LORENZO, where hangs all our hope?
 Touch'd by the Cross, we live, or more than die;
 That touch which touch'd not angels; more Divine
 Than that which touch'd confusion into form,
 And darkness into glory: partial touch! 680
 Ineffably pre-eminent regard!
 Sacred to man, and sovereign through the whole
 Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs
 From heaven through all duration, and supports,
 In one illustrious and amazing plan, 685

Thy welfare, Nature, and thy God's renown ;
 That touch, with charm celestial, heals the soul
 Diseased, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
 Turns earth to heaven, to heavenly thrones transforms
 The ghastly ruins of the mouldering tomb. 690

Dost ask me when? When HE who died returns!
 Returns, how changed! Where then the Man of Woe?
 In glory's terrors all the Godhead burns ;
 And all His courts, exhausted by the tide
 Of deities triumphant in His train, 695
 Leave a stupendous solitude in heaven ;
 Replenish'd soon, replenish'd with increase
 Of pomp and multitude ; a radiant band
 Of angels new, of angels from the tomb.

Is this by Fancy thrown remote? and rise 700
 Dark doubts between the promise and event?
 I send thee not to volumes for thy cure ;
 Read Nature ; Nature is a friend to truth ;
 Nature is Christian ; preaches to mankind,
 And bids dead matter aid us in our creed. 705

Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight?
 The' illustrious stranger, passing, terror sheds
 On gazing nations, from his fiery train
 Of length enormous ; takes his ample round
 Through depths of ether ; coasts unnumber'd worlds 710
 Of more than solar glory ; doubles wide
 Heaven's mighty cape ; and then revisits earth,
 From the long travel of a thousand years.
 Thus, at the destined period, shall return
 HE, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze ; 715
 And, with Him, all our triumph o'er the tomb.

NATURE is dumb on this important point,
 Or Hope precarious in low whisper breathes :
 Faith speaks aloud, distinct ; e'en adders hear,

But turn, and dart into the dark again. 720
 Faith builds a bridge across the gulf of Death,
 To break the shock blind Nature cannot shun,
 And lands Thought smoothly on the farther shore.
 Death's terror is the mountain Faith removes,
 That mountain-barrier between man and peace. 725
 'T is Faith disarms Destruction, and absolves
 From every clamorous charge the guiltless tomb.

WHY disbelieve, LORENZO ?—" Reason bids,
 All-sacred Reason."—Hold her sacred still ;
 Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame. 730
 All-sacred Reason ! source and soul of all
 Demanding praise, on earth, or earth above !
 My heart is thine : deep in its inmost folds
 Live thou with life ; live dearer of the two.
 Wear I the blessed Cross, by Fortune stamp'd 735
 On passive Nature before Thought was born ?
 My birth's blind bigot ! fired with local zeal !
 No ; Reason re-baptized me when adult,
 Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale ;
 My heart became the convert of my head, 740
 And made that choice which once was but my fate.
 " On argument alone my faith is built :"
 Reason pursued is Faith ; and, unpursued,
 Where proof invites, 't is Reason then no more ;
 And such our proof, that or our Faith is right, 745
 Or Reason lies, and Heaven design'd it wrong.
 Absolve we this ? what then is blasphemy ?

FOND as we are, and justly fond, of Faith,
 Reason, we grant, demands our first regard ;
 The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear. 750
 Reason the root, fair Faith is but the flower :
 The fading flower shall die, but Reason lives
 Immortal as her Father in the skies.

When Faith is virtue, Reason makes it so.
 Wrong not the Christian : think not Reason yours ; 755
 'T is Reason our great Master holds so dear ;
 'T is Reason's injured rights His wrath resents ;
 'T is Reason's voice obey'd His glories crown :
 To give lost Reason life, He pour'd His own.
 Believe, and show the reason of a man ; 760
 Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God ;
 Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.
 Through Reason's wounds alone thy Faith can die ;
 Which, dying, tenfold terror gives to Death,
 And dips in venom his twice-mortal sting. 765

LEARN hence what honours, what loud pæans, due
 To those who push our antidote aside ;
 Those boasted friends to Reason and to man,
 Whose fatal love stabs every joy, and leaves
 Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart. 770
 These pompous sons of Reason idolized,
 And vilified at once ; of Reason dead,
 Then deified, as monarchs were of old ;
 What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow ?
 While *love of truth* through all their camp resounds, 775
 They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
 Spike up their inch of reason on the point
 Of philosophic wit, call'd Argument,
 And then, exulting in their taper, cry,
 "Behold the sun !" and, Indian-like, adore. 780

TALK they of morals ? O Thou bleeding Love !
 Thou Maker of new morals to mankind !
 The grand morality is love of Thee.
 As wise as SOCRATES, if such they were,
 (Nor will they 'bate of that sublime renown,) 785
 "As wise as SOCRATES," might justly stand
 The definition of a modern fool.

A CHRISTIAN is the highest style of man.
 And is there who the blessed cross wipes off,
 As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow ? 790
 If angels tremble, 't is at such a sight ;
 The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,—
 More struck with grief or wonder who can tell ?

YE sold to sense ! ye citizens of earth !
 (For such alone the Christian banner fly,) 795
 Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain ?
 Behold the picture of earth's happiest man :
 " He calls his wish, it comes ; he sends it back,
 And says he call'd another ; that arrives,
 Meets the same welcome ; yet he still calls on ; 800
 Till One calls him, who varies not His call,
 But holds him fast in chains of darkness bound,
 Till Nature dies, and Judgment sets him free ;
 A freedom far less welcome than his chain."

BUT grant man happy ; grant him happy long ; 805
 Add to life's highest prize her latest hour ;
 That hour, so late, is nimble in approach,
 That, like a post, comes on in full career.
 How swift the shuttle flies that weaves thy shroud !
 Where is the fable of thy former years ? 810
 Thrown down the gulf of time ; as far from thee
 As they had ne'er been thine ; the day in hand,
 Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going ;
 Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 't is gone ;
 And each swift moment, fled, is death advanced 815
 By strides as swift. Eternity is all ;
 And whose eternity ? who triumphs there ?
 Bathing for ever in the font of bliss !
 For ever basking in the Deity !
 LORENZO, who ?—Thy conscience shall reply. 820

O GIVE it leave to speak ; 't will speak ere long,
 Thy leave unask'd : LORENZO, hear it now,
 While useful its advice, its accent mild.
 By the great edict, the Divine decree,
 Truth is deposited with man's last hour ; 825
 An honest hour, and faithful to her trust.
 Truth, eldest daughter of the Deity !
 Truth, of His council when He made the worlds ;
 Nor less, when He shall judge the worlds He made !
 Though silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound, 830
 Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,
 That heaven-commission'd hour no sooner calls
 But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,
 Like him they fable under Ætna wheln'd,
 The goddess bursts in thunder and in flame, 835
 Loudly convinces, and severely pains.
 Dark demons I discharge, and hydra-stings ;
 The keen vibration of bright Truth—is hell :
 Just definition ! though by schools untaught.
 Ye deaf to Truth, peruse this parson'd page, 840
 And trust, for once, a prophet and a priest :
 " Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die."

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT V.

THE RELAPSE.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF
LICHFIELD.



NIGHT V.

THE RELAPSE.

LORENZO! to recriminate is just.
 Fondness for fame is avarice of air.
 I grant the man is vain who writes for praise.
 Praise no man e'er deserved, who sought no more.

As just thy second charge. I grant the Muse 5
 Has often blush'd at her degenerate sons,
 Retain'd by Sense to plead her filthy cause ;
 To raise the low, to magnify the mean,
 And subtilize the gross into refined :
 As if to magic numbers' powerful charm 10
 'T was given to make a civet of their song
 Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.
 Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,
 And lifts our swine-enjoyments from the mire.

THE fact notorious, nor obscure the cause. 15
 We wear the chains of Pleasure and of Pride :
 These share the man ; and these distract him too ;
 Draw different ways, and clash in their commands.
 Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars ;
 But Pleasure, lark-like, nests upon the ground. 20
 Joys shared by brute-creation Pride resents,
 Pleasure embraces. Man would both enjoy,
 And both at once : a point how hard to gain!
 But what can't Wit, when stung by strong desire ?

WIT dares attempt this arduous enterprise. 25
 Since joys of Sense can't rise to Reason's taste,

In subtle Sophistry's laborious forge
 Wit hammers out a reason new, that stoops
 To sordid scenes, and greets* them with applause.
 Wit calls the Graces the chaste zone to loose, 30
 Nor less than a plump god to fill the bowl;
 A thousand phantoms, and a thousand spells,
 A thousand opiates scatters to delude,
 To fascinate, inebriate, lay asleep,
 And the fool'd mind delightfully confound. 35
 Thus that which shock'd the Judgment, shocks no more:
 That which gave Pride offence, no more offends.
 Pleasure and Pride, by nature mortal foes,
 At war eternal *which* in man shall reign,
 By Wit's address, patch up a fatal peace, 40
 And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,
 From rank refined to delicate and gay.
 Art, cursed Art! wipes off the' indebted blush
 From Nature's cheek, and bronzes every shame.
 Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt, 45
 And Infamy stands candidate for praise.

ALL writ by man in favour of the soul
 These sensual ethics far in bulk transcend.
 The flowers of eloquence profusely pour'd
 O'er spotted Vice, fill half the letter'd world. 50
 Can powers of genius exorcise their page,
 And consecrate enormities with song?

BUT let not these inexpiable strains
 Condemn the Muse that knows her dignity;
 Nor meanly stops at Time, but holds the world— 55
 As 't is, in Nature's ample field, a point—
 A point in her esteem; from whence to start,

* The reading of the early quarto and octavo impressions; but *meets* occurs first in the text of the collected Works, in 1762.—EDIT.

And run the round of universal space,
 To visit being universal there,
 And Being's Source, that utmost flight of mind ! 60
 Yet, spite of this so vast circumference,
 Well knows, but what is moral, nought is great.
 Sing sirens only? Do not argels sing?
 There is in Poesy a decent pride,
 Which well becomes her when she speaks to Prose, 65
 Her younger sister ; haply, not more wise.

THINK'ST thou, LORENZO, to find pastimes here?
 No guilty passion blown into a flame,
 No foible flatter'd, dignity disgraced,
 No fairy field of fiction, all on flower, 70
 No rainbow colours here, or silken tale;
 But solemn counsels, images of awe,
 Truths which Eternity lets fall on man
 With double weight, through these revolving spheres,
 This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade : 75
 Thoughts such as shall revisit your last hour ;
 Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires :
 And thy dark pencil, Midnight, darker still
 In melancholy dipp'd, embrowns the whole.

YET this, e'en this, my laughter-loving friends ! 80
 LORENZO, and thy brothers of the smile !
 If what imports you most can most engage,
 Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song
 Or if you fail me, know, the wise shall taste
 The truths I sing ; the truths I sing shall feel ; 85
 And, feeling, give assent ; and their assent
 Is ample recompence ; is more than praise.
 But chiefly thine, O LICHFIELD ! nor mistake :
 Think not unIntroduced I force my way ;
 NARCISSA, not unknown, not unallied, 90
 By virtue or by blood, illustrious youth,

To thee, from blooming amaranthine bowers,
 Where all the language harmony, descends
 Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the Muse ;
 A Muse that will not pain thee with thy praise ; 95
 Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspired.

O THOU blest Spirit ! whether the supreme,
 Great antemundane Father ! in whose breast
 Embryo-creation, unborn being, dwelt,
 And all its various revolutions roll'd 100

Present, though future, prior to themselves ;
 Whose breath can blow it into nought again :
 Or from His throne some delegated Power,
 Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought
 From vain and vile to solid and sublime ! 105

Unseen Thou lead'st me to delicious draughts
 Of inspiration, from a purer stream,
 And fuller of the God, than that which burst
 From famed Castalia : nor is yet allay'd
 My sacred thirst ; though long my soul has ranged 110
 Through pleasing paths of moral and Divine,
 By Thee sustain'd, and lighted by the STARS.

By them best lighted are the paths of thought :
 Nights are their days, their most illumined hours.
 By day the soul, o'erborne by life's career, 115
 Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,
 Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.
 By day the soul is passive, all her thoughts
 Imposed, precarious, broken, ere mature.

By night, from objects free, from passion cool, 120
 Thoughts uncontroll'd and unimpress'd, the births
 Of pure election, arbitrary range,
 Not to the limits of one world confined,
 But from ethereal travels light on earth,
 As voyagers drop anchor, for repose. 125

LET Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
 Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore :
 Darkness has more divinity for me :
 It strikes thought inward ; it drives back the soul
 To settle on herself, our point supreme ! 130
 There lies our theatre ; there sits our judge.
 Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene ;
 'T is the kind hand of Providence stretch'd out
 'Twixt man and vanity ; 't is Reason's reign,
 And Virtue's too ; these tutelary shades 135
 Are man's asylum from the tainted throng.
 Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too ;
 It no less rescues Virtue than inspires.

VIRTUE for ever frail, as fair, below,
 Her tender nature suffers in the crowd, 140
 Nor touches on the world without a stain.
 The world's infectious ; few bring back at eve,
 Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
 Something we thought, is blotted ; we resolved,
 Is shaken ; we renounced, returns again. 145
 Each salutation may slide-in a sin
 Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.
 Nor is it strange ; light, motion, concourse, noise,
 All scatter us abroad ; Thought, outward-bound,
 Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off 150
 In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,
 And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

PRESENT example gets within our guard,
 And acts with double force, by few repell'd.
 Ambition fires ambition ; love of gain 155
 Strikes like a pestilence, from breast to breast ;
 Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe ;
 And inhumanity is caught from man,
 From smiling man ! A slight, a single glance,

And shot at random, often has brought home 160
 A sudden fever to the throbbing heart
 Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.
 We see, we hear, with peril ; Safety dwells
 Remote from multitude ; the world 's a school
 Of wrong, and what proficients swarm around ! 165
 We must or imitate or disapprove ;
 Must list as their accomplices, or foes ;
 That stains our innocence, this wounds our peace.
 From Nature's birth, hence, Wisdom has been smit
 With sweet recess, and languish'd for the shade. 170

THIS sacred shade and solitude,—what is it ?
 'T is the felt presence of the Deity.
 Few are the faults we flatter when alone.
 Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,
 And looks, like other objects, black by night : 175
 By night an Atheist half-believes a God.

NIGHT is fair Virtue's immemorial friend ;
 The conscious Moon, through every distant age,
 Has held a lamp to Wisdom, and let fall
 On Contemplation's eye her purging ray. 180
 The famed Athenian, he who woo'd from heaven
 Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
 And form their manners, not inflame their pride,—
 While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
 His labouring mind, the stars in silence slide, 185
 And seem all gazing on their future guest,
 See him soliciting his ardent suit
 In private audience : all the live-long night,
 Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands ;
 Nor quits his theme or posture till the sun 190
 (Rude drunkard ! rising rosy from the main)
 Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
 And gives him to the tumult of the world.



All the live-long night,
Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands.

Night V. line 185



Hail, precious moments, stolen from the black waste
 Of murder'd Time! auspicious Midnight, hail! 195
 The world excluded, every passion hush'd,
 And open'd a calm intercourse with Heaven,
 Here the soul sits in council; ponders *past*,
 Predestines *future* action; sees, not feels,
 Tumultuous life, and reasons with the storm; 200
 All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.

WHAT awful joy! what mental liberty!
 I am not pent in darkness: rather say,
 (If not too bold,) in darkness I'm embower'd.
 Delightful gloom! the clustering thoughts around 205
 Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade;
 But droop by day, and sicken in the sun.
 Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that first fire,
 Fountain of animation, whence descends
 URANIA, my celestial guest! who deigns 210
 Nightly to visit me, so mean; and now,
 Conscious how needful discipline to man,
 From pleasing dalliance with the charms of Night,
 My wandering thought recalls, to what excites
 Far other beat of heart,—NARCISSA'S tomb! 215

OR is it feeble Nature calls me back,
 And breaks my spirit into grief again?
 Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood,
 A cold, slow puddle, creeping through my veins?
 Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all. 220
 What are we? how unequal! now we soar,
 And now we sink. To be the same, transcends
 Our present prowess. Dearly pays the soul
 For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.
 Reason, a baffled counsellor, but adds 225
 The blush of weakness to the bane of woe.
 The noblest spirit, fighting her hard fate

In this damp, dusky region, charged with storms,
 But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly ;
 Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall. 230
 Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again ;
 And not to yield, though beaten, all our praise.

'T is vain to seek in men for more than man.
 Though proud in promise, big in previous thought,
 Experience damps our triumph. I, who late, 235
 Emerging from the shadows of the grave,
 Where Grief detain'd me prisoner, mounting high,
 Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,
 And call'd mankind to glory, shook off pain,
 Mortality shook off, in ether pure, 240
 And struck the stars ; now feel my spirits fail :
 They drop me from the zenith ; down I rush,
 Like him whom Fable fledged with waxen wings,
 In sorrow drown'd—but not in sorrow lost.
 How wretched is the man who never mourn'd ! 245
 I dive for precious pearl in sorrow's stream :
 Not so the thoughtless man that only grieves ;
 Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain,
 (Inestimable gain !) and gives Heaven leave
 To make him but more wretched, not more wise. 250

If wisdom is our lesson, (and what else
 Ennobles man ? what else have angels learnt ?)
 Grief, more proficient in thy school are made
 Than Genius. or proud Learning, e'er could boast.
 Voracious Learning, often over-fed, 255
 Digests not into sense her motley meal.
 This Book-case, with dark booty almost burst,
 This forager on others' wisdom, leaves
 Her native farm, her reason, quite untill'd.
 With mix'd manure she surfeits the rank soil, 260
 Dung'd, but not dress'd, and rich to beggary.

A pomp untameable of weeds prevails.
Her servant's wealth encumber'd Wisdom mourns.

AND what says Genius? "Let the dull be wise."
Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong ; 265
And loves to *boust* where *blush* men less inspired.
It pleads exemption from the laws of Sense ;
Considers Reason as a leveller ;
And scorns to share a blessing with the crowd ;
That wise it *could be*, thinks an ample claim 270
To Glory, and to Pleasure gives the rest.
CRASSUS but sleeps, ARDELIO is undone.
Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.

BUT Wisdom smiles when humbled mortals weep.
When Sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe, 275
And hearts obdurate feel her softening shower ;
Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows ;
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.
If so, NARCISSA ! welcome my Relapse :
I'll raise a tax on my calamity, 280
And reap rich compensation from my pain.
I'll range the plenteous intellectual field ;
And gather every thought of sovereign power,
To chase the moral maladies of man ;
Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies, 285
Though natives of this coarse penurious soil ;
Nor wholly wither there, where seraphs sing,
Refined, exalted, not annull'd, in heaven :
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same
In either clime, though more illustrious there. 290
These, choicely cull'd, and elegantly ranged,
Shall form a garland for NARCISSA's tomb ;
And, peradventure, of no fading flowers.

SAY, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend ?
"The' importance of contemplating the tomb ; 295

Why men decline it ; Suicide's foul birth ;
 The various kinds of Grief ; the faults of Age ;
 And Death's dread character,"—invite my song.

AND, first, the' importance of our end survey'd.
 Friends counsel quick dismissal of our grief. 300

Mistaken kindness ! our hearts heal too soon.
 Are they more kind than He who struck the blow,
 Who bid it do His errand in our hearts,
 And banish peace, till nobler guests arrive,
 And bring it back a true and endless peace ? 305

Calamities are friends : as glaring day
 Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight,
 Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts
 Of import high, and light Divine, to man.

THE man how bless'd, who, sick of gaudy scenes, 310
 (Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves !)

Is led by choice to take his favourite walk
 Beneath Death's gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
 Unpierced by Vanity's fantastic ray ;
 To read his monuments, to weigh his dust, 315

Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs !
 LORENZO ! read with me NARCISSA'S stone ;
 (NARCISSA was thy favourite ;) let us read
 Her moral stone : few doctors preach so well ;
 Few orators so tenderly can touch 320

The feeling heart. What pathos in the date !
 Apt words can strike ; and yet in them we see
 Faint images of what we here enjoy.

What cause have we to build on length of life ?
 Temptatons seize when Fear is laid asleep, 325
 And Ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

SEE, from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,
 Truth, radiant goddess, sallies on my soul,

- And puts Delusion's dusky train to flight :
 Dispels the mists our sultry passions raise, 330
 From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene ;
 And shows the real estimate of things,
 Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw ;
 Pulls off the veil from Virtue's rising charms ;
 Detects Temptation in a thousand lies. 335
 Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves,
 And all they bleed for as the summer's dust,
 Driven by the whirlwind. Lighted by her beams,
 I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
 See things invisible, feel things remote, 340
 Am present with futurities ; think nought
 To man so foreign as the joys possess'd,
 Nought so much his as those beyond the grave.
- No folly keeps its colour in her sight ;
 Pale worldly Wisdom loses all her charms ; 345
 In pompous promise from her schemes profound,
 If future fate she plans, 't is all in leaves,
 Like Sibyl, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss !
 At the first blast it vanishes in air.
 Not so celestial. Wouldst thou know, LORENZO, 350
 How differ worldly Wisdom and Divine ?
 Just as the waning and the waxing moon.
More empty worldly Wisdom every day,
 And every day *more fair* her rival shines.
 When later, there 's less time to play the fool. 355
 Soon our whole term for Wisdom is expired,
 (Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave,)
 And "everlasting fool" is writ in fire,
 Or real Wisdom wafts us to the skies.
- As worldly schemes resemble Sibyl's leaves, 360
 The good man's days to Sibyl's books compare,
 (In ancient story read, thou know'st the tale,)

In price still rising, as in number less ;
 Inestimable quite his final hour.
 For that, who thrones can offer, offer thrones : 365
 Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.
 " O let me die his death ! " all Nature cries.
 " Then live his life ! "—all Nature falters there.
 Our great Physician daily to consult,
 To commune with the Grave, our only cure. 370

WHAT grave prescribes the best ? A friend's ; and yet
 From a friend's grave how soon we disengage !
 E'en to the dearest, as his marble, cold.
 Why are friends ravish'd from us ? 'T is to bind,
 By soft Affection's ties, on human hearts, 375
 The thought of death, which Reason, too supine,
 Or misemploy'd, so rarely fastens there.
 Nor Reason, nor Affection, no, nor both
 Combined, can break the witchcrafts of the world.
 Behold the' inexorable hour at hand ! 380
 Behold the' inexorable hour forgot !
 And to forget it the chief *aim* of life,
 Though well to ponder it is life's chief *end*.

Is Death, that ever threatening, ne'er remote,
 That all-important, and that only sure, 385
 (Come when he will,) an unexpected guest ?
 Nay, though invited by the loudest calls
 Of blind Imprudence, unexpected still ?
 Though numerous messengers are sent before,
 To warn his great arrival. What the cause, 390
 The wondrous cause, of this mysterious ill ?
 All heaven looks down, astonish'd at the sight.

Is it, that Life has sown her joys so thick,
 We can't thrust in a single care between ?
 Is it, that Life has such a swarm of cares, 395

- The thought of death can't enter for the throng?
 Is it, that Time steals on with downy feet,
 Nor wakes Indulgence from her golden dream?
 To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats;
 We take the lying sister for the same. 400
 Life glides away, LORENZO, like a brook;
 For ever changing, unperceived the change.
 In the same brook none ever bathed him twice:
 To the same life none ever twice awoke.
 We call the brook the same; the same we think 405
 Our life, though still more rapid in its flow;
 Nor mark the much irrevocably lapsed,
 And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say,
 (Retaining still the brook to bear us on,) 410
 That life is like a vessel on the stream?
 In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
 Of time descend, but not on time intent;
 Amused, unconscious of the gliding wave;
 Till on a sudden we perceive a shock;
 We start, awake, look out; what see we there? 415
 Our brittle bark is burst on Charon's shore.
- Is this the cause Death flies all human thought?
 Or is it Judgment by the Will struck blind,
 (That domineering mistress of the soul,) 420
 Like him so strong, by Delilah the fair?
 Or is it Fear turns startled Reason back,
 From looking down a precipice so steep?
 'T is dreadful; and the dread is wisely placed,
 By Nature, conscious of the make of man.
 A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind, 425
 A flaming sword to guard the tree of life.
 By that unawed, in life's most smiling hour,
 The good man would repine; would *suffer* joys,
 And burn impatient for his promised skies.
 The bad, on each punctilious pique of Pride, 430

Or gloom of Humour, would give Rage the rein,
Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,
And mar the schemes* of Providence below.

WHAT groan was that, LORENZO? Furies! rise;
And drown, in your less execrable yell, 435
Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,
On wing impetuous, a black sullen soul,
Blasted from hell, with horrid lust of death,
Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,
So call'd, so thought:—and then he fled the field. 440
Less base the fear of death than fear of life.
O Britain, infamous for suicide!
An island in thy manners! far disjoin'd
From the whole world of rationals beside!
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head, 445
Wash the dire stain, nor shock the Continent.

BUT thou be shock'd, while I detect the cause
Of Self-Assault, expose the monster's birth,
And bid Abhorrence hiss it round the world.
Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun; 450
The sun is innocent, thy clime absolved:
Immoral climes kind Nature never made.
The cause I sing in Eden might prevail,
And proves it is thy folly, not thy fate.

THE soul of man, (let man in homage bow, 455
Who names his soul,) a native of the skies,
High-born and free, her freedom should maintain,
Unsold, unmortgaged for Earth's little bribes.
The' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,—
Like strangers, jealous of her dignity, 460

* This is the reading of the early quarto and octavo impressions. In the collected Works, (1762,) it was altered to *scenes*.—EDIT.

Studious of home, and ardent to return,—
 Of Earth suspicious, Earth's enchanted cup
 With cool reserve light touching, should indulge
 On Immortality her godlike taste ;
 There take large draughts ; make her chief banquet there.

But some reject this sustenance Divine ; 466
 To beggarly vile appetites descend ;
 Ask alms of Earth for guests that came from heaven ;
 Sink into slaves ; and sell, for present hire,
 Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate) 470
 Their native freedom, to the prince who sways
 This nether world ; and, when his payments fail,
 When his foul basket gorges them no more,
 Or their pall'd palates loathe the basket full,
 Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage, 475
 For breaking all the chains of Providence,
 And bursting their confinement ; though fast barr'd
 By laws Divine and human ; guarded strong
 With horrors doubled to defend the pass
 The blackest Nature or dire Guilt can raise ; 480
 And moated round with fathomless destruction,
 Sure to receive and overwhelm them in their fall.

SUCH, Britons ! is the cause, to you unknown,
 Or worse, o'erlook'd ; o'erlook'd by magistrates,
 Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed 485
 Is madness ; but the madness of the heart.
 And what is that ? Our utmost bound of guilt.
 A sensual, unreflecting life is big
 With monstrous births, and Suicide, to crown
 The black infernal brood. The bold to break 490
 Heaven's law supreme, and desperately rush
 Through sacred Nature's murder on their own,
 Because they never think of death, they die.
 'T is equally man's duty, glory, gain,

At once to shun and meditate his end. 495
 When by the bed of languishment we sit,
 (The seat of wisdom ! if our choice, not fate,)
 Or o'er our dying friends in anguish hang,
 Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,
 Number their moments, and in every clock 500
 Start at the voice of an eternity ;
 See the dim lamp of life just feebly lift
 An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,
 Then sink again, and quiver into death,
 That most pathetic herald of our own :— 505
 How read we such sad scenes ? as sent to man
 In perfect vengeance ? No ; in pity sent,
 To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,
 Indelible, Death's image on his heart ;
 Bleeding for others, trembling for himself. 510
 We bleed, we tremble ; we forget, we smile :
 The mind turns fool before the cheek is dry.
 Our quick-returning folly cancels all ;
 As the tide rushing rases what is writ
 In yielding sands, and smooths the letter'd shore. 515

LORENZO ! hast thou ever weigh'd a sigh,
 Or studied the philosophy of tears ?
 (A science yet unlectured in our schools :)
 Hast thou descended deep into the breast,
 And seen their source ? If not, descend with me, 520
 And trace these briny rivulets to their springs.

OUR funeral tears from different causes rise.
 As if from separate cisterns in the soul,
 Of various kinds, they flow. From tender hearts,
 By soft contagion call'd, some burst at once, 525
 And stream obsequious to the leading eye.
 Some ask more time, by curious art distill'd.
 Some hearts, in secret hard, unapt to melt,

Struck by the magic of the public eye,
Like MOSES' smitten rock, gush out amain. 530

Some weep to share the fame of the deceased,
So high in merit, and to them so dear.
They dwell on praises which they think they share ;
And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.

Some mourn in proof that something they could love ; 535
They weep, not to *relieve* their grief, but *show*.

Some weep in perfect justice to the dead,
As conscious all their love is in arrear.
Some mischievously weep, not unapprized
Tears sometimes aid the conquest of an eye. 540

With what address the soft Ephesians draw
Their sable net-work o'er entangled hearts !
As seen through crystal, how their roses glow,
While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek !

Of hers not prouder Egypt's wanton queen, 545
Carousing gems, herself dissolved in love.

Some weep at Death, abstracted from the dead,
And celebrate, like CHARLES, their own decease.
By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,
Because a decent veil conceals their joy. 550

SOME weep in earnest, and yet weep in vain ;
As deep in indiscretion as in woe.
Passion, blind Passion, impotently pours
Tears that deserve more tears, while Reason sleeps,

Or gazes, like an idiot, unconcern'd, 555
Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm ;
Knows not it speaks to her, and her alone.

Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,
That noble gift, that privilege of man !
From Sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy. 560

But these are barren of that birth Divine :
They weep impetuous as the summer storm,
And full as short ! The cruel grief soon tamed,

They make a pastime of the stingless tale ;
 Far as the deep-resounding knell, they spread 565
 The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more :
 No grain of wisdom pays them for their woe.

HALF round the globe, the tears pump'd up by Death
 Are spent in watering vanities of life ;
 In making Folly flourish still more fair. 570
 When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,
 Reclines on earth, and sorrows in the dust,
 Instead of learning there her true support,
 Though there thrown down her true support to learn,
 Without Heaven's aid impatient to be bless'd, 575
 She crawls to the next shrub or bramble vile,
 Though from the stately cedar's arms she fell ;
 With stale, forsworn embraces clings anew,
 The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,
 In all the fruitless fopperies of life ; 580
 Presents her weed, well fancied, at the ball,
 And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.

So wept AURELIA, till the destined youth
 Stepp'd in with his receipt for making smiles,
 And blanching sables into bridal bloom. 585
 So wept LORENZO fair CLARISSA's fate,
 Who gave that angel boy on whom he dotes ;
 And died to give him, orphan'd in his birth !
 Not such, NARCISSA, my distress for thee ;
 I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb, 590
 To sacrifice to Wisdom. What wast thou ?
 " Young, gay, and fortunate ! " Each yields a theme :
 I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe ;
 (Heaven knows I labour with severer still !)
 I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death. 595
 A soul without reflection, like a pile
 Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

AND, first, thy youth : what says it to grey hairs ?

NARCISSA, I'm become thy pupil now.—

Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew, 600

She sparkled, was exhaled, and went to heaven.

Time on this head has snow'd, yet still 't is borne

Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.

Cover'd with shame I speak it, Age severe

Old worn-out Vice sets down for Virtue fair ; 605

With graceless gravity chastising Youth,

That Youth chastised surpassing in a fault,

Father of all, forgetfulness of Death !

As if, like objects pressing on the sight,

Death had advanced too near us to be seen ; 610

Or, that life's loan Time ripen'd into right,

And men might plead prescription from the grave ;

Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.

Deathless ? far from it ! such are dead already ;

Their hearts are buried ; and the world their grave. 615

TELL me, some god ! my guardian angel, tell,

What thus infatuates ? what enchantment plants

The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death

Already at the door ? He knocks ; we hear him,

And yet we will not hear. What mail defends 620

Our untouch'd hearts ? What miracle turns off

The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers

Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd ?

We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs

Around us falling ; wounded oft ourselves ; 625

Though bleeding with our wounds, immortal still !

We see Time's furrows on another's brow,

And Death, intrench'd, preparing his assault :

How few themselves in that just mirror see !

Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong ! 630

There Death is certain ; doubtful here : he *must*,

And soon—we *may*, within an age—expire.

Though grey our heads, our thoughts and aims are green ;
 Like damaged clocks, whose hand and bell dissent ;
 Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve. 635

ABSURD longevity! "More, more," it cries :
 More life, more wealth, more trash of every kind.
 And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails ?
 Object and Appetite must club for joy.
 Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow, 640

(Baubles I mean, that strike us from without,)
 While Nature is relaxing every string ?
 Ask Thought for joy ; grow rich, and hoard within.
 Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,
 Has nothing of more manly to succeed ? 645

Contract the taste immortal ; learn e'en now
 To relish what alone subsists hereafter.
 Divine or none, henceforth, your joys for ever.
 Of age the glory is, to wish to die ;
 That wish is praise and promise ; it applauds 650
 Past life, and promises our future bliss.

What weakness see not children in their sires ?
 Grand-climacterical absurdities !
 Grey-hair'd authority to faults of youth,
 How shocking ! it makes Folly thrice a fool ; 655

And our first childhood might our last despise.
 Peace and esteem is all that age can hope.
 Nothing but wisdom gives the first ; the last,
 Nothing but the repute of being wise.
 Folly bars both : our age is quite undone. 660

WHAT folly can be ranker ? Like our shadows,
 Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.
 No wish should loiter, then, this side the grave.
 Our hearts should leave the world before the knell
 Calls for our carcasses to mend the soil. 665
 Enough to live in tempest, die in port.

Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat
 Defects of judgment, and the will's subdue ;
 Walk thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore
 Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon, 670
 And put good works on board, and wait the wind
 That shortly blows us into worlds unknown ;
 If unconsider'd too, a dreadful scene !
 ALL should be prophets to themselves ; foresee
 Their future fate ; their future fate foretaste : 675
 This art would waste the bitterness of death.
 The *thought* of death alone the *fear* destroys.
 A disaffection to that precious thought
 Is more than midnight darkness on the soul,
 Which sleeps beneath it, on a precipice, 680
 Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, LORENZO, why so warmly press'd,
 By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,
 The thought of Death ? That thought is the machine,
 The grand machine that heaves us from the dust, 685
 And rears us into men ! That thought plied home
 Will soon reduce the ghastly precipice
 O'erhanging hell, will soften the descent,
 And gently slope our passage to the grave.
 How warmly to be wish'd ! What heart of flesh 690
 Would trifle with tremendous, dare extremes,
 Yawn o'er the fate of infinite ? What hand,
 Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,
 (To speak a language too well known to thee,)
 Would at a moment give its all to chance, 695
 And stamp the die for an eternity ?

Aid me, NARCISSA ! aid me to keep pace
 With Destiny ; and ere her scissors cut
 My thread of life, to break this tougher thread
 Of moral death, that ties me to the world. 700

Sting thou my slumbering Reason to send forth
 A thought of observation on the foe ;
 To sally, and survey the rapid march
 Of his ten thousand messengers to man ;
 Who, JEHU-like, behind him turns them all. 705
 All accident apart, by Nature sign'd,
 My warrant is gone out, though dormant yet ;
 Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

MUST I then forward only look for Death ?
 Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there. 710
 Man is a self-survivor every year.
 Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.
 Death 's a destroyer of quotidian prey.
 My youth, my noon-tide, his ; my yesterday ;
 The bold invader shares the present hour. 715
 Each moment on the former shuts the grave.
 While man is growing, life is in decrease,
 And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.
 Our birth is nothing but our death begun ;
 As tapers waste that instant they take fire. 720

SHALL we then fear lest that should come to pass,
 Which comes to pass each moment of our lives ?
 If fear we must, let that death turn us pale
 Which murders strength and ardour ; what remains
 Should rather call on Death, than dread his call. 725
 Ye partners of my fault and my decline !
 Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's knell
 (Rude visitant !) knocks hard at your dull sense,
 And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear !
 Be death your theme in every place and hour ; 730
 Nor longer want, ye monumental sires,
 A brother-tomb to tell you, you shall die.
 That death you dread, (so great is Nature's skill !)
 Know, you shall court, before you shall enjoy.

- BUT you are learn'd ; in volumes deep you sit, 735
 In wisdom shallow. Pompous ignorance !
 Would you be still more learned than the learn'd ?
 Learn well to know how much need not be known,
 And what that knowledge which impairs your sense.
 Our needful knowledge, like our needful food, 740
 Unhedged, lies open in life's common field,
 And bids all welcome to the vital feast.
 You scorn what lies before you in the page
 Of Nature and Experience,—moral truth,
 Of indispensable, eternal fruit ; 745
 Fruit on which mortals, feeding, turn to gods,—
 And dive in science for distinguish'd names,
 Dishonest fomentation of your pride,
 Sinking in virtue as you rise in fame.
 Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords 750
 Light, but not heat ; it leaves you undevout,
 Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.
 Awake, ye curious indagators, fond
 Of knowing all, but what avails you known.
 If you would learn Death's character, attend. 755
 All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,
 All dies of fortune, and all dates of age,
 Together shook in his impartial urn,
 Come forth at random ; or, if choice is made,
 The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults 760
 All bold conjecture and fond hopes of man.
 What countless multitudes not only leave
 But deeply disappoint us by their deaths !
 Though great our sorrow, greater our surprise.
- LIKE other tyrants, Death delights to smite 765
 What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of power
 And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme,
 To bid the wretch survive the fortunate ;
 The feeble wrap the' athletic in his shroud ;

And weeping fathers build their children's tomb · 770
 Me thine, NARCISSA!—What, though short thy date?
 Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
 That life is long which answers life's great end.
 The time that bears no fruit deserves no name.
 The man of wisdom is the man of years. 775
 In hoary youth METHUSELAHS may die;
 O how misdated on their flattering tombs!

NARCISSA's youth has lectured me thus far.
 And can her gaiety give counsel too?
 That, like the Jews' famed oracle of gems, 780
 Sparkles instruction; such as throws new light,
 And opens more the character of Death,
 Ill known to thee, LORENZO! This thy vaunt:
 "Give death his due,—the wretched and the old;
 E'en let him sweep his rubbish to the grave: 785
 Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,
 But own man born *to live*, as well as *die*."
 Wretched and old thou givest him: young and gay
 He takes; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.
 What if I prove, "The farthest from the *fear*
 Are often nearest to the *stroke* of Fate?" 790

ALL more than common, menaces an end.
 A blaze betokens brevity of life:
 As if bright embers should emit a flame,
 Glad spirits sparkled from NARCISSA's eye, 795
 And made youth younger, and taught life to live.
 As Nature's opposites wage endless war,
 For this offence, as treason to the deep
 Inviolable stupor of his reign,
 Where Lust and turbulent Ambition sleep, 800
 Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,
 More life is still more odious; and, reduced
 By conquest, aggrandizes more his power.

But wherefore aggrandized ? By Heaven's decree,
 To plant the soul on her eternal guard, 805
 In awful expectation of our end.

Thus runs Death's dread commission : "Strike, but so
 As most alarms the living by the dead."

Hence stratagem delights him, and surprise,
 And cruel sport with man's securities. 810

Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim ;
 And where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs most.
 This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

WHAT are his arts to lay our fears asleep ?
 Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up 815
 In deep dissimulation's darkest night.

Like princes unconfess'd in foreign courts,
 Who travel under cover, Death assumes
 The name and look of Life, and dwells among us ;
 He takes all shapes that serve his black designs ; 820

Though master of a wider empire far
 Than that o'er which the Roman eagle flew,
 Like Nero, he's a fiddler, charioteer ;
 Or drives his phaëton in female guise ;
 Quite unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath, 825
 His disarray'd oblation he devours.

HE most affects the forms least like himself,
 His slender self : hence burly corpulence
 Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.
 Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk, 830
 Or ambush in a smile ; or, wanton, dive

In dimples deep : Love's eddies, which draw-in
 Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.
 Such on NARCISSA'S couch he loiter'd long
 Unknown, and, when detected, still was seen 835
 To smile : such peace has Innocence in death !

- Most happy they whom least his arts deceive !
 One eye on Death, and one full fix'd on Heaven,
 Becomes a mortal and immortal man.
 Long on his wiles a piqued and jealous spy, 840
 I've seen, or dreamt I saw, the tyrant dress,
 Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles.
 Say, Muse, for thou remember'st, call it back ;
 And show LORENZO the surprising scene :
 If 't was a dream, his genius can explain. 845
- 'T WAS in a circle of the gay I stood :
 Death would have enter'd ; Nature push'd him back ;
 Supported by a Doctor of renown,
 His point he gain'd ; then artfully dismiss'd
 The sage, for Death design'd to be conceal'd. 850
 He gave an old vivacious usurer
 His meagre aspect, and his naked bones ;
 In gratitude for plumping up his prey,
 A pamper'd spendthrift, whose fantastic air,
 Well-fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow, 855
 He took in change, and underneath the pride
 Of costly linen tuck'd his filthy shroud.
 His crooked bow he straighten'd to a cane,
 And hid his deadly shafts in MYRA'S eye.
- THE dreadful masquerader, thus equipp'd, 860
 Out-sallies on adventures. Ask you where ?
 Where is he not ? For his peculiar haunts
 Let this suffice :—Sure as night follows day,
 Death treads in Pleasure's footsteps round the world,
 When Pleasure treads the paths which Reason shuns. 865
 When against Reason Riot shuts the door,
 And Gaiety supplies the place of Sense,
 Then foremost, at the banquet and the ball,
 Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly die :
 Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown. 870

Gaily carousing to his gay compeers,
 Inly he laughs to see them laugh at him,
 As absent far ; and when the revel burns,
 When Fear is banish'd, and triumphant Thought,
 Calling for all the joys beneath the moon, 875
 Against him turns the key, and bids him sup
 With their progenitors,—he drops his mask,
 Frowns out at full ; they start, despair, expire.

SCARCE with more sudden terror and surprise
 From his black mask of nitre, touch'd by fire, 880
 He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.
 And is not this triumphant treachery,
 And *more than simple conquest*, in the fiend ?

AND NOW, LORENZO, dost thou wrap thy soul
 In soft security, because unknown 885
 Which moment is commission'd to destroy ?
 In Death's uncertainty thy danger lies.
 Is Death uncertain ? Therefore thou be fix'd,
 Fix'd as a sentinel, all eye, all ear,
 All expectation of the coming foe. 890
 Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear,
 Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,
 And Fate surprise thee nodding. Watch, be strong :
 Thus give each day the merit and renown
 Of dying well, though doom'd but once to die. 895
 Nor let life's period hidden (as from most)
 Hide, too, from thee the precious use of life.

EARLY, not sudden, was NARCISSA's fate :
 Soon, not surprising, Death his visit paid :
 Her Thought went forth to meet him on his way, 900
 Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die ;
 Though Fortune, too, (our third and final theme,)
 As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,

And every glittering gewgaw, on her sight,
 To dazzle and debauch it from its mark. 905
 Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,
 And every thought that misses it is blind.
 Fortune, with Youth and Gaiety, conspired
 To weave a triple wreath of happiness
 (If happiness on earth) to crown her brow. 910
 And could Death charge through such a shining shield?

THAT shining shield invites the tyrant's spear,
 As if to damp our elevated aims,
 And strongly preach humility to man.
 O how portentous is prosperity! 915
 How, comet-like, it threatens while it shines!
 Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition,
 To cull his victims from the fairest fold,
 And sheathe his shafts in all the pride of life.
 When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er 920
 With recent honours, bloom'd with every bliss,
 Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,
 The gaudy centre, of the public eye;
 When Fortune thus has toss'd her child in air,
 Snatch'd from the covert of an humble state, 925
 How often have I seen him dropp'd at once,
 Our morning's envy, and our evening's sigh;
 As if her bounties were the signal given,
 The flowery wreath, to mark the sacrifice,
 And call Death's arrows on the destined prey! 930

HIGH Fortune seems in cruel league with Fate.
 Ask you for what? To give his war on man
 The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil;
 Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.
 And burns LORENZO still for the sublime 935
 Of Life? to hang his airy nest on high,
 On the slight timber of the topmost bough,

Rock'd at each breeze, and menacing a fall ?
 Granting grim Death at equal distance there,
 Yet peace begins just where ambition ends. 940
 What makes man wretched ? happiness denied ?
 LORENZO ! no : 't is Happiness disdain'd.
 She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile,
 And calls herself Content, a homely name :
 Our flame is Transport, and Content our scorn. 945
 Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,
 And weds a Toil, a Tempest, in her stead ;
 A Tempest, to warm Transport near of kin.
 Unknowing what our mortal state admits,
 Life's modest joys we ruin while we raise, 950
 And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace ;
 Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

AND since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth !
 Of Fortune fond, as thoughtless of thy fate !
 As late I drew Death's picture, to stir up 955
 Thy wholesome fears ; now, drawn in contrast, see
 Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.
 See, high in air the sportive goddess hangs,
 Unlocks her casket, spreads her glittering ware,
 And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad 960
 Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.
 All rush rapacious,—friends o'er trodden friends,
 Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,
 Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,
 (Still more adored,)—to snatch the golden shower. 965

GOLD glitters most where Virtue shines no more,
 As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.
 O what a precious pack of votaries,
 Unkennell'd from the prisons and the stews,
 Pour in, all opening in their Idol's praise ! 970
 All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,

And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,
 Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,
 Untasted, through mad appetite for more ;
 Gorged to the throat, yet lean and ravenous still ; 975
 Sagacious all to trace the smallest game,
 And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance !)
 Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they launch, they fly
 O'er just, o'er sacred, all forbidden ground,
 Drunk with the burning scent of place or power, 980
 Staunch to the foot of Lucre, till they die.

OR, if for men you take them, as I mark
 Their manners, thou their various fates survey.
 With aim mismeasured and impetuous speed,
 Some, darting, strike their ardent wish far off, 985
 Through fury to possess it : some succeed,
 But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.
 From some, by sudden blasts, 't is whirl'd away,
 And lodged in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.
 To some it sticks so close, that, when torn off, 990
 Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.
 Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad,
 Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.
 Together some (unhappy rivals !) seize,
 And rend abundance into poverty. 995
 Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles :
 Smiles too the goddess ; but smiles most at those
 (Just victims of exorbitant desire !)
 Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd
 Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire. 1000
 Fortune is famous for her numbers slain :
 The number small which happiness can bear.
 Though various for a while their fates, at last
 One curse involves them all : at Death's approach,
 All read their riches backward into loss, 1005
 And mourn in just proportion to their store.

AND Death's approach (if orthodox my song)
 Is hasten'd by the lure of Fortune's smiles.
 And art thou still a glutton of bright gold ?
 And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin ? 1010
 Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow ;
 A blow which, while it executes, alarms,
 And startles thousands with a single fall.
 As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,
 Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade, 1015
 The sun's defiance and the flock's defence,
 By the strong strokes of labouring hinds subdued,
 Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height,
 In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground ;
 The conscious forest trembles at the shock, 1020
 And hill, and stream, and distant dale resound.

THESE high-aim'd darts of Death, and these alone,
 Should I collect, my quiver would be full ;
 A quiver which, suspended in mid air,
 Or near Heaven's Archer, in the zodiac, hung, 1025
 (So could it be,) should draw the public eye,
 The gaze and contemplation of mankind ;
 A constellation awful, yet benign,
 To guide the gay through life's tempestuous wave ;
 Nor suffer them to strike the common rock,— 1030
 " From greater danger to grow more secure,
 And, wrapp'd in happiness, forget their fate."

LYSANDER, happy past the common lot,
 Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.
 He woo'd the fair ASPASIA ; she was kind : 1035
 In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were bless'd ;
 All who knew envied, yet in envy loved :
 Can Fancy form more finish'd happiness
 Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome
 Rose on the sounding beach. The glittering spires 1040

Float in the wave, and break against the shore :
 So break those glittering shadows, human joys !
 The faithless morning smiled ; he takes his leave,
 To re-embrace, in ecstasies, at eve.
 The rising storm forbids. The news arrives ; 1045
 Untold she saw it in her servant's eye.
 She felt it seen ; (her heart was apt to feel ;)
 And, drown'd without the furious ocean's aid,
 In suffocating sorrows, shares his tomb.
 Now round the sumptuous bridal monument 1050
 The guilty billows innocently roar ;
 And the rough sailor, passing, drops a tear.
A tear!—can tears suffice ?—but not for me.
 How vain our efforts ! and our arts how vain !
 The distant train of thought I took, to shun, 1055
 Has thrown me on, my fate.—These died together ;
 Happy in ruin ! undivorced by death !
 Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace.—
 NARCISSA ! Pity bleeds at thought of thee ;
 Yet thou wast only *near me ; not myself.* 1060
Survive myself?—That cures all other woe.
 NARCISSA lives ; PHILANDER is forgot.
 O the soft commerce ! O the tender ties,
 Close twisted with the fibres of the heart !
 Which, broken, break them, and drain off the soul 1065
 Of human joy, and make it pain to live.—
 And is it then to live ? When such friends part,
 'T is the survivor dies.—My heart ! no more.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VI.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

IN TWO PARTS.

CONTAINING THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF IMMORTALITY.

PART I.

WHERE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, GLORY AND RICHES ARE
PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY PEL-
HAM, FIRST LORD-COMMISSIONER OF THE TREASURY, AND
CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER.

1875

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PREFACE.

FEW ages have been deeper in dispute about religion than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, "Is man immortal, or is he not?" If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements, or trials of skill. In this case, truth, reason, religion, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shown) mere empty sounds, without any meaning in them. But if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eternal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth unestablished, or unawakened, in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity; how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it.

Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest, that souls should not survive! The Heathen world confessed that they rather hoped than firmly believed immortality: and how many Heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel: but by how many is the gospel rejected or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being,

accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded, that most, if not all, our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom. And I am satisfied that men, once thoroughly convinced of their immortality, are not far from being Christians. For it is hard to conceive that a man fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly and impartially inquire after the surest means of escaping one and securing the other. And of such an earnest and impartial inquiry I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall here occur which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments in this, of all points the most important. For as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed for this reason only, viz., because, where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable. And, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

NIGHT VI.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

PART I.

WHERE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, GLORY AND RICHES ARE
PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED.

SHE * (for I know not yet her name in heaven)
Not early, like NARCISSA, left the scene ;
Nor sudden, like PHILANDER. What avail ?
This seeming mitigation but inflames ;
This fancied medicine heightens the disease. 5
The longer known, the closer still she grew ;
And gradual parting is a gradual death.
'T is the grim tyrant's engine, which extorts
By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,
From hardest hearts, confession of distress. 10

O THE long, dark approach through years of pain,
Death's gallery, (might I dare to call it so,)
With dismal doubt and sable terror hung ;
Sick Hope's pale lamp its only glimmering ray !
There Fate my melancholy walk ordain'd, 15
Forbid Self-love itself to flatter there.
How oft I gazed, prophetically sad !
How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles !
In smiles she sunk her grief, to lessen mine.
She spoke me comfort, and increased my pain. 20
Like powerful armies trenching at a town,
By slow and silent, but resistless, sap,

* Referring to Night the Fifth.

In his pale progress gently gaining ground,
 Death urged his deadly siege ; in spite of Art,
 Of all the balmy blessings Nature lends 25
 To succour frail humanity. Ye stars,
 (Not now first made familiar to my sight,
 And thou, O Moon, bear witness ! many a night
 He tore the pillow from beneath my head,
 Tied down my sore attention to the shock, 30
 By ceaseless depredations on a life
 Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post
 Of observation, darker every hour !
 Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,
 And pointed at Eternity below ; 35
 When my soul shudder'd at futurity ;
 When, on a moment's point, the' important die
 Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,
 And turn'd up life ; my title to more woe.*

* In the Preface to the Fourth Night the author reminds his readers, (p. 69,) that in the First Night "three deaths are mentioned ;" that "two only of those three have yet been sung ;" and that "it is uncertain whether Providence or inclination will permit him to go any farther." His "inclination" exhibited some reluctance even to allude, in the Fourth Night, to the slow and lingering decease of his excellent wife, Lady Elizabeth Young. Near the commencement of the Fifth Night, however, a slight reference is made to her Ladyship's brother, the Earl of Lichfield. He is classed among "the wise," whose "assent to the truths" which the poet sung

"Is ample recompence, is more than praise."

"But chiefly thine, O LICHFIELD, nor mistake :
 Think not unIntroduced I force my way ;
 NARCISSA, not unknown, not unallied,
 By virtue or by blood, illustrious youth,
 To thee."

But, at the close of the same Night, in a few brief and abrupt sentences, he pathetically laments, that "the distant train of thought which he had taken to shun his fate," (the mention of her death,) had only served

But why more woe? More comfort let it be.	40
Nothing is dead but that which wish'd to die;	
Nothing is dead but wretchedness and pain;	
Nothing is dead but what encumber'd, gall'd,	
Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from real life.	
Where dwells that wish most ardent of the wise?	45
Too dark the sun to see it; highest stars	
Too low to reach it; Death, great Death alone,	
O'er stars and sun triumphant, lands us there.	
Nor dreadful our transition; though the mind,	
An artist at creating self-alarms,	50
Rich in expedients for inquietude,	
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take	
Death's portrait true? The tyrant never sat.	
Our sketch all random strokes, conjecture all;	
Close shuts the Grave, nor tells one single tale.	55
Death, and his image rising in the brain,	

to drive him the more rapidly upon it; and then adds, as a corollary to the affecting fate of Lysander and Aspasia,

“ Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace.

NARCISSA! Pity bleeds at thought of thee.

Yet thou wast only *near me, not myself.*”

Under the pressure of this his greatest woe, the loss of his better self, all the rest sink into insignificance: Narcissa seems to be still alive, and Philander quite forgotten.

But in the opening verses of this Sixth Night, his full heart found due utterance; and his language exhibits stronger traces of the affectionate husband than of the accomplished poet: it is natural, pathetic, and unaffected, indicative of the sincerest attachment and of the most profound grief. He invokes none of the goddesses, and bestows on her no fictitious title, as he had previously done on her two children, Narcissa and Philander. The description of his own illness in consequence of this severe shock, and of his restoration to health, a “title for more woe;” and the gradual transition from these saddening subjects to the grand illustration of his favourite doctrine of the soul's immortality; are all conceived in the best taste, and expressed in graceful and elegant language.—EDIT.

Bear faint resemblance ; never are alike :
 Fear shakes the pencil ; Fancy loves excess ;
 Dark Ignorance is lavish of her shades :
 And these the formidable picture draw. 60

BUT grant the worst ; 't is past ; new prospects rise,
 And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.
 Far other views our contemplation claim ;
 Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life,
 Views that suspend our agonies in death. 65

Wrapt in the thought of immortality,
 Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought,
 Long life might lapse, age unperceived come on,
 And find the soul unsated with her theme.
 Its *nature, proof, importance*, fire my song. 70

O that my song could emulate my soul !
 Like her, immortal. No !—the soul disdains
 A mark so mean ; far nobler hope inflames ;
 If endless ages can outweigh an hour,
 Let not the laurel, but the palm, inspire. 75

THEY *nature*, Immortality, who knows ?
 And yet who knows it not ? It is but life
 In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,
 And spun for ever ; dipp'd by cruel Fate
 In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle here ! 80

How short our correspondence with the sun,
 And, while it lasts, inglorious ! Our best deeds,
 How wanting in their weight ! Our highest joys,
 Small cordials to support us in our pain,
 And give us strength to suffer. But how great 85

To mingle interests, converse, amities,
 With all the sons of Reason, scatter'd wide
 Through habitable space, wherever born,
 Howe'er endow'd ; to live free citizens
 Of universal nature ; to lay hold, 90

- By more than feeble faith, on the Supreme!
 To call Heaven's rich unfathomable mines
 (Mines which support archangels in their state)
 Our own! to rise in science as in bliss,
 Initiate in the secrets of the skies! 95
 To read Creation, read its mighty plan
 In the bare bosom of the Deity!
 The plan and execution to collate!
 To see, before each glance of piercing thought,
 All cloud, all shadow, blown remote, and leave 100
 No mystery—but that of love Divine,
 Which lifts us on the seraph's flaming wing,
 From earth's Aceldama, this field of blood,
 Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,
 From darkness and from dust, to such a scene; 105
 Love's element, true joy's illustrious home,
 From earth's sad contrast (now deplored) more fair!
 What exquisite vicissitude of fate!
 Bless'd absolution of our blackest hour!
- LORENZO, these are thoughts that make man MAN, 110
 The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.
 How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,
 And every moment fear to sink beneath
 The clod we tread, soon trodden by our sons,
 How great, in the wild whirl of Time's pursuits, 115
 To stop, and pause; involved in high presage,
 Through the long vista of a thousand years,
 To stand contemplating our distant selves,
 As in a magnifying mirror seen,
 Enlarged, ennobled, elevate, Divine! 120
 To prophesy our own futurities,
 To gaze in thought on what all thought transcends!
 To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys
 As far beyond conception as desert,
 Ourselves the' astonish'd talkers, and the tale! 125

LORENZO, swells thy bosom at the thought ?
 The swell becomes thee ; 't is an honest pride.
 Revere thyself,—and yet thyself despise.
 His nature no man can o'er-rate, and none
 Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed, 130
 Nor there be modest where thou shouldst be proud ;
 That almost universal error shun.
 How just our pride, when we behold those heights !
 Not those Ambition paints in air, but those
 Reason points out, and ardent Virtue gains, 135
 And angels emulate. Our pride, how just !
 When mount we ? when these shackles cast ? when quit
 This cell of the creation ? this small nest,
 Stuck in a corner of the universe,
 Wrapp'd up in fleecy cloud and fine-spun air ? 140
 Fine-spun to sense, but gross and feculent
 To souls celestial ; souls ordain'd to breathe
 Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky ;
 Greatly triumphant on Time's farther shore,
 Where Virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears, 145
 While Pomp imperial begs an alms of Peace.

IN empire high, or in proud science deep,
 Ye born of earth, on what can you confer,
 With half the dignity, with half the gain,
 The gust, the glow of rational delight, 150
 As on this theme, which angels praise and share ?
 Man's fates and favours are a theme in heaven.

WHAT wretched repetition cloy us here !
 What periodic potions for the sick,
 Distemper'd bodies, and distemper'd minds ! 155
 In an eternity what scenes shall strike,
 Adventures thicken, novelties surprise !
 What webs of wonder shall unravel there !
 What full day pour on all the paths of Heaven,

And light the' Almighty's footsteps in the deep! 160
 How shall the blessed day of our discharge
 Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of Fate,
 And straighten its inextricable maze!

If inextinguishable thirst in man
 To know, how rich, how full, our banquet there! 165
 There, not the moral world alone unfolds;
 The world material, lately seen in shades,
 And in those shades by fragments only seen,
 And seen those fragments by the labouring eye,
 Unbroken, then, illustrious and entire, 170
 Its ample sphere, its universal frame,
 In full dimensions, swells to the survey,
 And enters, at one glance, the ravish'd sight.

From some superior point, (where, who can tell?
 Suffice it, 't is a point where gods reside,) 175
 How shall the stranger man's illumined eye,
 In the vast ocean of unbounded space,
 Behold an infinite of floating worlds
 Divide the crystal waves of ether pure,
 In endless voyage, without port! The least 180
 Of these disseminated orbs, how great!

Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,
 Huge as Leviathan to that small race,
 Those twinkling multitudes of little life,
 He swallows unperceived! Stupendous these! 185
 Yet what are these stupendous to the whole?
 As particles, as atoms ill-perceived;
 As circulating globules in our veins;
 So vast the plan. Fecundity Divine!
 Exuberant Source! perhaps I wrong thee still. 190

If admiration is a source of joy,
 What transport hence! yet this the least in heaven.
 What this to that illustrious robe He wears

- Who toss'd this mass of wonders from His hand,
 A specimen, an earnest of His power? 195
 'T is to that glory, whence all glory flows,
 As the mead's meanest floweret to the sun
 Which gave it birth. But what this Sun of heaven?
 This bliss supreme of the supremely bless'd?
 Death, only Death, the question can resolve. 200
 By Death, cheap-bought the' ideas of our joy;
 The bare ideas! solid happiness
 So distant from its shadow chased below.
- AND chase we still the phantom through the fire,
 O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death? 205
 And toil we still for sublunary pay,
 Defy the dangers of the field and flood?
 Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,
 Our more than vitals spin (if no regard
 To great futurity) in curious webs 210
 Of subtle thought, and exquisite design,
 (Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly,
 The momentary buzz of vain renown,
 A name, a mortal immortality?
- OR, (meaner still,) instead of grasping air, 215
 For sordid lucre plunge we in the mire?
 Drudge, sweat, through every shame, for every gain,
 For vile contaminating trash; throw up
 Our hope in heaven, our dignity with man,
 And deify the dirt, matured to gold? 220
 Ambition, Avarice! the two demons these,
 Which goad through every slough our human herd,
 Hard travell'd from the cradle to the grave.
 How low the wretches stoop! how steep they climb!
 These demons burn mankind; but most possess 225
 LORENZO'S bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in Time to hide Eternity ?
 And why not in an atom on the shore
 To cover ocean ? or a mote, the sun ?
 Glory and wealth ! have they this blinding power ? 230
 What, if to them I prove LORENZO blind ?
 Would it surprise thee ? Be thou then surprised :
 Thou *neither* know'st : their nature learn from me.

MARK well, as foreign as these subjects seem,
 What close connexion ties them to my theme. 235
 First, what is true ambition ? The pursuit
 Of glory, nothing less than man can share.
 Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,
 As flatulent with fumes of self-applause,
 Their arts and conquests animals might boast, 240
 And claim their laurel crowns as well as we ;
 But not celestial. Here we stand alone ;
 As in our form, distinct, pre-eminent :
 If prone in thought, our stature is our shame,
 And man should blush his forehead meets the skies. 245
 The Visible and Present are for brutes,
 A slender portion, and a narrow bound !
 These Reason, with an energy Divine,
 O'erleaps, and claims the Future and Unseen ;
 The vast Unseen, the Future fathomless ! 250
 When the great soul buoys up to this high point,
 Leaving gross Nature's sediments below,
 Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits
 The sage and hero of the fields and woods,
 Asserts his rank, and rises into man. 255
 This is ambition : this is human fire.

CAN Parts or Place (two bold pretenders !) make
 LORENZO great, and pluck him from the throng ?

GENIUS and Art, Ambition's boasted wings,
 Our boast but ill deserve. A feeble aid ! 260

Dædalian engin'ry ! if these alone
 Assist our flight, Fame's flight is Glory's fall.
 Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er so high,
 Our height is but the gibbet of our name.
 A celebrated wretch when I behold, 265
 When I behold a genius bright and base,
 Of towering talents, and terrestrial aims ;
 Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,
 The glorious fragments of a soul immortal,
 With rubbish mix'd, and glittering in the dust. 270
 Struck at the splendid, melancholy sight,
 At once compassion soft, and envy, rise—
 But wherefore envy ? Talents angel-bright,
 If wanting worth, are shining instruments
 In false Ambition's hand, to finish faults 275
 Illustrious, and give Infamy renown.

GREAT ill is an achievement of great powers :
 Plain Sense but rarely leads us far astray.
 Reason the means, Affections choose our end ;
 Means have no merit, if our end amiss. 280
 If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain ;
 What is a PELHAM's head to PELHAM's heart ?
 Hearts are proprietors of all applause.
 Right ends and means make wisdom ; worldly-wise
 Is but half-witted, at its highest praise. 285

LET Genius then despair to make thee great ;
 Nor flatter Station. What is Station high ?
 'T is a proud mendicant ; it boasts, and begs ;
 It begs an alms of homage from the throng,
 And oft the throng denies its charity. 290
 Monarchs and ministers are awful names ;
 Whoever wear them, challenge our devoir.
 Religion, public order, both exact
 External homage, and a supple knee,

To beings pompously set up, to serve 295
 The meanest slave: *all more* is Merit's due,
 Her sacred and inviolable right;
 Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.
 Our hearts ne'er bow but to superior worth,
 Nor ever fail of their allegiance there. 300
 Fools, indeed, drop the *man* in their account,
 And vote the *mantle* into majesty.
 Let the small savage boast his silver fur;
 His royal robe unborrow'd and unbought,
 His own, descending fairly from his sires. 305
 Shall man be proud to wear his livery,
 And souls in ermine scorn a soul without?
 Can place or lessen us or aggrandize?
 Pigmies are pigmies still, though perch'd on Alps;
 And pyramids are pyramids in vales. 310
 Each man makes his own stature, builds himself:
 Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids;
 Her monuments shall last when Egypt's fall.

Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause?
 The cause is lodged in immortality. 315
 Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for power;
 What station charms thee? I'll install thee there;
 'T is thine. And art thou greater than before?
 Then thou before wast something less than man.
 Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride? 320
 That treacherous pride betrays thy dignity;
 That pride defames humanity, and calls
 The being mean which staffs or strings can raise.
 That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,
 From blindness bold, and towering to the skies. 325
 'T is born of Ignorance, which knows not man
 An angel's second; nor his second long.
 A NERO, quitting his imperial throne,
 And courting glory from the tinkling string,

But faintly shadows an immortal soul, 330
 With empire's self, to pride or rapture fired.
 If nobler motives minister no cure,
 E'en Vanity forbids thee to be vain.

HIGH worth is elevated place : 't is more ;
 It makes the post stand candidate for thee ; 335
 Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man ;
 Though no exchequer it commands, 't is wealth ;
 And though it wears no riband, 't is renown ;
 Renown, that would not quit thee, though disgraced,
 Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile. 340

Other ambition Nature interdicts ;
 Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,
 By pointing at his origin and end ;
 Milk and a swathe, at first, his whole demand ;
 His whole domain, at last, a turf or stone ; 345
 To whom, between, a world may seem too small.

SOULS truly great dart forward, on the wing
 Of just Ambition, to the grand result,
 The curtain's fall ; there see the buskin'd chief
 Unshod behind this momentary scene, 350
 Reduced to his own stature, low or high,
 As vice, or virtue, sinks him, or sublimes ;
 And laugh at this fantastic mummery,
 This antic prelude of grotesque events,
 Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray 355
 A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,
 And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice
 To Christian pride ! which had with horror shock'd
 The darkest Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

O THOU *most Christian** enemy to peace ! 360
 Again in arms ? again provoking Fate ?

* The style and title of the King of France.—EDIT.

That prince, and that alone, is truly great,
 Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheathes ;
 On empire builds what empire far outweighs,
 And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies. 365

WHY *this* so rare ? Because forgot of all
 The day of death ; that venerable day,
 Which sits as judge ; that day which shall pronounce
 On all our days, absolve them or condemn.
 LORENZO, never shut thy thought against it ; 370
 Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room,
 And give it audience in the cabinet.
 That friend consulted (flatteries apart)
 Will tell thee fair if thou art great or mean.

To dote on aught may leave us, or be left,— 375
 Is that ambition ? Then let flames descend,
 Point to the centre their inverted spires,
 And learn humiliation from a soul
 Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.
 Yet these are they the world pronounces wise ; 380
 The world which cancels Nature's right and wrong,
 And casts new wisdom : e'en the grave man lends
 His solemn face to countenance the coin.

Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.
 This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave 385
 To call the wisest *weak*, the richest *poor*,
 The most ambitious *unambitious*, *mean* ;
 In triumph mean, and abject on a throne.

Nothing can make it less than mad in man,
 To put forth all his ardour, all his art, 390
 And give his soul her full unbounded flight,
 But reaching Him who gave her wings to fly.
 When blind Ambition quite mistakes her road,
 And downward pores for that which shines above,
 Substantial happiness, and true renown ; 395

Then, like an idiot, gazing on the brook,
 We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud ;
 At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

AMBITION! powerful source of good and ill!
 Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds, 400
 When disengaged from earth, with greater ease
 And swifter flight, transports us to the skies :
 By toys entangled, or in guilt bemired,
 It turns a curse ; it is our chain and scourge
 In this dark dungeon, where confined we lie, 405
 Close-grated by the sordid bars of sense ;
 All prospect of eternity shut out ;
 And, but for execution, ne'er set free.

WITH error in ambition justly charged,
 Find we LORENZO wiser in his wealth? 410
 What, if thy rental I reform, and draw
 An inventory new to set thee right?
 Where thy true treasure? Gold says, "Not in me ;"
 And, "Not in me," the diamond. Gold is poor ;
 India's insolvent : seek it in thyself ; 415
 Seek in thy naked self, and find it there ;
 In being so descended, form'd, endow'd ;
 Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race!
 Erect, immortal, rational, Divine!
 In senses, which inherit earth and heavens ; 420
 Enjoy the various riches Nature yields ;
 Far nobler! give the riches they enjoy ;
 Give taste to fruits, and harmony to groves,
 Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright sire ;
 Take-in, at once, the landscape of the world, 425
 At a small inlet, which a grain might close,
 And half-create the wondrous world they see.
 Our senses, as our reason, are Divine.
 But for the magic organ's powerful charm,

Earth were a rude, uncolour'd chaos still. 430
 Objects are but the' occasion : ours the' exploit ;
 Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
 Which Nature's admirable picture draws,
 And beautifies Creation's ample dome.
 Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake, 435
 Man makes the matchless image man admires.
 Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,
 (Superior wonders in himself forgot,)
 His admiration waste on objects round,
 When Heaven makes him the soul of all he sees? 440
 Absurd, not rare! so great, so mean, is man!

WHAT wealth in senses such as these! What wealth
 In *Fancy* fired to form a fairer scene
 Than Sense surveys! in *Memory's* firm record!
 Which, should it perish, could this world recall 445
 From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years,
 In colours fresh, originally bright,
 Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!
 What wealth in *Intellect*, that sovereign power,
 Which Sense and *Fancy* summons to the bar; 450
 Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;
 And from the mass those underlings import,
 From their materials sifted, and refined,
 And in Truth's balance accurately weigh'd,
 Forms art and science, government and law; 455
 The solid basis and the beauteous frame,
 The vitals and the grace, of civil life;
 And, manners (sad exception!) set aside,
 Strikes out, with master-hand, a copy fair
 Of His idea, whose indulgent thought, 460
 Long, long ere Chaos teem'd, plann'd human bliss!

WHAT wealth in souls that soar, dive, range around,
 Disdaining limit or from place or time:

And hear at once, in thought extensive, hear
 The' Almighty fiat, and the trumpet's sound! 465
 Bold on Creation's outside walk, and view
 What was, and is, and more than e'er shall be;
 Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,
 Creations new in Fancy's field to rise!
 Souls, that can grasp whate'er the' Almighty made, 470
 And wander wild through things impossible!
 What wealth in faculties of endless growth,
 In quenchless passions violent to crave,
 In liberty to choose, in power to reach,
 And in duration, (how thy riches rise!) 475
 Duration to perpetuate—boundless bliss!

Ask you, what power resides in feeble man
 That bliss to gain? Is Virtue's, then, unknown?
 Virtue, our present peace, our future prize!
 Man's unprecarious, natural estate, 480
 Improvable at will, in Virtue lies;
 Its tenure sure; its income is Divine.

HIGH-BUILT abundance, heap on heap! for what?
 To breed new wants, and beggar us the more!
 Then, make a richer scramble for the throng. 485
 Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long
 Almost by miracle, is tired with play,
 Like rubbish from dislodging engines thrown,
 Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly;
 Fly diverse; fly to foreigners, to foes; 490
 New masters court, and call the former *fool*
 (How justly!) for dependence on their stay.
 Wide scatter, first, our playthings; then our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace?
 Learn, and lament thy self-defeated scheme: 495
 Riches enable to be richer still;

And *richer still* what mortal can resist?
 Thus Wealth (a cruel task-master) enjoins
 New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train!
 And murders Peace, which taught it first to shine. 500
 The poor are half as wretched as the rich,
 Whose proud and painful privilege it is
 At once to bear a double load of woe;
 To feel the stings of Envy and of Want,
 Outrageous Want, both Indies cannot cure. 505

A COMPETENCE is vital to content.
 Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease:
 Sick, or encumber'd, is our happiness.
 A competence is all we can enjoy.
 O be content where Heaven can give no more! 510
 More, like a flash of water from a lock,
 Quickens our spirit's movement for an hour;
 But soon its force is spent, nor rise our joys
 Above our native temper's common stream.
 Hence Disappointment lurks in every prize, 515
 As bees in flowers, and stings us with success.

THE rich man who denies it, proudly feigns,
 Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.
 Much learning shows how little mortals know;
 Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy: 520
 At best it babies us with endless toys,
 And keeps us children till we drop to dust.
 As monkeys at a mirror stand amazed,
 They fail to find what they so plainly see:
 Thus men, in shining riches, see the face 525
 Of Happiness, nor know it is a shade;
 But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,
 And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want!
 Who lives to Nature rarely can be poor; 530

Who lives to Fancy never can be rich.
 Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,
 In debt to Fortune, trembles at her power :
 The man of Reason smiles at her and Death.
 O what a patrimony this! A being 535
 Of such inherent strength and majesty,
 Not worlds possess'd can raise it; worlds destroy'd
 Can't injure; which holds on its glorious course,
 When thine, O Nature! ends; too bless'd to mourn
 Creation's obsequies. What treasure this! 540
 The monarch is a beggar to the man.

IMMORTAL! Ages past, yet nothing gone!
 Morn without eve! a race without a goal,
 Unshorten'd by progression infinite!
 Futurity for ever future! Life 545
 Beginning still where computation ends!
 'T is the description of a Deity!
 'T is the description of the meanest slave :
 The meanest slave darcs, then, LORENZO scorn?
 The meanest slave thy sovereign glory shares. 550
 Proud youth, fastidious of the lower world!
 Man's lawful pride includes humility;
 Stoops to the lowest; is too great to find
 Inferiors : all immortal! brothers all!
 Proprietors eternal of thy love! 555

IMMORTAL! What can strike the sense so strong,
 As this the soul? It thunders to the thought;
 Reason amazes; gratitude o'erwhelms.
 No more we slumber on the brink of fate;
 Roused at the sound, the' exulting soul ascends, 560
 And breathes her native air; an air that feeds
 Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires;
 Quick kindles all that is Divine within us,
 Nor leaves one loitering thought beneath the stars.

HAS not LORENZO'S bosom caught the flame? 565

Immortal! Were but one immortal, how
Would others envy! how would thrones adore!
Because 't is common, is the blessing lost?
How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heaven!

O vain, vain, vain, all else! *Eternity!* 570

A glorious and a needful refuge, that,
From vile imprisonment in abject views.

'T is immortality, 't is that alone,

Amid Life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill. 575

That only, and that amply, this performs,
Lifts us above Life's pains, her joys above;
Their terror those, and these their lustre, lose:

Eternity depending covers all;
Eternity depending all achieves; 580

Sets Earth at distance; casts her into shades;
Blends her distinctions; abrogates her powers:

The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,
Fortune's dread frowns and fascinating smiles,
Make one promiscuous and neglected heap, 585

The man beneath; if I may call him *man*,
Whom immortality's full force inspires.

Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought:
Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,
By minds quite conscious of their high descent, 590

Their present province, and their future prize;
Divinely darting upward every wish,

Warm on the wing, in glorious absence lost!

DOUBT you this truth? Why labours your belief? 595

If Earth's whole orb, by some due-distanced eye,
Were seen at once, her towering Alps would sink,
And levell'd Atlas leave an even sphere.

Thus Earth, and all that earthly minds admire,
Is swallow'd in Eternity's vast round.

To that stupendous view when souls awake, 600
 So large of late, so mountainous to man,
 Time's toys subside ; and equal all below.

ENTHUSIASTIC this ? then all are weak,
 But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height
 Some souls have soar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled : 605
 And all may do what has by man been done.
 Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,
 Boundless, interminable joys can weigh,
 Unraptured, unexalted, uninflamed ?
 What slave, unblest'd, who from to-morrow's dawn 610
 Expects an empire ? He forgets his chain,
 And, throned in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

AND what a sceptre waits us ! what a throne !
 Her own immense appointments to compute,
 Or comprehend her high prerogatives, 615
 In this her dark minority, how toils,
 How vainly pants, the human soul Divine !
 Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy.
 What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss ?

IN spite of all the truths the Muse has sung,* 620
 Ne'er to be prized enough, enough revolved !
 Are there who wrap the world so close about them,
 They see no farther than the clouds ; and dance
 On heedless Vanity's fantastic toe,
 Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career, 625
 Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song ?
 Are there, LORENZO ? is it possible ?
 Are there on earth (let me not call them *men*)
 Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts ;

* In the quarto impressions this line immediately follows,—

“ Truths touching, marvellous, and full of Heaven.”—EDIT.

Unconscious as the mountain of its ore ; 630
 Or rock, of its inestimable gem ?
 When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, these
 Shall know their treasure ; treasure then no more.

ARE there (still more amazing !) who resist
 The rising thought ? who smother, in its birth, 635
 The glorious truth ? who struggle to be brutes ?
 Who through this bosom-barrier burst their way ;
 And, with reversed ambition, strive to sink ?
 Who labour downwards through the' opposing powers
 Of Instinct, Reason, and the World against them, 640
 To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock
 Of endless night, night darker than the grave's ?
 Who fight the proofs of immortality ?
 With horrid zeal and execrable arts,
 Work all their engines, level their black fires, 645
 To blot from man this attribute Divine,
 (Than vital blood far dearer to the wise,)
 Blasphemers, and rank atheists to themselves ?

To contradict them, see all Nature rise !
 What object, what event, the moon beneath, 650
 But argues, or endears, an after-scene ?
 To Reason proves, or weds it to Desire ?
 All things proclaim it needful ; some advance
 One precious step beyond, and prove it sure.
 A thousand arguments swarm round my pen, 655
 From Heaven, and Earth, and Man. Indulge a few,
 By nature, as her common habit, worn ;
 So pressing Providence a truth to teach,
 Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.

THOU ! whose all-providential eye surveys, 660
 Whose hand directs, whose Spirit fills and warms
 Creation, and holds empire far beyond !

- Eternity's Inhabitant august ;
 Of two eternities amazing Lord !
 One past, ere man's or angel's had begun : 665
 Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault
 Thy glorious immortality in man :
 A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,
 Of moment infinite! but relish'd most
 By those who love Thee most, who most adore. 670
- NATURE, Thy daughter, ever-changing birth
 Of Thee the great Immutable, to man
 Speaks wisdom ; is his oracle supreme ;
 And he who most consults her is most wise.
 LORENZO, to this heavenly Delphos haste ; 675
 And come back all-immortal, all-Divine :
 Look Nature through, 't is revolution all ;
 All change, no death. Day follows night ; and night,
 The dying day ; stars rise, and set, and rise ;
 Earth takes the' example. See, the Summer gay, 680
 With her green chaplet and ambrosial flowers,
 Droops into pallid Autumn : Winter grey,
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
 Blows Autumn and his golden fruits away ;
 Then melts into the Spring : soft Spring, with breath 685
 Favonian, from warm chambers of the south
 Recalls the first. All, to re-flourish, fades ;
 As in a wheel, all sinks, to re-ascend :
 Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.
- With this minute distinction, emblems just,— 690
 Nature revolves, but man advances : both
 Eternal ; that a circle, this a line ;
 That gravitates, this soars. The' aspiring Soul,
 Ardent and tremulous, like flame, ascends ;
 Zeal and Humility her wings to heaven. 695
 The world of matter, with its various forms,

All dies into new life. Life, born from Death,
Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
No single atom, once in being, lost,
With change of counsel charges the Most High. 700

WHAT hence infers LORENZO? Can it be?
Matter immortal? And shall *spirit* die?
Above the nobler, shall less noble rise?
Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
No resurrection know? Shall man alone, 705
Imperial man! be sown in barren ground,
Less privileged than grain on which he feeds?
Is man, in whom alone is power to prize
The bliss of being, or with previous pain
Deplore its period, by the spleen of Fate, 710
Severely doom'd Death's single unredeem'd?

IF Nature's *revolution* speaks aloud,
In her *gradation* hear her louder still.
Look Nature through; 't is neat gradation all.
By what minute degrees her scale ascends! 715
Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,
To that above it join'd, to that beneath.
Parts into parts reciprocally shot
Abhor divorce. What love of union reigns!
Here, dormant matter waits a call to life; 720
Half-life, half-death, join there: here, life and sense;
There, sense from reason steals a glimmering ray;
Reason shines out in man. But how preserved
The chain unbroken upward, to the realms
Of incorporeal life? those realms of bliss 725
Where Death hath no dominion? Grant a make
Half-mortal, half-immortal; earthy part,
And part ethereal: grant the soul of man
Eternal; or in man the series ends.
Wide yawns the gap; connexion is no more; 730

Check'd Reason halts ; her next step wants support ;
 Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme ;
 A scheme Analogy pronounced so true :
 Analogy, man's surest guide below.

THUS far all Nature calls on thy belief. 735

And will LORENZO, careless of the call,
 False attestation on all Nature charge,
 Rather than violate his league with Death ?

Renounce his reason, rather than renounce
 The dust beloved, and run the risk of heaven ? 740

O what indignity to deathless souls !
 What treason to the majesty of man !

Of man immortal hear the lofty style :—*
 "If so decreed, the' almighty will be done.

Let earth dissolve, yon ponderous orbs descend, 745

And grind us into dust : the soul is safe ;
 The man emerges ; mounts above the wreck,
 As towering flame from Nature's funeral pyre ;

O'er Devastation, as a gainer, smiles ;
 His charter, his inviolable rights, 750

* The Sixth Night was published in 1743. A few years afterwards the following six lines (a Christian paraphrase of Horace's *Si fractus illabatur orbis, impavidum ferient ruinae, &c.*) were subjected to a remarkable imitation, by the Rev. Charles Wesley, in one of his Hymns descriptive of the *Final Judgment*. I subjoin his paraphrase, and mark the imitations with *italics*.—EDIT.

" Stand the' omnipotent decree :

Jehovah's will be done !

Nature's end we wait to see,

And hear her final groan.

Let this earth dissolve, and blend
 In death the wicked and the just ;

Let those ponderous orbs descend,

And grind us into dust !

" Rests secure the righteous man !

At his Redeemer's beck,

Sure to' emerge, and rise again,

And mount above the wreck.

Lo! the heavenly spirit towers,

Like flame o'er Nature's funeral pyre,

Triumphs in immortal powers,

And claps his wings of fire.

" *Nothing hath the just to lose*

By worlds on worlds destroy'd ;

Far beneath his feet he views,

With smiles, the flaming void."

Well-pleas'd to learn from Thunder's impotence,
Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms."

BUT these chimeras touch not thee, LORENZO !
The glories of the world thy sevenfold shield.
Other ambition than of crowns in air, 755
And superlunary felicities,
Thy bosom warms. I'll cool it, if I can ;
And turn those glories that enchant, against thee.
What ties thee to this life proclaims the next.
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure. 760

COME, my ambitious ! let us mount together,
(To mount, LORENZO never can refuse,)
And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,
Look down on Earth.—What seest thou ? Wondrous things !
Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies. 765
What lengths of labour'd lands ! what loaded seas !
Loaded by man for pleasure, wealth, or war !
Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,
His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.
Nor can the' eternal rocks his will withstand : 770
What levell'd mountains, and what lifted vales !
O'er vales and mountains sumptuous cities swell,
And gild our landscape with their glittering spires.
Some 'mid the wondering waves majestic rise ;
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms. 775
Far greater still ! (what cannot mortal might ?)
See wide dominions ravish'd from the deep :
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.
Or southward turn : to delicate and grand
The finer arts there ripen in the sun. 780
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,
Ascend the skies ! The proud triumphal arch
Shows us half heaven beneath its ample bend.
High through mid-air, here streams are taught to flow ;

Whole rivers, there, laid by in basins, sleep. 785
 Here, plains turn oceans ; there, vast oceans join
 Through kingdoms channell'd deep from shore to shore,
 And changed Creation takes its face from man.
 Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,
 Where fame and empire wait upon the sword? 790
 See fields in blood ; hear naval thunders rise,—
 BRITANNIA'S voice, that awes the world to peace !
 How yon enormous mole projecting breaks
 The mid-sea furious waves ! Their roar amidst,
 Out-speaks the Deity, and says, " O main ! 795
 Thus far, nor farther ! new restraints obey."
 Earth 's disembowell'd ! measured are the skies !
 Stars are detected in their deep recess !
 Creation widens ! vanquish'd Nature yields !
 Her secrets are extorted ! Art prevails ! 800
 What monuments of genius, spirit, power !

AND NOW, LORENZO, raptured at this scene,
 Whose glories render heaven superfluous ! say,
 Whose footsteps these ?—Immortals have been here.
 Could less than souls immortal this have done ? 805
 Earth 's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal,
 And proofs of immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess
 These are Ambition's works ; and these are great :
 But *this* the least immortal souls can do : 810
 Transcend them all.—" But what can these transcend ?"
 Dost ask me, what ?—One sigh for the distress'd.
 " What then for infidels ?"—A deeper sigh.
 'T is moral grandeur makes the mighty man :
 How *little* they who think aught *great* below ! 815
 All our ambitions Death defeats, but one ;
 And that it crowns.—Here cease we ; but, ere long,
 More powerful proof shall take the field against thee,
 Stronger than Death, and smiling at the tomb.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VII.

BEING THE SECOND PART OF

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED :

**CONTAINING THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF
IMMORTALITY.**

PREFACE.

As we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners, of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue, and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange ; it is a subject by far the most interesting and important that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be. Yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase, at this day ; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it, if that opinion which is advanced in the Preface to the preceding Night be just. It is there supposed, that all our infidels, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize, are betrayed into their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom. And the more I consider this point, the more am I persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Though the distrust of a futurity is a strange error, yet it is an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed. For it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there ? There are but two in nature ; but two within the compass of human thought ; and these are,—That either God will not, or cannot, punish. Considering the Divine attributes, the

first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes. And, since omnipotence is as much a Divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish, is as absurd a supposition as the former. God certainly can punish, as long as wicked men exist. In non-existence, therefore, is their only refuge; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish. And strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner almost incredible. And since on this member of their alternative there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock and horror of an immediate and absolute despair.

On reviewing my subject by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclined than ever to pursue it, as it appeared to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages, it is accordingly pursued at large; and some arguments for immortality, new at least to me, are ventured on in them. There, also, the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view than is, I think, to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of Heathen antiquity: what pity it is they are not sincere! If they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider with what contempt and abhorrence their notions would have been received by those whom they so much admire! What degree of contempt and abhorrence would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact,

in my opinion, extremely memorable. Of all their Heathen worthies, Socrates, it is well known, was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed : yet this great master of temper was angry ; and angry at his last hour ; and angry with his friend ; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment ; angry for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising ? What could be the cause ? The cause was for his honour : it was a truly noble, though, perhaps, a too punctilious, regard for immortality ; for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, *where he should deposit his remains*, it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition that he could be so mean as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not immortal.

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

July 7th, 1744.

CONTENTS OF NIGHT VII.

IN the Sixth Night arguments were drawn from Nature, in proof of immortality. Here, others are drawn from Man: from his discontent, p. 168—from his passions and powers, 169—from the gradual growth of reason, 169—from his fear of death, 170—from the nature of hope, 170—and of virtue, 171, &c.—from knowledge, and love, as being the most essential properties of the soul, 175—from the order of creation, 176—from the nature of ambition, 177, &c.—avarice, 180—pleasure, 181.—A digression on the grandeur of the passions, 182.—Immortality alone renders our present state intelligible, 183.—An objection from the Stoics' disbelief of immortality, answered, 184.—Endless questions unresolvable, but on supposition of our immortality, 185, 186.—The natural, most melancholy, and pathetic complaint of a worthy man under the persuasion of no futurity, 187, &c.—The gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation urged home on LORENZO, 192, &c.—The soul's vast importance, 197, &c.—from whence it arises, 200.—The difficulty of being an infidel, 201.—The infamy, 202—the cause, 203—and the character, 203, of an infidel state.—What true free-thinking is, 204, 205.—The necessary punishment of the false, 206.—Man's ruin is from himself, 206.—An infidel accuses himself of guilt and hypocrisy, and that of the worst sort, 207.—His obligation to Christians, 208.—What danger he incurs by virtue, 209.—Vice recommended to him, 209.—His high pretences to virtue and benevolence exploded, 209.—The conclusion, on the nature of faith, 210—reason, 211—and hope, 211—with an apology for this attempt, 212.

NIGHT VII.

BEING THE SECOND PART OF
THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED:

CONTAINING THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE OF
IMMORTALITY.

HEAVEN gives the needful, but neglected, call.
 What day, what hour, but knocks at human hearts,
 To wake the soul to sense of future scenes?
 Deaths stand like Mercurys in every way,
 And kindly point us to our journey's end. 5
 POPE, who couldst make immortals! art thou dead?
 I give thee joy: nor will I take my leave,
 So soon to follow. Man but dives in* death;
 Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise:
 The grave his subterranean road to bliss. 10
 Yes, infinite Indulgence plann'd it so:
 Through various parts our glorious story runs;
 Time gives the preface, endless Age unrolls
 The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.

THIS, Earth and Skies† already have proclaim'd. 15
 The world's a prophecy of worlds to come;
 And who what God foretells (who speaks in things,
 Still louder than in words) shall dare deny?
 If Nature's arguments appear too weak,

* The reading of the early quarto impressions is *at death*; that of the first octavo, in 1749, is *to death*.—EDRR.

† Night the Sixth.

- Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in man. 20
 If man sleeps on, untaught by what he *sees*,
 Can he prove infidel to what he *feels*?
 He whose blind thought futurity denies,
 Unconscious bears, BELLEROPHON! like thee,
 His own indictment; he condemns himself: 25
 Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;
 Or Nature, there, imposing on her sons,
 Has written fables; man was made a lie.
- WHY Discontent for ever harbour'd there?
 Incurable consumption of our peace! 30
 Resolve me, why the cottager and king,—
 He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he
 Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,
 Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,—
 Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh, 35
 In fate so distant, in complaint so near.
- Is it that things terrestrial can't content?
 Deep in rich pasture will thy flocks complain?
 Not so; but to their master is denied
 To share their sweet serene. Man, ill at ease 40
 In this, not his own place, this foreign field,
 Where Nature foddors him with other food
 Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,
 Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,
 Sighs on for something more, when most enjoy'd. 45
- Is Heaven then kinder to thy flocks than thee?
 Not so: thy pasture richer, but remote;
 In part, remote: for that remoter part
 Man bleats from Instinct, though perhaps, debauch'd
 By Sense, his Reason sleeps, nor dreams the cause. 50
 The cause how obvious, when his Reason wakes!
 His grief is but his grandeur in disguise;
 And discontent is immortality.

SHALL sons of Ether, shall the blood of Heaven,
 Set up their hopes on earth, and stable here, 55
 With brutal acquiescence in the mire?
 LORENZO, no! They shall be nobly pain'd ;
 The glorious foreigners, distress'd, shall sigh
 On thrones ; and thou congratulate the sigh :
 Man's misery declares him born for bliss : 60
 His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing,
 And gives the sceptic in his head the lie.

OUR heads, our hearts, our passions, and our powers,
 Speak the same language ; call us to the skies.
 Unripen'd these, in this inclement clime, 65
 Scarce rise above conjecture and mistake ;
 And for this land of trifles those too strong
 Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life :
 What prize on earth can pay us for the storm?
 Meet objects for our passions Heaven ordain'd, 70
 Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
 No fault but in defect. Bless'd Heaven! avert
 A bounded ardour for unbounded bliss!
 O for a bliss unbounded! Far beneath
 A soul immortal is a mortal joy. 75
 Nor are our powers to perish immature ;
 But, after feeble effort here, beneath
 A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,
 Transplanted from this sublunary bed,
 Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom. 80

REASON progressive, Instinct is complete :
 Swift Instinct leaps ; slow Reason feebly climbs.
 Brutes soon their zenith reach ; their little all
 Flows in at once ; in ages they no more
 Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy. 85
 Were man to live coëval with the sun,
 The patriarch pupil would be learning still ;

Yet, dying, leave his lesson half-unlearn't.
 Men perish in advance, as if the sun
 Should set ere noon, in eastern oceans drown'd ; 90
 If fit, with *dim* ILLUSTRIOUS to compare,
 The sun's meridian with the soul of man.
 To man why, step-dame Nature, so severe ?
 Why thrown aside thy master-piece half-wrought,
 While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy ? 95
 Or if abortively poor man must die,
 Nor reach what reach he might, why die in dread ?
 Why cursed with foresight, wise to misery ?
 Why of his prond prerogative the prey ?
 Why less pre-eminent in rank than pain ? 100
 His immortality alone can tell ;
 Full ample fund to balance all amiss,
 And turn the scale in favour of the just !

His immortality alone can solve 105
 That darkest of enigmas, human Hope ;
 Of all the darkest, if at death we die.
 Hope, eager Hope, the' assassin of our joy,
 All present blessings treading under foot,
 Is scarce a milder tyrant than Despair.
 With no past toils content, still planning new, 110
 Hope turns us o'er to Death alone for ease.
 Possession, why more tasteless than pursuit ?
 Why is a wish far dearer than a crown ?
 That wish accomplish'd, why the grave of bliss ?
 Because, in the great future buried deep, 115
 Beyond our plans of empire and renown,
 Lies all that man with ardour should pursue ;
 And HE who made him, bent him to the right.

MAN's heart the' ALMIGHTY to the future sets,
 By secret and inviolable springs ; 120
 And makes his hope his sublunary joy.

Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry still :
 " More, more ! " the glutton cries : for something new
 So rages Appetite, if man can't mount,
 He will descend. He starves on the possess'd. 125
 Hence, the world's master, from Ambition's spire,
 In Caprea plunged, and dived beneath the brute.
 In that rank sty why wallow'd Empire's son
 Supreme? Because he could no higher fly ;
 His riot was Ambition in despair. 130

Old Rome consulted birds ; LORENZO ! thou,
 With more success, the flight of Hope survey ;
 Of restless Hope, for ever on the wing.
 High-perch'd o'er every thought that falcon sits,
 To fly at all that rises in her sight ; 135
 And, never stooping but to mount again
 Next moment, she betrays her aim's mistake,
 And owns her quarry lodged beyond the grave.

THERE should it fail us, (it must fail us there,
 If *being* fails,) more mournful riddles rise, 140
 And Virtue vies with Hope in mystery.
 Why Virtue? where its praise, its *being* fled ?
 Virtue is true self-interest pursued :
 What true self-interest of quite mortal man ?
 To close with all that makes him happy here. 145
 If Vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,
 Then Vice is Virtue ; 't is our sovereign good.
 In self-applause is Virtue's golden prize ;
 No self-applause attends it on thy scheme.
 Whence self-applause? From conscience of the right. 150
 And what is right but means of happiness ?
 No means of happiness when Virtue yields :
 That basis failing, falls the building too,
 And lays in ruin every virtuous joy.

THE rigid guardian of a blameless heart, 155
 So long revered, so long reputed wise,
 Is weak ; with rank knight-errantries o'er-run.
 Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams
 Of self-exposure, laudable and great,
 Of gallant enterprise, and glorious death ? 160
Die for thy country ?—Thou romantic fool !
 Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink.
Thy country ! what to thee ?—The Godhead, what,
 (I speak with awe !) though He should bid thee bleed ?*
 If, with thy blood, thy final hope is spilt, 165
 Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow,
 Be deaf ; preserve thy being ; disobey.

NOR is it disobedience : know, LORENZO !
 Whate'er the' ALMIGHTY's subsequent command,
 His first command is this :—" Man, love thyself." 170
 In this alone, free-agents are not free.
 Existence is the basis, bliss the prize :
 If Virtue costs existence, 't is a crime,
 Bold violation of our law supreme,
 Black suicide ; though nations, which consult 175
 Their gain at thy expense, resound applause.

SINCE Virtue's recompence is doubtful here,
 If man dies wholly, well may we demand,
 Why is man suffer'd to be good in vain ?
 Why, to be good in vain, is man enjoy'd ? 180
 Why, to be good in vain, is man betray'd ?
 Betray'd by traitors lodged in his own breast,
 By sweet complacencies from Virtue felt ?
 Why whispers Nature lies on Virtue's part ?

* In the early impressions, these two lines read thus,—

" *Thy country ! what to thee ? (I speak with awe,)*
The Godhead, what ? though He should bid thee bleed ?"—EDIT.

Or if blind Instinct (which assumes the name
Of sacred Conscience) plays the fool in man,
Why Reason made accomplice in the cheat?
Why are the wisest loudest in her praise?
Can man by Reason's beam be led astray?
Or, at his peril, imitate his God? 190
Since Virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,
Or both are true, or man survives the grave.

OR man survives the grave, or own, LORENZO,
Thy boast supreme a wild absurdity.
Dauntless thy spirit: cowards are thy scorn. 195
Grant man immortal, and thy scorn is just.
The man immortal, rationally brave,
Dares rush on death—because he cannot die.
But if man loses all when life is lost,
He lives a coward, or a fool expires. 200
A daring infidel, (and such there are,
From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
Or pure heroic defect of thought,
Of all Earth's madmen, most deserves a chain.

WHEN to the grave we follow the renown'd 205
For Valour, Virtue, Science, all we love,
And all we praise; for Worth, whose noon-tide beam,
Enabling us to think in higher style,
Mends our ideas of ethereal powers;
Dream we that lustre of the moral world 210
Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?
Why was he wise to know, and warm to praise,
And strenuous to transcribe in human life,
The Mind ALMIGHTY? Could it be, that Fate,
Just when the lineaments began to shine, 215
And dawn the DEITY, should snatch the draught,
With night eternal blot it out, and give
The Skies alarm, lest angels too might die?

If human souls, why not angelic too
 Extinguish'd ? and a solitary God, 220
 O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from His throne ?
 Shall we this moment gaze on GOD in man ?
 The next, lose man for ever in the dust ?
 From dust we disengage, or man mistakes ;
 And there, where least his judgment fears a flaw. 225
 Wisdom and Worth how boldly he commends !
 Wisdom and Worth are sacred names ; revered
 Where not embraced ; applauded, deified !
 Why not compassion'd too ? If spirits die,
 Both are calamities ; inflicted both 230
 To make us but more wretched : Wisdom's eye
 Acute, for what ? To spy more miseries ;
 And Worth, so recompensed, new-points their stings.
 Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,
 And Worth exalted humbles us the more. 235
 Thou wilt not patronize a scheme that makes
 Weakness and Vice the refuge of mankind.

" HAS Virtue, then, no joys ?"—Yes, joys dear-bought.
 Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state
 Virtue and Vice are at eternal war. 240
 Virtue's a combat ; and who fights for nought,
 Or for precarious or for small reward ?
 Who Virtue's self-reward so loud resound,
 Would take degrees *angelic* here below,
 And Virtue, while they compliment, betray, 245
 By feeble motives and unfaithful guards.
 The crown, the' unfading crown, her soul inspires :
 'T is that, and that alone, can countervail
 The Body's treacheries, and the World's assaults :
 On Earth's poor pay our famish'd Virtue dies ! 250
 Truth incontestable, in spite of all
 A BAYLE has preach'd, or a VOLTAIRE believed !

- IN man, the more we dive, the more we see
 Heaven's signet stamping an immortal make.
 Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base 255
 Sustaining all, what find we? Knowledge, love.
 As light and heat essential to the sun,
 These to the soul. And why, if souls expire?
 How little lovely here! How little known!
 Small knowledge we dig up with endless toil; 260
 And love unfeign'd may purchase perfect hate.
 Why starved, on earth, our angel-appetites,
 While brutal are indulged their fulsome fill?
 Were then capacities Divine conferr'd,
 As a mock diadem, in savage sport, 265
 Rank insult of our pompous poverty,
 Which reaps but pain from seeming claims so fair!
 In future age lies no redress? and shuts
 Eternity the door on our complaint?
 If so, for what strange ends were mortals made! 270
 The worst to wallow, and the best to weep;
 The man who merits most, must most complain.
 Can we conceive a disregard in Heaven,
 What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?
- THIS cannot be. To love, and know, in man 275
 Is boundless appetite, and boundless power:
 And these demonstrate boundless objects too.
 Objects, powers, appetites, Heaven suits in all;
 Nor, Nature through, e'er violates this sweet,
 Eternal concord on her tuneful string. 280
 Is man the sole exception from her laws?
 Eternity struck off from human hope,
 (I speak with truth, but veneration too)
 Man is a monster, the reproach of Heaven,
 A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud 285
 On Nature's beauteous aspect; and deforms,
 (Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.

If such is man's allotment, what is Heaven?
Or own the soul immortal, or blaspheme.

- OR own the soul immortal, or invert 290
All order. Go, mock-majesty! go, man!
And bow to thy superiors of the stall;
Through every scene of sense superior far:
They graze the turf untill'd; they drink the stream
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unembitter'd 295
With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs;
Mankind's peculiar! Reason's precious dower!
No foreign clime they ransack for their robes;
Nor brothers cite to the litigious bar.
Their good is good entire, unmix'd, unmarr'd; 300
They find a paradise in every field,
On boughs forbidden, where no curses hang:
Their ill no more than strikes the sense; unstretch'd
By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:
When the worst comes, it comes unfear'd; one stroke 305
Begins and ends their woe: they die but once;
Bless'd, incommunicable privilege! for which
Proud man, who rules the globe, and reads the stars,
Philosopher or hero, sighs in vain.
- ACCOUNT for this prerogative in brutes. 310
No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,
But what beams on it from eternity.
O sole and sweet solution! that unties
The difficult, and softens the severe;
The cloud on Nature's beauteous face dispels; 315
Restores bright order; casts the brute beneath;
And re-enthrones us in supremacy
Of joy, e'en here. Admit immortal life,
And Virtue is knight-errantry no more:
Each Virtue brings in hand a golden dower, 320
Far richer in reversion; Hope exults,

And, though much bitter in our cup is thrown,
 Predominates, and gives the taste of heaven.
 O wherefore is the DEITY so kind ?
 Astonishing beyond astonishment ! 325
 Heaven our reward—for heaven enjoy'd below.

STILL unsubdued thy stubborn heart ?—for there
 The traitor lurks, who doubts the truth I sing.
 Reason is guiltless ! Will alone rebels.
 What, in that stubborn heart if I should find 330
 New, unexpected witnesses against thee ?
 Ambition, Pleasure, and the Love of Gain !
 Canst thou suspect that these, which make the Soul
 The slave of earth, should own her heir of heaven ?
 Canst thou suspect, what makes us disbelieve 335
 Our immortality, should prove it sure ?

FIRST, then, Ambition summon to the bar.
 Ambition's "shame, extravagance, disgust,
 And inextinguishable nature," speak.
 Each much deposes : hear them in their turn. 340

THY soul, how passionately fond of Fame !
 How anxious that fond passion to conceal !
 We blush, detected in designs on praise,
 Though for best deeds, and from the best of men ;
 And why ? Because immortal. Art Divine 345
 Has made the body tutor to the soul ;
 Heaven kindly gives our blood a moral flow ;
 Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there
 Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,
 Which stoops to court a character from man ; 350
 While o'er us in tremendous judgment sit
 Far more than man, with endless praise and blame.

AMBITION'S boundless appetite out-speaks
 The verdict of its shame. When souls take fire

At high presumptions of their own desert, 355
 One age is poor applause; the mighty shout,
 The thunder by the living few begun,
 Late time must echo; worlds unborn, resound.
 We wish our names eternally to live :
 Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human thought 360
 Had not our natures been eternal too.
 Instinct points out an interest in hereafter ;
 But our blind Reason sees not where it lies ;
 Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

FAME is the shade of immortality, 365
 And in itself a shadow. Soon as caught,
 Contemn'd; it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.
 Consult the' ambitious,—'t is ambition's cure.
 "And is this all?" cried CÆSAR, at his height,
 Disgusted. This third proof Ambition brings 370
 Of immortality: The first in fame,
 Observe him near, your envy will abate :
 Shamed at the disproportion vast between
 The passion and the purchase, he will sigh
 At *such* success, and blush at his renown. 375
 And why? Because far richer prize invites
 His heart; far more illustrious glory calls ;
 It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

AND can Ambition a fourth proof supply ?
 It can, and stronger than the former three ; 380
 Yet quite o'erlook'd by some reputed wise.
 Though disappointments in ambition pain,
 And though success disgusts, yet still, LORENZO !
 In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts ;
 By Nature planted for the noblest ends. 385
 Absurd the famed advice to PYRRHUS given,
 More praised than ponder'd ; specious, but unsound :
 Sooner that hero's sword the world had quell'd,

- Than Reason his ambition. Man must soar.
 An obstinate activity within, 390
 An insuppressive spring, will toss him up,
 In spite of Fortune's load. Not kings alone,
 Each villager has his ambition too ;
 No sultan prouder than his fetter'd slave.
 Slaves build their little Babylons of straw, 395
 Echo the proud Assyrian in their hearts,
 And cry, " Behold the wonders of my might !"
 And why ? Because immortal as their lord :
 And souls immortal must for ever heave
 At something great ; the glitter, or the gold ; 400
 The praise of mortals, or the praise of Heaven.
- NOR absolutely vain is human praise,
 When human is supported by Divine.
 I 'll introduce LORENZO to himself :
 Pleasure and Pride (bad masters) share our hearts. 405
 As Love of Pleasure is ordain'd to guard
 And feed our bodies, and extend our race ;
 The Love of Praise is planted to protect
 And propagate the glories of the mind.
 What is it but the Love of Praise inspires, 410
 Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts,
 Earth's happiness ? From *that* the delicate,
 The grand, the marvellous, of civil life.
 Want and Convenience, under-workers, lay
 The basis, on which Love of Glory builds. 415
 Nor is thy life, O Virtue ! less in debt
 To Praise, thy secret stimulating friend.
 Were men not proud, what merit should we miss !
 Pride made the virtues of the Pagan world.
 Praise is the salt that seasons *right* to man, 420
 And whets his appetite for moral good.
 Thirst of Applause is Virtue's second guard ;
 Reason her first : but Reason wants an aid ;

Our private Reason is a flatterer ;
 Thirst of Applause calls Public Judgment in, 425
 To poise our own, to keep an even scale,
 And give endanger'd Virtue fairer play.

HERE a fifth proof arises, stronger still :
 Why this so nice construction of our hearts ;
 These delicate moralities of Sense ; 430
 This constitutional reserve of aid
 To succour Virtue, when our Reason fails ;
 If Virtue—kept alive by care and toil,
 And oft the mark of injuries on earth,
 When labour'd to maturity, (its bill 435
 Of disciplines and pains unpaid,)—must die ?
 Why freighted rich to dash against a rock ?
 Were man to perish when most fit to live,
 O how misspent were all these stratagems,
 By skill Divine inwoven in our frame ! 440
 Where are Heaven's holiness and mercy fled ?
 Laughs Heaven at once at Virtue and at man ?
 If not, why that discouraged, this destroy'd ?

THUS far Ambition. What says Avarice ?
 This her chief maxim, which has long been thine : 445
 "The wise and wealthy are the same." I grant it.
 To store up treasure with incessant toil,—
 This is man's province, this his highest praise,
 To this great end keen Instinct stings him on.
 To guide that Instinct, Reason ! is thy charge ; 450
 'T is thine to tell us where true treasure lies :
 But, Reason failing to discharge her trust,
 Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,
 A blunder follows ; and blind Industry,
 Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course, 455
 (The course where stakes of more than gold are won,)
 O'erloading, with the cares of distant age,

The jaded spirits of the present hour,
Provides for an eternity below.

“THOU shalt not covet,” is a wise command ; 460
But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys :
Look farther, the command stands quite reversed,
And avarice is a virtue most Divine.
Is faith a refuge for our happiness ?
Most sure. And is it not for reason too ? 465
Nothing this world unriddles, but the next.
Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain ?
From inextinguishable life in man.
Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the skies,
Had wanted wing to fly so far in guilt. 470
Sour grapes, I grant, ambition, avarice ;
Yet still their root is immortality.
These its wild growths so bitter, and so base,
(Pain and reproach !) Religion can reclaim,
Refine, exalt, throw down their poisonous lee, 475
And make them sparkle in the bowl of bliss.

SEE, the third witness laughs at bliss remote,
And falsely promises an Eden here :
Truth she shall speak for once, though prone to lie,
A common cheat, and Pleasure is her name. 480
To Pleasure never was LORENZO deaf ;
Then hear her now, now first thy real friend.

SINCE Nature made us not more fond than proud
Of happiness, (whence hypocrites in joy,
Makers of mirth, artificers of smiles !) 485
Why should the joy most poignant Sense affords
Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride ?—
Those heaven-born blushes tell us man descends,
E'en in the zenith of his earthly bliss.
Should Reason take her infidel repose, 490

This honest instinct speaks our lineage high :
 This instinct calls on darkness to conceal
 Our rapturous relation to the stalls.
 Our glory covers us with noble shame,
 And he that 's unconfounded is unmann'd. 495
 The man that blushes is not quite a brute.
 Thus far with thee, LORENZO, will I close :—
 Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made ;
 But pleasure full of glory as of joy ;
 Pleasure, which neither blushes nor expires. 500

THE witnesses are heard ; the cause is o'er ;
 Let Conscience file the sentence in her court,
 Dearer than deeds that half a realm convey :
 Thus, seal'd by Truth, the' authentic record runs :—

" KNOW, all ; know, infidels,—unapt to know ! 505
 'T is immortality your nature solves ;
 'T is immortality deciphers man,
 And opens all the mysteries of his make.
 Without it, half his instincts are a riddle ;
 Without it, all his virtues are a dream. 510
 His very crimes attest his dignity.
 His sateless thirst of pleasure, gold, and fame,
 Declares him born for blessings infinite :
 What less than infinite makes un-absurd
 Passions, which all on earth but more inflames ? 515
 Fierce passions, so mismeasured to this scene,
 Stretch'd out, like eagles' wings, beyond our nest,
 Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
 For earth too large, presage a nobler flight,
 And evidence our title to the skies." 520

YE gentle theologues of calmer kind !
 Whose constitution dictates to your pen,
 Who, cold yourselves, think ardour comes from hell !

Think not our passions from Corruption sprung,
 Though to Corruption now they lend their wings; 525
 That is their mistress, not their mother. All
 (And justly) Reason deem Divine: I see,
 I feel a grandeur in the Passions too,
 Which speaks their high descent, and glorious end;
 Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire. 530
 In Paradise itself they burnt as strong,
 Ere ADAM fell, though wiser in their aim.
 Like the proud Eastern, struck by Providence,
 What, though our passions are run mad, and stoop,
 With low terrestrial appetite, to graze 535
 On trash, on toys, dethroned from high desire?
 Yet still, through their disgrace, no feeble ray
 Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell:
 But these (like that fallen monarch when reclaim'd)
 When Reason moderates the rein aright, 540
 Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,
 Where once they soar'd illustrious; ere seduced,
 By wanton EVE's debauch, to stroll on earth,
 And set the sublunary world on fire.

BUT grant their frenzy lasts: their frenzy fails 545
 To disappoint one providential end,
 For which Heaven blew up ardour in our hearts:*
 Were Reason silent, boundless Passion speaks
 A future scene of boundless objects too,
 And brings glad tidings of eternal day. 550
Eternal day! 'T is that enlightens all;
 And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it sure.
 Consider man as an immortal being,
 Intelligible all; and all is great;
 A crystalline transparency prevails, 555

* This line was first introduced into the octavo edition, 1749; and has been retained in all subsequent impressions.—EDIT.

And strikes full lustre through the human sphere :
 Consider man as mortal, all is dark,
 And wretched ; Reason weeps at the survey.

THE learn'd LORENZO cries, " And let her weep,—
 Weak, modern Reason ! Ancient times were wise. 560
 Authority, that venerable guide,
 Stands on my part : the famed Athenian Porch
 (And who for wisdom so renown'd as they ?)
 Denied this immortality to man."
 I grant it ; but affirm, they proved it too. 565
 A riddle this !—Have patience ; I'll explain.

WHAT noble vanities, what moral flights,
 Glittering through their romantic wisdom's page,
 Make us, at once, despise them, and admire !
 Fable is flat to these high-season'd sires ; 570
 They leave the' extravagance of song below.
 "Flesh shall not feel ; or, feeling, shall enjoy
 The dagger or the rack ; to them alike
 A bed of roses, or the burning bull."
 In men exploding all beyond the grave, 575
 Strange doctrine, this !—As doctrine it was strange ;
 But not, as prophecy ; for such it proved,
 And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd :
 They feign'd a firmness Christians need not feign.
 The Christian truly triumph'd in the flame ; 580
 The Stoic saw, in double wonder lost,
 (Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,)
 To find the bold adventures of his thought
 Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain.

WHENCE, then, those thoughts ? those towering thoughts that
 flew 585
 Such monstrous heights ?—From instinct and from pride.
 The glorious instinct of a deathless soul,

Confusedly conscious of her dignity,
 Suggested truths they could not understand.
 In Lust's dominion, and in Passion's storm, 590
 Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay :
 (As light in chaos, glimmering through the gloom :)
 Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,
 Pleased Pride proclaim'd what Reason disbelieved.
 Pride, like the Delphic priestess, with a swell, 595
 Raved nonsense, destined to be future sense,
 When life immortal in full day should shine,
 And death's dark shadows fly the gospel sun.*
 They spoke what nothing but immortal souls
 Could speak ; and thus the truth they question'd, proved.

CAN then absurdities, as well as crimes, 601
 Speak man immortal ? All things speak him so.
 Much has been urged ; and dost thou call for more ?
 Call ; and with endless questions be distress'd,
 All unresolvable, if earth is all. 605

" WHY life, a moment ? infinite, desire ?
 Our wish, eternity ? our home, the grave ?
 Heaven's promise dormant lies in human hope ;
 Who wishes life immortal, proves it too.
 Why happiness pursued, though never found ? 610
 Man's thirst of happiness declares *It is* ;
 (For Nature never gravitates to nought ;)
 That thirst unquench'd declares, *It is not here.*
 My LUCIA, thy CLARISSA, call to thought.
 Why cordial friendship riveted so deep, 615
 (As hearts, to pierce at first, at parting rend,)
 If friend and friendship vanish in an hour ?
 Is not this Torment in the mask of Joy ?
 Why by Reflection marr'd the joys of Sense ?

* This line occurs first in the octavo impression of 1749.—EDIT.

Why Past and Future preying on our hearts, 620
 And putting all our present joys to death?
 Why labours Reason? Instinct were as well;
 Instinct, far better; what can choose, can err:
 O how *infallible* the thoughtless brute!
 'T were well His Holiness* were half as sure. 625
 Reason with Inclination why at war?
 Why sense of guilt? Why Conscience up in arms?"

CONSCIENCE of guilt is prophecy of pain,
 And bosom-counsel to decline the blow.
 Reason with Inclination ne'er had jarr'd. 630
 If nothing future paid forbearance here.
 Thus on:—these, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,
 All promise, some insure, a second scene;
 Which, were it doubtful, would be dearer far
 Than all things else most certain; were it false, 635
 What truth on earth so precious as the lie?
 This world it gives us, let what will ensue;
 This world it gives, in that high cordial, hope;
 The future of the present is the soul:
 How this life groans when sever'd from the next! 640
 Poor, mutilated wretch, that disbelieves!
 By dark distrust, his being, cut in two,
 In both parts perishes; life void of joy,
 Sad prelude of eternity in pain!

COULDEST thou persuade me the next life could fail 645
 Our ardent wishes, how should I pour out
 My bleeding heart in anguish, new as deep!
 O with what thoughts thy hope, and my despair,
 Abhor'd ANNIHILATION, blasts the soul,
 And wide extends the bounds of human woe! 650

* An allusion to the Romish doctrine of the Pope's infallibility.—
 EDIT.

Could I believe LORENZO's system true,*
In this black channel would my ravings run :—

“ GRIEF from the future borrow'd peace, ere-while.
The future vanish'd, and the present pain'd !
Strange import of unprecedented ill ! 655
Fall, how profound ! Like LUCIFER's, the fall !
Unequal fate : his fall, without his guilt !
From where fond Hope built her pavilion high,
The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once
To night, to nothing ! darker still than night. 660
If 't was a dream, why wake me, my worst foe ?
LORENZO ! boastful of the name of friend ! *
O for delusion ! O for error still !
Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant
A thinking being in a world like this, 665
Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite,
More cursed than at the fall ?—The sun goes out !
The thorns shoot up ! What thorns in every thought !
Why sense of better ? It embitters worse.
Why sense ? why life, if but to sigh, then sink 670
To what I was ? Twice nothing ! and much woe !
Woe from Heaven's bounties ! woe from what was wont
To flatter most,—high intellectual powers.

“ *Thought, virtue, knowledge !* blessings, by thy scheme
All poison'd into pains. First, knowledge, once 675
My soul's ambition, now her greatest dread.
To know myself, true wisdom ? No, to shun
That shocking science. Parent of despair,
Avert thy mirror ! if I see, I die.

“ *Know my Creator ?* Climb His bless'd abode 680
By painful speculation, pierce the veil,

* This line first occurs in the octavo impression of 1749.—EDIT.

Dive in His nature, read His attributes,
 And gaze in admiration—on a foe,
 Obtruding life, withholding happiness ?
 From the full rivers that surround His throne, 685
 Not letting fall one drop of joy on man :
 Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease
 To curse his birth, nor envy reptiles more !
 Ye sable clouds, ye darkest shades of night !
 Hide Him, for ever hide Him, from my thought, 690
 Once all my comfort, source and soul of joy !
 Now leagued with furies, and with thee * against me.†

“ *Know His achievements ? Study His renown ?*
 Contemplate this amazing universe,
 Dropp'd from His hand, with miracles replete ?— 695
 For what ? 'Mid miracles of nobler name,
 To find one miracle of misery ?
 To find the being, which alone can know
 And praise His works, a blemish on His praise ?
 Through Nature's ample range, in thought, to stroll, 700
 And start at man, the single mourner there,
 Breathing high hope, chain'd down to pangs and death ?

“ *KNOWING is suffering : and shall Virtue share*
The sigh of Knowledge ?— Virtue shares the sigh.
 By straining up the steep of excellent, 705
 By battles fought, and from Temptation won,
 What gains she, but the pang of seeing worth,
 Angelic worth, soon shuffled in the dark
 With every vice, and swept to brutal dust ?
 Merit is madness ; virtue is a crime ; 710
 A crime to Reason, if it costs us pain

* LORENZO.

† In the first quarto impression, another line followed :—

“ Thee, mankind's friend and blackest foe ! ”—EDIT.

Unpaid : what pain, amidst a thousand more,
 To think the most abandon'd, after days
 Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death
 As soft a pillow, nor make fouler clay! 715

"*Duty! Religion!*—These, our duty done,
 Imply reward. Religion is mistake.
 Duty!—There's none, but to repel the cheat.
 Ye cheats, away! ye daughters of my Pride!
 Who feign yourselves the favourites of the Skies: 720
 Ye towering hopes, abortive energies!
 That toss and struggle in my lying breast,
 To scale the skies, and build presumptions there,
 As I were heir of an eternity.

Vain, vain ambitions! trouble me no more. 725

Why travel far in quest of sure defeat?

As bounded as my being, be my wish.

All is inverted, Wisdom is a fool.

Sense! take the rein; blind Passion! drive us on;

And, Ignorance! befriend us on our way; 730

Ye new, but truest patrons of our peace!

Yes; give the Pulse full empire; live the Brute,

Since as the Brute we die. The sum of man,

Of godlike man, to revel and to rot!

"But not on equal terms with other brutes: 735

Their revels a more poignant relish yield,

And safer too; they never poisons choose.

Instinct, than Reason, makes more wholesome meals,

And sends all-marring Murmur far away.

For sensual life, they best philosophize; 740

Theirs that serene the sages sought in vain:

'T is man alone expostulates with Heaven;

His all the power, and all the cause, to mourn.

Shall human eyes alone dissolve in tears?

And bleed in anguish none but human hearts? 745

The wide-stretch'd realm of intellectual woe,
 Surpassing sensual far, is all our own.
 In life so fatally distinguish'd, why
 Cast in one lot, confounded, lump'd in death?

"ERE yet in being, was mankind in guilt? 750
 Why thunder'd this peculiar clause against us,
All-mortal, and all-wretched?—Have the Skies
 Reasons of state, their subjects may not scan,
 Nor humbly reason when they sorely sigh?
All-mortal, and all-wretched!—'T is too much; 755
 Unparallel'd in Nature: 't is too much
 On being *unrequested* at Thy hands,
 OMNIPOTENT! for I see nought but Power.

"AND why see that? Why Thought? To toil and eat,
 Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought. 760
 What superfluities are reasoning souls!
 O give eternity, or thought destroy!—
 But without thought our curse were half unfelt;
 Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart;
 And therefore 't is bestow'd. I thank thee, Reason, 765
 For aiding Life's too small calamities,
 And giving being to the dread of Death!
 Such are thy bounties!—Was it then too much
 For me to trespass on the brutal rights?
 Too much for Heaven to make one emmet more? 770
 Too much for Chaos to permit my mass
 A longer stay with essences unwrought,
 Unfashion'd, untormented into man?
 Wretched preferment to this round of pains!
 Wretched capacity of frenzy, *Thought!* 775
 Wretched capacity of dying, *Life!*
Life, Thought, Worth, Wisdom, all (O foul revolt!)
 Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.

"DEATH, then, has changed its nature too. O Death,
 Come to my bosom, thou best gift of Heaven! 780
 Best friend of man! since man is MAN no more.
 Why in this thorny wilderness so long,
 Since there's no Promised Land's ambrosial bower,
 To pay me with its honey for my stings?
 If needful to the selfish schemes of Heaven 785
 To sting us sore, why mock'd our misery?
 Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads?
 Why this illustrious canopy display'd?
 Why so magnificently lodged Despair?
 At stated periods, sure-returning, roll 790
 These glorious orbs, that mortals may compute
 Their length of labours and of pains, nor lose
 Their misery's full measure?—Smiles with flowers,
 And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming earth,
 That man may languish in luxurious scenes, 795
 And in an Eden mourn his wither'd joys?
 Claim Earth and Skies man's admiration, due
 For such delights? Bless'd animals! too wise
 To wonder, and too happy to complain!

"OUR doom decreed demands a mournful scene: 800
 Why not a dungeon dark for the condemn'd?
 Why not the dragon's subterranean den,
 For man to howl in? Why not his abode
 Of the same dismal colour with his fate?
 A Thebes, a Babylon, at vast expense 805
 Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders,
 As congruous, as for man this lofty dome,
 Which prompts proud Thought, and kindles high Desire;
 If, from her humble chamber in the dust,
 While proud Thought swells, and high Desire inflames,
 The poor worm calls us for her inmates there; 811
 And, round us, Death's inexorable hand
 Draws the dark curtain close; undrawn no more.

" *Undrawn no more!*—Behind the cloud of Death,
 Once, I beheld a sun; a sun which gilt 815
 That sable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold :
 How the grave 's alter'd ! fathomless as hell,
 A real hell to those who dreamt of heaven !
 ANNIHILATION ! how it yawns before me !
 Next moment I may drop from thought, from sense, 820
 The privilege of angels and of worms,
 An outcast from existence ! and this spirit,
 This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,
 This particle of energy Divine,
 Which travels Nature, flies from star to star, 825
 And visits gods, and emulates their powers,
 For ever is extinguish'd. Horror ! Death !
 Death of that death I fearless once survey'd !
 When horror universal shall descend,
 And Heaven's dark concave urn all human race, 830
 On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,
 How just this verse, this monumental sigh !"

*Beneath the lumber of demolish'd worlds,
 Deep in the rubbish of the general wreck,
 Swept ignominious to the common mass 835
 Of matter never dignified with life,
 Here lie proud Rationals, the sons of Heaven !
 The lords of Earth, the property of worms !
 Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow !
 Who lived in terror, and in pangs expired ! 840
 All gone to rot in chaos ; or to make
 Their happy transit into blocks or brutes,
 Nor longer sully their CREATOR'S name.*

LORENZO ! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce.
 Just is this history ? If such is man, 845
 Mankind's historian, though Divine, might weep :
 And dares LORENZO smile ?—I know thee proud :

For once let Pride befriend thee : Pride looks pale
 At such a scene, and sighs for something more.
 Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays, 850
 And art thou then a shadow ? less than shade ?
 A nothing ? less than nothing ? To have been,
 And not to be, is lower than unborn.
 Art thou ambitious ? Why then make the worm
 Thine equal ? Runs thy taste of pleasure high ? 855
 Why patronize sure death of every joy ?
 Charm riches ? Why choose beggary in the grave,
 Of every hope a bankrupt, and for ever ?
 Ambition, Pleasure, Avarice, persuade thee
 To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth, 860
 They * lately proved, thy soul's supreme desire.

WHAT art thou made of ? Rather, how unmade ?
 Great Nature's master-appetite destroy'd !
 Is endless life, and happiness, despised ?
 Or both wish'd here, where neither can be found ? 865
 Such man's perverse, eternal war with Heaven !
 Darest thou persist ? And is there nought on earth
 But a long train of transitory forms,
 Rising, and breaking, millions in an hour ?
 Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up 870
 In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd ?
 O ! for what crime, unmerciful LORENZO,
 Destroys thy scheme the whole of human race ?
 Kind is fell LUCIFER, compared to thee :
 O ! spare this waste of being half-Divine ; 875
 And vindicate the' economy of Heaven.

HEAVEN is all love ; all joy in giving joy :
 It never had created but to bless :
 And shall it, then, strike off the list of life

* In the Sixth Night.

A being bless'd, or worthy so to be? 880
 Heaven starts at an annihilating God.

Is that all Nature starts at, thy desire?
 Art such a clod to wish thyself all clay?
 What is that dreadful wish?—The dying groan
 Of Nature, murder'd by the blackest guilt. 885

What deadly poison has thy nature drunk?
 To Nature undebauch'd no shock so great;
 Nature's first wish is endless happiness;
 Annihilation is an after-thought,
 A monstrous wish, unborn till Virtue dies. 890
 And, O! what depth of horror lies enclosed!
 For non-existence no man ever wish'd,
 But first he wish'd the DEITY destroy'd.

If so, what words are dark enough to draw
 Thy picture true? The darkest are too fair. 895
 Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour
 Of desperation, by what Fury's aid,
 In what infernal posture of the soul,
 All hell invited, and all hell in joy
 At such a birth, a birth so near of kin, 900
 Did thy foul fancy whelp so black a scheme
 Of hopes abortive, faculties half-blown,
 And deities begun, reduced to dust?

"THERE'S nought," thou say'st, "but one eternal flux
 Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven 905
 Through Time's rough billows into Night's abyss."
 Say, in this rapid tide of human ruin,
 Is there no rock on which man's tossing thought
 Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,
 And boldly think it something to be born? 910
 Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,
 Is there no central, all-sustaining base,

All-realizing, all-connecting power,
 Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,
 And force Destruction to refund her spoil? 915
 Command the Grave restore her taken prey?
 Bid Death's dark vale its human harvest yield,
 And Earth, and Ocean, pay their debt of man,
 True to the grand deposit trusted there?
 Is there no Potentate, whose out-stretch'd arm, 920
 When ripening Time calls forth the' appointed hour,
 Pluck'd from foul Devastation's famish'd maw,
 Binds Present, Past, and Future to his throne?
 His throne, how glorious, thus divinely graced,
 By germinating beings clustering round! 925
 A garland worthy the Divinity!
 A throne, by Heaven's omnipotence in smiles,
 Built (like a Pharos towering in the waves)
 Amidst immense effusions of His love,
 An ocean of communicated bliss! 930

An all-prolific, all-preserving God!
 This were a God indeed.—And such *is* man,
 As here presumed: he rises from his fall.
 Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,
 Each blossom fair of DEITY destroy'd? 935
 Nothing is dead; nay, nothing sleeps; each soul
 That ever animated human clay
 Now wakes, is on the wing; and where, O where,
 Will the swarm settle?—When the trumpet's call,
 As sounding brass, collects us round Heaven's throne, 940
 Conglobed we bask in everlasting day,
 (Paternal splendour!) and adhere for ever.
 Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,
 In this vast vessel of the universe,
 How should we gasp, as in an empty void! 945
 How in the pangs of famish'd Hope expire!

How bright *my* prospect shines! How gloomy *thine*!
 A trembling world! and a devouring God!
 Earth but the shambles of Omnipotence!
 Heaven's face all stain'd with causeless massacres 950
 Of countless millions, born to feel the pang
 Of *being* lost. LORENZO, can it be?
 This bids us shudder at the thoughts of life.
 Who would be born to such a phantom world,
 Where nought substantial but our misery? 955
 Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,
 So soon to perish, and revive no more?
 The greater such a joy, the more it pains.*
 A world so far from great, (and yet how great
 It shines to thee!) there's nothing real in it; 960
Being a shadow, *consciousness* a dream!
 A dream how dreadful! Universal blank
 Before it and behind! Poor man, a spark
 From non-existence struck by wrath Divine,
 Glittering a moment, nor that moment sure, 965
 'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding night,
 His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!

LORENZO, dost thou feel these arguments?
 Or is there nought but vengeance can be felt?
 How hast thou dared the DEITY dethrone? 970
 How dared indict Him of a world like this?
 If such the world, creation was a crime;
 For what is crime, but cause of misery?
 Retract, blasphemers! and unriddle this,

* The subjoined four lines are found in the early quarto impressions, and in the octavo of 1749: but they were omitted in the collected Works, in 1762:—

"A world, where dark, mysterious vanity
 Of *good* and *ill* the distant colours blends,
 Confounds all reason, and all hope destroys;
 Reason and hope our sole asylum here!"—EDIT.

Of endless arguments, above, below, 975
 Without us, and within, the short result,—
 “If man’s immortal, there’s a God in heaven.”

BUT wherefore such redundancy, such waste
 Of argument? One sets my soul at rest;
 One obvious, and at hand, and O!—at heart. 980
 So just the Skies, PHILANDER’S life so pain’d,
 His heart so pure; that or succeeding scenes
 Have palms to give, or ne’er had he been born.

“WHAT an old tale is this!” LORENZO cries.
 I grant this argument is old; but truth 985
 No years impair; and had not this been true,
 Thou never hadst despised it for its age.
 Truth is immortal as thy soul; and fable
 As fleeting as thy joys. Be wise, nor make
 Heaven’s highest blessing *vengeance*: O be wise! 990
 Nor make a curse of immortality.

SAY, know’st thou what it is? or what thou art?
 Know’st thou the’ importance of a soul immortal?
 Behold this midnight glory: worlds on worlds!
 Amazing pomp! Redouble this amaze! 995
 Ten thousand add, add twice ten thousand more;
 Then weigh the whole: one soul outweighs them all;
 And calls the’ astonishing magnificence
 Of unintelligent Creation, poor.

FOR this, believe not me; no *man* believe; 1000
 Trust not in words, but deeds; and deeds no less
 Than those of the SUPREME; nor His, a few;
 Consult them all. Consulted, all proclaim
 Thy soul’s importance: tremble at thyself;
 For whom Omnipotence has waked so long; 1005
 Has waked and work’d for ages; from the birth
 Of Nature to this unbelieving hour.

IN this small province of His vast domain,
 (All Nature bow, while I pronounce His name!)
 What has God done, and not for this sole end,— 1010
 To rescue souls from death? The soul's high price
 Is writ in all the conduct of the Skies.
 The soul's high price is the Creation's key,
 Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
 The genuine cause of every deed Divine : 1015
 That is the chain of ages which maintains
 Their obvious correspondence, and unites
 Most distant periods in one bless'd design :
 That is the mighty hinge on which have turn'd
 All revolutions, whether we regard 1020
 The natural, civil, or religious world ;
 The former two but servants to the third ;
 To that their duty done, they both expire,
 Their mass new-cast, forgot their deeds renown'd ;
 And angels ask, " where once they shone so fair !" 1025

To lift us from this abject to sublime ;
 This flux to permanent ; this dark to day ;
 This foul to pure ; this turbid to serene ;
 This mean to mighty!—for this glorious end
 The' ALMIGHTY, rising, His long sabbath broke : 1030
 The world was made ; was ruin'd ; was restored ;
 Laws from the Skies were publish'd ; were repeal'd ;
 On earth kings, kingdoms rose ; kings, kingdoms fell ;
 Famed sages lighted up the Pagan world ;
 Prophets from Sion darted a keen glance 1035
 Through distant age ; saints travell'd ; martyrs bled ;
 By wonders sacred Nature stood controll'd ;
 The living were translated ; dead were raised ;
 Angels, and more than angels, came from heaven ;
 And, O! for this, descended lower still ; 1040
 Gilt was hell's gloom : astonish'd at his Guest,
 For one short moment Lucifer adored :

LORENZO! and wilt thou do less?—For this
 That hallow'd page fools scoff at, was inspired,
 Of all these truths thrice-venerable code! 1045
 Deists, perform your quarantine; and then
 Fall prostrate ere you touch it, lest you die.

NOR less intensely bent infernal powers
 To mar, than those of light this end to gain.
 O what a scene is here!—LORENZO, wake, 1050
 Rise to the thought: exert, expand thy soul
 To take the vast idea: it denies
 All else the name of great. Two warring worlds!
 Not Europe against Afric; warring worlds
 Of more than mortal, mounted on the wing! 1055
 On ardent wings of energy and zeal,
 High-hovering o'er this little brand of strife!
 This sublunary ball!—But strife, for what?
 In their own cause conflicting? No; in thine,
 In man's. His single interest blows the flame; 1060
 His the sole stake; his fate the trumpet sounds,
 Which kindles war immortal. How it burns!
 Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms!
 Force, force opposing, till the waves run high,
 And tempest Nature's universal sphere. 1065
 Such opposites eternal, steadfast, stern,
 Such foes implacable, are Good and Ill;
 Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between them.

THINK not this fiction. "There was war in heaven."
 From heaven's high crystal mountain, where it hung, 1070
 The' ALMIGHTY'S out-stretch'd arm took down His bow,
 And shot His indignation at the deep:
 Re-thunder'd Hell, and darted all her fires.
 And seems the stake of little moment still?
 And slumbers man, who singly caused the storm? 1075
 He sleeps.—And art thou shock'd at mysteries?

The greatest, thou! How dreadful to reflect,
 What ardour, care, and counsel mortals cause
 In breasts Divine! how little in their own!

WHERE'ER I turn, how new proofs pour upon me! 1080

How happily this wondrous view supports
 My former argument! How strongly strikes
 Immortal life's full demonstration here!
 Why this exertion? Why this strange regard
 From Heaven's Omnipotent indulged to man? 1085

Because in man the glorious dreadful power,
 Extremely to be pain'd, or bless'd, for ever.
 Duration gives importance; swells the price.
 An angel, if a creature of a day,

What would he be? A trifle of no weight; 1090

Or stand or fall,—no matter which,—he's gone.
 Because IMMORTAL, therefore is indulged
 This strange regard of deities to dust.

Hence Heaven looks down on earth with all her eyes;
 Hence the soul's mighty moment in her sight; 1095

Hence every soul has partisans above,
 And every thought a critic in the skies:
 Hence clay, vile clay, has angels for its guard,
 And every guard a passion for his charge:

Hence, from all age, the Cabinet Divine 1100
 Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man.

NOR have the clouds those gracious counsels hid.
 Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
 And PROVIDENCE came forth to meet mankind.
 In various modes of emphasis and awe, 1105

He spoke His will, and trembling Nature heard:
 He spoke it loud, in thunder and in storm.

Witness, thou Sinai! whose cloud-cover'd height,
 And shaken basis, own'd the present God:
 Witness, ye billows! whose returning tide, 1110

Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,
 Swept Egypt and her menaces to hell :
 Witness, ye flames the' Assyrian tyrant blew
 To sevenfold rage, as impotent as strong :
 And thou, Earth ! witness, whose expanding jaws 1115
 Closed o'er Presumption's sacrilegious sons : *
 Has not each element, in turn, subscribed
 The soul's high price, and sworn it to the wise ?
 Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove
 To strike this truth through adamantine man ? 1120
 If not all-adamant, LORENZO ! hear :
 All is delusion ; Nature is wrapp'd up,
 In tenfold night, from Reason's keenest eye ;
 There 's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end
 In all beneath the sun, in all above, 1125
 (As far as man can penetrate,) or heaven
 Is an immense, inestimable prize ;
 Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.—
 And shall each toy be still a match for heaven ?
 And full equivalent for groans below ? 1130
 Who would not give a trifle to prevent
 What he would give a thousand worlds to cure ?

LORENZO, thou hast seen (if thine to see)
 All Nature, and her God, (by Nature's course,
 And Nature's course controll'd,) declare for me : 1135
 The Skies above proclaim "Immortal man !"
 And "Man immortal !" all below resounds.
 The world's a system of theology,
 Read by the greatest strangers to the schools ;
 If honest, learn'd ; and sages o'er a plough. 1140
 Is not, LORENZO, then, imposed on thee
 This hard alternative,—or to renounce
 Thy reason and thy sense, or to believe ?

* Korah, &c.

What then is unbelief? 'T is an exploit ;
 A strenuous enterprize : to gain it, man 1145
 Must burst through every bar of common sense,
 Of common shame, magnanimously wrong.
 And what rewards the sturdy combatant?
 His prize, repentance ; infamy, his crown.

Bur wherefore infamy?—For want of faith,* 1150
 Down the steep precipice of wrong he slides ;
 There 's nothing to support him in the right.

Faith in the future wanting, is, at least
 In embryo, every weakness, every guilt ;
 And strong Temptation ripens it to birth. 1155

If this life's gain invites him to the deed,
 Why not his country sold, his father slain?
 'T is virtue to pursue our good supreme ;
 And his supreme, his only good is here.

Ambition, Avarice, by the wise disdain'd, 1160
 Is perfect wisdom, while mankind are fools,
 And think a turf or tomb-stone covers all :

These find employment, and provide for Sense
 A richer pasture, and a larger range ;
 And Sense by right Divine ascends the throne, 1165

When Virtue's† prize and prospect are no more :
 Virtue no more we think the will of Heaven.
 Would Heaven quite beggar Virtue, if beloved ?

“HAS Virtue charms?”—I grant her heavenly fair ;
 But if unportion'd, all will Interest wed ; 1170
 Though *that* our admiration, *this* our choice.

The virtues grow on immortality ;
 That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.

* Instead of *faith*, the reading of the early quarto and octavo impressions is *worth*.—EDIT.

† *Reason* is the reading of all the early quarto and octavo impressions.—EDIT.

- A DEITY believed will nought avail ;
 Rewards and punishments make God adored ; 1175
 And hopes and fears give Conscience all her power.
 As in the dying parent dies the child,
 Virtue with Immortality expires.
 Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,
 Whate'er his boast, has told me he's a knave. 1180
 His duty 't is to love himself alone ;
 Nor care, though mankind perish, if he smiles.
 Who thinks ere long the man shall wholly die,
 Is dead already ; nought but brute survives.
- AND are there such ?—Such candidates there are 1185
 For more than death ; for utter loss of being ;
 Being, the basis of the DEITY !
 Ask you the cause ?—The cause they will not tell :
 Nor need they : O the sorceries of Sense !
 They work this transformation on the soul, 1190
 Dismount her, like the serpent at the fall,*
 Dismount her from her native wing, (which soar'd
 Erewhile ethereal heights,) and throw her down,
 To lick the dust, and crawl in such a thought.
- Is it in words to paint you ? O ye fallen ! 1195
 Fallen from the wings of Reason, and of Hope !
 Erect in stature, prone in appetite !
 Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain !
 Lovers of argument, averse to sense !
 Boasters of liberty, fast bound in chains ! 1200
 Lords of the wide creation, and the shame !
 More senseless than the' irrationals you scorn !
 More base than those you rule ! than those you pity,
 Far more undone ! O ye most infamous

* This line was first introduced into the octavo of 1749, and has been retained in all subsequent impressions.—EDIT.

Of beings, from superior dignity !	1205
Deepest in woe, from means of boundless bliss !	
Ye cursed by blessings infinite ! because	
Most highly favour'd, most profoundly lost !	
Ye motley mass of contradictions strong !	
And are you, too, convinced your souls fly off	1210
In exhalation soft, and die in air,	
From the full flood of evidence against you ?	
In the coarse drudgeries and sinks of Sense,	
Your souls have quite worn out the make of Heaven,	
By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own :	1215
But though you can deform, you can't destroy ;	
To curse, not uncreate, is all your power.	
LORENZO, this black brotherhood renounce :	
Renounce St. Evremont, and read St. Paul.	
Ere rapt by miracle, by reason wing'd,	1220
His mounting mind made long abode in heaven.	
This is freethinking,—unconfined to parts,—	
To send the soul, on curious travel bent,	
Through all the provinces of human thought ; *	
To dart her flight through the whole sphere of man ;	1225
Of this vast universe to make the tour ;	
In each recess of space and time at home ;	
Familiar with their wonders ; diving deep,	
And, like a prince of boundless interests there,	
Still most ambitious of the most remote ;	1230
To look on truth unbroken and entire ;	
Truth in the system, the full orb ; where truths,	
By truths enlighten'd and sustain'd, afford	
An arch-like strong foundation, to support	
The' incumbent weight of absolute, complete	1235

* " From First to Last (but *Last* there none shall be !) "

This line follows in the early quartos, but was omitted in all subsequent impressions.—EDIT.

Conviction : Here the more we press, we stand
 More firm ; who most examine, most believe.
 Parts, like half-sentences, confound : the whole
 Conveys the sense, and God is understood ;
 Who not in fragments writes to human race : 1240
 Read His whole volume, sceptic ! then reply.

THIS, this is thinking free,—a thought that grasps
 Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.
 Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene ;
 What are Earth's kingdoms to yon boundless orbs, 1245
 Of human souls one day the destined range ?
 And what yon boundless orbs to godlike man ?
 Those numerous worlds that throng the firmament,
 And ask more space in heaven, can roll at large
 In man's capacious thought, and still leave room 1250
 For ampler orbs, for new creations, there.
 Can such a soul contract itself, to gripe
 A point of no dimension, of no weight ?
 It can : it does : the world is such a point ;
 And of that point, how small a part enslaves ! 1255
 How small a part—of nothing, shall I say ?
 Why not ?—Friends, our chief treasure ! How they drop !
 LUCIA, NARCISSA fair, PHILANDER gone !
 The grave, like fabled Cerberus, has oped
 A triple mouth ; and, in an awful voice, 1260
 Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.
 How the world falls to pieces round about us,
 And leaves us in a ruin of our joy !
 What says this transportation of my friends ?
 It bids me love the place where now they dwell, 1265
 And scorn this wretched spot they leave so poor.
 Eternity's vast ocean lies before thee ;
 There, there, LORENZO, thy CLARISSA sails.
 Give thy mind sea-room ; keep it wide of earth,
 That rock of souls immortal ; cut thy cord ; 1270

Weigh anchor ; spread thy sails ; call every wind ;
 Eye thy great Pole-star ; make the land of life.

Two kinds of life has double-natured man,
 And two of death : the last far more severe.
 Life animal is nurtured by the sun ; 1275

Thrives on his bounties, triumphs in his beams.
 Life rational subsists on higher food,
 Triumphant in His beams who made the day.
 When we leave that sun, and are left by this,
 (The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt,) 1280
 'T is utter darkness ; strictly double death.

We sink by no judicial stroke of Heaven,
 But Nature's course ; as sure as plummets fall.
 Since God or man must alter ere they meet,
 (For* light and darkness blend not in one sphere,) 1285
 'T is manifest, LORENZO ! *who* must change.

If then that double death should prove thy lot,
 Blame not the bowels of the DEITY :
 Man shall be bless'd as far as man permits.
 Not man alone, all rationals Heaven arms 1290

With an illustrious but tremendous power
 To counteract its own most gracious ends ;
 And this of strict necessity, not choice :
 That power denied, men, angels, were no more
 But passive engines, void of praise or blame. 1295

A nature rational implies the power
 Of being bless'd, or wretched, as we please ;
 Else idle Reason would have nought to do ;
 And he that would be barr'd capacity
 Of pain, courts incapacity of bliss. 1300
 Heaven *wills* our happiness, *allows* our doom ;

* *For*, and not *since*, is the reading of all the early quarto and octavo impressions.--EDIT.

Invites us ardently, but not *compels* ;
 Heaven but *persuades*, almighty man *decrees* ;
 Man is the maker of immortal fates.
 Man falls by man, if finally he falls ; 1305
 And fall he must, who learns from Death alone
 The dreadful secret—that he lives for ever.

WHY this to thee ?—thee yet perhaps in doubt
 Of second life ? But wherefore doubtful still ?
 Eternal life is Nature's ardent wish : 1310
 What ardently we wish, we soon believe :
 Thy tardy faith declares that wish destroy'd :
 What has destroy'd it ?—Shall I tell thee what ?
 When fear'd the future, 't is no longer wish'd ;
 And when unwish'd, we strive to disbelieve. 1315

“ Thus infidelity our guilt betrays.”
 Nor that the sole detection ! Blush, LORENZO,
 Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.
The future fear'd ?—An infidel, and fear !
 Fear what ? a dream ? a fable ? How thy dread, 1320
 Unwilling evidence, and therefore strong,
 Affords my cause an undesign'd support !
 How disbelief affirms what it denies !
 “ It, unawares, asserts immortal life.”—
 Surprising ! Infidelity turns out 1325
 A creed, and a confession of our sins :
 Apostates, thus, are orthodox divines.

LORENZO, with LORENZO clash no more :
 Nor longer a transparent vizard wear.
 Think'st thou, RELIGION only has her mask ? 1330
 Our infidels are Satan's hypocrites,
 Pretend the worst, and at the bottom fail.
 When visited by Thought, (Thought *will* intrude,)
 Like him they serve, they “ tremble, and believe.”
 Is their hypocrisy so foul as this ? 1335

So fatal to the welfare of the world ?
 What detestation, what contempt their due !
 And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape
 That Christian candour they strive hard to scorn.
 If not for that asylum, they might find 1340
 A hell on earth ; nor 'scape a worse below.

With insolence and impotence of thought,
 Instead of racking fancy to refute,
 Reform thy manners, and the truth enjoy.—
 But shall I dare confess the dire result ? 1345
 Can thy proud reason brook so black a brand ?
 From purer manners, to sublimer faith,
 Is Nature's unavoidable ascent :
 An honest deist, where the gospel shines,
 Matured to nobler, in *the Christian* ends. 1350
 When that bless'd change arrives, e'en cast aside
 This song superfluous : life immortal strikes
 Conviction, in a flood of light Divine.
 A Christian dwells, like *URIEL*,* in the sun.
 Meridian Evidence puts Doubt to flight ; 1355
 And ardent Hope anticipates the skies.
 Of that bright sun, *LORENZO* ! scale the sphere :
 'T is easy ; it invites thee ; it descends
 From heaven to woo, and waft thee whence it came :
 Read and revere the sacred page ; a page 1360
 Where triumphs Immortality ; a page
 Which not the whole creation could produce ;
 Which not the conflagration shall destroy ;
 In Nature's ruins not one letter lost :
 'T is printed in the minds of gods for ever.† 1365

* MILTON.

† This is the collocation of the two lines in all the early impressions ; but in the collected Works, (1762,) they assume another form :—

“ 'T is printed in the minds of gods for ever,
 In Nature's ruins not one letter lost.”—EDIT.

IN proud disdain of what e'en gods adore,
 Dost smile?—Poor wretch! thy guardian-angel weeps.
 Angels and men assent to what I sing;
 Wits smile, and thank me for my midnight dream.
 How vicious hearts fume frenzy to the brain! 1370
 Parts push us on to Pride, and Pride to Shame;
 Pert Infidelity is Wit's cockade,
 To grace the brasen brow that braves the Skies,
 By *loss of being* dreadfully secure.
 LORENZO! if thy doctrine wins the day, 1375
 And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field;
 If this is all, if earth a final scene,
 Take heed: stand fast; be sure to be a knave;
 A knave in grain; ne'er deviate to the right:
 Shouldst thou be good—how infinite thy loss! 1380
 Guilt only makes annihilation gain.
 Bless'd scheme! which Life deprives of comfort, Death
 Of hope; and which VICE only recommends!
 If so, where, infidels, your bait thrown out
 To catch weak converts? Where your lofty boast 1385
 Of zeal for virtue, and of love to man?
 ANNIHILATION, I confess, in these.

WHAT can reclaim you? Dare I hope profound
 Philosophers the converts of a song?
 Yet know, its title* flatters *you*, not *me*; 1390
 Yours be the praise to make my title good:
 Mine to bless Heaven, and triumph in your praise.
 But since so pestilential your disease,
 Though sovereign is the medicine I prescribe,
 As yet I'll neither triumph nor despair; 1395
 But hope, ere long, my midnight dream will wake
 Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise:
 For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,

* The Infidel Reclaimed.

E'er wish (and wish in vain!) that souls could die!
 What ne'er can die, O! grant to live; and crown 1400
 The wish, and aim, and labour of the Skies;
 Increase, and enter on, the joys of heaven:
 Thus shall my title pass a sacred seal,
 Receive an *imprimatur* from above,
 While angels shout—"An Infidel Reclaim'd!" 1405

To close, LORENZO! Spite of all my pains,
 Still seems it strange that thou shouldst live for ever?
 Is it less strange that thou shouldst live at all?
This is a miracle; and *that* no more.
 Who gave beginning can exclude an end. 1410
 Deny thou *art*: then doubt if thou *shalt be*.
 A miracle with miracles enclosed
 Is man: and starts his faith at what is strange?
 What less than wonders from the Wonderful?
 What less than miracles from God can flow? 1415
 Admit a GOD, (that mystery supreme,
 That Cause uncaused!)—all other wonders cease;
 Nothing is marvellous for Him to do:
 Deny Him—all is mystery besides;
 Millions of mysteries! each darker far 1420
 Than that thy wisdom would unwisely shun.
 If weak thy faith, why choose the harder side?
 We nothing know but what is marvellous;
 Yet what is marvellous we can't believe.
 So weak our reason, and so great our God, 1425
 What most surprises in the sacred page,
 Or full as strange, or stranger, must be true.
 Faith is not Reason's labour, but repose.

To Faith and Virtue why so backward man?
 From hence:—The Present strongly strikes us all; 1430
 The Future, faintly: can we, then, be men?
 If men, LORENZO! the reverse is right.

Reason is man's peculiar ; Sense, the brute's.
 The Present is the scanty realm of Sense ;
 The Future, Reason's empire unconfined : 1435
 On that expending all her godlike power,
 She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs there ;
 There builds her blessings ; there expects her praise ;
 And nothing asks of Fortune or of men.
 And what is Reason ? Be she thus defined : 1440
 Reason is upright stature in the soul.
 O ! be a man ;—and strive to be a god.

“ For what ? ” (thou say'st :) “ to damp the joys of life ? ”
 No ; to give heart and substance to thy joys.
 That tyrant, Hope, mark how she domineers : 1445
 She bids us quit realities for dreams ;
 Safety and peace, for hazard and alarm :
 That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the soul,—
 She bids Ambition quit its taken prize,
 Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it sits, 1450
 Though bearing crowns, to spring at distant game,
 And plunge in toils and dangers—for repose.
 If hope precarious, and of things, when gain'd,
 Of little moment, and as little stay,
 Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys ; 1455
 What, then, that hope, which nothing can defeat,
 Our leave unask'd ? Rich hope of boundless bliss !
 Bliss past man's power to paint it ; Time's, to close !

THIS hope is earth's most estimable prize :
 This is man's portion, while no more than man : 1460
 Hope, of all passions, most befriends us here ;
 Passions of prouder name befriend us less.
 Joy has her tears ; and Transport has her death :
 Hope, like a cordial, innocent, though strong,
 Man's heart at once inspirits and serenes ; 1465
 Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys.

'T is all our present state can safely bear,—
 Health to the frame, and vigour to the mind!
 A joy attemper'd, a chastised delight!*
 Like the fair summer evening, mild and sweet! 1470
 'T is man's full cup, his Paradise below!

A BLESS'D hereafter, then, or hoped, or gain'd,
 Is all;—our whole of happiness: full proof
 I chose no trivial or inglorious theme.
 And know, ye foes to song! (well-meaning men, 1475
 Though quite forgotten half your Bible's † praise!)
 Important truths, in spite of verse, may please:
 Grave minds you praise; nor can you praise too much:
 If there is weight in an ETERNITY,
 Let the grave listen;—and be graver still. 1480

* In the early impressions, quarto and octavo, the reading of this line was,—

“And to the modest eye chastised delight!”—ED. R.

† The poetical parts of it.

NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VIII

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY;

OR,

THE MAN OF THE WORLD ANSWERED.

IN WHICH ARE CONSIDERED, THE LOVE OF THIS LIFE; THE AMBITION
AND PLEASURE, WITH THE WIT AND WISDOM, OF THE WORLD.



NIGHT VIII.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

AND has all Nature, then, espoused my part ?
 Have I bribed Heaven and Earth to plead against thee ?
 And is thy soul immortal ?—What remains ?
 All, all, LORENZO !—Make immortal BLESS'D.
Unbless'd immortals ! what can shock us more ? 5
 And yet LORENZO still affects the world ;
 There, stows his treasure ; thence, his title draws,
 MAN OF THE WORLD ! (for such wouldst thou be call'd !)
 And art thou proud of that inglorious style ?
 Proud of reproach ? for a reproach it was, 10
 In ancient days ; and CHRISTIAN—in an age,
 When men were men, and not ashamed of Heaven—
 Fired their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
 Sprinkled with dews from the Castalian font,
 Fain would I re-baptize thee, and confer 15
 A purer spirit, and a nobler name.

THY fond attachments, fatal and inflamed,
 Point out my path, and dictate to my song :
 To thee the World how fair ! how strongly strikes
 Ambition ! and gay Pleasure stronger still ! 20
 Thy triple bane ! the triple bolt, that lays
 Thy Virtue dead ! Be these my triple theme ;
 Nor shall thy wit or wisdom be forgot.

COMMON the theme ; not so the song ; if she
 My song invokes, URANIA, deigns to smile. 25
 The charm that chains us to the World, her foe,

If she dissolves, the man of earth, at once,
 Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes ;
 Scenes, where these sparks of night, these stars, shall shine
 Unnumber'd suns ; (for all things as they are 30
 The bless'd behold ;) and, in one glory, pour
 Their blended blaze on man's astonish'd sight ;
 A blaze,—the least illustrious object there.

LORENZO! since Eternal is at hand,
 To swallow Time's ambitions ; as the vast 35
 Leviathan, the bubbles vain that ride
 High on the foaming billow ; what avail
 High titles, high descent, attainments high,
 If unattain'd our highest? O LORENZO!
 What lofty thoughts, these elements above, 40
 What towering hopes, what sallies from the sun,
 What grand surveys of destiny Divine,
 And pompous presage of unfathom'd fate,
 Should roll in bosoms where a spirit burns,
 Bound for eternity ; in bosoms read 45
 By Him who foibles in archangels sees!
 On human hearts He bends a jealous eye,
 And marks, and in Heaven's register enrols,
 The rise and progress of each option there ;
 Sacred to doomsday! *That* the page unfolds, 50
 And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

AND what an option, O LORENZO, thine!
 This world! and this, unrivall'd by the skies!
 A world, where Lust of Pleasure, Grandeur, Gold,
 Three demons that divide its realms between them, 55
 With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
 Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball ;
 Till with the giddy circle sick and tired,
 It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
 Such is the world LORENZO sets above 60

That glorious promise angels were esteem'd
 Too mean to bring : a promise, their Adored
 Descended to communicate, and press,
 By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.
 Such is the world LORENZO'S wisdom wooses, 65
 And on its thorny pillow seeks repose ;
 A pillow which, like opiates ill-prepared,
 Intoxicates, but not composes ; fills
 The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
 All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest ; 70
 What unfeign'd travail, and what dreams of joy!

How frail men, things! how momentary both!
 Fantastic chase, of shadows hunting shades!
 The gay, the busy, equal, though unlike ;
 Equal in wisdom, differently wise! 75
 Through flowery meadows, and through dreary wastes,
 One bustling, and one dancing, into death.
 There 's not a day but, to the man of thought,
 Betrays some secret, that throws new reproach
 On life, and makes him sick of seeing more. 80
 The scenes of business tell us—" what are men ;"
 The scenes of pleasure—" what is all beside :"
 There, others we despise ; and here, ourselves.
 Amid disgust eternal, dwells delight ?
 'T is approbation strikes the string of joy. 85

WHAT wondrous prize has kindled this career,
 Stuns with the din, and chokes us with the dust,
 On Life's gay stage, one inch above the grave ?
 The proud run up and down in quest of eyes ;
 The sensual, in pursuit of something worse ; 90
 The grave, of gold ; the politic, of power ;
 And all, of other butterflies, as vain !
 As eddies draw things frivolous and light,
 How is man's heart by vanity drawn in ;

On the swift circle of returning toys, 95
Whirl'd, straw-like, round and round, and then ingulf'd,
Where gay delusion darkens to despair!

“THIS is a beaten track.”—Is this a track
Should not be beaten? Never beat enough,
Till enough learn'd the truths it would inspire. 100

Shall Truth be silent because Folly frowns?
Turn the world's history; what find we there,
But Fortune's sports, or Nature's cruel claims,
Or woman's artifice, or man's revenge,
And endless inhumanities on man? 105

Fame's trumpet seldom sounds but, like the knell,
It brings bad tidings! How it hourly blows
Man's misadventures round the listening world!
Man is the tale of narrative Old Time;
Sad tale! which high as Paradise begins. 110

As if the toil of travel to conclude,
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,
The Days, his daughters,—as they spin our hours
On Fortune's wheel, where accident unthought
Oft, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread,— 115
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,
With, now-and-then, a wretched farce between;
And fills his chronicle with human woes.

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

Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies ;
 Nor owns itself a cheat, till it expires. 130
 Its little joys go out by one and one,
 And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night ;
 Night darker than what now involves the pole.

O THOU, who dost permit these ills to fall
 For gracious ends, and wouldst that man should mourn !
 O THOU, whose hand this goodly fabric framed, 136
 Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should know !
 What is this sublunary world ? A vapour !
 A vapour all it holds ; itself a vapour ;
 From the damp bed of Chaos, by Thy beam 140
 Exhaled, ordain'd to swim its destined hour
 In ambient air, then melt, and disappear !
 Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom ;
 As mortal, though less transient than her sons :
 Yet they dote on her, as the world and they 145
 Were both eternal, solid ; THOU, a dream.

THEY dote ! on what ? Immortal views apart,
 A region of outsides, a land of shadows !
 A fruitful field of flowery promises !
 A wilderness for joys, perplex'd with doubts, 150
 And sharp with thorns ! a troubled ocean, spread
 With bold adventurers, their *all* on board ;
 No second hope if here their fortune frowns :
 Frown soon it must. Of various rates they sail,
 Of ensigns various ; all alike in this,— 155
 All restless, anxious ; toss'd with hopes and fears
 In calmest skies : obnoxious all to storm ;
 And stormy the most general blast of life :
 All bound for happiness ; yet few provide
 The chart of Knowledge, pointing where it lies ; 160
 Or Virtue's helm, to shape the course design'd.
 All, more or less, capricious Fate lament,

Now lifted by the tide, and now resorb'd,
 And farther from their wishes than before :
 All, more or less, against each other dash, 165
 To mutual hurt by gusts of passion driven,
 And suffering more from Folly than from Fate.

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

SELF-FLATTER'D, unexperienced, high in hope, 180
 When young, with sanguine cheer, and streamers gay,
 We cut our cable, launch into the world,
 And fondly dream each wind and star our friend ;
 All, in some darling enterprise embark'd :
 But where is he can fathom its event ? † 185
 Amid a multitude of artless hands,
 Ruin's sure perquisite, her lawful prize !
 Some steer aright ; but the black blast blows hard,
 And puffs them wide of hope : with hearts of proof,
 Full against wind and tide, some win their way ; 190
 And when strong Effort has deserved the port,
 And tugg'd it into view, 't is won ! 't is lost !

* Admiral Balchen, &c.

† Instead of *event*, the edition of the collected Works, in 1762, had *extent* ; which was copied into most of the modern impressions.—EDIT.

Though strong their oar, still stronger is their fate :
 They strike ; and while they triumph, they expire.
 In stress of weather, most ; some sink outright ; 195
 O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close ;
 To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
 Others a short memorial leave behind,
 Like a flag floating, when the bark 's ingulf'd ;
 It floats a moment, and is seen no more : 200
 One CÆSAR lives ; a thousand are forgot.
 How few, beneath auspicious planets born,
 (Darlings of Providence, fond Fate's elect !)
 With swelling sails make good the promised port,
 With all their wishes freighted ! Yet e'en these, 205
 Freight with all their wishes, soon complain.
 Free from misfortune, not from Nature free,
 They still are men ; and when is man secure ?
 As fatal Time as Storm ! The rush of years
 Beats down their strength ; their numberless escapes 210
 In ruin end : and now their proud success
 But plants new terrors on the victor's brow :
 What pain to quit the world just made their own,
 Their nest so deeply down'd,* and built so high !
 Too low they build who build beneath the stars. 215

Woe then apart, (if woe apart can be
 From mortal man,) and Fortune at our nod,
 The gay, rich, great, triumphant, and august !
 What are they ?—The most happy (strange to say !)
 Convince me most of human misery : 220
 What are they ? Smiling wretches of to-morrow !
 More wretched then than e'er their slave can be ;
 Their treacherous blessings, at the day of need,

* This is the reading of the early quarto and octavo impressions ; but in the collected Works of 1762 occurs the evident misprint of *drown'd*, which has been perpetuated in subsequent editions.—EDIT.

- Like other faithless friends, unmask and sting :
 Then, what provoking indigence in wealth ! 225
 What aggravated impotence in power !
 High titles, then, what insult of their pain !
 If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,
 Immortal Hope ! defies not the rude storm,
 Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage, 230
 And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.
- Is this a sketch of what thy soul admires ?
 " But here," thou say'st, " the miseries of life
 Are huddled in a group. A more distinct
 Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news." 235
 Look on life's stages : they speak plainer still ;
 The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.
 Look on thy lovely boy ; in him behold
 The best that can befall the best on earth ;
 The boy has virtue by his mother's side : 240
 Yes, on FLORELLO look :—a father's heart
 Is tender, though the man's is made of stone :
 The truth, through such a medium seen, may make
 Impression deep, and Fondness prove thy friend.
- FLORELLO, lately cast on this rude coast 245
 A helpless infant ; now a heedless child ;
 To poor CLARISSA's throes, thy care succeeds :
 Care full of love, and yet severe as hate !
 O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns !
 Needful austerities his will restrain ; 250
 As thorns fence-in the tender plant from harm.
 As yet, his reason cannot go alone ;
 But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.
 His little heart is often terrified ;
 The blush of morning in his cheek turns pale ; 255
 Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye,
 His harmless eye ! and drowns an angel there.

Ah! what avails his innocence? The task
 Enjoin'd must discipline his early powers ;
 He learns to sigh ere he has known to sin ; 260
 Guiltless, and sad! a wretch before the fall!
 How cruel this! more cruel to forbear.
 Our nature such, with necessary pains
 We purchase prospects of precarious peace :
 Though not a father, this might steal a sigh. 265

SUPPOSE him disciplined aright; (if not,
 'T will sink our poor account to poorer still ;)
 Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
 He leaps enclosure, bounds into the world :
 The world is taken, after ten years' toil, 270
 Like ancient Troy ; and all its joys his own.
 Alas! the world 's a tutor more severe ;
 Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains ;
 Unteaching all his virtuous nature taught,
 Or books (fair Virtue's advocates!) inspired. 275

FOR who receives him into public life ?
 Men of the world, the terræ-filial breed,
 Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
 (Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight,)
 And in their hospitable arms enclose : 280
 Men who think nought so strong of the romance,
 So rank knight-errant, as a real friend :
 Men that act up to Reason's golden rule,
 All weakness of affection quite subdued :
 Men that would blush at being thought sincere, 285
 And feign, for glory, the few faults they want ;
 That love a lie, where Truth would pay as well ;
 As if, to them, Vice shone her own reward.

LORENZO! canst thou bear a shocking sight?
 Such, for FLORELLO's sake, 't will now appear:— 290

See the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
 Train'd to the world, in burnish'd falsehood bright ;
 Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace ;
 All soft sensation in the throng rubb'd off ;
 All their keen purpose in politeness sheathed ; 295
 His friends eternal—during interest ;
 His foes implacable—when worth their while ;
 At war with every welfare but their own ;
 As wise as LUCIFER, and half as good ;
 And by whom none but LUCIFER can gain :— 300
 Naked, through these, (so common Fate ordains,)
 Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
 Stung out of all most amiable in life,
 Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles unfeign'd ;
 Affection, as his species, wide diffused ; 305
 Noble presumptions to mankind's renown ;
 Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

THESE claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
 Will cost him many a sigh, till time, and pains,
 From the slow mistress of this school, Experience, 310
 And her assistant, pausing, pale Distrust,
 Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth
 Through serpentine obliquities of life,
 And the dark labyrinth of human hearts.
 And happy if the clue shall come so cheap ! 315
 For while we learn to fence with public guilt,
 Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,
 If less than heavenly Virtue is our guard.
 Thus, a strange kind of cursed necessity
 Brings down the sterling temper of his soul, 320
 By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
 Below call'd Wisdom ; sinks him into safety ;
 And brands him into credit with the world ;
 Where specious titles dignify disgrace,
 And Nature's injuries are arts of life ; 325

Where brighter Reason prompts to bolder crimes,
 And heavenly talents make infernal hearts,—
 That unsurmountable extreme of guilt!

POOR MACHIAVEL, who labour'd hard his plan,
 Forgot that Genius needs not go to school ; 330

Forgot that man, without a tutor wise,
 His plan had practised long before 't was writ.
 The world 's all title-page, there 's no contents :
 The world 's all face ; the man who shows his heart
 Is hooted for his nudities, and scorn'd. 335

A man I knew who lived upon a smile ;
 And well it fed him ; he look'd plump and fair,
 While rankest venom foam'd through every vein.
 LORENZO ! what I tell thee, take not ill.
 Living, he fawn'd on every fool alive ; 340

And, dying, cursed the friend on whom he lived.
 To such proficients thou art half a saint.
 In foreign realms, (for thou hast travell'd far,)
 How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,
 Studious their nests to feather in a trice, 345

With all the necromantics of their art,
 Playing the game of faces on each other,
 Making court-sweetmeats of their latent gall,
 In foolish hope to steal each other's trust ;
 Both cheating, both exulting, both deceived ; 350

And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone !
 Their parts we doubt not ; but be that their shame.
 Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,
 Stoop to mean wiles, that would disgrace a fool ?
 And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve ? 355
 For who can thank the man he cannot see ?

Why so much cover ? It defeats itself.
 Ye that know all things ! know ye not men's hearts
 Are therefore known, because they are conceal'd ?

For why conceal'd?—The cause they need not tell. 360
 I give him joy that 's awkward at a lie ;
 Whose feeble nature Truth keeps still in awe :
 His incapacity is his renown.
 'T is great, 't is manly, to disdain disguise ;
 It shows our spirit, or it proves our strength. 365
 Thou say'st 't is needful. Is it therefore right ?
 Howe'er, I grant it some small sign of grace,
 To strain at an excuse. And wouldst thou then
 Escape that cruel need ? Thou mayst with ease :
 Think no post needful that demands a knave. 370
 When late our civil helm was shifting hands,
 So P—— thought : think better, if you can.

But this, how rare ! The public path of life
 Is dirty. Yet allow that dirt its due ;
 It makes the noble mind more noble still. 375
 The world 's no neuter ; it will wound or save ;
 Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
 You say, " The world, well-known, will make a man : "
 The world, well-known, will give our hearts to Heaven,
 Or make us demons long before we die. 380

To show how fair the world, thy mistress, shines,
 Take either part, sure ills attend the choice :
 Sure, though not equal, detriment ensues.
 Not Virtue's self is deified on earth :
 Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes ; 385
 Foes that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
 Virtue has her peculiar set of pains.
 True, friends to virtue last and least complain :
 But if they sigh, can others hope to smile ?
 If Wisdom has her miseries to mourn, 390
 How can poor Folly lead a happy life ?
 And if both suffer, what has Earth to boast.
 Where he most happy who the least laments ?

Where much, much patience, the most envied state ;
 And some forgiveness needs the best of friends ? 395
 For friend or happy life who looks not higher,
 Of neither shall he find the shadow here.

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

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

AND first, thy Caucasus, Ambition, calls :
 Mountain of torments ! eminence of woes !
 Of courted woes ! and courted through mistake !
 'T is not Ambition charms thee : 't is a cheat 425
 Will make thee start, as H—— at his Moor.

Dost grasp at greatness? First, know what it is :
 Think'st thou thy greatness in distinction lies ?
 Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,
 By Fortune stuck, to mark us from the throng, 430
 Is glory lodged : 't is lodged in the reverse ;
 In that which joins, in that which equals, all,
 The monarch and his slave ;—"a deathless soul,
 Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
 A Father God, and brothers in the skies ;" 435
 Elder, indeed, in time ; but less remote
 In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man.
 Why greater what can fall, than what can rise ?

IF still delirious now, LORENZO ! go ;
 And with thy full-blown brothers of the world, 440
 Throw scorn around thee ; cast it on thy slaves ;
 Thy slaves, and equals : how scorn cast on them
 Rebounds on thee ! If man is mean, as man,
 Art thou a god ? If Fortune makes him so,
 Beware the consequence : a maxim *that*, 445
 Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind,
 Where, in the drapery, the man is lost ;
 Externals fluttering, and the soul forgot :
 Thy greatest glory when disposed to boast,
 Boast *that* aloud in which thy servants share. 450

WE wisely strip the steed we mean to buy :
 Judge we, in their caparisons, of men ?
 It nought avails thee *where*, but *what*, thou art :
 All the distinctions of this little life
 Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man ! 455
 When through Death's straits Earth's subtle serpents creep,
 Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
 As crooked Satan the forbidden tree,
 They leave their party-colour'd robe behind,
 All that now glitters, while they rear aloft 460

Their brasen crests, and hiss at us below.
 Of Fortune's *fucus* strip them, yet alive ;
 Strip them of body, too ; nay, closer still,
 Away with all, but moral, in their minds ;
 And let what then remains impose their name, 465
 Pronounce them weak, or worthy ! great, or mean !
 How mean that snuff of glory Fortune lights,
 And Death puts out ! Dost thou demand a test
 (A test at once infallible and short)
 Of real greatness ? That man greatly lives, 470
 Whate'er his fate or fame, who greatly dies ;
 High-flush'd with hope where heroes shall despair.
 If this a true criterion, many courts,
 Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

THE' Almighty, from His throne, on earth surveys 475
 Nought greater than an honest humble heart ;
 An humble heart, His residence ! pronounced
 His second seat ; and rival to the skies.
 The private path, the secret acts of men,
 If noble, far the noblest of our lives ! 480
 How far above LORENZO'S glory sits
 The' illustrious master of a name unknown ;
 Whose worth unrival'd, and unwitness'd, loves
 Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men ;
 And Peace, beyond the world's conceptions, smiles ! 485
 As thou (now dark) before we part shalt see.

BUT thy great soul this skulking glory scorns.
 LORENZO'S sick but when LORENZO'S seen ;
 And, when he shrugs at public business, lies.
 Denied the public eye, the public voice, 490
 As if he lived on others' breath, he dies.
 Fain would he make the world his pedestal ;
 Mankind the gazers, the sole figure he.
 Knows he that mankind praise against their will,

And mix as much detraction as they can ? 495
 Knows he that faithless Fame her whisper has,
 As well as trumpet? that his vanity
 Is so much tickled from not hearing all ?
 Knows this all-knower that, from itch of praise,
 Or from an itch more sordid, when he shines, 500
 Taking his country by five hundred ears,
 Senates at once admire him, and despise,
 With modest laughter lining loud applause,
 Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame?
 His fame, which, (like the mighty CÆSAR,) crown'd 505
 With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,
 By seeming friends that honour, and destroy.
 We rise in glory as we sink in pride ;
 Where boasting ends, there dignity begins ;
 And yet, mistaken beyond all mistake, 510
 The blind LORENZO 's proud—of being proud ;
 And dreams himself ascending in his fall.

AN eminence, though fancied, turns the brain ;
 All vice wants hellebore ; but of all vice
 Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl ; 515
 Because, all other vice unlike, it flies,
 In fact, the point in fancy most pursued.
 Who court applause, oblige the world in this :
 They gratify man's passion to refuse.
 Superior honour, when assumed, is lost ; 520
 E'en good men turn banditti, and rejoice,
 Like KOULI KHAN, in plunder of the proud.

THOUGH somewhat disconcerted, steady still
 To the world's cause, with half a face of joy,
 LORENZO cries,—“ Be, then, Ambition cast ; 525
 Ambition's dearer far stands unimpeach'd,
 Gay Pleasure ! Proud Ambition is her slave ;
 For her he soars at great, and hazards ill ;

For her he fights, and bleeds or overcomes ;
 And paves his way with crowns to reach her smile : 530
 Who *can* resist her charms ?"—Or, *should* ? LORENZO !
 What mortal shall resist, where angels yield ?
 Pleasure 's the mistress of ethereal powers ;
 For her contend the rival gods above ;
 Pleasure 's the mistress of the world below. 535
 And well it is for man that Pleasure charms :
 How would all stagnate, but for Pleasure's ray !
 How would the frozen stream of action cease !
 What is the pulse of this so busy world ?
 The love of Pleasure : that, through every vein, 540
 Throws motion, warmth ; and shuts out death from life.

THOUGH various are the tempers of mankind,
 Pleasure's gay family hold all in chains :
 Some most affect the black, and some the fair :
 Some honest pleasure court, and some obscene. 545
 Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng
 Of passions that can err in human hearts ;
 Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.
 Think you there 's but one whoredom ? Whoredom all,
 But when our Reason licenses delight. 550
 Dost doubt, LORENZO ? Thou shalt doubt no more.
 Thy father chides thy gallantries ; yet hugs
 An ugly common harlot in the dark ;
 A rank adulterer with others' gold :
 And that hag, Vengeance, in a corner, charms. 555
 Hatred her brothel has, as well as Love,
 Where horrid epicures debauch in blood.
 Whate'er the motive, Pleasure is the mark !
 For her the black assassin draws his sword ;
 For her dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp, 560
 To which no single sacrifice may fall ;
 For her the saint abstains, the miser starves ;
 The Stoic proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorn'd ;

For her Affliction's daughters grief indulge,
 And find, or hope, a luxury in tears ; 565
 For her, guilt, shame, toil, danger we defy ;
 And, with an aim voluptuous, rush on death.
 Thus universal her despotic power.

AND as her empire wide, her praise is just.
 Patron of pleasure, doted on delight ! 570
 I am thy rival ; pleasure I profess ;
 Pleasure the purpose of my gloomy song.
 Pleasure is nought but Virtue's gayer name :
 I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low :
 Virtue the root, and Pleasure is the flower ; 575
 And honest EPICURUS' foes were fools.

BUT this sounds harsh, and gives the wise offence ;
 If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the name.
 How knits Austerity her cloudy brow,
 And blames, as bold and hazardous, the praise 580
 Of Pleasure to mankind, *unpraised* too dear !
 Ye modern Stoics ! hear my soft reply :—
 Their senses men will trust ; we can't impose ;
 Or if we could, is imposition right ?
 Own honey sweet, but, owning, add this sting,— 585
 “ When mix'd with poison, it is deadly too.”
 Truth never was indebted to a lie.
 Is nought but Virtue to be praised as good ?
 Why then is health preferr'd before disease ?
 What Nature loves is good, without our leave. 590
 And where no future drawback cries, “ Beware !”
 Pleasure, though not from Virtue, should prevail.
 'T is balm to life, and gratitude to Heaven :
 How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd !
 The Love of Pleasure is man's eldest-born, 595
 Born in his cradle, living to his tomb.
 Wisdom, her younger sister, though more grave,

Was meant to minister, and not to mar
Imperial Pleasure, queen of human hearts.

LORENZO, thou, Her Majesty's renown'd 600
(Though uncoif'd) counsel, learned in the world,
Who think'st thyself a MURRAY, with disdain
Mayst look on me. Yet, my DEMOSTHENES,
Canst thou plead Pleasure's cause as well as I?
Know'st thou her "nature, purpose, parentage?" 605
Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all;
And know thyself; and know thyself to be
(Strange truth!) the most abstemious man alive.
Tell not CALISTA! she will laugh thee dead;
Or send thee to her hermitage with L——. 610
Absurd presumption! Thou who never knew'st
A serious thought, shalt thou dare dream of joy?
No man e'er found a happy life by chance,
Or yawn'd it into being with a wish;
Or, with the snout of grovelling Appetite, 615
E'er smelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
An art it is, and must be learn'd; and learn'd
With unremitting effort, or be lost,
And leave us perfect blockheads in our bliss.
The clouds may drop down titles and estates; 620
Wealth may seek us; but Wisdom must be sought;
Sought before all; but (how unlike all else
We seek on earth!) 't is never sought in vain.

FIRST, Pleasure's birth, rise, strength, and grandeur see:
Brought forth by Wisdom, nursed by Discipline, 625
By Patience taught, by Perseverance crown'd,
She rears her head majestic; round her throne,
Erected in the bosom of the just,
Each Virtue, listed, forms her manly guard.
For what are Virtues? (formidable name!) 630
What but the fountain or defence of joy?

Why then commanded? Need mankind commands
 At once to merit and to make their bliss?—
 Great Legislator, scarce so great as kind!
 If men are rational, and love delight, 635
 Thy gracious law but flatters human choice;
 In the transgression lies the penalty;
 And they the most indulge who most obey.

OF Pleasure next the final cause explore;
 Its mighty purpose, its important end. 640
 Not to turn human *brutal*, but to build
Divine on human, Pleasure came from heaven.
 In aid to Reason was the goddess sent;
 To call up all its strength by such a charm.
 Pleasure first succours Virtue; in return, 645
 Virtue gives Pleasure an eternal reign.
 What but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,
 Supports life natural, civil, and Divine?
 'T is from the pleasure of repast we live;
 'T is from the pleasure of applause we please; 650
 'T is from the pleasure of belief we pray:
 (All prayer would cease, if unbeliev'd the prize:)
 It serves ourselves, our species, and our God;
 And to serve more, is past the sphere of man.
 Glide, then, for ever, Pleasure's sacred stream! 655
 Through Eden, as Euphrates ran, it runs,
 And fosters every growth of happy life;
 Makes a new Eden where it flows;—but such
 As must be lost, LORENZO, by thy fall.

“WHAT mean I by thy fall?”—Thou 'lt shortly see, 660
 While Pleasure's nature is at large display'd;
 Already sung her origin and ends.
 Those glorious ends, by kind, or by degree,
 When Pleasure violates, 't is then a vice,
 And vengeance too; it hastens into pain. 665

From due refreshment, life, health, reason, joy ;
 From wild excess, pain, grief, distraction, death :
 Heaven's justice *this* proclaims, and *that* her love.
 What greater evil can I wish my foe,
 Than his full draught of pleasure, from a cask 670
 Unbroach'd by just Authority, ungauged
 By Temperance, by Reason unrefined ?
 A thousand demons lurk within the lee.
 Heaven, others, and ourselves ! uninjured these,
 Drink deep ; the deeper, then, the more Divine ; 675
 Angels are angels from indulgence there ;
 'T is unrepenting Pleasure makes a god.

Dost think thyself a god from other joys ?
 A victim rather ! shortly sure to bleed.
 The wrong must mourn : can Heaven's appointments fail ?
 Can man outwit Omnipotence ? strike out 681
 A self-wrought happiness unmeant by Him
 Who made us, and the world we would enjoy ?
 Who forms an instrument, ordains from whence
 Its dissonance or harmony shall rise. 685
 Heaven bade the soul this mortal frame inspire ;
 Bade Virtue's ray Divine inspire the soul
 With unprecarious flows of vital joy ;
 And, without breathing, man as well might hope
 For life, as, without piety, for peace. 690

"Is Virtue, then, and Piety the same ?"
 No ; Piety is more ; 't is Virtue's source ;
 Mother of every worth, as that of joy.
 Men of the world this doctrine ill digest ;
 They smile at Piety ; yet boast aloud 695
 Good-will to men ; nor know they strive to part
 What Nature joins ; and thus confute themselves.
 With Piety begins all good on earth :
 'T is the first-born of Rationality.

Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lies ; 700
 Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good ;
 A feign'd affection bounds her utmost power.
 Some we can't love but for the' Almighty's sake :
 A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man ;
 Some sinister intent taints all he does ; 705
 And in his kindest actions he 's unkind.

ON piety humanity is built ;
 And on humanity much happiness :
 And yet still more on piety itself.
 A soul in commerce with her God is heaven ; 710
 Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life ;
 The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart.
 A Deity believed, is joy begun ;
 A Deity adored, is joy advanced ;
 A Deity beloved, is joy matured. 715
 Each branch of piety delight inspires ;
 Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,
 O'er Death's dark gulf, and all its horror hides ;
 Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,
 That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still ; 720
 Prayer ardent opens heaven, lets down a stream
 Of glory on the consecrated hour
 Of man, in audience with the Deity.
 Who worships the great God, that instant joins
 The first in heaven, and sets his foot on hell. 725

LORENZO, when wast thou at church before ?
 Thou think'st the service long ; but is it just ?
 Though just, unwelcome ; thou hadst rather tread
 Unhallow'd ground ; the Muse, to win thine ear,
 Must take an air less solemn. She complies. 730
Good conscience!—at the sound the world retires :
 Verse disaffects it, and LORENZO smiles ;
 Yet has she her seraglio full of charms ;

And such as age shall heighten, not impair.
 Art thou dejected? Is thy mind o'ercast? 735
 Amid her fair ones, thou the fairest choose,
 Thy gloom to chase.—“Go, fix some weighty truth;
 Chain down some passion; do some generous good;
 Teach Ignorance to see, or Grief to smile;
 Correct thy friend; befriend thy greatest foe; 740
 Or, with warm heart, and confidence Divine,
 Spring up, and lay strong hold on Him who made thee.”
 Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow,
 Though wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance, 745
 Loud mirth, mad laughter? Wretched comforters!
 Physicians, more than half of thy disease!
 Laughter, though never censured yet as sin,
 (Pardon a thought that only seems severe,
 Is half-immoral: is it much indulged? 750
 By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,
 It shows a scorner, or it makes a fool;
 And sins, as hurting others or ourselves.
 'Tis Pride, or Emptiness, applies the straw
 That tickles little minds to mirth effuse; 755
 Of grief approaching, the portentous sign!*
 The house of laughter makes a house of woe.
 A man triumphant is a monstrous sight;
 A man dejected is a sight as mean.
 What cause for triumph where such ills abound? 760
 What for dejection, where presides a Power
 Who call'd us into being to be bless'd?
 So grieve, as conscious grief may rise to joy;
 So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.
 Most true, a wise man never will be sad: 765

* In the quarto and octavo impressions the reading of this line is,—

“Of grief as impotent, portentous sign.”—EDR.

But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth
 A shallow stream of happiness betray :
 Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.

YET wouldst thou laugh, (but at thy own expense,)
 This counsel strange should I presume to give :— 770
 "Retire, and read thy Bible, to be gay."

There truths abound of sovereign aid to peace ;
 Ah ! do not prize them less because inspired,
 As thou and thine are apt and proud to do.

If not inspired, that pregnant page had stood 775
 Time's treasure, and the wonder of the wise !
 Thou think'st, perhaps, thy soul alone at stake ;

Alas ! should men mistake thee for a fool,
 What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,
 Though tender of thy fame, could interpose ? 780
 Believe me, Sense here acts a double part,
 And the true critic is a Christian too.

But these, thou think'st, are gloomy paths to joy.—
 True joy in sunshine ne'er was found at first.
 They first themselves offend, who greatly please ; 785
 And travail only gives us sound repose.

Heaven sells all pleasure ; effort is the price ;
 The joys of conquest are the joys of man ;
 And Glory the victorious laurel spreads
 O'er Pleasure's pure, perpetual, placid stream. 790

THERE is a time when toil must be preferr'd,
 Or Joy, by mis-timed fondness, is undone.
 A man of pleasure is a man of pains.
 Thou wilt not take the trouble to be bless'd.
 False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought ; 795
 From thought's full bent and energy, the true ;
 And that demands a mind in equal poise,
 Remote from gloomy grief and glaring joy.

Much joy not only speaks small happiness,
 But happiness that shortly must expire. 800
 Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand?
 And in a tempest can reflection live?
 Can joy like thine secure itself an hour?
 Can joy like thine meet accident unshock'd?
 Or ope the door to honest Poverty? 805
 Or talk with threatening Death, and not turn pale?
 In such a world, and such a nature, these
 Are needful fundamentals of delight:
 These fundamentals give delight indeed;
 Delight, pure, delicate, and durable; 810
 Delight, unshaken, masculine, Divine;
 A constant and a sound, but serious, joy.

"Is Joy the daughter of Severity?"
 It is:—yet far my doctrine from severe.
 "Rejoice for ever!" it becomes a man; 815
 Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.
 "Rejoice for ever," Nature cries, "rejoice!"
 And drinks to man in her nectareous cup,
 Mix'd up of delicates for every sense;
 To the great Founder of the bounteous feast 820
 Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise;
 And he that will not pledge her is a churl.
 Ill firmly to support, good fully taste,
 Is the whole science of felicity.
 Yet sparing pledge: her bowl is not the best 825
 Mankind can boast.—"A rational repast;
 Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,
 A military discipline of thought,
 To foil Temptation in the doubtful field;
 And ever-waking ardour for the right:" 830
 'Tis these first give, then guard, a cheerful heart.
 Nought that is right think little; well aware,
 What Reason bids, God bids; by His command

How aggrandized the smallest thing we do !
 Thus nothing is insipid to the wise : 835
 To thee insipid all but what is mad ;
 Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.

“MAD !” (thou repliest, with indignation fired :)
 “Of ancient sages proud to tread the steps,
 I follow Nature.”—Follow Nature still, 840
 But look it be thine own : is Conscience then
 No part of Nature ? Is she not supreme ?
 Thou regicide ! O raise her from the dead !
 Then follow Nature, and resemble God.

WHEN, spite of Conscience, Pleasure is pursued, 845
 Man's nature is unnaturally pleased :
 And what's unnatural is painful too
 At intervals, and must disgust e'en thee !
 The fact thou know'st, but not perhaps the cause.
 Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid ; 850
 Heaven mix'd her with our make, and twisted close
 Her sacred interests with the strings of life.
 Who breaks her awful mandate, shocks himself,
 His better self : and is it greater pain,
 Our soul should murmur, or our dust repine ? 855
 And one, in their eternal war, must bleed.

IF one must suffer, which should least be spared ?
 The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense :
 Ask, then, the Gout, what torment is in guilt.
 The joys of sense to mental joys are mean : 860
 Sense on the present only feeds ; the soul
 On past and future forages for joy.
 'T is hers, by retrospect, through time to range ;
 And, forward, Time's great sequel to survey.
 Could human courts take vengeance on the mind, 865

Axes might rust, and racks and gibbets fall :
Guard then thy mind, and leave the rest to fate.

LORENZO, wilt thou never be a man ?
The man is dead, who for the body lives,
Lured, by the beating of his pulse, to list 870
With every lust that wars against his peace ;
And sets him quite at variance with himself.
Thyself first know, then love : a self there is
Of Virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.
A self there is, as fond of every vice, 875
While every virtue wounds it to the heart !
Humility degrades it, Justice robs,
Bless'd Bounty beggars it, fair Truth betrays,
And godlike Magnanimity destroys.
This self, when rival to the former, scorn ; 880
When not in competition, kindly treat,
Defend it, feed it :—but when Virtue bids,
Toss it or to the fowls, or to the flames.
And why ? 'T is Love of Pleasure bids thee bleed ;
Comply, or own Self-Love extinct, or blind. 885

For what is Vice ? Self-Love in a mistake :
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And Virtue, what ? 'T is Self-Love in her wits,
Quite skilful in the market of Delight.
Self-Love's good sense is love of that dread Power, 890
From whom herself, and all she can enjoy.
Other Self-Love is but disguised Self-Hate ;
More mortal than the malice of our foes ;
A Self-Hate *now* scarce felt ; *then* felt full sore,
When Being cursed, Extinction loud implored, 895
And every thing preferr'd to what we are.

YET this Self-Love LORENZO makes his choice ;
And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.
How is his want of happiness betray'd,

By disaffection to the present hour! 900
 Imagination wanders far afield :
 The future pleases : why ? The present pains.—
 “ But that ’s a secret.”—Yes, which all men know ;
 And know from thee, discover’d unawares.
 Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll 905
 From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause ;
 What is it ?—’T is the cradle of the Soul,
 From Instinct sent, to rock her in disease,
 Which her physician, Reason, will not cure.
 A poor expedient ! yet thy best ; and while 910
 It mitigates thy pain, it owns it too.

SUCH are LORENZO’S wretched remedies !
 The weak have remedies ; the wise have joys.
 Superior wisdom is superior bliss.
 And what sure mark distinguishes the wise ? 915
 Consistent Wisdom ever wills the same ;
 Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.
 Sick of herself, is Folly’s character ;
 As Wisdom’s is, a modest self-applause.
 A change of evils is thy good supreme ; 920
 Nor, but in motion, canst thou find thy rest.
 Man’s greatest strength is shown in standing still.
 The first sure symptom of a mind in health
 Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.
 False Pleasure from abroad her joys imports ; 925
 Rich from within, and self-sustain’d, the true.
 The true is fix’d, and solid as a rock ;
 Slippery the false, and tossing as the wave.
 This, a wild wanderer on earth, like CAIN :
 That, like the fabled self-enamour’d boy, 930
 Home-contemplation her supreme delight ;
 She dreads an interruption from without,
 Smit with her own condition ; and the more
 Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

- No man is happy till he thinks on earth 935
 There breathes not a more happy than himself
 Then Envy dies, and Love o'erflows on all ;
 And Love o'erflowing makes an angel here.
 Such angels all, entitled to repose
 On Him who governs fate : though Tempest frowns, 940
 Though Nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heaven !
 To lean on Him on whom archangels lean !
 With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
 They stand collecting every beam of thought,
 Till their hearts kindle with Divine delight ; 945
 For all their thoughts, like angels seen of old
 In ISRAEL'S dream, come from, and go to, heaven :
 Hence are they studious of sequester'd scenes ;
 While noise and dissipation comfort thee.
- WERE all men happy, revellings would cease, 950
 That opiate for inquietude within.
 LORENZO! never man was truly bless'd,
 But it composed, and gave him such a cast,
 As Folly might mistake for want of joy :
 A cast unlike the triumph of the proud ; 955
 A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.
 O for a joy from thy PHILANDER'S spring !
 A spring perennial, rising in the breast,
 And permanent as pure! no turbid stream
 Of rapturous exultation, swelling high ; 960
 Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour awhile,
 Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.
 What does the man who transient joy prefers ?
 What, but prefer the bubbles to the stream ?
- VAIN are all sudden sallies of delight ; 965
 Convulsions of a weak, distemper'd joy :
 Joy's a fix'd state ; a tenure, not a start.
 Bliss there is none, but unprecarious bliss :

That is the gem : sell all, and purchase that.
 Why go a-begging to contingencies, 970
 Not gain'd with ease, nor safely loved, if gain'd ?
 At good fortuitous, draw back, and pause ;
 Suspect it ; what thou canst insure, enjoy ;
 And nought but what thou givest thyself is sure.
 Reason perpetuates joy that Reason gives, 975
 And makes it as immortal as herself :
 To mortals, nought immortal but their worth.

WORTH, conscious Worth, should absolutely reign,
 And other Joys ask leave for their approach ;
 Nor, unexamined, ever leave obtain. 980
 Thou art all anarchy ; a mob of Joys
 Wage war, and perish in intestine broils ;
 Not the least promise of internal peace !
 No bosom-comfort, or unborrow'd bliss !
 Thy Thoughts are vagabonds ; all outward-bound, 985
 Mid sands, and rocks, and storms, to cruise for pleasure ;
 If gain'd, dear-bought ; and better miss'd than gain'd.
 Much pain must expiate what much pain procured.
 Fancy and Sense from an infected shore
 Thy cargo bring ; and pestilence the prize. 990
 Then, such thy thirst, (insatiable thirst !
 By fond indulgence but inflamed the more !)
 Fancy still cruises when poor Sense is tired.

IMAGINATION is the Paphian shop,
 Where feeble Happiness, like VULCAN, lame, 995
 Bids foul Ideas, in their dark recess,
 And hot as hell, (which kindled the black fires,)
 With wanton art, those fatal arrows form
 Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
 Wouldst thou receive them, other Thoughts there are, 1000
 On angel-wing, descending from above,
 Which these, with art Divine, would counterwork,
 And form celestial armour for thy peace.

IN this is seen Imagination's *guilt* ;
 But who can count her *follies* ? She betrays thee 1005
 To think in grandeur there is something great.
 For works of curious art, and ancient fame,
 Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd ;
 And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.
 Hence, what disaster !—Though the price was paid, 1010
 That persecuting priest, the Turk of Rome,
 Whose foot, (ye gods !) though cloven, must be kiss'd,
 Detain'd thy dinner on the Latian shore ;
 (Such is the fate of honest Protestants !)
 And poor Magnificence is starved to death. 1015
 Hence just resentment, indignation, ire !—
 Be pacified : if outward things are great,
 'T is magnanimity great things to scorn ;
 Pompous expenses, and parades august,
 And courts,—that insalubrious soil to peace ! 1020
 True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye ;
 True happiness resides in things unseen.
 No smiles of Fortune ever bless'd the bad,
 Nor can her frowns rob Innocence of joys ;
 That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor : 1025
 So tell His Holiness, and be revenged.

PLEASURE, we both agree, is man's chief good ;
 Our only contest, what deserves the name.
 Give Pleasure's name to nought but what has pass'd
 The' authentic seal of Reason, (which, like YORKE, 1030
 Demurs on what it passes,) and defies
 The tooth of Time ; when pass'd, a pleasure still ;
 Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
 And doubly to be prized, as it promotes
 Our future, while it forms our present, joy. 1035
 Some joys the future overcast ; and some
 Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
 Some joys endear eternity ; some give

Abhorr'd annihilation dreadful charms.
 Are rival joys contending for thy choice? 1040
 Consult thy whole existence, and be safe;
 That oracle will put all doubt to flight.
 Short is the lesson, though my lecture long :
 "Be good"—and let Heaven answer for the rest.

YET, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant, 1045
 In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
 The good man has his clouds that intervene ;
 Clouds, that obscure his sublunary day,
 But never conquer : e'en the best must own,
 Patience and Resignation are the pillars 1050
 Of human Peace on earth. The pillars, these :
 But those of SERP not more remote from thee,
 Till this heroic lesson thou hast learn'd,
 To frown at pleasure, and to smile in pain.
 Fired at the prospect of unclouded bliss, 1055
 Heaven in reversion, like the sun, as yet
 Beneath the' horizon, cheers us in this world ;
 It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,
 The glorious dawn of our eternal day.

"THIS," says LORENZO, "is a fair harangue : 1060
 But can harangues blow back strong Nature's stream ;
 Or stem the tide Heaven pushes through our veins,
 Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
 And lays his labour level with the world ?"

THEMSELVES men make their comment on mankind ; 1065
 And think nought is but what they find at home :
 Thus weakness to chimera turns the truth.*
 Nothing romantic has the Muse prescribed.

* In the early quarto impressions, the reading of this line is,—

"Thus, weakness to chimeras turns the wise."—EDIT.

Above,* LORENZO saw the man of earth,
 The mortal man ; and wretched was the sight. 1070
 To balance *that*, to comfort and exalt,
 Now see the man immortal : him, I mean,
 Who lives as such ; whose heart, full-bent on heaven,
 Leans all that way, his bias to the stars.
 The world's dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise 1075
 His lustre more, though bright without a foil.
 Observe his awful portrait, and admire ;
 Nor stop at wonder ; imitate, and live.

SOME angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
 What nothing less than angel can exceed, 1080
 A man on earth devoted to the Skies,
 Like ships in seas, while in, above, the world !

WITH aspect mild, and elevated eye,
 Behold him seated on a mount serene,
 Above the fogs of Sense, and Passion's storm : 1085
 All the black cares and tumults of this life,
 Like harmless thunders breaking at his feet,
 Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
 Earth's genuine sons, the sceptred, and the slave,
 A mingled mob, a wandering herd, he sees, 1090
 Bewilder'd in the vale ; in all unlike !
 His full reverse in all ! What higher praise ?
 What stronger demonstration of the right ?

THE present all their care ; the future his.
 When public welfare calls, or private want, 1095
 They give to fame ; his bounty he conceals.
 Their virtues varnish nature ; his exalt.
 Mankind's esteem they court ; and he his own.
 Theirs the wild chase of false felicities ;

* In a former Night.

His the composed possession of the true. 1100
 Alike throughout is his consistent peace,
 All of one colour, and an even thread ;
 While party-colour'd shreds of happiness,
 With hideous gaps between, patch up for them
 A madman's robe ; each puff of Fortune blows 1105
 The tatters by, and shows their nakedness.

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

His joys create, theirs murder, future bliss. 1135
 To triumph in existence, his alone ;
 And his alone, triumphantly to think
 His true existence is not yet begun.
 His glorious course was, yesterday, complete :
 Death then was welcome ; yet life still is sweet. 1140

BUT nothing charms LORENZO like the firm,
 Undaunted breast.—And whose is that high praise ?
 They yield to pleasure, though they danger brave,
 And show no fortitude but in the field ;
 If there they show it, 't is for glory shown : 1145
 Nor will that cordial always man *their* hearts.
 A cordial *his* sustains that cannot fail :
 By pleasure unsubdued, unbroke by pain,
 He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts ;
 All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls ; 1150
 And, when he falls, writes VICI on his shield :
 From magnanimity, all fear above ;
 From nobler recompence, above applause,
 Which owes to man's short out-look all its charms.

BACKWARD to credit what he never felt, 1155
 LORENZO cries,—“ Where shines this miracle ?
 From what root rises this immortal man ? ”
 A root that grows not in LORENZO's ground :
 The root dissect, nor wonder at the flower.

HE follows nature, (not like thee ! *) and shows us 1160
 An uninverted system of a man.
 His appetite wears Reason's golden chain,
 And finds in due restraint its luxury.
 His passion, like an eagle well reclaim'd,
 Is taught to fly at nought but infinite. 1165

* See page 240, line 840.

Patient his hope, unanxious is his care,
 His caution fearless, and his grief (if grief
 The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
 And why?—Because affection, more than meet,
 His wisdom leaves not disengaged from Heaven. 1170
 Those secondary goods that smile on earth,
 He, loving in proportion, loves in peace.
 They most the world enjoy, who least admire.
 His understanding 'scapes the common cloud
 Of fumes arising from a boiling breast. 1175
 His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
 By worldly competitions uninflamed.
 The moderate movements of his soul admit
 Distinct ideas, and matured debate,
 An eye impartial, and an even scale : 1180
 Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.
 Thus, in a double sense, the good are wise ;
 On its own dunghill, wiser than the world.
 What then the world ? It must be doubly weak ;
 Strange truth ! as soon would they believe the Creed.

YET thus it is ; nor otherwise can be ; 1186
 So far from aught romantic what I sing.
 Bliss has no being, Virtue has no strength,
 But from the prospect of immortal life.
 Who think earth all, or (what weighs just the same) 1190
 Who care no farther, must prize what it yields ;
 Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.
 Who thinks earth nothing, can't its charms admire ;
 He can't a foe, though most malignant, hate,
 Because that hate would prove his greater foe. 1195
 'T is hard for them (yet who so loudly boast
 Good-will to men ?) to love their dearest friend ;
 For may not he invade their good supreme,
 Where the least jealousy turns love to gall ?
 All shines to *them*, that for a season shines. 1200

Each act, each thought, *he* questions, "What its weight,
 Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?"
 And what it there appears, he deems it now.
 Hence, pure are* the recesses of his soul;
 The god-like man has nothing to conceal. 1205
 His virtue, constitutionally deep,
 Has Habit's firmness, and Affection's flame;
 Angels, allied, descend to feed the fire;
 And Death, which others slays, makes him a god.

AND now, LORENZO, bigot of this world, 1210
 Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by Heaven!
 Stand by thy scorn, and be reduced to nought:
 For what art thou?—Thou boaster! while *thy* glare,
 Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
 Like a broad mist, at distance strikes us most; 1215
 And, like a mist, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
 Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies,
 By promise now, and by possession soon,
 (Too soon, too much, it cannot be,) his own. 1220

FROM this thy just annihilation rise,
 LORENZO! rise to something, by reply.
 The World, thy client, listens and expects;
 And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.
 Canst thou be silent? No; for Wit is thine; 1225
 And Wit talks most when least she has to say,
 And Reason interrupts not her career.
 She'll say, that "mists above the mountains rise;"
 And with a thousand pleasantries amuse.
 She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust, 1230
 And fly conviction in the dust she raised.

* The reading of the early quarto impressions is,—

"Hence sacred the recesses of his soul."—EDIT.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste!
 'T is precious, as the *vehicle* of sense ;
 But, as its *substitute*, a dire disease.
 Pernicious talent ! flatter'd by the world, 1235
 By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.*
 Wisdom is rare, LORENZO ! wit abounds ;
 Passion can give it ; sometimes wine inspires
 The lucky flash ; and madness rarely fails.
 Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs, 1240
 Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.
 For thy renown 't were well was this the worst :
 Chance often hits it ; and, to pique thee more,
 See, Dulness, blundering on vivacities,
 Shakes her sage head at the calamity 1245
 Which has exposed and let her down to thee.
 But Wisdom, awful Wisdom, which inspects,
 Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,
 Seizes the right, and holds it to the last ;
 How rare ! in senates, synods, sought in vain ! 1250
 Or if there found, 't is sacred to the few ;
 While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,
 Frequent, as fatal, Wit : in civil life,
 Wit makes an enterpriser ; Sense, a man.
 Wit hates authority, commotion loves, 1255
 And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.
 In states, 't is dangerous ; in religion, death :
 Shall Wit turn Christian, when the dull believe ?
 Sense is our helmet, Wit is but the plume ;
 The plume exposes, 't is our helmet saves. 1260
 Sense is the diamond, weighty, solid, sound ;
 When cut by Wit, it casts a brighter beam ;
 Yet, Wit apart, it is a diamond still.

* The reading of these two lines in the early quarto impressions was,—

“Pernicious talent ! flatter'd by mankind,
 Yet hated too : they think the talent rare.”—EDIT.

Wit, widow'd of Good Sense, is worse than nought ;
 It hoists more sail to run against a rock. 1265
 Thus, a half-CHESTERFIELD is quite a fool ;
 Whom dull fools scorn, and bless their want of wit.

How ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,
 Where Sirens sit to sing thee to thy fate !
 A joy in which our reason bears no part 1270
 Is but a sorrow tickling ere it stings.

Let not the cooings of the World allure thee ;
 Which of her lovers ever found her true ?
 Happy, of this bad World who little know !—
 And yet we much must know her to be safe. 1275

To *know* the World, not *love* her, is thy point ;
 She gives but little, nor that little long.

There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,
 A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
 Our thoughtless Agitation's idle child, 1280

That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,
 Leaving the soul more vapid than before ;
 An animal ovation ! such as holds

No commerce with our reason, but subsists
 On juices, through the well-toned tubes well-strain'd ; 1285

A nice machine ! scarce ever tuned aright ;
 And when it jars—thy Sirens sing no more,
 Thy dance is done ; the demi-god is thrown
 (Short apotheosis !) beneath the man,
 In coward gloom immersed, or fell despair. 1290

ART thou yet dull enough, despair to dread,
 And startle at destruction ? If thou art,
 Accept a buckler, take it to the field ;

(A field of battle is this mortal life !)
 When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart ; 1295
 A single sentence proof against the world :—
 " Soul, body, fortune ! every good pertains

To one of these ; but prize not all alike :
 The goods of fortune to thy body's health,
 Body to soul, and soul submit to God." 1300
 Wouldst thou build lasting happiness? Do this :
 The' inverted pyramid can never stand.

Is this truth doubtful? It outshines the sun ;
 Nay, the sun shines not but to show us this,
 The single lesson of mankind on earth. 1305
 And yet—Yet, what? No news! Mankind is mad !
 Such mighty numbers list against the right,
 (And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, achieve ?)
 They talk themselves to something like belief,
 That all earth's joys are theirs : as Athens' fool 1310
 Grinn'd from the port on every sail his own.

THEY grin ; but wherefore? and how long the laugh ?
 Half ignorance their mirth, and half a lie ;
 To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile.
 Hard either task ! The most abandon'd own, 1315
 That others, if abandon'd, are undone :
 Then, for themselves, the moment Reason wakes,
 (And Providence denies it long repose,)
 O how laborious is their gaiety !
 They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen, 1320
 Scarce muster patience to support the farce,
 And pump sad laughter till the curtain falls.
Scarce, did I say? some cannot sit it out ;
 Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,
 And show us what their joy by their despair. 1325

THE clotted hair ! gored breast ! blaspheming eye !
 Its impious fury still alive in death !
 Shut, shut the shocking scene!—But Heaven denies
 A cover to such guilt ; and so should man.
 Look round, LORENZO ! see the reeking blade, 1330

The' envenom'd phial, and the fatal ball ;
 The strangling cord, and suffocating stream ;
 The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays
 From raging riot ; (slower suicides !)
 And pride in these, more execrable still !— 1335
 How horrid all to thought !—But horrors these
 That vouch the truth, and aid my feeble song.

FROM Vice, Sense, Fancy, no man can be bless'd :
 Bliss is too great to lodge within an hour :
 When an immortal being aims at bliss, 1340
 Duration is essential to the name.
 O for a joy from Reason ! joy from that
 Which makes man MAN ; and, exercised aright,
 Will make him more : a bounteous joy ! that gives,
 And promises ; that weaves, with art Divine, 1345
 The richest prospect into present peace :
 A joy ambitious ! joy in common held
 With thrones ethereal, and their Greater far :
 A joy high-privileged from Chance, Time, Death ;
 A joy which Death shall double, Judgment crown ; 1350
 Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage,
 Through bless'd eternity's long day ; yet still,
 Not more remote from sorrow than from Him
 Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours
 So much of Deity on guilty dust ! 1355
 There, O my LUCIA ! may I meet thee there,*
 Where not *thy* presence can improve my bliss !

* This brief and incidental mention of his departed wife is one of those natural touches, to which the reader's attention has been directed at the commencement of the Sixth Night, p. 136 ; and which, far beyond any laboured panegyric, serve to prove the sincerity of his grief, and the depth of his affection. See similar passing allusions to his loss in Night vii. line 615, p. 185 ; line 1258, p. 205 ; and in Night ix. line 473, p. 275.

—EDIT.

- AFFECTS not this the sages of the world ?
 Can nought affect them but what fools them too ?
 Eternity depending on an hour, 1360
 Makes serious thought man's wisdom, joy, and praise.
 Nor need you blush (though sometimes your designs
 May shun the light) at your designs on heaven :
 Sole point, where *over-bashful* is your blame !
 Are you not wise ?—You know you are : yet hear 1365
 One truth, amid your numerous schemes, mislaid,
 Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen :—
 " Our schemes to plan by this world, or the next,
 Is the sole difference between *wise* and *fool*."
 All worthy men will weigh you in this scale ; 1370
 What wonder, then, if they pronounce you light ?
 Is their esteem alone not worth your care ?
 Accept my simple scheme of common sense :
 Thus save your fame, and make two worlds your own.
- THE World replies not ;—but the World persists ; 1375
 And puts the cause off to the longest day,
 Planning evasions for the day of doom :
 So far, at that re-hearing, from redress,
 They then turn witnesses against themselves.
 Hear that, LORENZO ! nor be wise to-morrow. 1380
 Haste, haste ! a man, by nature, is in haste :
 For who shall answer for another hour ?
 'T is highly prudent to make one sure friend ;
 And that thou canst not do this side the skies.
- YE sons of earth ! (nor willing to be more !) 1385
 Since verse you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
 Thus, in an age so gay, the Muse plain truths
 (Truths which, at church, you might have heard in prose)
 Has ventured into light ; well-pleas'd the verse
 Should be forgot, if you the truths retain, 1390
 And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.

But praise she need not fear : I see my fate,
 And headlong leap, like CURTIUS, down the gulf.
 Since many an ample volume, mighty tome,
 Must die, and die unwept ; O thou minute, 1395
 Devoted page ! go forth among thy foes ;
 Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
 And die a double death. Mankind, incensed,
 Denies thee long to live : nor shalt thou rest
 When thou art dead ; in Stygian shades arraign'd 1400
 By LUCIFER, as traitor to his throne,
 And bold blasphemer of his friend,—the WORLD ;
 The WORLD, whose legions cost him slender pay,
 And, volunteers, around his banner swarm ;
 Prudent as PRUSSIA in her zeal for GAUL. 1405

" ARE all, then, fools ?" LORENZO cries.—Yes, all,
 But such as hold this doctrine (new to thee) :
 "The mother of true Wisdom is the Will ;"
 The noblest intellect a fool without it.
 World-wisdom much has done, and more may do, 1410
 In arts and sciences, in wars and peace ;
 But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,
 And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
 This is the most Indulgence can afford :—
 "Thy wisdom all can do but—make thee wise." 1415
 Nor think this censure is severe on thee ;
 Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.



NIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE CONSOLATION.

NIGHT IX.

CONTAINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS,

1.—A MORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.

2.—A NIGHT ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

HUMBLY INSCRIBED TO HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF NEWCASTLE,
ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARIES OF STATE.

—*Fatis contraria fata rependens.*—VIRG.



THE CONSOLATION.

NIGHT IX.

CONTAINING, AMONG OTHER THINGS,

1.—A MORAL SURVEY OF THE NOCTURNAL HEAVENS.

2.—A NIGHT ADDRESS TO THE DEITY.

As when a traveller, a long day pass'd
 In painful search of what he cannot find,
 At night's approach, content with the next cot,
 There ruminates awhile his labour lost ;
 Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords, 5
 And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,
 Till the due season calls him to repose :
 Thus I, long travell'd in the ways of men,
 And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze
 Where Disappointment smiles at Hope's career ; 10
 Warn'd by the languor of Life's evening ray,
 At length have housed me in an humble shed ;
 Where, future wandering banish'd from my thought,
 And waiting patient the sweet hour of rest,
 I chase the moments with a serious song. 15
 Song soothes our pains ; and age has pains to soothe.

WHEN age, care, crime, and friends embraced at heart
 Torn from my bleeding breast, and Death's dark shade,
 Which hovers o'er me, quench the' ethereal fire,

Canst thou, O Night! indulge one labour more? 20
 One labour more indulge! then sleep, my strain!
 Till, haply, waked by RAPHAEL'S golden lyre,
 Where night, death, age, care, crime, and sorrow cease;
 To bear a part in everlasting lays,—
 Though far, far higher set,—in aim, I trust, 25
 Symphonious to this humble prelude here.

HAS not the Muse asserted pleasures pure,
 Like those above, exploding other joys?
 Weigh what was urged, LORENZO, fairly weigh;
 And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still? 30
 I think thou wilt forbear a boast so bold.
 But if, beneath the favour of mistake,
 Thy smile's sincere, not more sincere can be
 LORENZO'S smile than my compassion for him.
 The sick in body call for aid: the sick 35
 In mind are covetous of more disease;
 And when at worst, they dream themselves quite well.
 To know ourselves diseased, is half our cure.
 When Nature's blush by custom is wiped off,
 And Conscience, deaden'd by repeated strokes, 40
 Has into manners naturalized our crimes;
 The curse of curses is, our curse to love,
 To triumph in the blackness of our guilt,
 (As Indians glory in the deepest jet,) 45
 And throw aside our senses with our peace.

BUT, grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy;
 Grant joy and glory, quite unsullied, shone;
 Yet still it ill deserves LORENZO'S heart.
 No joy, no glory, glitters in thy sight,
 But, through the thin partition of an hour, 50
 I see its sables wove by Destiny;
 And that in sorrow buried; this in shame;
 While howling Furies ring the doleful knell;

And Conscience, now so soft thou scarce canst hear
Her whisper, echoes her * eternal peal. 55

WHERE the prime actors of the last Year's scene ?
Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume !
How many sleep who kept the world awake
With lustre and with noise ! Has Death proclaim'd
A truce, and hung his sated lance on high ? 60
'T is brandish'd still, nor shall the present Year
Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
Or spread of feeble life a thinner fall.

BUT needless monuments to wake the thought ;
Life's gayest scenes speak man's mortality ; 65
Though in a style more florid, full as plain
As mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs :
What are our noblest ornaments, but Deaths
Turn'd flatterers of Life, in paint, or marble,
The well-stain'd canvass, or the featured stone ? 70
Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the scene.
Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.

"PROFESS'D Diversions ! cannot these escape ?"
Far from it : these present us with a shroud ;
And talk of Death, like garlands o'er a grave. 75
As some bold plunderer for buried wealth,
We ransack tombs for pastime ; from the dust
Call up the sleeping hero ; bid him tread
The scene for our amusement. How like gods
We sit ; and, wrapp'd in immortality, 80
Shed generous tears on wretches born to die ;
Their fate deploring, to forget our own !

WHAT, all the pomps and triumphs of our lives,
But legacies in blossom ? Our lean soil,

* The reading of the early quarto impressions was *their*.—EDIT.

Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities, 85
 From friends interr'd beneath, a rich manure!
 Like other worms, we banquet on the dead;
 Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know
 Our present frailties, or approaching fate?

LORENZO! such the glories of the world! 90
 What is the world itself? thy world?—A grave.
 Where is the dust that has not been alive?
 The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors;
 From human mould we reap our daily bread.
 The globe around Earth's hollow surface shakes, 95
 And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.
 O'er devastation we blind revels keep;
 Whole buried towns support the dancer's heel.
 The moist of human frame the sun exhales;
 Winds scatter, through the mighty void, the dry; 100
 Earth repossesses part of what she gave,
 And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire;
 Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils;
 As Nature, wide, our ruins spread: man's death
 Inhabits all things but the thought of man! 105

NOR man alone; his breathing bust expires,
 His tomb is mortal; empires die. Where now
 The Roman? Greek? They stalk, an empty name!
 Yet few regard them in this useful light;
 Though half our learning is their epitaph. 110
 When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
 That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,
 O Death! I stretch my view; what visions rise!
 What triumphs, toils imperial, arts Divine,
 In wither'd laurels, glide before my sight! 115
 What lengths of far-famed ages, billow'd high
 With human agitation, roll along
 In unsubstantial images of air!

The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,
 Whispering faint echoes of the world's applause, 120
 With penitential aspect, as they pass,
 All point at earth, and hiss at human pride,
 The wisdom of the wise, and prancings of the great.

BUT, O LORENZO, far the rest above,
 Of ghastly nature and enormous size, 125
 One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,
 And shakes my frame. Of *one* departed world
 I see the mighty shadow : oozy wreath
 And dismal sea-weed crown her ! O'er her urn,
 Reclined, she weeps her desolated realms, 130
 And bloated sons ; and, weeping, prophesies
Another's dissolution, soon, in flames :
 But, like CASSANDRA, prophesies in vain ;
 In vain, to many ; not, I trust, to thee.

FOR, know'st thou not, or art thou loath to know, 135
 The great decree, the counsel of the Skies ?
 Deluge and Conflagration, dreadful powers !
 Prime ministers of Vengeance ! Chain'd in caves
 Distinct, apart, the giant Furies roar ;
 Apart, or, such their horrid rage for ruin, 140
 In mutual conflict would they rise, and wage
 Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.
 But not for this ordain'd their boundless rage :
 When Heaven's inferior instruments of wrath,
 War, Famine, Pestilence, are found too weak 145
 To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,
 These are let loose, alternate ; down they rush,
 Swift and tempestuous, from the' eternal throne,
 With irresistible commission arm'd,
 The world, in vain corrected, to destroy, 150
 And ease Creation of the shocking scene.

SEEST thou, LORENZO, what depends on man ?
 The fate of Nature ; as for man her birth.
 Earth's actors change Earth's transitory scenes,
 And make Creation groan with human guilt. 155
 How must it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
 But not of waters ! At the destined hour,
 By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
 See, all the formidable sons of Fire,
 Eruptions, Earthquakes, Comets, Lightnings, play 160
 Their various engines ; all at once disgorge
 Their blazing magazines ; and take by storm
 This poor terrestrial citadel of man.

AMAZING period ! when each mountain-height
 Out-burns Vesuvius ; rocks eternal pour 165
 Their melted mass, as rivers once they pour'd ;
 Stars rush ; and final Ruin fiercely drives
 Her ploughshare o'er Creation !—while aloft
 More than astonishment, if more can be !
 Far other firmament than e'er was seen, 170
 Than e'er was thought by man ! Far other stars !
 Stars animate, that govern these of fire.
 Far other Sun !—A Sun, O how unlike
 The Babe at Bethlehem ! How unlike the Man
 That groan'd on Calvary ! Yet He it is ; 175
 That Man of sorrows ! O how changed ! What pomp !
 In grandeur terrible, all heaven descends !
 And gods, ambitious, triumph in His train.*
 A swift archangel, with his golden wing,

* In the first quarto, these four lines immediately followed, which were omitted in all subsequent impressions :—

“ As monarchs grand, on coronation-days,—
 OMNIPOTENCE affects omnipotence,
 Wears all His glories, marshals all His powers,
 Their State imblazes, Deity exalts ! ”—EDIT.

As blots and clouds, that darken and disgrace 180
 The scene Divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.
 And now, all dross removed, Heaven's own pure day,
 Full on the confines of our ether, flames :
 While (dreadful contrast !) far (how far !) beneath,
 Hell, bursting, belches forth her blazing seas, 185
 And storms sulphureous ; her voracious jaws
 Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.

LORENZO, welcome to this scene ; the last
 In Nature's course, the first in Wisdom's thought.
 This strikes, if aught can strike thee ; this awakes 190
 The most supine ; this snatches man from death.
 Rouse, rouse, LORENZO, then, and follow me,
 Where Truth, the most momentous man can hear,
 Loud calls my soul, and Ardour wings her flight.
 I find my inspiration in my theme ; 195
 The grandeur of my subject is my Muse.

At midnight, (when mankind is wrapp'd in peace,
 And worldly Fancy feeds on golden dreams,)
 To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour,
 At midnight, 't is presumed, this pomp will burst 200
 From tenfold darkness ; sudden as the spark
 From smitten steel ; from nitrous grain, the blaze.
 Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more ;
 The day is broke which never more shall close !
 Above, around, beneath, amazement all ! 205
 Terror and glory join'd in their extremes !
 Our GOD in grandeur, and our world on fire !
 All Nature struggling in the pangs of death !
 Dost thou not hear her ? Dost thou not deplore
 Her strong convulsions, and her final groan ? 210
 Where are we now ? Ah me ! the ground is gone
 On which we stood ! LORENZO, while thou mayst,
 Provide more firm support, or sink for ever !

“Where? How? From whence?” Vain hope! it is too late!
 Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly, 215
 When consternation turns the good man pale?

GREAT day! for which all other days were made;
 For which earth rose from chaos, man from earth;
 And an eternity, the date of gods,
 Descended on poor earth-created man! 220

Great day of dread, decision, and despair!
 At thought of thee each sublunary wish
 Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world;
 And catches at each reed of hope in heaven.
 At THOUGHT of thee!—And art thou absent then? 225

LORENZO, no; 't is here!—it is begun:—
 Already is begun the Grand Assize,
 In thee, in all; deputed Conscience scales
 The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom;
 Forestalls; and, by forestalling, proves it sure. 230
 Why on himself should man void judgment pass?
 Is idle Nature laughing at her sons?
 Who Conscience sent, her sentence will support,
 And GOD above assert that God in man.

THRICE happy they that enter now the court 235
 Heaven opens in their bosoms: but, how rare,
 Ah me! that magnanimity, how rare!

What hero like the man who stands himself;
 Who dares to meet his naked heart alone;
 Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings, 240
 Resolved to silence future murmurs there?
 The coward flies; and, flying, is undone.

(Art thou a coward? No!) The coward flies;
 Thinks, but thinks slightly; asks, but fears to know;
 Asks, “What is truth?” with PILATE; and retires; 245
 Dissolves the court, and mingles with the throng;
 Asylum sad from reason, hope, and heaven!

SHALL all but man look out, with ardent eye,
 For that great day which was ordain'd for man ?
 O day of consummation ! mark supreme 250
 (If men are wise) of human thought ! nor least,
 Or in the sight of angels or their KING !
 Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,
 Order o'er order, rising, blaze o'er blaze,
 As in a theatre, surround this scene, 255
 Intent on man, and anxious for his fate :
 Angels look out for thee ; for thee, their LORD,
 To vindicate His glory ; and for thee
 Creation universal calls aloud,
 To disinvolve the moral world, and give 260
 To Nature's renovation brighter charms.

SHALL man alone, whose fate, whose final fate,
 Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought ?
 I think of nothing else ; I see, I feel it !
 All Nature, like an earthquake, trembling round ! 265
 All deities, like summer's swarms, on wing !
 All basking in the full meridian blaze !
 I see the JUDGE enthroned, the flaming guard,
 The volume open'd, open'd every heart !
 A sunbeam pointing out each secret thought ! 270
 No patron, intercessor none ! now past
 The sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour !
 For guilt no plea ! to pain, no pause, no bound !
 Inexorable all, and all extreme !

NOR man alone ; the foe of God and man, 275
 From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,
 And rears his brasen front, with thunder scarr'd ;
 Receives his sentence, and begins his hell.
 All vengeance past, now, seems abundant grace :
 Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll 280

His baleful eyes! He curses whom he dreads ;
And deems it the first moment of his fall.

'T is present to my thought!—And yet where is it?
Angels can't tell me ; angels cannot guess
The period ; from created beings lock'd 285
In darkness. But the process and the place
Are less obscure : for these may man inquire.
Say, thou Great Close of human hopes and fears,
Great Key of hearts, Great Finisher of fates,
Great End, and Great Beginning! Say, where art thou?
Art thou in time, or in eternity? 291
Nor in eternity, nor time, I find thee.
These, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,
(Monarchs of all elapsed, or unarrived!)
As in debate, how best their powers allied 295
May swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath,
Of HIM whom both their monarchies obey.

TIME—this vast fabric for him built (and doom'd
With him to fall) now bursting o'er his head ;
His lamp, the sun, extinguish'd—from beneath 300
The frown of hideous darkness calls his sons
From their long slumber ; from Earth's heaving womb,
To second birth. Contemporary throng!
Roused at one call, upstarting from one bed,
Press'd in one crowd, appall'd with one amaze, 305
He turns them o'er, Eternity, to thee.
Then (as a king deposed disdains to live)
He falls on his own scythe ; nor falls alone ;
His greatest foe falls with him ; TIME, and he
Who murder'd all Time's offspring, DEATH, expire. 310

TIME was! ETERNITY now reigns alone!
Awful Eternity, offended queen!
And her resentment to mankind how just!

With kind intent soliciting access,
 How often has she knock'd at human hearts ! 315
 Rich to repay their hospitality,
 How often call'd, and with the voice of God !
 Yet bore repulse, excluded as a cheat,
 A dream ! while foulest foes found welcome there !
 A dream, a cheat, now, all things but her smile. 320

For, lo ! her twice ten thousand gates, thrown wide
 As thrice from Indus to the frozen pole—
 With banners streaming as the comet's blaze,
 And clarions louder than the deep in storms,
 Sonorous as immortal breath can blow— 325
 Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,
 Of light, of darkness ; in a middle field,
 Wide as Creation, populous as wide !
 A neutral region ! there to mark the' event
 Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes 330
 Detain'd them close spectators, through a length
 Of ages, ripening to this grand result ;
 Ages, as yet unnumber'd but by God ;
 Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates
 The rights of Virtue, and His own renown. 335

ETERNITY, the various sentence past,
 Assigns the sever'd thron'g distinct abodes,
 Sulphureous or ambrosial. What ensues ?
 The deed predominant, the deed of deeds !
 Which makes a hell of hell, a heaven of heaven ! 340
 The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns
 Her adamantine key's enormous size
 Through Destiny's inextricable wards,
 Deep driving every bolt on both their fates.
 Then, from the crystal battlements of heaven, 345
 Down, down she hurls it through the dark profound,
 Ten thousand thousand fathom ; there to rust,

And ne'er unlock her resolution more.
 The deep resounds; and Hell, through all her glooms,
 Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar. 350

O how unlike the chorus of the Skies!
 O how unlike those shouts of joy, that shake
 The whole ethereal! How the concave rings!
 Nor strange, when deities their voice exalt;
 And louder far than when Creation rose, 355

To see Creation's godlike aim and end
 So well accomplish'd, so divinely closed!
 To see the mighty Dramatist's last act
 (As meet) in glory rising o'er the rest!
 No fancied God, a GOD indeed, descends, 360

To solve all knots; to strike the moral home;
 To throw full day on darkest scenes of time;
 To clear, commend, exalt, and crown the whole.
 Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,
 The charm'd spectators thunder their applause; 365
 And the vast void, beyond, applause resounds.

WHAT THEN AM I?—

Amidst applauding worlds,
 And worlds celestial, is there found on earth
 A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string, 370
 Which jars in the grand chorus, and complains?

Censure on thee, LORENZO, I suspend,
 And turn it on myself; how greatly due!
 All, all is right, by God ordain'd or done;
 And who but God resumed the friends He gave? 375
 And have I been complaining then so long?

Complaining of His *favours*,—Pain and Death?
 Who, without Pain's advice, would e'er be good?
 Who, without Death, but would be good in vain?
 Pain is to save from pain; all punishment, 380
 To make for peace; and Death, to save from death;

And second death, to guard immortal life ;
 To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,
 And turn the tide of souls another way ;
 By the same tenderness Divine ordain'd, 385
 That planted Eden, and high-bloom'd for man
 A fairer Eden, endless, in the skies.

HEAVEN gives us friends to bless the present scene ;
 Resumes them, to prepare us for the next.
 All evils natural are moral goods : 390

All discipline, indulgence, on the whole.
 None are unhappy : all have cause to smile
 But such as to themselves that cause deny.
 Our faults are at the bottom of our pains ;
 Error, in act or judgment, is the source 395

Of endless sighs : we sin, or we mistake ;
 And Nature tax, when false Opinion stings.
 Let impious Grief be banish'd, Joy indulg'd ;
 But chiefly then, when Grief puts in her claim.
 Joy from the joyous frequently betrays, 400

Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe.
 Joy, amidst ills, corroborates, exalts ;
 'T is joy and conquest ; joy and virtue too.
 A noble fortitude in ills delights
 Heaven, earth, ourselves ; 't is duty, glory, peace. 405

Affliction is the good man's shining scene !
 Prosperity conceals his brightest ray ;
 As Night to stars, Woe lustre gives to man.
 Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
 And Virtue in calamities, admire. 410

The crown of manhood is a winter-joy ;
 An evergreen that stands the northern blast,
 And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.

'T is a prime part of happiness to know
 How much unhappiness must prove our lot ; 415

A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax
 Without one rebel murmur from this hour,
 Nor think it misery to be a man;
 Who thinks it is, shall never be a god:
 Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live. 420

WHAT spoke proud Passion? "Wish my *being* lost!"*
 Presumptuous, blasphemous, absurd, and false!
 The triumph of my soul is—that I am;
 And therefore that I may be—What? LORENZO!
 Look inward, and look deep, and deeper still; 425
 Unfathomably deep our treasure runs
 In golden veins through all eternity!
 Ages, and ages, and succeeding still
 New ages, where this phantom of an hour,
 Which courts, each night, dull slumber, for repair, 430
 Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,
 And fly through infinite, and all unlock;
 And, (if deserved,) by Heaven's redundant love
 Made half adorable itself, adore;
 And find in adoration endless joy! 435
 Where thou, not master of a moment here,
 Frail as the flower, and fleeting as the gale,
 Mayst boast a whole eternity, enrich'd
 With all a kind Omnipotence can pour.
 Since ADAM fell, no mortal, uninspired, 440
 Has ever yet conceived, or ever shall,
 How kind is GOD, how great (if good) is MAN.
 No man too largely from Heaven's love can hope,
 If what is hoped he labours to secure.

Ills?—There are none! All-Gracious! none from Thee;
 From man full many! Numerous is the race 446
 Of blackest ills, and those immortal too,

* Referring to the First Night.

Begot by Madness on fair Liberty ;
 Heaven's daughter, hell-debauch'd ! Her hand alone
 Unlocks destruction to the sons of men, 450
 Fast barr'd by Thine ; high-wall'd with adamant,
 Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,
 And cover'd with the thunders of Thy law ;
 Whose threats are *mercies*, whose injunctions *guides*,
 Assisting, not restraining, Reason's choice ; 455
 Whose sanctions, unavoidable results
 From Nature's course, indulgently reveal'd ;
 If unreveal'd, more dangerous, nor less sure.
 Thus, an indulgent father warns his sons,
 "Do this ; fly that ;"—nor always tells the cause ; 460
 Pleased to reward, as duty to his will,
 A conduct needful to their own repose.

GREAT GOD of wonders ! (if, Thy love survey'd,
 Aught else the name of wonderful retains,) 465
 What rocks are these, on which to build our trust ?
 Thy ways admit no blemish ; none I find ;
 Or this alone—that "none is to be found."
 Not one, to soften Censure's hardy crime ;
 Not one, to palliate peevish Grief's COMPLAINT,
 Who, like a demon, murmuring, from the dust, 470
 Dares into judgment call her Judge.—SUPREME !
 For all I bless Thee ; most, for the severe ;
 Her death*—my own at hand—the fiery gulf,
 That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent !
 It thunders ;—but it thunders to preserve ; 475
 It strengthens what it strikes ; its wholesome dread
 Averts the dreaded pain ; its hideous groans
 Join Heaven's sweet Hallelujahs in Thy praise,
 Great Source of good alone ! How kind in all !
 In vengeance kind ! Pain, Death, Gehenna, SAVE. 480

* LUCIA.

- Thus, in thy world material, Mighty Mind !
 Not that alone which solaces and shines,
 The rough and gloomy challenges our praise.
 The winter is as needful as the spring ;
 The thunder, as the sun ; a stagnate mass 485
 Of vapours breeds a pestilential air :
 Nor more propitious the Favonian breeze
 To Nature's health, than purifying storms.
 The dread volcano ministers to good ;
 Its smother'd flames might undermine the world. 490
 Loud *Ætnas* fulminate in love to man ;
 Comets good omens are, when duly scann'd ;
 And, in their use, eclipses learn to shine.
- MAN is responsible for ills received ! 495
 Those we call wretched are a chosen band,
 Compell'd to refuge in the right, for peace.
 Amid my list of blessings infinite,
 Stand this the foremost—that " my heart has bled."
 'T is Heaven's last effort of good-will to man ;
 When pain can't bless, Heaven quits us in despair. 500
 Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls,
 Or grieves too much, deserves not to be bless'd ;
 Inhuman, or effeminate, his heart :
 Reason absolves the grief which Reason ends.
 May Heaven ne'er trust my friend with happiness, 505
 Till it has taught him how to bear it well,
 By previous pain ; and made it safe to smile !
 Such smiles are mine, and such may they remain ;
 Nor hazard their extinction, from excess.
 My change of heart a change of style demands ; 510
 The CONSOLATION cancels the COMPLAINT,
 And makes a convert of my guilty song.
- As when, o'erlabour'd, and inclined to breathe,
 A panting traveller some rising ground,
 Some small ascent, has gain'd ; he turns him round, 515

And measures with his eye the various vale,
 The fields, woods, meads, and rivers he has pass'd ;
 And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home,
 Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil :
 Thus I, though small indeed is that ascent 520
 The Muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod,
 Various, extensive, beaten but by few ;
 And, conscious of her prudence in repose,
 Pause ; and with pleasure meditate an end,
 Though still remote ; so fruitful is my theme. 525
 Through many a field of moral and Divine,
 The Muse has stray'd ; and much of sorrow seen
 In human ways ; and much of false and vain ;
 Which none, who travel this bad road, can miss.
 O'er friends deceased full heartily she wept ; 530
 Of love Divine the wonders she display'd ;
 Proved man immortal ; show'd the source of joy ;
 The grand tribunal raised ; assign'd the bounds
 Of human grief : in few, to close the whole,
 The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch, 535
 Though not in form, nor with a RAPHAEL-stroke,
 Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
 In this our land of travel, and of hope,
 For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies.

WHAT then remains?—Much! much! a mighty debt 540
 To be discharged: these thoughts, O NIGHT! are thine ;
 From thee they came, like lovers' secret sighs,
 While others slept. So CYNTHIA, (poets feign),
 In shadows veil'd, soft sliding from her sphere,
 Her shepherd cheer'd ; of her enamour'd less 545
 Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung,
 Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing?
 Immortal Silence!—Where shall I begin?
 Where end? or how steal music from the spheres
 To soothe their goddess? 550

O MAJESTIC NIGHT!

Nature's great ancestor! Day's elder-born,
 And fated to survive the transient sun!
 By mortals and immortals seen with awe!
 A starry crown thy raven brow adorns; 555
 An azure zone, thy waist; clouds, in Heaven's loom
 Wrought through varieties of shape and shade,
 In ample folds of drapery Divine,
 Thy flowing mantle form, and, heaven throughout,
 Voluminously pour thy pompous train. 560
 Thy gloomy grandeurs (Nature's most august,
 Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse;
 And, like a sable curtain starr'd with gold,
 Drawn o'er my labours pass'd, shall close the scene.

AND what, O man! so worthy to be sung? 565
 What more prepares us for the songs of heaven?
 Creation of archangels is the theme!
 What, to be sung, so needful? What so well
 Celestial joys prepares us to sustain?
 The soul of man, HIS face design'd to see 570
 Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,
 Has here a previous scene of objects great
 On which to dwell; to stretch to that expanse
 Of thought, to rise to that exalted height
 Of admiration, to contract that awe, 575
 And give her whole capacities that strength,
 Which best may qualify for final joy.
 The more our spirits are enlarged on earth,
 The deeper draught shall they receive of heaven.

HEAVEN'S KING! whose face unveil'd consummates bliss;
 Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void 581
 The whole creation leaves in human hearts!
 THOU, who didst touch the lip of JESSE'S son,
 Rapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,

And set his harp in concert with the spheres! 585
 While of Thy works material the supreme
 I dare attempt, assist my daring song.
 Loose me from earth's enclosure, from the sun's
 Contracted circle set my heart at large ;
 Eliminate my spirit, give it range 590
 Through provinces of thought yet unexplored ;
 Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,
 Creation's golden steps, to climb to THEE.
 Teach me with Art great Nature to control,
 And spread a lustre o'er the shades of night. 595
 Feel I Thy kind assent? and shall the sun
 Be seen at midnight, rising in my song?

LORENZO! come, and warm thee: thou whose heart,
 Whose little heart, is moor'd within a nook
 Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh. 600
 Another ocean calls, a nobler port ;
 I am thy pilot, I thy prosperous gale.
 Gainful thy voyage through yon azure main ;
 Main without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore ;
 And whence thou mayst import eternal wealth ; 605
 And leave to beggar'd minds the pearl and gold.
 Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?
 Thou stranger to the world! thy tour begin ;
 Thy tour through Nature's universal orb.
 Nature delineates her whole chart at large, 610
 On soaring souls, that sail among the spheres ;
 And man how purblind, if unknown the whole!
 Who circles spacious Earth, then travels here,
 Shall own he never was from home before!
 Come, my PROMETHEUS,* from thy pointed rock 615
 Of false ambition if unchain'd, we'll mount ;
 We'll innocently steal celestial fire,

* Night the Eighth.

And kindle our devotion at the stars ;
A theft that shall not chain, but set thee free.

ABOVE our Atmosphere's intestine wars, 620
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of Hail ;
Above the northern nests of feather'd Snows,
The brew of Thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked Lightning ; 'bove the caves
Where infant Tempests wait their growing wings, 625
And tune their tender voices to that roar
Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world ;
Above misconstrued omens of the sky,
Far-travell'd Comets' calculated blaze, 630
E lance thy thought, and think of more than man.
Thy soul, till now, contracted, wither'd, shrunk,
Blighted by blasts of Earth's unwholesome air,
Will blossom here ; spread all her faculties
To these bright ardours ; every power unfold,
And rise into sublimities of thought. 635
Stars teach as well as shine. At Nature's birth,
Thus their commission ran,—“ Be kind to man.”
Where art thou, poor benighted traveller?
The stars will light thee, though the moon should fail.
Where art thou, more benighted, more astray 640
In ways immoral ? The stars call thee back ;
And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right.*

* The following lines occur in the first quarto, but are omitted in all subsequent, impressions:—

“ Where art thou, Virtue-militant ! The stars
Are thine allies, all listed on thy side.
By thousands, and ten thousands, they advance
Their bright battalions in fair Virtue's cause ;
And keep strict watch, and nightly light their fires,
Fires of alarm, to warn thee of the foe ;
The foe, that claims these regions as his own ;
Usurper bold, high-styled *The Prince of Air !*

THIS prospect vast, what is it?—Weigh'd aright,
 'T is Nature's system of divinity,
 And every student of the night inspires. 645
 'T is elder Scripture, writ by GOD'S own hand ;
 Scripture authentic, uncorrupt by man.
 LORENZO, with my *radius* (the rich gift
 Of thought nocturnal !) I 'll point out to thee
 Its various lessons ; some that may surprise 650
 An un-adept in mysteries of NIGHT ;
 Little, perhaps, expected in her school,
 Nor thought to grow on planet, or on star.
 Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters, here we feign :
 Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here 655
 Exists indeed—a lecture to mankind !

WHAT read we here?—The' existence of a GOD ?
 Yes : and of other beings, man above ;
 Natives of ether, sons of higher climes ! *
 And, what may move LORENZO'S wonder more, 660
 ETERNITY is written in the skies.
 And whose eternity ? LORENZO ! thine :
 Mankind's eternity. Nor FAITH alone,

Beneath Night's awful banner, let us draw
 Sidereal Wisdom's formidable sword,
 And send him headlong to *far other flames* !
 MICHAEL'S alone—the sword his mighty arm
 Pluck'd from the golden column in the Mount,
 The Mount Celestial, where the sons of God
 Hang up Heaven's vengeance, far above the stars,
 Above the Sagittary's humble bow—
 Could give the swarthy demon deeper wound.

“ And was there need of ampler field than this,
 When giant-angels giant-angels met,
 In fiery conflict, and outrageous storm,
 To controvert the sceptre of the skies ? ”—EDIT.

* The following line is found only in the first quarto impression :—

“ Immortal lights, that govern these of fire ! ”—EDIT.

VIRTUE grows here ; here springs the sovereign cure
Of almost every vice ; but chiefly thine,— 665
Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.*

LORENZO, thou canst wake at midnight too,
Though not on *morals* bent : Ambition, Pleasure,
Those tyrants I for thee so lately † fought,
Afford their harass'd slaves but slender rest. 670

Thou, to whom midnight is immoral noon ;
And the sun's noontide blaze, prime dawn of day ;
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,
Commencing one of our antipodes !

In thy nocturnal rove, one moment halt, 675
'T wixt stage and stage of riot and cabal ;
And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift,
If bold to meet the face of injured Heaven)

To yonder stars : for other ends they shine,
Than to light revellers from shame to shame, 680
And thus be made accomplices in guilt.

WHY from yon arch, that Infinite of space,
With Infinite of lucid orbs replete,
Which set the living firmament on fire,
At the first glance, in such an overwhelm 685

Of Wonderful, on man's astonish'd sight
Rushes OMNIPOTENCE ?—To curb our pride ;
Our reason rouse, and lead it to that Power
Whose love lets down these silver chains of light,
To draw up man's ambition to Himself, 690

* The following five lines occur only in the first quarto impression :—

“ Dost ask, *why call I thee at this late hour,*
Which all-wise Nature destined to repose ?
Yes, and to fit us for repose more sweet
Than down can yield, or man on earth enjoy :
Own *all-wise Nature wiser still* in this ! ”—EDIT.

† Night the Eighth.

And bind our chaste affections to His throne.
 Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,
 And welcomed on heaven's coast with most applause,—
 An humble, pure, and heavenly-minded heart,—
 Are here inspired. And canst thou gaze too long? 695

NOR stands thy wrath deprived of its reproof,
 Or un-upbraided by this radiant choir.
 The planets of each system represent
 Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails;
 Sweet interchange of rays, received, return'd; 700
 Enlightening, and enlighten'd! All, at once,
 Attracting, and attracted! Patriot-like,
 None sins against the welfare of the whole;
 But their reciprocal, unselfish aid
 Affords an emblem of millennial love. 705
 Nothing in Nature, much less conscious being,
 Was e'er created solely for itself:
 Thus man his sovereign duty learns in this
 Material picture of benevolence.

AND know, of all our supercilious race, 710
 Thou most inflammable, thou wasp of men!
 Man's angry heart, inspected, would be found
 As rightly set as are the starry spheres;
 'T is Nature's structure, broke by stubborn Will,
 Breeds all that uncelestial discord there. 715
 Wilt thou not feel the bias Nature gave?
 Canst thou descend from converse with the Skies,
 And seize thy brother's throat? For what? a clod?
 An inch of earth? The Planets cry, "Forbear."
 They chase our double darkness; Nature's gloom, 720
 And (kinder still!) our intellectual night.

AND see, Day's amiable sister sends
 Her invitation, in the softest rays

Of mitigated lustre ; courts thy sight,
 Which suffers from her tyrant brother's blaze. 725
 Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,
 Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye ;
 With gain and joy she bribes thee to be wise.
 Night opes the noblest scenes, and sheds an awe
 Which gives those venerable scenes full weight, 730
 And deep reception in the' entender'd heart ;
 While Light peeps through the darkness like a spy,
 And Darkness shows its grandeur by the light.
 Nor is the profit greater than the joy,
 If human hearts at glorious objects glow, 735
 And admiration can inspire delight.

WHAT speak I more than I, this moment, feel ?
 With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck ;
 (Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise !)
 Then into transport starting from her trance, 740
 With love and admiration how she glows !
 This gorgeous apparatus, this display,
 This ostentation of creative power,
 This theatre,—what eye can take it in ?
 By what Divine enchantment was it raised, 745
 For minds of the first magnitude to launch
 In endless speculation, and adore ?
 One sun by day, by night ten thousand shine ;
 And light us deep into the DEITY ;
 How boundless in magnificence and might ! 750
 O what a confluence of ethereal fires,
 From urns unnumber'd, down the steep of heaven,
 Streams to a point, and centres in my sight !
 Nor tarries there ; I feel it at my heart.
 My heart, at once, it humbles and exalts ; 755
 Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.
 Who sees it unexalted, or unawed ?
 Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen ?

Material offspring of OMNIPOTENCE!
 Inanimate, all-animating birth! 760
 Work worthy Him who made it! worthy praise,
 All praise, praise more than human! nor denied
 Thy praise Divine!—But though man, drown'd in sleep,
 Withholds his homage, not alone I wake;
 Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing, unheard 765
 By mortal ear, the glorious Architect,
 In this His universal temple hung
 With lustres, with innumerable lights,
 That shed religion on the soul; at once,
 The temple and the preacher! O how loud 770
 It calls Devotion, genuine growth of Night!

DEVOTION! daughter of Astronomy!
 An undevout astronomer is mad.
 True, all things speak a GOD; but, in the small,
 Men trace out Him; in great, He seizes man; 775
 Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills
 With new inquiries, 'mid associates new.
 Tell me, ye stars, ye planets, tell me, all
 Ye starr'd and planeted inhabitants! what is it?
 What are these sons of wonder? Say, proud arch, 780
 (Within whose azure palaces they dwell,)
 Built with Divine ambition! in disdain
 Of limit built! built in the taste of Heaven!
 Vast concave, ample dome! wast thou design'd
 A meet apartment for the DEITY?— 785
 Not so; that thought alone thy State impairs,
 Thy Lofty sinks, and shallows thy Profound,
 And straitens thy Diffusive; dwarfs the whole,
 And makes an universe an orrery.

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man, 790
 Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is restored,
 O Nature! wide flies off the' expanding round.

As when whole magazines at once are fired,
 The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow ;
 The vast dislosion dissipates the clouds ; 795
 Shock'd ether's billows dash the distant skies :
 Thus (but far more) the' expanding round flies off,
 And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,
 Might teem with new creation ; re-inflamed
 Thy luminaries triumph, and assume 800
 Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange,
 Matter high-wrought to such surprising pomp,
 Such godlike glory, stole the style of gods
 From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in sense ;
 For, sure, to sense they truly are Divine, 805
 And half-absolved idolatry from guilt ;
 Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it was
 In those who put forth all they had of man
 Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher ;
 But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd ; and thought 810
 What was their Highest, must be their Adored.

BUT they how weak, who could no higher mount !
 And are there then, LORENZO, those to whom
Unseen and *unexistent* are the same ;
 And, if *incomprehensible* is join'd, 815
 Who dare pronounce it madness to believe ?
 Why has the mighty BUILDER thrown aside
 All measure in His work ; stretch'd out His line
 So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole ?
 Then, (as He took delight in wide extremes,) 820
 Deep in the bosom of His universe,
 Dropp'd down that reasoning mite, that insect, man,
 To crawl, and gaze, and wonder, at the scene ?—
 That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement
 For disbelief of wonders in Himself. 825
 Shall God be less miraculous than what
 His hand has form'd ? Shall mysteries descend

- From Unmysterious? things more elevate
 Be more familiar? uncreated lie
 More obvious than created, to the grasp 830
 Of human thought? The more of wonderful
 Is heard in Him, the more we should assent.
 Could we conceive Him, GOD He could not be;
 Or He not GOD, or we could not be men.
 A GOD alone can comprehend a GOD: 835
 Man's distance, how immense! On such a theme,
 Know this, LORENZO, (seem it ne'er so strange,)
 Nothing can satisfy but what confounds;
 Nothing but what astonishes is true.
 The scene thou seest attests the truth I sing, 840
 And every star sheds light upon thy Creed.
 These stars, this furniture, this cost of Heaven,
 If but reported, thou hadst ne'er believed;
 But thine eye tells thee the romance is true.
 The Grand of Nature is the' Almighty's oath, 845
 In Reason's court, to silence Unbelief.
- How my mind, opening at this scene, imbibes
 The moral emanations of the skies,
 While nought, perhaps, LORENZO less admires!
 Has the Great Sovereign sent ten thousand worlds 850
 To tell us He resides above them all,
 In glory's unapproachable recess?
 And dare Earth's bold inhabitants deny
 The sumptuous, the magnificent embassy
 A moment's audience? Turn we? nor will hear 855
 From whom they come, or what they would impart
 For man's emolument,—sole cause that stoops
 Their grandeur to man's eye? LORENZO, rouse!
 Let thought, awaken'd, take the lightning's wing,
 And glance from east to west, from pole to pole. 860
 Who sees, but is confounded or convinced,
 Renounces Reason, or a GOD adores?

Mankind was sent into the world to see :
 Sight gives the science needful to their peace ;
 That obvious science asks small learning's aid. 865
 Wouldst thou on metaphysic pinions soar ?
 Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns ?
 Or travel history's enormous round ?
 Nature no such hard task enjoins : she gave
 A make to man directive of his thought ; 870
 A make set upright, pointing to the stars,
 As who should say, " Read thy chief lesson there."
 Too late to read this manuscript of heaven,
 When, like a parchment scroll, shrunk up by flames,
 It folds LORENZO's lesson from his sight ! 875

LESSON how various ! Not the God alone,
 I see His ministers ; I see, diffused
 In radiant orders, essences sublime,
 Of various offices, of various plume,
 In heavenly liveries distinctly clad, 880
 Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
 Or all commix'd ; they stand, with wings outspread,
 Listening to catch the Master's least command,
 And fly through Nature ere the moment ends ;
 Numbers innumerable !—Well-conceived 885
 By Pagan and by Christian ! O'er each sphere
 Presides an angel, to direct its course,
 And feed, or fan, its flames ; or to discharge
 Other high trusts unknown. For who can see
 Such pomp of matter, and imagine Mind, 890
 For which alone Inanimate was made,
 More sparingly dispensed ? that nobler son,
 Far liker the great SIRE !—'T is thus the skies
 Inform us of superiors numberless,
 As much in excellence above mankind, 895
 As above earth in magnitude the spheres.
 These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us ;

In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds ;
 Perhaps a thousand demi-gods descend
 On every beam we see, to walk with men. 900
 Awful reflection ! strong restraint from ill !

Yet, here, our virtue finds still stronger aid
 From these ethereal glories Sense surveys.
 Something, like magic, strikes from this blue vault :
 With just attention is it view'd ? We feel 905
 A sudden succour, unimplored, unthought :
 Nature herself does half the work of man.
 Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,
 The promontory's height, the depth profound
 Of subterranean, excavated grotts, 910
 Black-brow'd, and vaulted high, and yawning wide
 From Nature's structure, or the scoop of Time ;
 If ample of dimension, vast of size,
 E'en these an aggrandizing impulse give ;
 Of solemn thought enthusiastic heights 915
 E'en these infuse.—But what of Vast in these ?
 Nothing : or we must own the skies forgot.
 Much less in Art.—Vain Art ! thou pigmy power !
 How dost thou swell, and strut, with human pride,
 To show thy littleness ! What childish toys, 920
 Thy watery columns squirted to the clouds !
 Thy basin'd rivers, and imprison'd seas !
 Thy mountains moulded into forms of men !
 Thy hundred-gated capitals ! or those
 Where three days' travel left us much to ride ; 925
 Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
 Arches triumphal, theatres immense,
 Or nodding gardens pendent in mid-air,
 Or temples proud to meet their gods half-way !
 Yet these affect us in no common kind. 930
 What then the force of such superior scenes ?
 Enter a temple, it will strike an awe :

What awe from this the DEITY has built ?
 A good man seen, though silent, counsel gives :
 The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise : 935
 In a bright mirror His own hands have made,
 Here we see something like the face of GOD.
 Seems it not then enough to say, LORENZO,
 To man abandon'd, " Hast thou seen the skies ?"

AND yet, so thwarted Nature's kind design 940
 By daring man, he makes her sacred awe
 (That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation
 To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
 Celestial Art's intent. The trembling Stars
 See Crimes gigantic stalking through the gloom 945
 With front erect, that hide their head by day,
 And making night still darker by their deeds.
 Slumbering in covert till the shades descend,
 Rapine and Murder, link'd, now prowl for prey.
 The miser earths his treasure ; and the thief, 950
 Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn.
 Now Plots and foul Conspiracies awake ;
 And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
 Havoc and devastation they prepare,
 And kingdoms tottering in the field of blood. 955
 Now sons of riot in mid-revel rage.
 What shall I do ? suppress it ? or proclaim ?—
 Why sleeps the thunder ? NOW, LORENZO, now,
 His best friend's couch the rank adulterer
 Ascends secure, and laughs at gods and men. 960
 Preposterous madmen, void of fear or shame,
 Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of Heaven ;
 Yet shrink and shudder at a mortal's sight.
 Were moon and stars for villains only made ?
 To guide, yet screen, them with tenebrious light ? 965
 No ; they were made to fashion the Sublime
 Of human hearts, and wiser make the wise.

THOSE ends were answer'd once, when mortals lived
 Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent
 In theory sublime. O how unlike 970
 Those vermin of the night,—this moment sung,
 Who crawl on earth, and on her venom feed!—
 Those ancient sages, human stars! they met
 Their brothers of the skies at midnight hour;
 Their counsel ask'd; and, what they ask'd, obey'd. 975
 The Stagyrice, and PLATO, he who drank
 The poison'd bowl, and he of Tusculum,
 With him of Corduba, (immortal names!)
 In these unbounded and elysian walks,
 An area fit for Gods and godlike men, 980
 They took their nightly round through radiant paths
 By seraphs trod; instructed, chiefly, thus
 To tread in their bright footsteps here below;
 To walk in worth still brighter than the skies.
 There they contracted their contempt of Earth; 985
 Of hopes eternal kindled there the fire;
 There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew
 (Great visitants!) more intimate with GOD,
 More worth* to men, more joyous to themselves.
 Through various virtues, they with ardour ran 990
 The zodiac of their learn'd, illustrious lives.

IN Christian hearts, O for a Pagan zeal!
 A needful but opprobrious prayer! As much
 Our ardour less, as greater is our light.
 How monstrous this in morals! Scarce more strange 995
 Would this phenomenon in Nature strike,—
 A sun that froze her,† or a star that warm'd!

WHAT taught these heroes of the moral world?
 To these thou givest thy praise, give credit too.

* Employed here as an adjective.—EDIT.

† In the early quarto impressions it is *us*.—EDIT.

These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee ; 1000
 And Pagan tutors are thy taste.—They taught,
 That narrow views betray to misery :
 That wise it is to comprehend the whole :
 That Virtue rose from Nature, ponder'd well,
 The single base of Virtue built to heaven : 1005
 That GOD and Nature our attention claim :
 That Nature is the glass reflecting GOD,
 As by the sea reflected is the Sun,
 Too glorious to be gazed on in his sphere :
 That Mind immortal loves immortal aims : 1010
 That boundless Mind affects a boundless space :
 That vast surveys, and the Sublime of things,
 The soul assimilate, and make her great :
 That, therefore, Heaven her glories, as a fund
 Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man. 1015
 Such are their doctrines ; such the Night inspired.

AND what more true ? What truth of greater weight ?
 The Soul of man was made to walk the skies ;
 Delightful outlet of her prison here !
 There, disencumber'd from her chains, the ties 1020
 Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large ;
 There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
 In full proportion let loose all her powers,
 And, undeluded, grasp at something great.
 Nor as a stranger does she wander there ; 1025
 But, wonderful herself, through wonder strays ;
 Contemplating their grandeur, finds her own ;
 Dives deep in their economy Divine,
 Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
 And, like a master, judges not amiss. 1030
 Hence greatly pleased, and justly proud, the Soul
 Grows conscious of her birth celestial ; breathes
 More life, more vigour, in her native air ;
 And feels herself at home among the stars ;
 And, feeling, emulates her country's praise. 1035

WHAT call we then the Firmament, LORENZO !—
 As Earth the body, since the Skies sustain
 The soul with food, that gives immortal life,
 Call it “the noble pasture of the Mind,”
 Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults, 1040
 And riots through the luxuries of thought.
 Call it “the garden of the DEITY,”
 Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth
 Of fruit ambrosial, moral fruit to man.
 Call it “the breast-plate of the true High Priest,” 1045
 Ardent with gems oracular, that give,
 In points of highest moment, right response ;
 And ill neglected, if we prize our peace.

THUS have we found a true astrology :
 Thus have we found a new and noble sense 1050
 In which alone stars govern human fates.
 O that the stars (as some have feign'd) let fall
 Bloodshed and havoc on embattled realms,
 And rescued monarchs from so black a guilt !
 BOURBON ! this wish how generous in a foe ! 1055
 Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,
 And stick thy deathless name among the stars,
 For mighty conquests on a needle's point ?
 Instead of forging chains for foreigners,
 Bastile thy tutor. Grandeur all thy aim ? 1060
 As yet thou know'st not what it is : how great,
 How glorious then appears the mind of man,
 When in it all the stars and planets roll !
 And what it seems it is ; great objects make
 Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge ; 1065
 Those still more godlike, as these more Divine.

AND more Divine than these thou canst not see.
 Dazzled, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught
 Of miscellaneous splendours, how I reel

From thought to thought, inebriate, without end! 1070
 An Eden this, a PARADISE unlost!
 I meet the DEITY in every view,
 And tremble at my nakedness before Him!
 O that I could but reach the tree of life!
 For here it grows, unguarded from our taste; 1075
 No flaming sword denies our entrance here;
 Would man but gather, he might live for ever.

LORENZO, much of moral hast thou seen.
 Of curious arts art thou more fond? Then mark
 The mathematic glories of the skies, 1080
 In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.
 LORENZO'S boasted builders, Chance and Fate,
 Are left to finish his ærial towers:
 Wisdom and Choice their well-known characters
 Here deep impress; and claim it for their own. 1085
 Though splendid all, no splendour void of use;
 Use rivals Beauty; Art contends with Power;
 No wanton waste amid effuse expense;
 The great ECONOMIST adjusting all
 To prudent pomp, magnificently wise. 1090
 How rich the prospect, and for ever new!
 And newest to the man that views it most;
 For newer still in infinite succeeds.
 Then, these ærial racers, O how swift!
 How the shaft loiters from the strongest string! 1095
 Spirit alone can distance the career.
 Orb above orb ascending without end!
 Circle in circle, without end, enclosed!
 Wheel within wheel; EZEKIEL! like to thine!
 Like thine, it seems a vision or a dream; 1100
 Though seen, we labour to believe it true!
 What involution! What extent! What swarms
 Of worlds, that laugh at Earth! immensely great!
 Immensely distant from each other's spheres!

What then the wondrous space through which they roll ?
 At once it quite ingulfs all human thought ; 1106
 'T is Comprehension's absolute defeat.

NOR think thou seest a wild disorder here :
 Through this illustrious chaos to the sight,
 Arrangement neat, and chastest order, reign. 1110

The path prescribed, inviolably kept,
 Upbraids the lawless sallies of mankind.
 Worlds, ever thwarting, never interfere.
 What knots are tied ! How soon are they dissolved,
 And set the seeming married planets free ! 1115

They rove for ever, without error rove ;
 Confusion unconfused ! Nor less admire
 This tumult untumultuous ! all on wing,
 In motion all ! yet what profound repose !
 What fervid action, yet no noise ! as awed 1120

To silence by the presence of their LORD :
 Or hush'd, by His command, in love to man,
 And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,
 Restless themselves. On yon cerulean plain,
 In exultation to their GOD, and thine, 1125

They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,
 Eternal celebration of His praise.
 But, since their song arrives not at our ear,
 Their dance perplex'd exhibits to the sight
 Fair hieroglyphic of His peerless power. 1130

Mark, how the labyrinthian turns they take,
 The circles intricate, and mystic maze,
 Weave the grand cipher of Omnipotence ;
 To gods, how great ! how legible to man !

LEAVES so much wonder greater wonder still ? 1135
 Where are the pillars that support the skies ?
 What more than Atlantean shoulder props
 The' incumbent load ? What magic, what strange art,

- In fluid air these ponderous orbs sustains?
 Who would not think them hung in golden chains? 1140
 And so they arc,—in the high will of Heaven,
 Which fixes all; makes adamant of air,
 Or air of adamant; makes all of nought,
 Or nought of all; if such the dread decree.
- IMAGINE from their deep foundations torn 1145
 The most gigantic sons of Earth, the broad
 And towering Alps, all toss'd into the sea;
 And, light as down, or volatile as air,
 Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
 In time and measure exquisite; while all 1150
 The winds, in emulation of the spheres,
 Tune their sonorous instruments aloft,
 The concert swell, and animate the ball:
 Would this appear amazing? What then worlds,
 In a far thinner element sustain'd, 1155
 And acting the same part, with greater skill,
 More rapid movement, and for noblest ends?
- MORE obvious ends to pass, are not these stars
 The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,
 On which angelic delegates of Heaven, 1160
 At certain periods, as the SOVEREIGN nods,
 Discharge high trusts of vengeance or of love;
 To clothe, in outward grandeur, grand design,
 And acts most solemn still more solemnize?
- YE CITIZENS of air! what ardent thanks, 1165
 What full effusion of the grateful heart,
 Is due from man indulged in such a sight!
 A sight so noble, and a sight so kind!
 It drops new truths at every new survey!
 Feels not LORENZO something stir within, 1170
 That sweeps away all period? As these spheres
 Measure duration, they no less inspire

The godlike hope of ages without end.
 The boundless space, through which these rovers take
 Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought 1175
 Of boundless time. Thus by kind Nature's skill,
 To man unlabour'd, that important guest,
 ETERNITY, finds entrance at the sight :
 And an eternity for man ordain'd,
 Or these his destined midnight counsellors, 1180
 The stars, had never whisper'd it to man.
 NATURE informs, but ne'er insults, her sons.
 Could she then kindle the most ardent wish
 To disappoint it ?—That is blasphemy.
 Thus of thy Creed a second article, 1185
 Momentous as the' existence of a GOD,
 Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought :
 And thou mayst read thy soul immortal here.

HERE, then, LORENZO ! on these glories dwell ;
 Nor want the gilt, illuminated roof, 1190
 That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
 Assemblies ?—This is one divinely bright ;
 Here, unendanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
 Range through the fairest, and the SULTAN scorn.
 He, wise as thou, no crescent holds so fair 1195
 As that which on his turban awes a world ;
 And thinks the Moon is proud to copy him.
 Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,—
 A mind superior to the charms of power.
 Thou muffled in delusions of this life ! 1200
 Can yonder Moon turn Ocean in his bed,
 From side to side, in constant ebb and flow,
 And purify from stench his watery realms ?
 And fails her *moral* influence ? Wants she power
 To turn LORENZO's stubborn tide of thought 1205
 From stagnating on earth's infected shore,
 And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart ?

- Fails her attraction when it draws to heaven ?
 Nay, and to what thou valu'st more, earth's joy?
 Minds elevate, and panting for Unseen, 1210
 And defecate from sense, alone obtain
 Full relish of existence undeflower'd,
 The life of life, the zest of worldly bliss.
 All else on earth amounts—to what ? To this :
 "BAD to be suffer'd ; BLESSINGS to be left :"
 Earth's richest inventory boasts no more. 1215
- OF higher scenes be then the call obey'd.
 O let me gaze !—Of gazing there 's no end.
 O let me think !—Thought too is wilder'd here ;
 In midway flight Imagination tires ; 1220
 Yet soon re-prunes her wing to soar anew,
 Her point unable to forbear or gain ;
 So great the pleasure, so profound the plan !
 A banquet this, where men and angels meet,
 Eat the same manna, mingle earth and heaven. 1225
 How distant some of these nocturnal suns !
 So distant, (says the sage,) 't were not absurd
 To doubt, if beams, set out at Nature's birth,
 Are yet arrived at this so foreign world ;
 Though nothing half so rapid as their flight. 1230
 An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
 And roll for ever : who can satiate sight
 In such a scene ? in such an ocean wide
 Of deep astonishment ? where depth, height, breadth,
 Are lost in their extremes ; and where to count 1235
 The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,
 Perhaps a seraph's computation fails.
 Now go, Ambition ! boast thy boundless might
 In conquest o'er the tenth part of a grain.
- AND yet LORENZO calls for miracles, 1240
 To give his tottering faith a solid base.
 Why call for less than is already thine ?

Thou art no novice in theology :
 What is a miracle ?—'T is a reproach,
 'T is an implicit satire, on mankind ; 1245
 And while it satisfies, it censures too.
 To common sense, great Nature's course proclaims
 A DEITY : when mankind falls asleep,
 A miracle is sent, as an alarm,
 To wake the world, and prove Him o'er again, 1250
 By recent argument, but not more strong.
 Say, which imports more plenitude of power,—
 Or Nature's laws to fix, or to repeal ?
 To make a Sun, or stop his mid career ?
 To countermand his orders, and send back 1255
 The flaming courier to the frighted east,
 Warm'd, and astonish'd, at his evening ray ?
 Or bid the Moon, as with her journey tired,
 In Ajalon's soft flowery vale repose ?
 Great things are these ; still greater, to create. 1260
 From ADAM'S bower look down through the whole train
 Of miracles ;—resistless is their power ?
 They do not, cannot, more amaze the mind
 Than this, *call'd* unmiraculous, survey,
 If duly weigh'd, if rationally seen, 1265
 If seen with human eyes. The brute, indeed,
 Sees nought but spangles here ; the fool, no more.
 Sayst thou, "The course of Nature governs all ?"
 The course of Nature is the art of GOD.
 The miracles thou call'st for, this attest ; 1270
 For say, could Nature Nature's course control ?

BUT, miracles apart, who sees HIM not,
 Nature's CONTROLLER, AUTHOR, GUIDE, and END ?
 Who turns his eye on Nature's midnight face
 But must inquire—"What hand behind the scene, 1275
 What arm almighty, put these wheeling globes
 In motion, and wound-up the vast machine ?

Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?
 Who bowl'd them flaming through the dark profound,
 Numerous as glittering gems of morning dew, 1280
 Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,
 And set the bosom of old Night on fire,
 Peopled her desert, and made Horror smile?"
 Or, if the military style delights thee,
 (For stars have fought their battles, leagued with man,
 "Who marshals this bright host? enrolls their names? 1286
 Appoints their posts, their marches, and returns,
 Punctual, at stated periods? Who disbands
 These veteran troops, their final duty done,
 If e'er disbanded?" HE, whose potent word, 1290
 Like the loud trumpet, levied first their powers
 In Night's inglorious empire, where they slept
 In beds of darkness, arm'd them with fierce flames,
 Arranged and disciplined, and clothed in gold;
 And call'd them out of Chaos to the field, 1295
 Where now they war with Vice and Unbelief.
 O let us join this army! Joining these
 Will give us hearts intrepid at that hour
 When brighter flames shall cut a darker night;
 When these strong demonstrations of a GOD 1300
 Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,
 And one eternal curtain cover all!

STRUCK at that thought, as new-awaked, I lift
 A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars,
 To man still more propitious; and their aid 1305
 (Though guiltless of idolatry) implore;
 Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.
 O ye dividers of my time! ye bright
 Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,
 In your fair calendar distinctly mark'd! 1310
 Since that authentic, radiant register,
 Though man inspects it not, stands good against him;

Since you, and years, roll on, though man stands still ;
 Teach me my days to number, and apply
 My trembling heart to wisdom ; now beyond 1315
 All shadow of excuse for fooling on.
 Age smooths our path to Prudence ; sweeps aside
 The snares keen Appetite and Passion spread
 To catch stray souls ; and woe to that grey head
 Whose folly would undo what Age has done ! 1320
 Aid, then, aid, all ye stars !—Much rather, THOU,
 Great ARTIST ! THOU, whose finger set aright
 This exquisite machine, with all its wheels,
 Though intervolv'd, exact ; and pointing out
 Life's rapid and irrevocable flight, 1325
 With such an index fair as none can miss
 Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is closed.
 Open mine eye, dread DEITY ! to read
 The tacit doctrine of Thy works ; to see
 Things as they are, unalter'd through the glass 1330
 Of worldly wishes. *Time, Eternity!*
 ('T is these, mis-measured, ruin all mankind :)
 Set them before me ; let me lay them both
 In equal scale, and learn their various weight.
 Let Time appear a moment as it is : 1335
 And let Eternity's full orb, at once,
 Turn on my soul, and strike it into heaven.
 When shall I see far more than charms me now ?
 Gaze on creation's model in Thy breast
 Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transcript more ? 1340
 When this vile foreign dust, which smothers all
 That travel Earth's deep vale, shall I shake off ?
 When shall my Soul her incarnation quit,
 And, re-adopted to Thy bless'd embrace,
 Obtain her apotheosis in THEE ? 1345

Dost think, LORENZO, this is wandering wide ?
 No : 't is directly striking at the mark :

To wake thy dead devotion * was my point ;
 And how I bless Night's consecrating shades,
 Which to a temple turn an universe, 1350
 Fill us with great ideas full of heaven,
 And antidote the pestilential earth !
 In every storm that either frowns or falls,
 What an asylum has the soul in prayer !
 And what a fane is this, in which to pray ! 1355
 And what a GOD must dwell in such a fane !
 O what a Genius must inform the skies !
 And is LORENZO's salamander-heart
 Cold and untouch'd amid these sacred fires ?
 O ye nocturnal sparks, ye glowing embers, 1360
 On heaven's broad hearth ! who burn, or burn no more,
 Who blaze, or die, as great JEHOVAH'S breath
 Or blows you, or forbears ; assist my song ;
 Pour your whole influence ; exorcise his heart,
 So long possess'd ; and bring him back to *man*. 1365

AND is LORENZO a demurrer still ?
 Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest
 Truths which, contested, put thy parts to shame.
 Nor shame they more LORENZO's head than heart ;
 A faithless heart, how despicably small ! 1370
 Too strait aught great or generous to receive !
 Fill'd with an atom ! fill'd and foul'd with self !
 And self mistaken ! self, that lasts an hour !
 Instincts and passions, of the nobler kind,
 Lie suffocated there ! or they alone, 1375
 Reason apart, would wake high hope ; and open,
 To ravish'd thought, that intellectual sphere
 Where Order, Wisdom, Goodness, Providence,
 Their endless miracles of love display,
 And promise all the truly great desire. 1380

The mind that would be happy, must be great ;
 Great in its wishes ; great in its surveys.
 Extended views a narrow mind extend ;
 Push out its corrugate, expansive make,
 Which, ere long, more than planets shall embrace. 1385
 A man of compass makes a man of worth :
 Divine contemplate, and become Divine.

As man was made for glory and for bliss,
 All littleness is in approach to woe.
 Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide, 1390
 And let-in manhood ; let-in happiness.

Admit the boundless theatre of thought
 From nothing up to GOD ; which makes a man.
 Take GOD from Nature, nothing great is left ;
 Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees ; 1395
 Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.

Emerge from thy profound ; erect thine eye ;
 See thy distress ; how close art thou besieged !
 Besieged by Nature, the proud sceptic's foe !
 Enclosed by these innumerable worlds, 1400

Sparkling conviction on the darkest mind,
 As in a golden net of PROVIDENCE
 How art thou caught, sure captive of Belief !
 From this thy bless'd captivity what art,
 What blasphemy to reason, sets thee free ? 1405

This scene is Heaven's indulgent violence :
 Canst thou bear up against this tide of glory ?
 What is earth, bosom'd in these ambient orbs,
 But faith in GOD imposed and press'd on man ?
 Darest thou still litigate thy desperate cause, 1410
 Spite of these numerous awful witnesses,
 And doubt the deposition of the Skies !*
 O how laborious is thy way to ruin !

* This line followed, in the first quarto impression :—

“ That bright connexion between hearts and heaven ! ”—EDIT.

Laborious? 'T is impracticable quite ;
 To sink beyond a doubt, in this debate, 1415
 With all his weight of wisdom, and of will,
 And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.
 Some wish they did ; but no man disbelieves.
 GOD is a Spirit ; spirit cannot strike
 These gross material organs ; GOD by man 1420
 As much is seen as man a GOD can see,
 In these astonishing exploits of power.
 What order, beauty, motion, distance, size !
 Concertion of design, how exquisite !
 How complicate in their Divine police ! 1425
 Apt means, great ends, consent to general good !—
 Each attribute of these material gods,
 So long (and that with specious pleas) adored,
 A separate conquest gains o'er rebel thought,
 And leads in triumph the whole mind of man. 1430

LORENZO, this may seem harangue to thee ;
 Such all is apt to seem that thwarts our will.
 And dost thou then demand a simple proof
 Of this great master-moral of the skies,
 Unskill'd, or disinclined, to read it there ? 1435
 Since 't is the basis, and all drops without it,
 Take it, in one compact, unbroken chain.
 Such proof insists on an attentive ear ;
 'T will not make one amid a mob of thoughts,
 And, for thy notice, struggle with the world. 1440
 Retire ; the world shut out ; thy thoughts call home ;
 Imagination's airy wing repress ;
 Lock up thy senses ; let no passion stir ;
 Wake all to Reason ; let her reign alone :
 Then, in thy soul's deep silence, and the depth 1445
 Of Nature's silence, midnight, thus inquire,
 As I have done,—and shall inquire no more.
 In Nature's channel thus the questions run :—

"WHAT am I? and from whence?—I nothing know
 But that I am; and, since I am, conclude 1450
 Something eternal: had there e'er been nought,
 Nought still had been: eternal there must be.
 But what eternal?—Why not human race?
 And ADAM'S ancestors without an end?—
 That's hard to be conceived, since every link 1455
 Of that long-chain'd succession is so frail;
 Can every part depend, and not the whole?
 Yet grant it true: new difficulties rise:
 I'm still quite out at sea; nor see the shore.
 Whence Earth, and these bright orbs? eternal too?
 Grant matter was eternal; still these orbs 1461
 Would want some other father;—much design
 Is seen in all their motions, all their makes;
 Design implies intelligence and art:
 That can't be from themselves—or man; that art 1465
 Man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow?
 And nothing greater, yet allow'd, than man.—
 Who motion, foreign to the smallest grain,
 Shot through vast masses of enormous weight?
 Who bid brute matter's restive lump assume 1470
 Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly?
 Has matter innate motion? Then each atom,
 Asserting its indisputable right
 To dance, would form a universe of dust.
 Has matter none? Then whence these glorious forms
 And boundless flights, from shapeless and reposed? 1476
 Has matter more than motion? Has it thought,
 Judgment, and genius? Is it deeply learn'd
 In mathematics? Has it framed such laws,
 Which but to guess, a NEWTON made immortal?— 1480
 If so, how each sage atom laughs at me,
 Who think a clod inferior to a man!
 If art to form, and counsel to conduct,
 (And that with greater far than human skill,)

Resides not in each block—a GODHEAD reigns! 1485
 Grant, then, invisible, eternal MIND;
 That granted, all is solved. But, granting that,
 Draw I not o'er me a still darker cloud?
 Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive?
 A Being without origin or end!— 1490
 Hail, human liberty! There is no GOD.—
 Yet why? On either scheme that knot subsists;
 Subsist it must, in GOD, or human race:
 If in the last, how many knots beside,
 Indissoluble all!—Why choose it there, 1495
 Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more?
 Reject it where, that chosen, all the rest,
 Dispersed, leave Reason's whole horizon clear?
 This is not Reason's dictate; Reason says,
 'Close with the side where one grain turns the scale.' 1500
 What vast preponderance is here! Can Reason
 With louder voice exclaim—'Believe a GOD?'
 And Reason heard is the sole mark of man.
 What things impossible must man think true
 On any other system! And how strange 1505
 To disbelieve through mere credulity!"

IF in this chain LORENZO finds no flaw,
 Let it for ever bind him to belief.
 And where the link in which a flaw he finds?
 And if a GOD there is, that GOD how great! 1510
 How great that POWER, whose providential care
 Through these bright orbs' dark centres darts a ray,
 Of Nature universal threads the whole,
 And hangs Creation, like a precious gem,
 Though little, on the footstool of His throne! 1515

THAT little gem, how large! A weight let fall
 From a fix'd star, in ages can it reach
 This distant earth? Say, then, LORENZO, where,

Where ends this mighty building? Where begin
 The suburbs of creation? Where the wall 1520
 Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
 Of non-existence, NOTHING'S strange abode? *
 Say, at what point of space JEHOVAH dropp'd
 His slacken'd line, and laid His balance by;
 Weigh'd worlds, and measured Infinite, no more? 1525
 Where rears His terminating pillar high
 Its extra-mundane head; and says to gods,
 In characters illustrious as the sun?—

*I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce
 The work accomplish'd; the Creation closed: 1530
 Shout, all ye gods! nor shout, ye gods, alone;
 Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
 That rests, or rolls, ye heights and depths, resound!
 Resound! resound! ye depths and heights, resound!*

HARD are those questions?—Answer harder still. 1535
 Is this the sole exploit, the single birth,
 The solitary son, of Power Divine?
 Or has the' Almighty FATHER, with a breath,
 Impregnated the womb of distant space?
 Has He not bid, in various provinces, 1540
 Brother-creations the dark bowels burst
 Of Night primeval; barren now no more?
 And He the central Sun, transpiercing all
 Those giant-generations, which disport
 And dance, as motes, in His meridian ray; 1545
 That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd
 In that abyss of horror whence they sprung;
 While Chaos triumphs, repossess'd of all

* In the first quarto impression these three lines followed:—

“Dread, bottomless! Amazement! how it yawns!
 How shuddering Fancy sickens and recoils!
 And is it *there* LORENZO hopes to dwell?”—EDIT.

Rival Creation ravish'd from his throne?
 CHAOS! of Nature both the womb and grave! 1550

THINK'ST thou my scheme, LORENZO, spreads too wide?
 Is this extravagant?—No; this is just;
 Just in conjecture, though 't were false in fact.
 If 't is an error, 't is an error sprung
 From noble root, high thought of the MOST HIGH. 1555

But wherefore error? Who can prove it such?—
 He that can set OMNIPOTENCE a bound.
 Can man conceive beyond what God can do?
 Nothing but quite impossible is hard.
 He summons into being, with like ease, 1560
 A whole creation, and a single grain.

Speaks He the word? a thousand worlds are born!
A thousand worlds? There's space for millions more!
 And in what space can His great fiat fail?
 Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge 1565
 The warm imagination. Why condemn?

Why not indulge such thoughts as swell our hearts
 With fuller admiration of that Power
 Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to swell?
 Why not indulge in His augmented praise? 1570

Darts not His glory a still brighter ray,
 The less is left to Chaos, and the realms
 Of hideous Night, where Fancy strays aghast,
 And, though most talkative, makes no report?

STILL seems my thought enormous? Think again:—
 Experience' self shall aid thy lame belief. 1576
 Glasses—that revelation to the sight!—

Have they not led us deep in the disclose
 Of fine-spun Nature, exquisitely small,
 And, though demonstrated, still ill-conceived? 1580
 If then, on the reverse, the mind would mount
 In magnitude, what mind can mount too far,

- To keep the balance, and Creation poise?
 Defect alone can err on such a theme.
 What is too great, if we the Cause survey? 1585
 Stupendous ARCHITECT! THOU, THOU art all!
 My soul flies up and down in thoughts of THEE,
 And finds herself but at the centre still!
 I AM, Thy name! existence, all Thine own!
 Creation's nothing; flatter'd much, if styled 1590
 "The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of GOD."
- O FOR the voice—of what? of whom? What voice
 Can answer to my wants, in such ascent
 As dares to deem one universe too small?
 Tell me, LORENZO! (for now Fancy glows, 1595
 Fired in the vortex of Almighty power,
 Is not this home-creation, in the map
 Of universal Nature, as a speck,
 Like fair BRITANNIA in our little ball;
 Exceeding fair, and glorious, for its size, 1600
 But, elsewhere, far out-measured, far outshone?
 In Fancy (for the fact beyond us lies)
 Canst thou not figure it, an isle, almost
 Too small for notice, in the vast of being;
 Sever'd by mighty seas of unbuilt space 1605
 From other realms; from ample continents
 Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;
 Less northern, less remote from DEITY,
 Glowing beneath the line of the SUPREME;
 Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth 1610
 Luxuriant growths; nor the late autumn wait
 Of human worth, but ripen soon to gods?
- YET why drown Fancy in such depths as these?
 Return, presumptuous rover, and confess
 The bounds of man, nor blame them as too small. 1615
 Enjoy we not full scope in what is seen?

Full ample the dominions of the Sun !
 Full glorious to behold ! How far, how wide,
 The matchless monarch, from his flaming throne,
 Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him, 1620
 Farther and faster than a thought can fly,
 And feeds his planets with eternal fires !
 This Heliopolis, by Greater far
 Than the proud tyrant of the Nile, was built ;
 And He alone, who built it, can destroy. 1625
 Beyond this city, why strays human thought ?
 One Wonderful, enough for man to know !
 One Infinite, enough for man to range !
 One firmament, enough for man to read !
 O what voluminous instruction here ! 1630
 What page of wisdom is denied him ? None ;
 If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.
 Nor is instruction here our only gain :
 There dwells a noble pathos in the skies,
 Which warms our passions, proselytes our hearts. 1635
 How eloquently shines the glowing pole !
 With what authority it gives its charge,
 Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,
 Though silent, loud ! heard earth around ; above
 The planets heard ; and not unheard in hell : 1640
 Hell has her wonder, though too proud to praise.
 Is Earth, then, more infernal ? Has she those
 Who neither praise, LORENZO, nor admire ?

 LORENZO's admiration, pre-engaged,
 Ne'er ask'd the moon one question ; never held 1645
 Least correspondence with a single star ;
 Ne'er rear'd an altar to the queen of heaven
 Walking in brightness ; or her train adored.
 Their sublunary rivals have long since
 Engross'd his whole devotion ; stars malign, 1650
 Which make their fond astronomer run mad,

Darken his intellect, corrupt his heart ;
 Cause him to sacrifice his fame and peace
 To momentary madness, call'd delight.*
 Idolater more gross than ever kiss'd 1655
 The lifted hand to LUNA, or pour'd out
 The blood to JOVE!—O THOU, to whom belongs
 All sacrifice! O Thou great JOVE unfeign'd!
 DIVINE INSTRUCTOR! Thy first volume this
 For man's perusal! all in CAPITALS! 1660
 In moon and stars (Heaven's golden alphabet ;)
 Emblaz'd to seize the sight ; who runs may read ;
 Who reads can understand. 'T is unconfined
 To Christian land or Jewry ; fairly writ
 In language universal to MANKIND : 1665
 A language lofty to the learn'd, yet plain
 To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
 Or from its husk strike out the bounding grain :
 A language worthy the GREAT MIND that speaks!
 Preface and comment to the sacred page! 1670
 Which oft refers its reader to the skies,
 As pre-supposing his first lesson there,
 And Scripture's self a fragment, *that* unread.
 Stupendous book of wisdom to the wise!
 Stupendous book! and open'd, NIGHT, by thee. 1675

By thee much open'd, I confess, O Night!
 Yet more I wish ; but how shall I prevail?
 Say, gentle Night, whose modest, maiden beams
 Give us a new creation, and present
 The world's great picture soften'd to the sight ; 1680
 Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent still,
 Say, thou, whose mild dominion's silver key
 Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view

* This line was first inserted in the octavo impression of 1749.—EDIT.

- Worlds beyond number, worlds conceal'd by day
 Behind the proud and envious star of noon ! 1685
 Canst thou not draw a deeper scene ? and show
 The mighty POTENTATE, to whom belong
 These rich regalia pompously display'd
 To kindle that high hope ? Like him of Uz,
 I gaze around ; I search on every side :— 1690
 O for a glimpse of HIM my soul adores !
 As the chased hart, amid the desert waste,
 Pants for the living stream ; for HIM who made her
 So pants the thirsty soul, amid the blank
 Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess, where ? 1695
 Where blazes His bright court ? Where burns His throne ?
 Thou know'st, for thou art near Him ; by thee, round
 His grand pavilion, sacred Fame reports
 The sable curtains drawn. If not, can none
 Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing, 1700
 Who travel far, discover where He dwells ?
 A star His dwelling pointed out below.
 Ye Pleiades, Arcturus, Mazzaroth,
 And thou, Orion, of still keener eye !
 Say, ye who guide the wilder'd in the waves, 1705
 And bring them out of tempest into port !
 On which hand must I bend my course to find Him ?
 These courtiers keep the secret of their KING ;
 I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.
- I WAKE ; and, waking, climb Night's radiant scale, 1710
 From sphere to sphere ; the steps by Nature set
 For man's ascent, at once to tempt and aid ;
 To tempt his eye, and aid his towering thought,
 Till it arrives at the GREAT GOAL of all.
- IN ardent Contemplation's rapid car, 1715
 From earth, as from my barrier, I set out.

How swift I mount! Diminish'd earth recedes ;
 I pass the moon ; and from her further side
 Pierce heaven's blue curtain ; strike into Remote ;
 Where, with his lifted tube, the subtle sage 1720
 His artificial airy journey takes,
 And to *celestial* lengthens *human* sight.
 I pause at every planet on my road,
 And ask for HIM who gives their orbs to roll,
 Their foreheads fair to shine. From SATURN'S ring, 1725
 In which of earths an army might be lost,
 With the bold comet take my bolder flight
 Amid those sovereign glories of the skies,
 Of independent, native lustre proud !
 The souls of systems, and the lords of life, 1730
 Through their wide empires!—What behold I now ?
 A wilderness of wonders burning round,
 Where larger suns inhabit higher spheres,
 Perhaps the villas of descending gods!
 Nor halt I here ; my toil is but begun, 1735
 'T is but the threshold of the DEITY,
 Or far beneath it I am grovelling still.*
 Nor is it strange ; I built on a mistake :
 The grandeur of His works, whence Folly sought
 For aid, to Reason sets His glory higher ; 1740
 Who built thus high for worms, (mere worms to Him,)
 O where, LORENZO, must the BUILDER dwell ?

PAUSE, then ; and, for a moment, here respire—
 If human thought can keep its station here.
 Where am I? Where is Earth? Nay, where art thou, 1745
 O Sun?—Is the Sun turn'd recluse?—And are.
 His boasted expeditions short to mine?
 To mine, how short! On Nature's Alps I stand,

* This line follows in the early quarto impressions:—

“Grovelling in elevation few can reach!”—EDR.

And see a thousand firmaments beneath,
 A thousand systems, as a thousand grains! 1750
 So much a stranger, and so late arrived,
 How can man's curious spirit not inquire,
 What are the natives of this world sublime,
 Of this so foreign, unterrestrial sphere,
 Where mortal, untranslated, never stray'd? 1755

“O YE, as distant from my little home
 As swiftest sunbeams in an age can fly!
 Far from my native element I roam,
 In quest of New and Wonderful to man.
 What province this of His immense domain, 1760
 Whom all obeys? Or mortals here, or gods?
 Ye borderers on the coasts of bliss, what are you?
 A colony from heaven? or only raised,
 By frequent visit from heaven's neighbouring realms,
 To secondary gods, and half Divine? 1765
 Whate'er your nature, this is past dispute,—
 Far other life you live, far other tongue
 You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
 Than man. How various are the works of God!
 But say, what thought? Is Reason here enthroned, 1770
 And absolute? or Sense in arms against her?
 Have you two lights? or need you no reveal'd?
 Enjoy your happy realms their golden age?
 And had your EDEN an abstemious EVE?
 Our EVE's fair daughters prove their pedigree, 1775
 And ask their ADAMS, 'Who would not be wise?'
 Or, if your mother fell, are you redeem'd?
 And if redeem'd, is your Redeemer scorn'd?
 Is this your final residence? If not,
 Change you your scene, translated? or by death? 1780
 And if by death, what death?—Know you disease?
 Or horrid war?—With war, this fatal hour,
 EUROPA groans (so call we a small field,

Where kings run mad). In our world DEATH deputes
 Intemperance to do the work of Age, 1785
 And, hanging up the quiver Nature gave him,
 As slow of execution, for despatch
 Sends forth imperial butchers ; bids them slay
 Their sheep, (the silly sheep they fleeced before,)
 And toss him twice ten thousand at a meal. 1790
 Sit all your executioners on thrones?
 With you, can rage for plunder make a god,
 And bloodshed wash out every other stain?—
 But you, perhaps, can't bleed : from matter gross
 Your spirits clean are delicately clad 1795
 In fine-spun ether, privileged to soar,
 Unloaded, uninfected : how unlike
 The lot of man ! How few of human race
 By their own mud unmurder'd ! How we wage
 Self-war eternal !—Is your painful day 1800
 Of hardy conflict o'er ? or are you still
 Raw candidates at school ? And have you those
 Who disaffect reversions, as with us ?—
 But what are we ? You never heard of man,
 Or earth ; the Bedlam of the universe ! 1805
 Where Reason (undiseased with you) runs mad,
 And nurses Folly's children as her own ;
 Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount
 Of holiness, where Reason is pronounced
 Infallible ; and thunders, like a god ; 1810
 E'en there, by saints the demons are outdone :
 What these think wrong, our saints refine to right ;
 And kindly teach dull Hell her own black arts :
 SATAN, instructed, o'er their morals smiles.—
 But this how strange to you, who know not man !. 1815
 Has the least rumour of our race arrived ?
 Call'd here ELIJAH, in his flaming car ?
 Pass'd by you the good ENOCH, on his road
 To those fair fields, whence LUCIFER was hurl'd ;

Who brush'd, perhaps, your sphere, in his descent, 1820
 Stain'd your pure crystal ether, or let fall
 A short eclipse from his portentous shade?
 O that the fiend had lodged on some broad orb
 Athwart his way, nor reach'd his present home!
 Then blacken'd earth with footsteps foul'd in hell, 1825
 Nor wash'd in ocean, as from ROME he pass'd
 To BRITAIN'S isle; too, too conspicuous there!"

BUT this is all digression. Where is HE
 That o'er heaven's battlements the felon hurl'd
 To groans, and chains, and darkness? Where is HE 1830
 Who sees Creation's summit in a vale?
 HE whom, while man is MAN, he can't but seek;
 And, if he finds, commences more than man?
 O for a telescope His throne to reach!
 Tell me, ye learn'd on earth, or bless'd above! 1835
 Ye searching, ye Newtonian angels! tell,
 Where your great MASTER'S orb? His planets, where?
 Those conscious satellites, those morning stars,
 First-born of DEITY! from Central Love,
 By veneration most profound, thrown off; 1840
 By sweet attraction no less strongly drawn;
 Awed, and yet raptur'd; raptur'd, yet serene;
 Past thought illustrious, but with borrow'd beams;
 In still approaching circles, still remote,
 Revolving round the sun's eternal SIRE? 1845
 Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies
 To nations—in what latitude?—Beyond
 Terrestrial thought's horizon.—And on what
 High errands sent?—Here human effort ends;
 And leaves me still a stranger to His throne. 1850

FULL well it might! I quite mistook my road;
 Born in an age more curious than devout;
 More fond to fix the *place* of heaven or hell,

Than studious this to shun, or that secure.*
 'T is not the curious, but the pious, path 1855
 That leads me to my point: LORENZO, know,
 Without or star or angel for their guide,
 Who worship GOD shall find Him. Humble Love,
 And not proud Reason, keeps the door of heaven;
 Love finds admission, where proud Science fails. 1860
 Man's science is the culture of his heart;
 And not to lose his plummet in the depths
 Of Nature, or the more profound of GOD:
Either to know, is an attempt that sets
 The wisest on a level with the fool. 1865
 To fathom Nature (ill-attempted here!)
 Past doubt, is deep philosophy above:
 Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,
 As deeper learn'd; the deepest, learning still.
 For, what a thunder of Omnipotence 1870
 (So might I dare to speak) is seen in all!
 In man, in earth, in more amazing skies!
 Teaching this lesson, Pride is loath to learn:—
 "Not deeply to discern, not much to know,
 Mankind was born to WONDER and ADORE." 1875

AND is there cause for higher wonder still
 Than that which struck us from our past surveys?
 Yes; and for deeper adoration too.
 From my late airy travel unconfined,
 Have I learn'd nothing?—Yes, LORENZO, this:— 1880
 Each of these stars is a religious house;
 I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,
 And heard Hosannas ring through every sphere,

* Perhaps an unintentional iteration of Pope's couplet, in his
 "Universal Prayer:—"

"This teach me more than hell to shun,
 That more than heaven pursue."—EDIT.

- A seminary fraught with future gods,
 Nature all o'er is consecrated ground, 1885
 Teeming with growths immortal and Divine.
 The great PROPRIETOR'S all-bounteous hand
 Leaves nothing waste ; but sows these fiery fields
 With seeds of Reason, which to Virtues rise
 Beneath His genial ray ; and, if escaped 1890
 The pestilential blasts of stubborn Will,
 When grown mature, are gather'd for the skies.
 And is devotion thought too much on earth,
 When beings, so superior, homage boast,
 And triumph in prostrations to THE THRONE? 1895
- BUT wherefore more of planets, or of stars?
 Ethereal journeys, and, discover'd there,
 Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand ways devout,
 All Nature sending incense to THE THRONE,
 Except the bold LORENZOS of our sphere? 1900
 Opening the solemn sources of my soul,
 Since I have pour'd, like feign'd ERIDANUS,
 My flowing numbers o'er the flaming skies,
 Nor see, of fancy or of fact what more
 Invites the Muse,—here turn we, and review 1905
 Our past nocturnal landscape wide :—then say,
 Say then, LORENZO! with what burst of heart,
 The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
 Must man exclaim, adoring, and aghast!—
- “ O WHAT a Root! O what a branch is here! 1910
 O what a Father! what a family!
 Worlds, systems, and creations!—and creations,
 In one agglomerated cluster, hung,
 Great VINE,* on THEE! On THEE the cluster hangs ;
 The filial cluster, infinitely spread 1915

* John xv. 1.

In glowing globes, with various being fraught ;
 And drinks (nectareous draught !) immortal life.
 Or, shall I say ? (for who can say enough ?)
 A constellation of ten thousand gems,
 (And O ! of what dimensions, of what weight !) 1920
 Set in one signet, flames on the right hand
 Of MAJESTY DIVINE ! The blazing seal
 That deeply stamps on all-created mind,
 Indelible, His sovereign attributes,
 OMNIPOTENCE and LOVE ! that passing bound, 1925
 And this surpassing that. Nor stop we here
 For want of power in GOD, but thought in MAN.
 E'en this, acknowledged, leaves us still in debt :
 If greater aught, that greater all is THINE,
 DREAD SIRE !—Accept this miniature of THEE ; 1930
 And pardon an attempt from mortal thought,
 In which archangels might have fail'd unblamed."

How such ideas of the' ALMIGHTY's power,
 And such ideas of the' ALMIGHTY's plan,
 (Ideas not absurd,) distend the thought 1935
 Of feeble mortals ! nor of them alone !
 The fulness of the DEITY breaks forth
 In Inconceivables to men and gods.
 Think, then, O think, nor ever drop the thought,
 How low must man descend, when gods adore ! 1940
 Have I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast ?
 Did I not tell thee,* we would mount, LORENZO,
 And "kindle our devotion at the stars ?"

AND have I fail'd ? And did I flatter thee ?
 And art all adamant ? And dost confute 1945
 All urged, with one irrefragable smile ?
 LORENZO ! mirth how miserable here !
 Swear by the stars, by HIM who made them, swear.

Thy heart, henceforth, shall be as pure as they !
 Then thou, like them, shalt shine ; like them, shalt rise
 From low to lofty, from obscure to bright, 1951
 By due gradation, Nature's sacred law.
 The stars, from whence?—Ask Chaos : he can tell.
 These bright temptations to idolatry
 From darkness and confusion took their birth ; 1955
 Sons of deformity ! From fluid dregs
 Tartarean, first they rose to masses rude,
 And then to spheres opaque ; then dimly shone ;
 Then brighten'd ; then blazed out in perfect day.
 Nature delights in progress ; in advance 1960
 From worse to better : but, when minds ascend,
 Progress in part depends upon themselves.
 Heaven aids exertion ; greater makes the great ;
 The voluntary little lessens more.
 O be a man, and thou shalt be a god, 1965
 And half self-made !—Ambition how Divine !

O THOU, ambitious of disgrace alone,
 Still undevout, unkindled ? though high-taught,
 School'd by the skies, and pupil of the stars !
 Rank coward to the fashionable world, 1970
 Art thou ashamed to bend thy knee to Heaven ?
 Cursed fume of pride, exhaled from deepest hell !
 Pride in religion is man's highest praise.
 Bent on destruction, and in love with death !
 Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once, 1975
 Were half so sad as one benighted mind,
 Which gropes for happiness, and meets despair.
 How, like a widow in her weeds, the Night,
 Amid her glimmering tapers, silent sits !
 How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps 1980
 Perpetual dews, and saddens Nature's scene !
 A scene more sad Sin makes the darken'd soul,
 All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

- THOUGH blind of heart, still open is thine eye :
 Why such magnificence in all thou seest? 1985
 Of matter's grandeur, know, one end is this,
 To tell the rational who gazes on it,—
 "Though that immensely great, still greater He
 Whose breast capacious can embrace and lodge,
 Unburden'd, Nature's universal scheme ; 1990
 Can grasp Creation with a single thought ;
 Creation grasp ; and not exclude its SIRE :"
 To tell him farther,—“ It behoves him much
 To guard the' important, yet depending, fate
 Of *being* brighter than a thousand suns : 1995
 One single ray of thought outshines them all.”
 And if man hears obedient, soon he 'll soar
 Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
 His purple wing bedropp'd with eyes of gold,
 Rising, where thought is now denied to rise, 2000
 Look down triumphant on these dazzling spheres.
- WHY then persist?—No mortal ever lived,
 But, dying, he pronounced (when words are true)
 The whole that charms thee absolutely vain ;
 Vain, and far worse!—Think thou with dying men ; 2005
 O condescend to think as angels think !
 O tolerate a chance for happiness !
 Our nature such, ill choice insures ill fate ;
 And hell had been, though there had been no God.
 Dost thou not know, my new astronomer, 2010
 Earth, turning from the sun, brings night to man ?
 Man, turning from his God, brings endless night ;
 Where thou canst read no morals, find no friend,
 Amend no manners, and expect no peace.
 How deep the darkness ! and the groan, how loud ! 2015
 And far, how far, from lambent are the flames !
 Such is LORENZO'S purchase, such his praise !
 The proud, the politic LORENZO'S praise !

Though in his ear, and levell'd at his heart,
I've half read o'er the volume of the skies. 2020

FOR think not thou hast heard all this from me ;
My song but echoes what great Nature speaks.
What has she spoken ? Thus the goddess spoke,
Thus speaks for ever :—" Place at Nature's head
A Sovereign, which o'er all things rolls His eye, 2025

Extends His wing, promulgates His commands,
But, above all, diffuses endless good ;

To whom, for sure redress, the wrong'd may fly,
The vile for mercy, and the pain'd for peace ;
By whom the various tenants of these spheres, 2030

Diversified in fortunes, place, and powers,
Raised in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,
Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)

At that bless'd fountain-head from which they stream ;
Where conflict past redoubles present joy ; 2035

And present joy looks forward on increase ;
And that on more ; no period ! every step
A double boon, a promise and a bliss."

How easy sits this scheme on human hearts !
It suits their make, it soothes their vast desires ; 2040

Passion is pleased, and Reason asks no more :
'T is rational, 't is great !—But what is thine ?

It darkens, shocks, excruciates, and confounds !
Leaves us quite naked both of help and hope,

Sinking from bad to worse ; few years, the sport 2045
Of Fortune ; then, the morsel of Despair.

SAY then, LORENZO, (for thou know'st it well,)
What's vice ?—Mere want of compass in our thought.
Religion, what ?—The proof of common-sense.

How art thou hooted, where the least prevails ! 2050
Is it my fault if these truths call thee " fool ?"
And thou shalt never be miscall'd by me.

Can neither shame nor terror stand thy friend ?
 And art thou still an insect in the mire ?
 How, like thy guardian angel, have I flown ; 2055
 Snatch'd thee from earth ; escorted thee through all
 The' ethereal armies ; walk'd thee, like a god,
 Through splendours of first magnitude, arranged
 On either hand ; clouds thrown beneath thy feet ;
 Close cruised on the bright paradise of God ; 2060
 And almost introduced thee to THE THRONE !
 And art thou still carousing, for delight,
 Rank poison ; first fermenting to mere froth,
 And then subsiding into final gall ?
 To beings of sublime, immortal make, 2065
 How shocking is all joy whose end is sure !
 Such joy more shocking still, the more it charms !
 And dost thou choose what ends ere well begun,
 And infamous as short ? And dost thou choose
 (Thou, to whose palate glory is so sweet) 2070
 To wade into perdition, through contempt,
 Not of poor bigots only, but thy own ?
 For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
 And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow ;
 For, by strong Guilt's most violent assault, 2075
 Conscience is but disabled, not destroy'd.

O THOU most awful being, and most vain !
 Thy will, how frail ! how glorious is thy power !
 Though dread ETERNITY has sown her seeds
 Of bliss and woe in thy despotic breast ; 2080
 Though heaven and hell depend upon thy choice,*
 A butterfly comes 'cross, and both are fled.
 Is this the picture of a rational ?
 This horrid image, shall it be most just ?
 LORENZO ! no : it cannot, shall not, be, 2085

* Instead of *choice*, the first quarto edition had *thought*.—EDIT.

If there is force in reason ; or in sounds
 Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon,
 A magic, at this planetary hour,
 When slumber locks the general lip, and dreams
 Through senseless mazes hunt souls uninspired. 2090
 Attend—the sacred mysteries begin—
 My solemn night-born adjuration hear.
 Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust,
 While the stars gaze on this enchantment new ;
 Enchantment, not infernal, but Divine ! 2095

“ By Silence, DEATH'S peculiar attribute ;
 By Darkness, GUILT'S inevitable doom ;
 By Darkness and by Silence, sisters dread !
 That draw the curtain round NIGHT'S ebon throne,
 And raise ideas solemn as the scene ! 2100
 By NIGHT, and all of Awful, Night presents
 To Thought or Sense ! (of Awful much to both
 The goddess brings !) By these her trembling fires,
 Like VESTA'S, ever burning ; and, like hers,
 Sacred to thoughts immaculate and pure ! 2105
 By these bright orators, that prove, and praise,
 And press thee to revere, the DEITY ;
 Perhaps, too, aid thee, when revered awhile,
 To reach His throne ; as stages of the soul,
 Through which, at different periods, she shall pass, 2110
 Refining gradual, for her final height,
 And purging off some dross at every sphere !
 By this dark pall thrown o'er the silent world !
 By the world's kings, and kingdoms, most renown'd,
 From short ambition's zenith set for ever ; 2115
 Sad presage to vain boasters now in bloom !
 By the long list of swift mortality,
 From ADAM downward to this evening knell,
 Which Midnight waves in Fancy's startled eye ;
 And shocks her with a hundred centuries, 2120

Round Death's black banner throng'd, in human thought!
 By thousands, now resigning their last breath,
 And calling thee—wert thou so wise to hear!
 By tombs o'er tombs arising; human earth
 Ejected, to make room for—human earth; 2125
 The monarch's terror, and the sexton's trade!
 By pompous obsequies, that shun the day,
 The torch funereal, and the nodding plume,
 Which makes poor man's humiliation proud;
 Boast of our ruin, triumph of our dust! 2130
 By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones;
 And the pale lamp that shows the ghastly dead,
 More ghastly, through the thick incumbent gloom!
 By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,
 The gliding spectre, and the groaning grove!* 2135
 By groans and graves, and miseries that groan
 For the grave's shelter! By desponding men,
 Senseless to pains of death, from pangs of guilt!
 By Guilt's last audit! By yon moon in blood,
 The rocking firmament, the falling stars, 2140
 And thunder's last discharge, great Nature's knell!
 By SECOND Chaos, and ETERNAL Night!"—

BE WISE:—Nor let PHILANDER blame my charm;
 But own not ill-discharged my double debt,—
 Love to the living, duty to the dead. 2145

FOR know, I'm but executor: *he* left
 This moral legacy! I make it o'er
 By his command: PHILANDER hear in me;
 And Heaven in both.—If deaf to these, O hear
 FLORELLO's tender voice; his weal depends 2150

* *Grave* was the word in the first quarto; but it was altered into *grove* in the first octavo of 1749; and *grove* has been retained in all subsequent impressions.—EDIT.

On thy resolve ; it trembles at thy choice :
 For his sake—love thyself. Example strikes
 All human hearts ; a bad example more ;
 More still a father's ; that insures his ruin.
 As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove 2155
 The' unnatural parent of his miseries,
 And make him curse the being which thou gavest ?
 Is this the blessing of so fond a father ?
 If careless of LORENZO, spare, O spare
 FLORELLO'S father, and PHILANDER'S friend ! 2160
 FLORELLO'S father, ruin'd, ruins him ;
 And from PHILANDER'S friend the world expects
 A conduct, no dishonour to the dead.
 Let passion do what nobler motive should ;
 Let love, and emulation, rise in aid 2165
 To reason ; and persuade thee to be—bless'd.

THIS seems not a request to be denied ;
 Yet (such the' infatuation of mankind !)
 'T is the most hopeless man can make to man.
 Shall I, then, rise in argument and warmth, 2170
 And urge PHILANDER'S posthumous advice,
 From topics yet unbroach'd ?—
 But, O, I faint ! my spirits fail ! Nor strange !
 So long on wing, and in no middle clime ;
 To which my great CREATOR'S glory call'd, 2175
 And calls—but now in vain. Sleep's dewy wand
 Has stroked my drooping lids, and promises*
 My long arrear of rest ; the downy god
 (Wont to return with our returning peace)
 Will pay, ere long, and bless me with repose. 2180
 Haste, haste, sweet stranger, from the peasant's cot,
 The ship-boy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,

* In the early quarto impressions this line immediately follows,—

“ (If my fond wishes are not flatterers). ”—EDR.

Whence sorrow never chased thee! With thee bring,
 Not hideous visions, as of late; but draughts
 Delicious of well-tasted, cordial rest; 2185
 Man's rich restorative; his balmy bath,
 That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play
 The various movements of this nice machine,
 Which asks such frequent periods of repair.
 When tired with vain rotations of the day, 2190
 Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn;
 Fresh we spin on, till sickness clogs our wheels,
 Or Death quite breaks the spring, and motion ends.
 When will it end with me?

—"THOU only know'st, 2195

THOU, whose broad eye the future and the past
 Joins to the present; making one of three
 To mortal* thought! THOU know'st, and THOU alone,
 All-knowing! all-unknown! and yet well-known!
 Near, though remote; and, though unfathom'd, felt!
 And, though invisible, for ever seen! 2201
 And seen in all, the great and the minute!
 Each globe above, with its gigantic race,
 Each flower, each leaf, with its small people swarm'd,
 (Those puny vouchers of † OMNIPOTENCE!) 2205
 To the first thought that asks, 'From whence?' declare
 Their common source. THOU Fountain, running o'er
 In rivers of communicated joy!
 Who gavest us speech for far, far humbler themes!
 Say, by what name shall I presume to call 2210
 HIM I see burning in these countless suns,
 As MOSES, in the bush? ILLUSTRIOUS MIND!

* In all the early impressions, quarto and octavo, this is *mortal*; which was changed to *moral* in the edition of the collected Works, 1762.—EDIT.

† Instead of this word, the early quarto and octavo impressions have *for*.—EDIT.

The whole creation less, far less, to Thee,
 Than *that* to the creation's ample round.*
 How shall I name THEE?—How my labouring soul 2215
 Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!

“GREAT System of perfections! Mighty Cause
 Of causes mighty! Cause uncaused! Sole Root
 Of Nature, that luxuriant growth of GOD!
 First Father of effects, that progeny 2220
 Of endless series! where the golden chain's
 Last link admits a period, who can tell?
 Father of all that is or heard or hears!
 Father of all that is or seen or sees!
 Father of all that *is* or shall arise! 2225
 Father of this immeasurable mass
 Of matter multiform, or dense or rare,
 Opaque or lucid, rapid or at rest,
 Minute, or passing bound! in each extreme,
 Of like amaze and mystery to man. 2230
 Father of these bright millions of the night!
 Of which *the least* full Godhead had proclaim'd,
 And thrown the gazer on his knee.—Or, say,
 Is appellation higher still Thy choice?
 Father of matter's temporary lords! 2235
 Father of spirits, nobler offspring! sparks
 Of high paternal glory; rich-endow'd
 With various measures, and with various modes
 Of instinct, reason, intuition; beams
 More pale or bright, from day Divine, to break 2240
 The Dark of matter organized; (the ware
 Of all created spirit;) beams, that rise
 Each over other in superior light,
 Till the last ripens into lustre strong,†

* *Orb* in the first quarto impression.—EDIT.

† In the first quarto edition this line immediately follows,—

“(In the Throne's full effulgence colour'd high).”—EDIT.

Of next approach to GODHEAD. Father fond 2245
 (Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)
 Of intellectual beings! beings bless'd
 With powers to please THEE; not of passive ply
 To laws they know not! beings lodged in seats
 Of well-adapted joys, in different domes 2250
 Of this imperial palace for Thy sons;
 Of this proud, populous, well-policied,
 Though boundless, habitation, plann'd by THEE;
 Whose several clans their several climates suit;
 And transposition, doubtless, would destroy. 2255
 Or, O! indulge, Immortal KING! indulge
 A title, less august indeed, but more
 Endearing; ah! how sweet in human ears,
 Sweet in our ears, and triumph in our hearts!
Father of Immortality to man! 2260
 A theme* that lately set my soul on fire.—
 And THOU the NEXT, yet equal! THOU, by whom
 That blessing was convey'd, (far more!) was bought,
 Ineffable the price! by whom all worlds
 Were made, and one redeem'd! illustrious Light, 2265
 From Light illustrious! THOU, whose regal power,
 Finite in time, but infinite in space,
 On more than adamantine basis fix'd,
 O'er more, far more, than diadems and thrones
 Inviolably reigns; the dread of gods! 2270
 And, O! the friend of man! beneath whose foot,
 And by the mandate of whose awful nod,
 All regions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
 Of high, of low, of mind and matter, roll
 Through' the short channels of expiring Time, 2275
 Or shoreless ocean of eternity,
 Calm or tempestuous, (as Thy Spirit breathes,)
 In absolute subjection!—And, O THOU,

* Nights the Sixth and Seventh.

The glorious THIRD! distinct, not separate!
 Beaming from both, with both incorporate! 2280
 And (strange to tell!) incorporate with dust!
 By condescension, as Thy glory, great,
 Enshrined in man! of human hearts, if pure,
 Divine inhabitant! the tie Divine
 Of Heaven with distant earth! by whom, I trust, 2285
 (If not inspired) uncensured this address
 To THEE, to THEM—To whom? Mysterious power!
 Reveal'd, yet unreveal'd! Darkness in light!
 Number in unity! our joy, our dread!
 The triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin! 2290
 That animates all right, the triple Sun!
 Sun of the Soul, her never-setting Sun!*
 Triune, unutterable, unconceived,
 Absconding yet demonstrable, GREAT GOD!
 Greater than greatest, better than the best! 2295
 Kinder than kindest! with soft Pity's eye,
 Or (stronger still to speak it) with Thine own,
 From Thy bright home, from that high firmament,
 Where THOU, from all eternity, hast dwelt,
 Beyond archangel's unassisted ken; 2300
 From far above what mortals *highest* call;
 From elevation's pinnacle; look down,
 Through—what? Confounding interval! through all,
 And more than labouring Fancy can conceive,—
 Through radiant ranks of essences unknown; 2305
 Through hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd,
 Round various banners of OMNIPOTENCE,
 With endless change of rapturous duties fired;
 Through wondrous beings' interposing swarms,*
 All clustering at the call, to dwell in THEE; 2310
 Through this wide waste of worlds; this vista vast,

* This line was not in the quarto impressions, but was first inserted in the octavo of 1749.—EDIT.

All sanded o'er with suns! suns turn'd to night
 Before Thy feeblest beam,—Look down, down, down,
 On a poor breathing particle in dust,
 Or, lower,—an immortal in his crimes. 2315
 His crimes forgive; forgive his virtues too,—
 Those smaller faults, half-converts to the right!
 Nor let me close these eyes, which never more
 May see the sun, (though night's descending scale
 Now weighs up morn,) unpitied and unblest'd! 2320
 In Thy displeasure dwells eternal pain:
 Pain, our aversion; pain, which strikes me now:
 And, since all pain is terrible to man,
 Though transient, terrible; at Thy good hour,
 Gently, ah! gently, lay me in my bed, 2325
 My clay-cold bed! by Nature, now, so near!
 By Nature, near; still nearer by Disease!
 Till then, be this an emblem of my grave!
 Let it out-preach the Preacher; every night
 Let it out-cry the boy at PHILIP'S ear; 2330
 That tongue of death, that herald of the tomb!
 And when (the shelter of Thy wing implored)
 My senses, soothed, shall sink in soft repose;
 O sink this truth still deeper in my soul,
 Suggested by my pillow, sign'd by Fate, 2335
 First, in Fate's volume, at the page of Man:—
Man's sickly soul, though turn'd and toss'd for ever
From side to side, can rest on nought but THEE,—
Here in full trust, hereafter in full joy;
 On THEE, the promised, sure, eternal down 2340
 Of spirits, toil'd in travel through this vale.
 Nor of that pillow shall my soul despond;
 For—Love almighty! Love almighty! (Sing,
 Exult, Creation!) Love almighty reigns!
 That death of death, that cordial of despair! 2345
 And loud ETERNITY'S triumphant song!

"OF whom no more: for, O Thou PATRON-GOD!
 Thou God and mortal! thence more GOD to man!
 Man's theme eternal, man's eternal theme!
 THOU canst not 'scape uninjured from our praise. 2350
 Uninjured from our praise can HE escape,
 Who, disembosom'd from the FATHER, bows
 The heaven of heavens, to kiss the distant earth?
 Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul;
 Against the cross, Death's iron sceptre breaks; 2355
 From famish'd Ruin plucks her human prey;
 Throws wide the gates celestial to His foes;
 Their gratitude, for such a boundless debt,
 Deputes their suffering brothers to receive;
 And, if deep human guilt in payment fails, 2360
 As deeper guilt, prohibits our *despair*;
 Enjoins it, as our duty, to rejoice;
 And, (to close all,) omnipotently kind,
 Takes His delights among the sons of men?"*

WHAT words are these?—And did they come from heaven?
 And were they spoke to man? to guilty man? 2366
 What are all mysteries to love like this?
 The songs of angels, all the melodies
 Of choral gods, are wafted in the sound;
 Heal and exhilarate the broken heart, 2370
 Though plunged before in horrors dark as night:
 Rich prelibation of consummate joy!
 Nor wait we dissolution to be bless'd.

THIS final effort of the moral Muse,
 How justly titled! † Nor for me alone; 2375
 For all that read! What spirit of support,
 What heights of CONSOLATION, crown my song!

* Prov. viii.

† The Consolation.

THEN farewell, NIGHT! Of darkness now no more :
 Joy breaks, shines, triumphs ; 't is eternal day.
 Shall that which rises out of nought complain 2380
 Of a few evils, paid with endless joys ?
 My soul ! henceforth, in sweetest union join
 The two supports of human happiness,
 Which some erroneous think can never meet,—
 True taste of life, and constant thought of death ; 2385
 The thought of death, sole victor of its dread !
 Hope be thy joy, and probity thy skill ;
 Thy Patron, HE whose diadem has dropp'd
 Yon gems of heaven ; eternity, thy prize :
 And leave the racers of the world their own, 2390
 Their feather, and their froth, for endless toils :
 They part with all for that which is not bread ;
 They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power ;
 And laugh to scorn the fools that aim at more.
 How must a spirit, late escaped from earth,— 2395
 Suppose PHILANDER'S, LUCIA'S, or NARCISSA'S,—
 The truth of things new-blazing in its eye,
 Look back, astonish'd, on the ways of men,
 Whose lives' whole drift is to forget their graves !
 And when our present privilege is pass'd, 2400
 To scourge us with due sense of its abuse,
 The same astonishment will seize us all.
 What *then* must pain us, would preserve us *now*.
 LORENZO ! 't is not yet too late ; LORENZO !
 Seize Wisdom, ere 't is torment to be wise ; 2405
 That is, seize Wisdom, ere she seizes thee.
 For what, my small philosopher, is Hell ?
 'T is nothing but full knowledge of the Truth,
 When Truth, resisted long, is sworn our foe,
 And calls ETERNITY to do her right. 2410

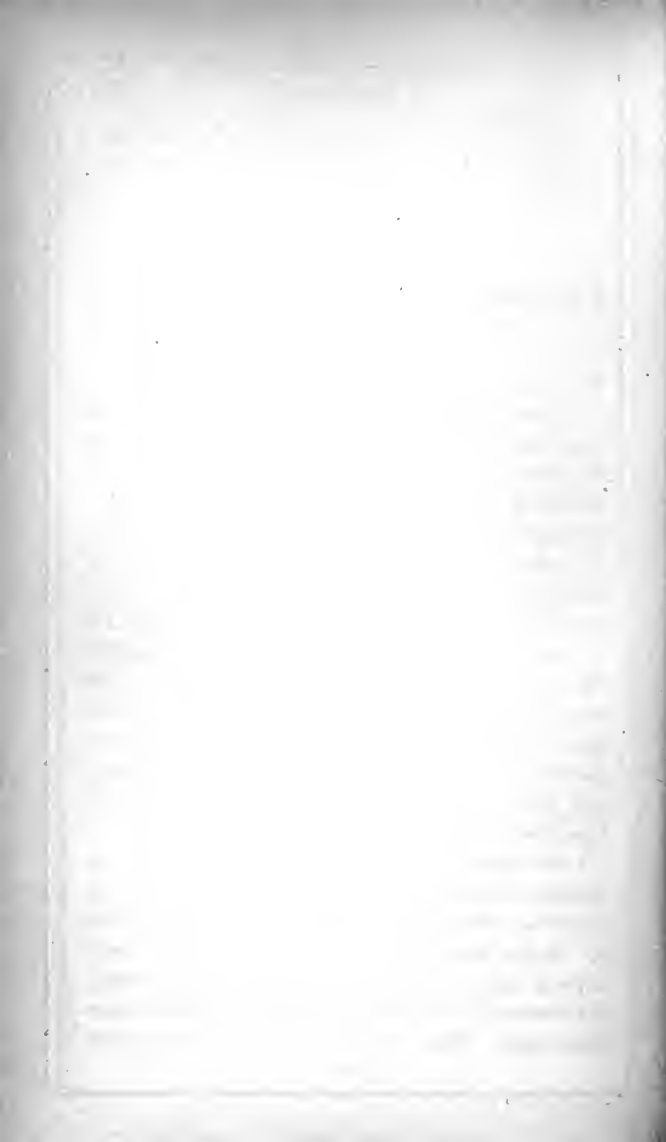
THUS, Darkness aiding intellectual light,
 And sacred Silence whispering truths Divine,

And truths Divine converting pain to peace,
 My song the midnight raven has outwing'd,
 And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes, 2415
 Beyond the flaming limits of the world,
 Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
 Of Fancy, when our hearts remain below?
 Virtue abounds in flatterers and foes;
 'T is pride to praise her, penance to perform. 2420
 To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
 LORENZO! rise at this auspicious hour:
 An hour when Heaven's most intimate with man;
 When, like a falling star, the ray Divine
 Glides swift into the bosom of the just; 2425
 And *just* are all, determin'd to reclaim;
 Which sets that title high within thy reach.
 Awake then; thy PHILANDER calls; awake!
 Thou who shalt wake when the creation sleeps;
 When, like a taper, all these suns expire; 2430
 When TIME, like him of Gaza, in his wrath,
 Plucking the pillars that support the world,
 In NATURE'S ample ruins lies entomb'd;
 And MIDNIGHT, universal Midnight, reigns.*

* While this Ninth Night was passing through the press, in the autumn of 1745, Dr. Young was enjoying himself, after the fatigues of authorship, at Tunbridge Wells. Towards the end of September, having heard of the progress of the rebellion in favour of the Pretender, he returned to Welwyn, and composed a violent diatribe, in blank verse, against Popery, arbitrary power, and French ambition; which he addressed to the Duke of Newcastle, and subjoined to the concluding verses of the "Night Thoughts." Soon afterwards he removed it from that position, as an incongruous appendage, and placed the "Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job" as a substitute. The reader will find the discarded verses in the collection of his Works, (in two volumes, published by Messrs. William Tegg and Co.,) under the title of "Reflections on the public Situation of the Kingdom, 1745."—EDIT.

A PARAPHRASE
ON
PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB.

PRINTED IN MDCCXIX.



DEDICATION.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS LORD PARKER, BARON OF
MACCLESFIELD, LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR
OF GREAT BRITAIN, &c.

MY LORD,

THOUGH I have not the honour of being known to your Lordship, I presume to take a privilege which men of retirement are apt to think themselves in possession of, as being the only method they have of making their way to persons of your Lordship's high station without struggling through multitudes for access. I may possibly fail in my respect to your Lordship, even while I endeavour to show it most; but, if I err, it is because I imagined I ought not to make my first approach to one of your Lordship's exalted character with less ceremony than that of a dedication. It is annexed to the condition of eminent merit, not to suffer more from the malice of its enemies than from the importunity of its admirers; and perhaps it would be unjust that your Lordship should hope to be exempted from the troubles, when you possess all the talents, of a patron.

I have here a fair occasion to celebrate those sublime qualities, of which a whole nation is sensible, were it not inconsistent with the design of my present application. By the just discharge of your great employments, your Lordship may well deserve the prayers of the distressed, the thanks of your country, and the approbation of your royal master. This, indeed, is a reason why every good

Briton should applaud your Lordship ; but it is equally a reason why none should disturb you, in the execution of your important affairs, by works of fancy and amusement. I was therefore induced to make this address to your Lordship, by considering you rather in the amiable light of a person distinguished for a refined taste of the polite arts, and the candour that usually attends it, than in the dignity of your public character.

The greatness and solemnity of the subjects treated of in the following work, cannot fail, in some measure, to recommend it to a person who holds in the utmost veneration those sacred books from which it is taken ; and would at the same time justify to the world my choice of the great name prefixed to it, could I be assured that the undertaking had not suffered in my hands. Thus much I think myself obliged to say,—that if this little performance had not been very indulgently spoken of by some whose judgment is universally allowed in writings of this nature, I had not dared to gratify my ambition in offering it to your Lordship. I am sensible that I am endeavouring to excuse one vanity by another ; but I hope I shall meet with pardon for it, since it is visibly intended to show the great submission and respect with which I am, my Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient and most humble servant,

EDWARD YOUNG.

A PARAPHRASE
ON
PART OF THE BOOK OF JOB.*

THRICE happy Job † long lived in regal state :
Nor saw the sumptuous East a prince so great,
Whose worldly stores in such abundance flow'd,
Whose heart with such exalted virtue glow'd.
At length misfortunes take their turn to reign, 5
And ills on ills succeed, a dreadful train !
What now but deaths, and poverty, and wrong,
The sword wide-wasting, the reproachful tongue,

* It is disputed amongst the critics, who was the author of the Book of Job: some give it to Moses, some to others. As I was engaged in this little performance, some arguments occurred to me which favour the former of these opinions; which arguments I have flung into the following notes, where little else is to be expected.

† The Almighty's speech, (chap. xxxviii. &c.) which is what I paraphrase in this little work, is by much the finest part of the noblest and most ancient poem in the world. Bishop Patrick says, its grandeur is as much above all other poetry, as thunder is louder than a whisper. In order to set this distinguished part of the poem in a fuller light, and give the reader a clearer conception of it, I have abridged the preceding and subsequent parts of the poem, and joined them to it; so that this piece is a sort of an epitome of the whole Book of Job.

I use the word "Paraphrase," because I want another which might better answer to the uncommon liberties I have taken. I have omitted, added, and transposed. The *mountain*, the *comet*, the *sun*, and other parts, are entirely added; those upon the *peacock*, the *lion*, &c., are much enlarged; and I have thrown the whole into a method more suitable to our notions of regularity. The judicious, if they compare this piece with the original, will, I flatter myself, find the reasons for the great liberties I have indulged myself in through the whole.

Longinus has a chapter on interrogations, which shows that they con-

And spotted plagues, that mark'd his limbs all o'er
 So thick with pains, they wanted room for more? 10
 A change so sad what mortal heart could bear?
 Exhausted woe had left him nought to fear,
 But gave him all to grief. Low earth he press'd,
 Wept in the dust, and sorely smote his breast.
 His friends around the deep affliction mourn'd. 15
 Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan return'd;
 In anguish of their hearts their mantles rent,
 And seven long days in solemn silence spent;
 A debt of reverence to distress so great!
 Then Job contain'd no more, but cursed his fate. 20
 His day of birth, its inauspicious light
 He wishes sunk in shades of endless night,
 And blotted from the year; nor fears to crave
 Death, instant death; impatient for the grave,
 That seat of bliss, that mansion of repose, 25
 Where rest and mortals are no longer foes;
 Where counsellors are hush'd, and mighty kings
 (O happy turn!) no more are wretched things.

His words were daring, and displeas'd his friends;
 His conduct they reprove, and he defends: 30
 And now they kindled into warm debate,
 And sentiments oppos'd with equal heat;
 Fix'd in opinion, both refuse to yield,
 And summon all their reason to the field.
 So high at length their arguments were wrought, 35
 They reach'd the last extent of human thought:
 A pause ensued:—when, lo! Heaven interpos'd,
 And awfully the long contention closed.

tribute much to the sublime. This speech of the Almighty is made up of them. Interrogation seems, indeed, the proper style of majesty incensed. It differs from other manner of reproof, as bidding a person execute himself does from a common execution; for he that asks the guilty a proper question, makes him, in effect, pass sentence on himself.



Low earth he press'd,
Wept in the dust, and sorely smote his breast.
His friends around the deep affliction mourn'd,
Felt all his pangs, and groan for groan return'd.

Job linc 14.



Full o'er their heads, with terrible surprise,
 A sudden whirlwind blacken'd all the skies. 40
 (They saw, and trembled!)* From the darkness broke
 A dreadful voice; and thus the' Almighty spoke:—

“WHO gives his tongue a loose so bold and vain,
 Censures my conduct, and reproves my reign?
 Lifts up his thoughts against me from the dust, 45
 And tells the world's Creator what is just?
 Of late so brave, now lift a dauntless eye,
 Face my demand, and give it a reply:—
 Where didst thou dwell at nature's early birth?
 Who laid foundations for the spacious earth? 50
 Who on its surface did extend the line,
 Its form determine, and its bulk confine?
 Who fix'd the corner-stone? What hand, declare,
 Hung it on nought, and fasten'd it in air;
 When the bright morning-stars in concert sung, 55
 When heaven's high arch with loud hosannas rung,
 When shouting sons of God the triumph crown'd,
 And the wide concave thunder'd with the sound?”

“EARTH'S numerous kingdoms,—hast thou view'd them
 all?
 And can thy span of knowledge grasp the ball? 60
 Who heaved the mountain, which sublimely stands,
 And casts its shadow into distant lands?”

* The Book of Job is well known to be dramatic, and, like the tragedies of old Greece, is fiction built on truth. Probably this most noble part of it—the Almighty speaking out of the whirlwind—(so suitable to the after-practice of the Greek stage, when there happened *dignus vindice nodus*) is fictitious; but it is a fiction more agreeable to the time in which Job lived than to any since. Frequent before the Law were the appearances of the Almighty after this manner. (Exod. xix.; Ezek. i., &c.) Hence is He said to “dwell in thick darkness, and have His way in the whirlwind.”

"WHO, stretching forth his sceptre o'er the deep,
 Can that wild world in due subjection keep?
 I broke the globe, I scoop'd its hollow'd side, 65
 And did a basin for the floods provide;
 I chain'd them with my word: the boiling sea,
 Work'd up in tempests, hears my great decree:
 'Thus far thy floating tide shall be convey'd;
 And here, O main, be thy proud billows stay'd.'* 70

"HAST thou explored the secrets of the deep,
 Where, shut from use, unnumber'd treasures sleep?
 Where, down a thousand fathoms from the day,
 Springs the great fountain, mother of the sea?
 Those gloomy paths did thy bold foot e'er tread, 75
 Whole worlds of waters rolling o'er thy head?

"HATH the cleft centre open'd wide to thee?
 Death's inmost chambers didst thou ever see?
 E'er knock at his tremendous gate, and wade
 To the black portal through the' incumbent shade? 80
 Deep are those shades; but shades still deeper hide
 My counsels from the ken of human pride.

"WHERE dwells the light? in what refulgent dome?
 And where has darkness made her dismal home?
 Thou know'st, no doubt; since thy large heart is fraught 85
 With ripen'd wisdom, through long ages brought;

* There is a very great air in all that precedes, but this is signally sublime. We are struck with admiration to see the vast and ungovernable ocean receiving commands, and punctually obeying them; to find it like a managed horse, raging, tossing, and foaming, but by the rule and direction of its master. This passage yields in sublimity to that of "Let there be light," &c., so much only as the absolute government of nature yields to the creation of it. The like spirit in these two passages is no bad concurrent argument that Moses is author of the Book of Job.

Since nature was call'd forth when thou wast by,
And into being rose beneath thine eye!

“ARE mists begotten? Who their father knew?
From whom descend the pearly drops of dew? 90
To bind the stream by night, what hand can boast,
Or whiten morning with the hoary frost?
Whose powerful breath, from northern regions blown,
Touches the sea, and turns it into stone,
A sudden desert spreads o'er realms defaced, 95
And lays one half of the creation waste?

“THOU know'st me not: thy blindness cannot see
How vast a distance parts thy God from thee.
Canst thou in whirlwinds mount aloft? Canst thou
In clouds and darkness wrap thy awful brow, 100
And, when day triumphs in meridian light,
Put forth thy hand, and shade the world with night?

“WHO launch'd the clouds in air, and bid them roll
Suspended seas aloft from pole to pole?
Who can refresh the burning sandy plain, 105
And quench the summer with a waste of rain?
Who, in rough deserts, far from human toil,
Made rocks bring forth, and desolation smile?
There blooms the rose, where human face ne'er shone,
And spreads its beauties to the sun alone. 110

“TO check the shower, who lifts his hand on high,
And shuts the sluices of the' exhausted sky,
When earth no longer mourns her gaping veins,
Her naked mountains, and her russet plains;
But, new in life, a cheerful prospect yields 115
Of shining rivers, and of verdant fields;
When groves and forests lavish all their bloom,
And earth and heaven are fill'd with rich perfume?

" HAST thou e'er scaled my wintry skies, and seen
 Of hail and snows my northern magazine? 120
 These the dread treasure of mine anger are,
 My funds of vengeance for the day of war,
 When clouds rain death, and storms, at my command,
 Rage through the world, or waste a guilty land.

" WHO taught the rapid winds to fly so fast, 125
 Or shakes the centre with his eastern blast?
 Who from the skies can a whole deluge pour?
 Who strikes through nature with the solemn roar
 Of dreadful thunder, points it where to fall,
 And in fierce lightning wraps the flying ball? 130
 Not he who trembles at the darted fires,
 Falls at the sound, and in the flash expires.

" WHO drew the comet out to such a size,
 And pour'd his flaming train o'er half the skies?
 Did thy resentment hang him out? Does he 135
 Glare on the nations, and denounce, from thee?

" WHO on low earth can moderate the rein
 That guides the stars along the' ethereal plain,
 Appoint their seasons, and direct their course,
 Their lustre brighten, and supply their force? 140
 Canst thou the skies' benevolence restrain,
 And cause the Pleiades to shine in vain?
 Or, when Orion sparkles from his sphere,
 Thaw the cold season, and unbind the year?
 Bid Mazzaroth his destined station know, 145
 And teach the bright Arcturus where to glow?
 Mine is the Night, with all her stars: I pour
 Myriads, and myriads I reserve in store.

" DOST thou pronounce where daylight shall be born,
 And draw the purple curtain of the morn; 150

Awake the sun, and bid him come away,
 And glad thy world with his obsequious ray?
 Hast thou, enthroned in flaming glory, driven
 Triumphant round the spacious ring of heaven?
 That pomp of light what hand so far displays, 155
 That distant earth lies basking in the blaze?

“WHO did the soul with her rich powers invest,
 And light up reason in the human breast,
 To shine, with fresh increase of lustre bright,
 When stars and sun are set in endless night? 160
 To these my various questions make reply.”

THE' Almighty spoke; and, speaking, shook the sky.

WHAT then, Chaldæan sire, was thy surprise!
 Thus thou, with trembling heart and downcast eyes:—
 “Once and again, which I in groans deplore, 165
 My tongue has err'd; but shall presume no more.
 My voice is in eternal silence bound,
 And all my soul falls prostrate to the ground.”

HE ceased: when, lo! again the' Almighty spoke;
 The same dread voice from the black whirlwind broke:—

“CAN that arm measure with an Arm Divine? 171
 And canst thou thunder with a voice like mine?
 Or in the hollow of thy hand contain
 The bulk of waters, the wide-spreading main,
 When, mad with tempests, all the billows rise 175
 In all their rage, and dash the distant skies?”

“COME forth, in beauty's excellence array'd;
 And be the grandeur of thy power display'd;
 Put on omnipotence, and, frowning, make
 The spacious round of the creation shake; 180

Despatch thy vengeance, bid it overthrow
 Triumphant Vice, lay lofty tyrants low,
 And crumble them to dust. When this is done,
 I grant thy safety lodged in thee alone;
 Of thee thou art, and mayst undaunted stand 185
 Behind the buckler of thine own right hand.

“FOND man, the vision of a moment made!
 Dream of a dream, and shadow of a shade!
 What worlds hast thou produced, what creatures framed,
 What insects cherish'd, that thy God is blamed? 190
 When,* pain'd with hunger, the wild raven's brood
 Loud calls on God, importunate for food,
 Who hears their cry, who grants their hoarse request,
 And stills the clamour of the craving nest?

“WHO in the stupid ostrich † has subdued 195
 A parent's care and fond inquietude?

* Another argument that Moses was the author is, that most of the creatures here mentioned are Egyptian. The reason given why the raven is particularly mentioned as an object of the care of Providence is, because by her clamorous and importunate voice she particularly seems always calling upon it. Thence *κοράσσω, à κόραξ*, is “to ask earnestly:” (ÆLIAN. lib. ii. cap. 48:) and since there were ravens on the banks of the Nile more clamorous than the rest of that species, those probably are meant in this place.

† There are many instances of this bird's stupidity: let two suffice. First. It covers its head in the reeds, and thinks itself all out of sight:

—*Stat lumine clauso*

Ridendum revoluta caput, creditque latere

Quem non ipsa videt.—CLAUDIUS, *In Eutropium*, lib. ii. 314.

Secondly. They that go in pursuit of them draw the skin of an ostrich's neck on one hand, which proves a sufficient lure to take them with the other. They have so little brain, that Heliogabalus had six hundred heads for his supper.

Here we may observe, that our judicious as well as sublime author just touches the great points of distinction in each creature, and then hastens to another. A description is exact when you cannot add but

While far she flies, her scatter'd eggs are found,
 Without an owner, on the sandy ground :
 Cast out on fortune, they at mercy lie,
 And borrow life from an indulgent sky : 200
 Adopted by the sun, in blaze of day,
 They ripen under his prolific ray ;
 Unmindful she, that some unhappy tread
 May crush her young in their neglected bed.
 What time she skims along the field with speed,* 205
 She scorns the rider and pursuing steed. †

“ How rich the peacock ! What bright glories run
 From plume to plume, and vary in the sun !
 He proudly spreads them to the golden ray,
 Gives all his colours, and adorns the day ; ‡ 210
 With conscious state the spacious round displays,
 And slowly moves amid the waving blaze.

what is common to another thing, nor withdraw but something peculiarly belonging to the thing described. A likeness is lost in too much description, as a meaning often in too much illustration.

* Here is marked another peculiar quality of this creature, which neither flies nor runs distinctly, but has a motion composed of both, and, using its wings as sails, makes great speed.

*Vasta velut Libyæ venantum vocibus ales
 Cùm premitur, calidas cursu transmittit arenas,
 Inque modum veli sinuatis flamine pennis
 Pulverulenta volat.*—CLAUDIUS, *In Eutropium*, lib. ii. 310.

† Xenophon says, Cyrus had horses that could overtake the goat and the wild ass ; but none that could reach this creature. A thousand golden ducats, or a hundred camels, was the stated price of a horse that could equal their speed.

‡ Though this bird is but just mentioned in my author, I could not forbear going a little farther, and spreading those beautiful plumes (which are there shut up) into half a dozen lines. The circumstance I have marked, of his opening his plumes to the sun, is true : *Expandit colores adverso maximè sole, quia sic fulgentius radiant.*—PLINII *Hist. Nat.* lib. x. cap. 20.

“ Who taught the hawk to find, in seasons wise,
 Perpetual summer, and a change of skies ?
 When clouds deform the year, she mounts the wind, 215
 Shoots to the south, nor fears the storm behind ;
 The sun returning, she returns again,
 Lives in his beams, and leaves ill days to men.

“ THOUGH strong the hawk,* though practised well to fly,
 An eagle drops her in a lower sky ; 220
 An eagle, when, deserting human sight,
 She seeks the sun in her unwearied flight.
 Did thy command her yellow pinion lift
 So high in air, and set her on the clift,
 Where far above thy world she dwells alone, 225
 And proudly makes the strength of rocks her own ;
 Thence wide o'er nature takes her dread survey,
 And with a glance predestinates her prey ? †
 She feasts her young with blood ; and, hovering o'er
 The' unslaughter'd host, enjoys the promised gore. 230

“ KNOW'ST thou how many moons, by me assign'd,
 Roll o'er the mountain goat and forest hind,
 While pregnant they a mother's load sustain ? ‡
 They bend in anguish, and cast forth their pain.

* Thuanus (*De Re Accip.*) mentions a hawk that flew from Paris to London in a night. And the Egyptians, in regard to its swiftness, made it their symbol for the wind ; for which reason we may suppose the hawk, as well as the crow above, to have been a bird of note in Egypt.

† The eagle is said to be of so acute a sight, that when she is so high in air that man cannot see her, she can discern the smallest fish under water. My author accurately understood the nature of the creatures he describes, and seems to have been a naturalist as well as a poet, which the next note will confirm.

‡ The meaning of this question is, “ Knowest thou the time and circumstances of their bringing forth ? ” For to know the time only was easy, and had nothing extraordinary in it ; but the circumstances had something peculiarly expressive of God's Providence, which makes the

Hale are their young, from human frailties freed ; 235
 Walk unsustain'd, and unassisted feed :
 They live at once, forsake the dam's warm side,
 Take the wide world, with Nature for their guide,
 Bound o'er the lawn, or seek the distant glade,
 And find a home in each delightful shade. 240

" WILL the tall *reem*, which knows no lord but me,
 Low at the crib, and ask an alms of thee ?
 Submit his unworn shoulder to the yoke,
 Break the stiff clod, and o'er thy furrow smoke ?
 Since great his strength, go trust him, void of care ; 245
 Lay on his neck the toil of all the year ;
 Bid him bring home the seasons to thy doors,
 And cast his load among thy gather'd stores.

" DIDST thou from service the wild ass discharge,
 And break his bonds, and bid him live at large, 250
 Through the wide waste, his ample mansion, roam,
 And lose himself in his unbounded home ?
 By Nature's hand magnificently fed,
 His meal is on the range of mountains spread :
 As in pure air aloft he bounds along, 255
 He sees in distant smoke the city throng ;
 Conscious of freedom, scorns the smother'd train,
 The threatening driver, and the servile rein.

" SURVEY the warlike horse : * didst thou invest
 With thunder his robust distended chest ? 260

question proper in this place. Pliny observes, that the hind with young is by instinct directed to a certain herb called *seselis*, which facilitates the birth. Thunder also (which looks like the more immediate hand of Providence) has the same effect. (Psalm xxix. 9.) In so early an age to observe these things, may style our author a naturalist.

* The description of the horse is the most celebrated of any in the poem. There is an excellent critique on it in the "Guardians." I shall

No sense of fear his dauntless soul allays ;
 'T is dreadful to behold his nostrils blaze ;
 To paw the vale he proudly takes delight,
 And triumphs in the fulness of his might.
 High-raised he snuffs the battle from afar, 265
 And burns to plunge amid the raging war ;
 And mocks at death, and throws his foam around,
 And in a storm of fury shakes the ground.
 How does his firm, his rising heart advance
 Full on the brandish'd sword, and shaken lance ; 270
 While his fix'd eye-balls meet the dazzling shield,
 Gaze, and return the lightning of the field !
 He sinks the sense of pain in generous pride,
 Nor feels the shaft that trembles in his side ;
 But neighs to the shrill trumpet's dreadful blast 275
 Till death ; and when he groans, he groans his last.

" But, fiercer still, the lordly lion stalks,
 Grimly majestic in his lonely walks :
 When round he glares, all living creatures fly ;
 He clears the desert with his rolling eye. 280
 Say, mortal, does he rouse at thy command,
 And roar to thee, and live upon thy hand ?

therefore only observe, that in this description, as in other parts of this speech, our vulgar translation has much more spirit than the Septuagint ; it always takes the original in the most poetic and exalted sense ; so that most commentators, even on the Hebrew itself, fall beneath it.

[The preceding note by the author was inserted in all the early editions of this *Paraphrase*, but was omitted in the collected Works in 1762. The critique in the "Guardian," (Number 86,) was published 1713, and is dated from "Oxford, June 16," where Young was then a resident ; and there is no improbability in the supposition, that it was written by himself, in grateful acknowledgment of the handsome manner in which some passages "taken out of his manuscript poem *On the Last Day*," had been quoted in Number 51 ; and it was there announced as "shortly to appear in public."—EDIT.]

Dost thou for him in forests bend thy bow,
 And to his gloomy den the morsel throw,
 Where, bent on death, lie hid his tawny brood, 285
 And, couch'd in dreadful ambush, pant for blood ;
 Or, stretch'd on broken limbs, consume the day,
 In darkness wrapp'd, and slumber o'er their prey ?
 By the pale moon they take their destin'd round,*
 And lash their sides, and furious tear the ground. 290
 Now shrieks and dying groans the desert fill ;
 They rage, they rend ; their ravenous jaws distil
 With crimson foam ; and, when the banquet's o'er,
 They stride away, and paint their steps with gore.
 In flight alone the shepherd puts his trust, 295
 And shudders at the talon in the dust.

"MILD is my behemoth, though large his frame ;
 Smooth is his temper, and repress'd his flame,
 While unprovoked. This native of the flood
 Lifts his broad foot, and puts ashore for food : 300
 Earth sinks beneath him, as he moves along
 To seek the herds,† and mingle with the throng.
 See with what strength his harden'd loins are bound,
 All over proof and shut against a wound.
 How like a mountain-cedar moves his tail ! 305
 Nor can his complicated sinews fail.
 Built high and wide, his solid bones surpass
 The bars of steel ; his ribs are ribs of brass ;
 His port majestic, and his armed jaw,
 Give the wide forest, and the mountain, law. 310

* Pursuing their prey by night is true of most wild beasts, particularly the lion. (Psalm civ. 20.) The Arabians have one among their five hundred names for the lion which signifies "the hunter by moonshine."

† This is the reading of the early editions of the poem, which agrees well with the other portion of the verse, "to mingle with the throng." But in the collected Works of 1762, it is altered into *herbs* ; which may also be correct, as indicating one of the habits of the animal.—EDIT.

The mountains feed him ; there the beasts admire
 The mighty stranger, and in dread retire ;
 At length his greatness nearer they survey,
 Graze in his shadow, and his eye obey.
 The fens and marshes are his cool retreat, 315
 His noontide shelter from the burning heat ;
 Their sedgy bosoms his wide couch are made,
 And groves of willows give him all their shade.
 His eye drinks Jordan up, when, fired with drought,
 He trusts to turn its current down his throat ; 320
 In lessen'd waves it creeps along the plain :
 He sinks a river, and he thirsts again.*

“ Go to the Nile, and, from its fruitful side,
 Cast forth thy line into the swelling tide :
 With slender hair leviathan command, 325
 And stretch his vastness on the loaded strand.†
 Will he become thy servant ? Will he own
 Thy lordly nod, and tremble at thy frown ?
 Or with his sport amuse thy leisure-day,
 And, bound in silk, with thy soft maidens play ? 330

“ SHALL pompous banquets swell with such a prize,
 And the bowl journey round his ample size ?

* *Cephis glaciale caput, quò suctus anhelam
 Ferre sitim Python, amnemque avertere ponto.*

STATI *Thebais*, lib. vii. 349.

*Qui spiris teget montes, hauriret hiatu
 Flumina, &c.—CLAUDIUS, In Rufinum, Præf. ad lib. i. 3.*

Let not, then, this hyperbole seem too much for an eastern poet, though some commentators of name strain hard in this place for a new construction, through fear of it.

† The taking the crocodile is most difficult. Diodorus says, they are not to be taken but by iron nets. When Augustus conquered Egypt, he struck a medal, the impress of which was a crocodile chained to a palm-tree, with this inscription, *Nemo antea religavit.*

Or the debating merchants share the prey,
 And various limbs to various marts convey ?
 Through his firm skull what steel its way can win ? 335
 What forceful engine can subdue his skin ?
 Fly far, and live ; tempt not his matchless might :
 The bravest shrink to cowards in his sight ;
 The rashest dare not rouse him up : * Who, then,
 Shall turn on me, among the sons of men ? 340

“ AM I a debtor ? Hast thou ever heard
 Whence come the gifts that are on me conferr'd ?
 My lavish fruit a thousand valleys fills,
 And mine the herds that graze a thousand hills :
 Earth, sea, and air,—all nature is my own ; 345
 And stars and sun are dust beneath my throne.
 And darest thou with the world's great Father vie,
 Thou, who dost tremble at my creature's eye ?

“ AT full my huge leviathan shall rise,
 Boast all his strength, and spread his wondrous size. 350
 Who, great in arms, e'er stripp'd his shining mail,
 Or crown'd his triumph with a single scale ?
 Whose heart sustains him to draw near ? Behold,
 Destruction yawns ; his spacious jaws unfold, †
 And, marshall'd round the wide expanse, disclose 355
 Teeth edged with death, and crowding rows on rows.
 What hideous fangs on either side arise !
 And what a deep abyss between them lies !

* This alludes to a custom of this creature, which is, when sated with fish, to come ashore and sleep among the reeds.

† The crocodile's mouth is exceeding wide. When he gapes, says Pliny, *fit totum os*. Martial says to his old woman,

Cùm comparata rictibus tuis ora

Niliacus habeat crocodilus angusta.—Lib. iii. *Epig.* xciii. 6.

So that the expression there is barely just.

Mete with thy lance, and with thy plummet sound,
The one how long, the other how profound. 360

“ His bulk is charged with such a furious soul,
That clouds of smoke from his spread nostrils roll,
As from a furnace ; and, when roused his ire,
Fate issues from his jaws in streams of fire.*
The rage of tempests, and the roar of seas, 365
Thy terror, this thy great superior please.
Strength on his ample shoulder sits in state ;
His well-join'd limbs are dreadfully complete ;
His flakes of solid flesh are slow to part ;
As steel his nerves, as adamant his heart. 370

“ WHEN, late awaked, he rears him from the floods,
And, stretching forth his stature to the clouds,
Writhes in the sun aloft his scaly height,
And strikes the distant hills with transient light,
Far round are fatal damps of terror spread ; 375
The mighty fear, nor blush to own their dread.

“ LARGE is his front ; and when his burnish'd eyes
Lift their broad lids, the morning seems to rise.†

* This too is nearer truth than at first view may be imagined. The crocodile, say the naturalists, lying long under water, and being there forced to hold its breath, when it emerges, the breath long repressed is hot, and bursts out so violently, that it resembles fire and smoke. The horse suppresses not his breath by any means so long, neither is he so fierce and animated ; yet the most correct of poets ventures to use the same metaphor concerning him :

Collectumque premens volvitur sub naribus ignem.

VIRGILII *Georg.* lib. iii. 85.

By this and the foregoing note I would caution against a false opinion of the eastern boldness, from passages in them ill understood.

† *His eyes are like the eye-lids of the morning.*—I think this gives us as great an image of the thing it would express, as can enter the thought of man. It is not improbable that the Egyptians stole their hieroglyphic

" IN vain may death in various shapes invade,
 The swift-wing'd arrow, the descending blade : 380
 His naked breast their impotence defies ;
 The dart rebounds, the brittle falchion flies.
 Shut in himself, the war without he hears,
 Safe in the tempest of their rattling spears ;
 The cumber'd strand their wasted volleys strow ; 385
 His sport, the rage and labour of the foe.

" His pastimes like a caldron boil the flood,
 And blacken ocean with the rising mud ;
 The billows feel him, as he works his way ;
 His hoary footsteps shine along the sea ; 390
 The foam, high-wrought, with white divides the green,
 And distant sailors point where death has been.

" His like earth bears not on her spacious face :
 Alone in nature stands his dauntless race,
 For utter ignorance of fear renown'd. 395
 In wrath he rolls his baleful eye around ;

for the morning, which is the crocodile's eye, from this passage, though no commentator I have seen mentions it. It is easy to conceive how the Egyptians should be both readers and admirers of the writings of Moses, whom I suppose the author of this poem.

I have observed already that three or four of the creatures here described are Egyptian : the two last are notoriously so ; they are the river-horse and the crocodile, those celebrated inhabitants of the Nile ; and on these two it is that our author chiefly dwells. It would have been expected from an author more remote from that river than Moses, in a catalogue of creatures produced to magnify their Creator, to have dwelt on the two largest works of His hand, viz., the elephant and the whale. This is so natural an expectation, that some commentators have rendered *behemoth* and *leviathan* "the elephant" and "whale," though the descriptions in our author will not admit of it ; but Moses being, as we may well suppose, under an immediate terror of the *hippopotamos* and crocodile, from their daily mischiefs and ravages around him, it is very accountable why he should permit them to take place.

Makes every swoln, disdainful heart subside,
And holds dominion o'er the sons of pride."

THEN the Chaldæan eased his labouring breast,
With full conviction of his crime oppress'd :— 400

"THOU canst accomplish all things, Lord of might!
And every thought is naked to Thy sight.
But, O! Thy ways are wonderful, and lie
Beyond the deepest reach of mortal eye.
Oft have I heard of Thine almighty power, 405
But never saw Thee till this dreadful hour.
O'erwhelm'd with shame, the Lord of life I see,
Abhor myself, and give my soul to Thee.
Nor shall my weakness tempt Thine anger more :
Man was not made to question, but adore." 410

END OF PARAPHRASE ON THE BOOK OF JOB.

INDEX.

The figures denote the page.

A

- Addison*, quoted, 89, *n.*
Address, to Death, 13—to the great and indolent, 30—to the lilies of the field, 53—to the aged, 74—to God, as the Creator, 75; on His mercy, love, and justice, 77; on the perfection of His ways, 275; as the essence of bliss and true happiness, 278; as omniscient, omnipresent, the great First Cause and Father of all, 327—to the ocean, 220—to night, 278, 311—to the stars, 296—to Jesus Christ, as God-Man, 332—to Lorenzo, to awake from sleep, 334
Adjuration, solemn, the author's, by night, addressed to Lorenzo, 324
Ælian, quoted, 346, *n.*
Affliction, beneficial to good men, 273
Age and disease, the harbingers of death, 64
Aged, the, less heedful of death's approach than the young, 117—absurdities of, 118
Allegory, on sleep, 7—on time, 27—on aged trees, 74—on experience, 74—on the end of life, 74—on learning, 106—on pleasure, 232
Almighty, the, reproves Job for his boldness and ignorance, 341—omnipotence of, 345, 356—providence of, 346. See *God*.
Altamont, death of, 112
Ambition, and avarice, the influence of, 143, 148—true, described, 143—a proof of immortality, 177
Analogy, man's surest guide, 158
Angels, half their joy derived from friendship, 41—and men, compared, 87—the relationship between, 91—the war of, 199
Annihilation, the absurdities and horrors of, urged, 192
Arts, human, surpassed by nature, 289
Aspasia and Lysander, their story, 129
Ass, wild, described, 349
Astrology, true, what it is, found out, 293

- Author*, the, prefaces by, 3, 69, 133, 163—his disappointments, 73—predicted fate of his book, 256—his prayer for himself, 331—his dedication to Lord Macclesfield, 337
Avarice furnishes an argument of immortality, 180

B

- Balchen*, Admiral, death of, alluded to, 220
Behemoth, described, 351
Bell, striking of a, its language and import, 8
Bible, reading of the, recommended, 203, 238
Blessed, the, see the works of creation in their due proportion, 216
Brutes, in what light superior to man, 176—happier than rational beings, 189

C

- Christ*, His crucifixion described, 78—His life, death, and ascension proofs of immortality, 79—His philanthropy, 89
Christian, the dignity of a, 95—compared to a ship at sea, 247—difference between him and the men of the world, 247
Claudian, quoted, 346, *n.*, 347, *n.*, 352, *n.*
Clouds, a fine description of them, 278—and rain, described, 343
Comets, described, 344
Complaint, the, of a good man, on the supposition of no future existence, 186
Conscience, the treachery of, 31—the power of, whence it is derived, 203
Conversation, the benefits of, 38—fits for solitude, 38
Creation, a specimen and earnest of God's power, 142—the magnificence of, a mockery on man, if doomed to annihilation, 191—the end of it, immortality, 199—described, 341
Crimes, covered by night, 290
Cyrus, fleet horses of, mentioned, 347, *n.*

D

- Darkness and light*, described, 342
Day of judgment, described, 266

- Daylight*, described, 344
- Dead*, the, folly of lamenting, 10—pity more justly the living, 10—who properly mourn, 24—heinousness of violating, 55
- Death*, the proprietor of, all, 13—sudden and unexpected, the danger of, 18—damps all worldly enjoyments, 34—the great advantages derived from, 65—to be welcomed by age, 71—the swiftness of its progress, 95—of friends, how to be improved, 110, 206—the thought of, an antidote against the fear of, 119, 333—characterized, 121—insidiousness or treachery of, 123—the different forms in which it appears, 123—the uncertainty of, should excite us to watchfulness, 125—domains of, described, 342
- Death-bed*, of the just, described, 42—of friends, a fine description of the, 114
- Dedication to Lord Macclesfield*, the author's, 337
- Deluge*, the, and conflagration of all things, described, 265
- Description* of true ambition, 143—of the wild ass, 349—of the behemoth, 351—of the crucifixion of Christ, 78—of the clouds, 278, 343—of comets, 344—of the creation, 341—of darkness, 342—of the day of judgment, 266—of daylight, 344—of the domains of death, 342—of the death-bed of the just, 42—of the death of friends, 114—of the deluge, and conflagration of all things, 265—of dew, 343—of the eagle, 348—of true economy, 150—of eternity, 153—of a summer's evening, 44—of fame, 178—of fields, 343—of the bosom of a friend, 39—of pompous funerals, 325—of the goat, 348—of God, 83—of the grave, 10, 34, 57—of true greatness, 228—of hail, 344—of earthly happiness, 221—of the hawk, 348—of hell, 267, 333—of the different kinds of hope, 170, 211—of the horse, 349—of the nature of immortality, 138—of infancy, 222—of learning, 106—of the leviathan, 216, 352, 353—of light, 342—of lightning, 344—of the lion, 350—of the heart of man, 170—of the man of the world, 223—of the ministers of God, 288—of mists, 343—of the creation of mountains, 341—of night, 7, 278, 283, 311, 344—of the ocean, 220—of the ostrich, 346—of the peacock, 347—of the death of Philander, 43—of rain, 343—of the boasted friends of reason, 94—of the reem, 349—of rivers, 343—of the creation of the seas, 342—of the seasons, 156, 344—of sleep, 326—of the snows, 344—of solitude, 104—

- of high station, 144—of storms, 344—of thunder, 344—
of the end of time, 270—of truth, 96—of true wealth,
148—of the whirlwind, 343—of the winds, 344—of wit,
251—of true worth, 146
- Devil*, his sentence, what, 269
- Dew and mists*, described, 343
- Diodorus*, quoted, 352, *n.*
- Discontent*, man's, a proof of immortality, 168
- Disease*, the harbinger of death, 64
- Diversions*, censured, 25
- Dreams*, a proof of the soul's immortality, 10

E

- Eagle*, the, described, 348
- Earth*, the region of melancholy, 10—not to be trusted in,
54
- Economy*, true, described, 150
- End of time*, a fine description of the, 270
- Epitaph*, on the human race, supposing no future state, 192
- Eternity*, description of, 153
- Evening*, fine description of a summer's, 44
- Experience*, its language, 35

F

- Faith*, disarms death of its terrors, 93
- Fame*, vanity of, 74—fondness for, disavowed by man, 177
—described, 178
- Fear of a future state*, a proof of its reality, 207
- Fields and rivers*, described, 343
- Firmament*, what it is, 293
- Florello*, his story, 222
- Folly*, subject to misery, 226—and wisdom, contrasted, 242
- Friend*, the bosom of a, finely described, 39
- Friends*, real, the value of, 37, 38—God's design in taking
them from us, 110, 272—dying, a striking description of,
114—death of, how to be improved, 205
- Friendship*, benefits of, 37—directions for preserving, 40
- Funerals*, description of pompous, 325
- Future state*, a good man's complaint, supposing none, 186

G

- Glory*, true, wherein it consists, 228
Goat, the, described, 348
God, erroneously defined by infidels, 78—a sublime description of, 83—in what light viewed by the believer, 195; by those who favour annihilation, 196—denied, creates innumerable mysteries, 210—all He does right, 272—decrees of, vindicated, 272
Goldsmith, Dr., quoted, 74, *n.*
Good man, the, exposed to trials in this life, 246—characterized, 247
Grave, a description of the, 10, 34, 57—a real hell, if there is no future state, 192
Great, the, their mistaken notions of friendship, 40
Greatness, true, described, 228
Grief, the proper school of wisdom, 106
Guardian, the, quoted, 349, *n.*, 350, *n.*

H

- Hail and snows*, described, 344
Happiness, earthly, its insufficiency and emptiness, 15—described, 221—present, an earnest of future pain, 16—where her sole residence on earth, 39—true, what it is, 243, 245
Hawk, the, described, 348
Health of the mind, what it is, 242
Heaven, the favours of, their nature explained, 17
Heavens, starry, questions suggested by a view of the, 299
Heliogabulus, an instance of his extravagance in eating, mentioned, 346, *n.*
Hell, described, 267, 333
Hope, the different kinds of, described, 170, 211—a proof of immortality, 170—true, its benefits, 211—false, its dictates, 211
Horace, quoted, 158, *n.*
Horse, the warlike, described, 349
Hours, past, the wisdom of talking with them, 34
Human pursuits, the vanity of, 11
Humility, the praise of, 229

I

- Idleness*, the bane of the soul, 27
- Ills*, proceed from man alone, 274—the intent of, 276
- Imagination*, her numerous follies, 244
- Immortality*, the nature of, described, 138—the value of, 138—knowledge to be derived from, 141—its beneficial influence on the soul, 152—proved, from nature, 155; from man's discontent, 168; from his powers and passions, 169; from the gradual growth of his reason, 169; from the fear of death, 170; from ambition, 177; from avarice, 180; from pleasure, 181—a belief of, the source of true courage, 173
- Infancy*, described, 222
- Infidel*, an, the most frantic of madmen, 169
- Infidelity*, the cause of, 203
- Infidels*, their character at large, 203—in what respects they resemble Satan, 207
- Inscription* on those who believe the doctrine of annihilation, 192
- Instinct*, in animals, in what respect wiser than reason in man, 189

J

- Job*, his prosperous condition, 339—his sad reverses, 339—curses his fate, 340—his warm debate with his friends, 340—addressed by the Almighty, 341, 345—reproved for his boldness and ignorance, 341—confesses his presumption, 345, 356
- Job*, the book of, difference of opinion respecting the author of, 339, *n.*—reasons for ascribing it to Moses, 339, *n.*, 342, *n.*, 346, *n.*, 355, *n.*—is fiction built on truth, 341, *n.*
- Joy*, the essence of heaven, 193—true, learned from scripture, 238
- Judgment*, the day of, described, 266

K

- Kissing the pope's toe*, the custom of, ridiculed, 245
- Knowledge*, a real evil, if the system of the infidel is adopted, 187
- Korah, Dathan, and Abiram*, rebellion of, alluded to, 201

L

- Laughter*, much indulged, censured, 237
Learning, described, 106—true, defined, 121
Leviathan, the, described, 216, 352, 353
Lichfield, Earl of, notices of, 136, n.
Life, the dawn of existence, 10—various evils to which it is subject enumerated, 17—the shortness of, 120—how to be valued, 122—length of, how to be computed, 122—the different stages of, 222
Light and darkness, described, 342
Lightning and thunder, described, 344
Lion, the, described, 350
Longinus, quoted, 339, n.
Lorenzo, advice to, 18, 59, 140, 236—address to, 54, 64, 290
Love and joy, the essence of heaven, 193
Lysander and Aspasia, their story, 129

M

- Macclesfield*, Lord, dedication to, 337
Man, the complicated nature of, 9—his littleness and greatness, 9—attached solely to this world, 11—his neglect of time, 36—places all pleasure in the gratification of his passions, 53—his unreasonable fears of death, 71—through redemption, superior to the angels, 84—the cause of his misery, 127—his birth and death, 146—his heart described, 170—of the world, described, 223—a melancholy but true picture of, 323
Martial, quoted, 353, n.
Men of the world, wherein they differ from the real Christian, 247
Milton, alluded to, 208
Ministers of God, a description of the, 288
Mists and dew, described, 343
Moon, for what end created, 290—her influence respecting the tides, 297
Morality, true, defined, 94
Mountains, creation of, described, 341

N

- Narcissa*, death and character of, 52

- Nature*, and man, compared, 156—the speech of, 322
Necessity, the doctrine of, disapproved, 206
Night, a fine description of, 7, 278, 283, 311, 344—its pre-eminence over day, 102, 283—a friend to religion, 286
Nobility, wealth, and fame, the vanity of, 73

O

- Obligations*, religious and moral, all rendered void on the plan of infidelity, 189
Ocean, a description of the, 220
Ostrich, the, described, 346

P

- Passions, and powers*, human, evince an immortality, 169
 —grandeur of the, 183—origin of the, 183
Patience and resignation, the pillars of human peace, 246
Patrick, Bishop, remarks of, on the Almighty's speech to Job, 339, n.
Peace and pleasure, from whence derived, 227
Peacock, the, described, 347
Philander, the effects his last sigh had upon the author, 17
 —his death elegantly described, 43
Pleasure, proves the existence of a future state, 181—what it is, 230—the love of, universally predominant, 231—the praise of, vindicated, 232—the origin of, 233—its purpose and end, 234—nature of, 234
Pleasures, various kinds of, pursued, 231, 234—prohibited by conscience, unnatural, 240
Pliny, quoted, 347, n., 349, n., 353, n.
Poetry and prose, their affinity, 101
Pope, Mr., panegyric on, 20—quoted, 317
Pope of Rome, infallibility of, alluded to, 186
Portland, duchess of, notices of, 50, n.
Praise, the love of, its effects, 179
Prayer, secret, what it is, 236—an asylum in trouble, 330
Preface, the author's, to the Night Thoughts, 3—to Night IV., 69—to Night VI., 133—to Night VII., 163
Pride, and pleasure, compared, 99—reconciled by wit, 99
Prince, the truly great, defined, 147
Pursuits of mankind, what are the, 217

Q

Questions, various, unresolvable, but on the supposition of an immortality, 185

R

- Rain and clouds*, described, 343
Reason, the boasted friends of, described, 94—and instinct, compared, 169—the slow growth of, an evidence of immortality, 169—peculiar to man, 211—lit up by God, and intended to increase for ever, 345
Redemption of man, descant on the, 80
Reem, the, described, 349
Reflection, the benefits of, 34
Religion, the blessings derived from, 87
Riches, of no avail in death, 128
Rivers and fields, described, 343
Ruin of man, from himself, 206

S

- Scale of beings*, 157
Scriptures, value of the, 208—why contemned by infidels, 238
Seas, creation of the, described, 342
Seasons, the, described, 156, 344—emblems of man, 156
Self-knowledge, the sum of wisdom, 86
Sense, distinguishes the brute from man, 211
Senses, extensive power of the, 148
Shame, the sensation of, for what purpose implanted in man, 177
Silence and darkness, sisters, 8
Similes :—
Aged, the, compared to damaged clocks, 118
Annihilation, to the fall of Lucifer, 187
Author, the, to a worm, 11—to a shipwrecked mariner, 73—to a shepherd, 73—to a traveller, 261
Christ, love of, to men, to that of Jacob for Joseph, 89—second coming of, to a comet, 92
Christian, to a ship at sea, 247
Cock, a, to the last trumpet, 23

Similes (continued).

- Creation*, to a net, 303—to a gem, 306
Death, to a harvest, 65—to an army, 135
Earth, the, to a map of man, 15
Eternity, to an ocean, 205
Friends, dying, to a cloud, 58—the loss of, to an engine of torture, 135
Friendship, to honey, 37
Future state, to the end of a drama, 146
God, to a builder, 286
Great, death of the, to the fall of an oak, 129
Happiness, to Vulcan, 244
Hope, to a cordial, 211
Joys, human, to the reflection of objects in the water, 130
Life, the good man's, to the moon, 62—to a brook, 111
 —to a battle, 117—to a stage, 146
Man, at the last hour of life, to a ship driven out to sea, 25—in his neglect of death, to Jehu, 120—to a spider, 142—to sheep, 168
Mankind, to navigators, 219
Men, to children, 26—to comedians, 72—old, to aged trees, 74—wicked, to serpents, 223
Night, to a widow in her weeds, 320
Prosperity, to the light of day, 108—to a comet, 126
Recollection, to a murderer, 13
Sickness, a dangerous, to the cast of a die, 136
Sorrow, to a plough, 107
Soul, a redeemed, to a prisoner released, 88
Souls of men, at the resurrection, to a swarm of bees, 195
Thoughts, to plants, 107—of the wicked, to a vessel at sea, 244
Time, to Samson, 334
Vice, to a pestilence, 244
World, the, to a small isle, 87—to a ship, 91—to a troubled sea, 219—to a book, 225—to a human figure, 225
Sinner, the hardened, his wretched state, 262
Skies, the, prove the being of a God, 281
Sky, the, not the habitation of God, 285—the effects of contemplating, 288
Sleep, a fine description of, 326
Snows and hails, described, 344

- Soldier*, peculiar hard fate of the, 14
Solitude, the advantages of, 49—the companion of safety, 104—what it is described, 104
Sorrow, the common lot of all mankind, 15—ennobles and degrades our nature, 16
Soul, the, a stranger here below, 112—the value of, 197—for what end created, 292
Speech, the advantage of, 37
Spirits, departed, their thoughts of men, 333
Starry heavens, benefits arising from a view of the, 284
Stars, instructive, 280—supposed to be suns, 284—how kept in their places, 296—prove the being of a God, 300—address to them, 300—their origin, 320—fixed, their immense distance from the earth, 306
Statesmen, the wiles of, 225
Station, high, described, 144
Statius, quoted, 352, *n.*
Storms and winds, described, 344
Subjects insisted on in the Night Thoughts, 101
Suicide, peculiar propensity of the English to, 112—the cause of, defined, 113—a picture of, 254
Superstition, the cruelty and popish bigotry of, displayed, 54

T

- Tears*, indulged, deserve shame, 53—their different sources, 114
Thought, of death, how beneficial, 59—a real evil, if the system of the infidel is adopted, 187—serious, the importance of, 256
Thoughts, the importance of guarding our, 26
Thuanus, quoted, 348, *n.*
Thunder, and lightning, described, 344—an effect of, in she-goats, 349, *n.*
Time, its value, 24—and eternity, the meeting of, 270—fine description of the end of, 270
Tombs, instruction derived from, 107
Truth, description of, 96

U

- Unbelief*, defined, 202
Understanding, the benefits and use of, 148

V

- Vice*, a definition of, 322
Vicious men, their enjoyments destitute of stability, 148
Virgil, quoted, 354, *n.*
Virtue, alone, can inspire us with confidence in death, 43
 —attended with what consequences, 61—lightens the evils of life, 62, 150—its durability, 145—a crime, if the doctrine of the future state is rejected, 189—suffers here below, 226

W

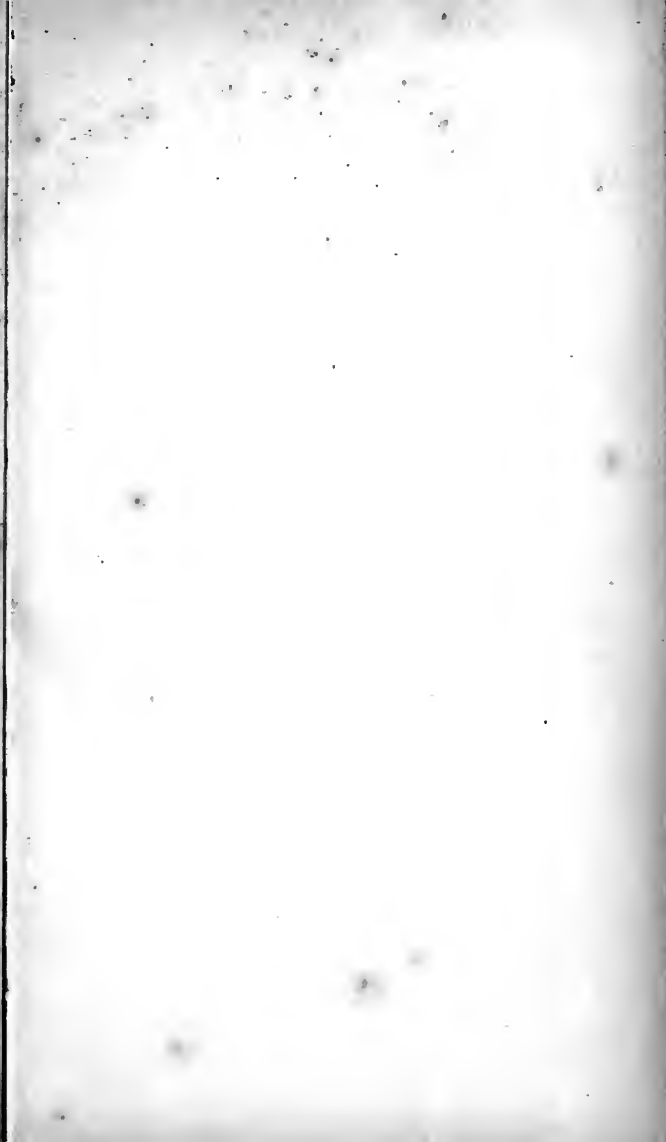
- Warnings*, the use of, 35
Wealth, the vanity of, 74—true, described, 148
Wesley, Rev. Charles, an imitator of Young in one of his hymns, 158, *n.*
Whirlwind, the, described, 343
Winds and storms, described, 344
Winter, as necessary and beneficial as the spring, 276
Wisdom, her admonitions, when most prevalent, 107—and folly, contrasted, 242—true, the operations and advantages of, 252
Wishes, proofs of immortality, 170
Wishing, the folly of, 73
Wit, a true description of, 251
Woes, usually assail us in clusters, 51
World, the, a point only in the creation, 100—this, defined, 216, 219—a man of the, described, 223—much knowledge of the, necessary to our safety, 253—the present, a grave, 264
Worth, true, described, 146

X

- Xenophon*, quoted, 347, *n.*

Y

- Young*, Lady Elizabeth, notices of, 136, *n.*, 255, *n.*





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