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OF
JOHN
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THE POEMS OF JOHN DYER

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JOHN DYER LL.D.



THE
POEMS OF
JOHN DYER

EDITED BY EDWARD
THOMAS, AUTHOR
OF "HORAE SOLI-
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INTRODUCTION

JOHN DYER, 1701-1757.

JOHN DYER was born at Aberglasney, a considerable house, in the parish of Llangathen, in Caermarthen-shire, in 1700 according to some, in 1701 according to others; more probably in 1701. The register which would have shown the date of his birth has been lost, and I can only learn that he was fifty-six years old when he died in 1757. He was the second son of a solicitor "of great reputation," and from father and mother had English blood. He was educated, first at a country school, then at Westminster School, under Dr Freind. Of his attainments we know nothing. It is likely that he painted and wrote verse at an early age; and he is said to have planned "Grongar Hill" when he was sixteen years old. Before he was ripe for a university, he was called from Westminster to his father's office. Having no taste for the law, he left it on his father's

death, soon afterwards. His taste for painting led him to become a pupil of Jonathan Richardson, in Lincoln's Inn Fields. Richardson's written work inspired Reynolds, but his teaching would not seem to have matured Dyer's capacity to anything beyond a skilled mediocrity. According to one of his own published letters, the youth, on leaving Richardson, became "an itinerant painter" in South Wales and the neighbouring counties of England. He must have paid visits to London about this time. Savage and Aaron Hill were among his friends. From an epistle by the former, it appears that, like his master, he painted portraits. His character, gentle, amiable, independent and unworldly, endeared him to those whom he met, if it did not attract the literary world.

Probably in 1724, he went, still as a painter, to Italy. He spent two years in Rome and Florence and other cities that were a matter of course. Like some of the next century's poets, whom he faintly but certainly foreshadowed, he was delighted by the riches of Nature, the Renaissance, the Middle Ages, and antiquity, which he saw. With a milder rapture than Shelley's, he was happy in sight of the Baths of Caracalla and the Coliseum. He is said to have been more successful with pen and ink sketches than with crayon and oils; but it may be conjectured that his work in colour and line had little but the indirect value of training his eye in a way that

afterwards served him as a poet of Nature. To "Clio"—probably the "Clio" whom he is known to have painted—he addressed some trifling "Verses from Rome"; Clio sent back a set of verses of equal merit.

1726, the year of his return to England, was a year of some literary activity for Dyer. It was the year of the publication of Thomson's "Winter." Savage's *Miscellany* of that date contained five pieces from Dyer's pen, viz.: "The Inquiry," an unimportant composition that proves his rural contentment; "To Aaron Hill," a complimentary epistle; "An Epistle to a Painter," *i.e.* to Richardson; "The Country Walk," and "Grongar Hill." As then published, "Grongar Hill" was not significant. In form "an irregular ode," divided into stanzas, it displayed some unattractive Pindarism and the antics of that day. "The Country Walk," the one wild flower of the collection, slender but unique, in manner suggested the turn which was given later to "Grongar Hill." He was again an itinerant painter.

In 1727, "Grongar Hill" appeared in its final shape. The revision had been happy, but somewhat imperfectly inspired. Thus the opening lines are negligent and vague, and "unhappy fate," etc., is indefensible. But when we consider the fitness of the metre, and the skilful presentation of a mood so uncommon in his day, breathing in the first lines,

and gracefully completed in the last, we must grant to the poem a very special claim. If we exclude consideration of the age in which it appeared, it has still a charm, if only for the small number of readers who care for all the poetry of Nature. As a product of 1727, it must be allowed that it adds to the strength of a necessary link in the chain of English literature that deals poetically with Nature. It has been praised in English and Welsh, and in the last century was paraphrased in Welsh. The manner of Dyer's work, and the combination of personal fancy with accurate observation, make him a closer relative to Wordsworth than his bulky rival Thomson, who was in many ways far more richly gifted. It is necessary to add, since it has been wrongly located, that Grongar is in Caermarthenshire, and in sight of Aberglasney.

It is obvious that Dyer must have been much out of doors. He probably knew South Wales intimately. He had a short, practical experience of agriculture, and a love of animals. At the same time he was not a hearty out-door philosopher. His health was always indifferent, and the Campagna had injured it. He seems to have had an amiable, constitutional melancholy, and must have known the angrier moods of that "sweet enemy"; for, in 1729, he is said to have written his epitaph. He called himself "old and sickly" in middle age; for many years in later

life he was deaf; yet remained true to the character which was given to him by Aaron Hill, who says,

"You look abroad serene
And marking both extremes, pass clear between."

After the publication of "Grongar Hill," he continued to write verse. Italy lived impressively in his memory. He probably took many notes during his tour, and certainly made a preparatory sketch of "The Ruins of Rome," which was published in its final shape in 1740. Portions of it have been praised by Johnson, Hervey, Wordsworth and others. It is, indeed, a dignified and impassioned meditation. Like "Grongar Hill," it hints at the ampler manner of the next century. In execution it is sometimes tame, and the poet here uses Miltonisms for the first time; but the conception, and some of the thoughts, might well remind us of Shelley. Here, again, Dyer is to be respected as an interesting link, though "The Ruins of Rome" appears less like a finished poem than a first draft by a powerful hand.

In 1740, or at about that time, he married a Miss Ensor; and failing health and, we may surmise, an aptitude of temperament, led him into the Church. He was presented by "one Mr Harper" to the living of Catthorpe in Leicestershire, in the following year. In 1751, he left Catthorpe for Belchford in Lincolnshire, to which he was appointed by Lord

Hardwicke, Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the recommendation of Daniel Wray, Deputy Teller; and in the same year, Sir John Heathcote presented him to the living of Coningsby in Lincolnshire, and in 1755 to Kirky-on-Bane in the same county, in place of Belchford. He became LL.B., Cantab., by royal mandate, in 1752.

Coningsby Rectory was then his home, which he left seldom and unwillingly. He was probably careful in the performance of his duties, preached fair sermons, and built part of the present rectory. He kept his registers with singular neatness. His poems are more or less clearly impressed by reminiscences of such writers as Spenser, Drayton, Milton, Gray, Appollonius Rhodius, Theocritus, Lucretius and Virgil; he quoted from Columella and Janus Vitalis, and in his leisure must have been mainly occupied with books. There seems to be no reason for believing that he understood Welsh. His letters do not lead us to suppose that he was often afield in his later years: he was unable to tell Duncombe when the swallows had appeared, but was "told they had been skimming about his garden this fortnight." Perhaps Lincolnshire was not altogether consoling to one who had known the Towy valley. His last work was full of reminiscences of Wales. At Coningsby, he was busy with his longest poem, "The Fleece." He composed laboriously; and Akenside, who was giving him medical advice,

helped him in the work. It is his biggest effort, and when we consider the subject, his greatest success. A very large proportion of dulness is to be expected from Dyer on wool; but it does not obscure the excellence of his design; even where his thought is rustic, the style is pure; in some places he is nearly grand; in many, felicitous. These isolated lines are characteristic of Dyer at his best:—

“ Or the tall growth of glossy-rinded beech,”
 “ No prickly brambles, white with woolly theft,”
 “ Rolling by ruins hoar of antient towns,”
 “ Long lay the mournful realms of elder fame
 In gloomy desolation. . . .”
 “ Nor what the peasant, near some lucid wave,
 Pactolus, Simois or Meander slow,
 Renowned in story, with his plough upturns.”

Wordsworth found parts of the poem “dry and heavy,” and parts superior to any writer in verse since Milton, for imagination and purity of style. It was praised, among Dyer’s contemporaries, by Dr James Grainger, a verse-writer in *The Monthly Review*, and by Gray.

I do not think it necessary to add much size and no light to this volume, by commenting on the numerous proper names of men and places in “The Fleece.” I have retained Dyer’s spelling—*e.g.*: “Mincoy” for “Minikoi”—almost as it was in the first edition. His abbreviations—as “ev’n” for

“even”—have been as carefully as possible preserved, as illustrating Dyer’s (and his century’s) preferences in rhythm. In Book I. the 72nd and 89th lines have been changed in accordance with Dyer’s directions to the printer. In former editions, these lines have been :—

“Or marl with clay deep mixed, be then thy choice,”

and

“At a meet distance from the upland ridge.”

These unimportant changes, and possibly others, had been suggested, as we learn from Duncombe’s correspondence, to Dodsley the publisher; but without effect, because the poet died of a consumptive malady in the year of publication, 15th December, 1757, “aged 56,” says the register at Coningsby. There he was buried and remains without memorial.

Postscript.—I thank Mr John Jenkins (“Gwili”), the Rev. Arthur Wright, Rector of Coningsby, and the Rev. J. Alex. Williams, Vicar of Llangathen, for their answers to my enquiries concerning the poet.

EDWARD THOMAS.

Note by the Publisher.

The portrait which appears as a frontispiece to this volume is taken from an Edition of Dyer’s Poems, bearing the date 1779. There is, however, some doubt as to its being an authentic likeness of the poet.

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TO THE POET, JOHN DYER

BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

Bard of the Fleece, whose skilful genius made
That work a living landscape fair and bright ;
Nor hallowed less with musical delight
Than those soft scenes through which thy childhood strayed,
Those southern tracts of Cambria, 'deep embayed,
With green hills fenced, with Ocean's murmur lulled';
Though hasty fame hath many a chaplet culled
For worthless brows, while in the pensive shade
Of cold neglect she leaves thy head ungraced,
Yet pure and powerful minds, hearts meek and still,
A grateful few, shall love thy modest lay,
Long as the shepherd's bleating flock shall stray
O'er naked Snowdon's wide aërial waste ;
Long as the thrush shall pipe on Grongar Hill !

GRONGAR HILL

SILENT Nymph ! with curious eye,
Who, the purple ev'ning, lie
On the mountain's lonely van,
Beyond the noise of busy man,
Painting fair the form of things, 5
While the yellow linnet sings,
Or the tuneful nightingale
Charms the forest with her tale ;
Come, with all thy various hues,
Come, and aid thy sister Muse ; 10
Now while Phœbus, riding high,
Gives lustre to the land and sky,
Grongar Hill invites my song ;
Draw the landscape bright and strong ;
Grongar in whose mossy cells, 15
Sweetly musing Quiet dwells ;
Grongar, in whose silent shade,
For the modest Muses made,
So oft I have, the ev'ning still,
At the fountain of a rill 20
Sat upon a flow'ry bed,
With my hand beneath my head,
While stray'd my eyes o'er Towy's flood,
Over mead and over wood,

From house to house, from hill to hill, 25
Till Contemplation had her fill.

About his chequer'd sides I wind,
And leave his brooks and meads behind,
And groves and grottoes where I lay, 30
And vistles shooting beams of day.

Wide and wider spreads the vale,
As circles on a smooth canal :
The mountains round, unhappy fate !
Sooner or later, of all height,
Withdraw their summits from the skies, 35
And lessen as the others rise :

Still the prospect wider spreads,
Adds a thousand woods and meads ;
Still it widens, widens still,
And sinks the newly-risen hill. 40

Now I gain the mountain's brow,
What a landskip lies below !
No clouds, no vapours intervene ;
But the gay, the open scene
Does the face of Nature show 45
In all the hues of heaven's bow,
And, swelling to embrace the light,
Spreads around beneath the sight.

Old castles on the cliffs arise,
Proudly tow'ring in the skies ; 50
Rushing from the woods, the spires
Seem from hence ascending fires ;
Half his beams Apollo sheds
On the yellow mountain-heads,
Gilds the fleeces of the flocks, 55
And glitters on the broken rocks.

Below me trees unnumber'd rise,
Beautiful in various dyes ;

The gloomy pine, the poplar blue,
The yellow beech, the sable yew, 60
The slender fir, that taper grows,
The sturdy oak with broad-spread boughs,
And beyond the purple grove,
Haunt of Phillis, queen of love!
Gaudy as the op'ning dawn, 65
Lies a long and level lawn,
On which a dark hill, steep and high,
Holds and charms the wand'ring eye :
Deep are his feet in Towy's flood,
His sides are cloath'd with waving wood, 70
And ancient towers crown his brow,
That cast an awful look below ;
Whose ragged walls the ivy creeps,
And with her arms from falling keeps ;
So both a safety from the wind 75
On mutual dependence find.

'Tis now the raven's bleak abode ;
'Tis now th' apartment of the toad ;
And there the fox securely feeds,
And there the pois'nous adder breeds, 80
Conceal'd in ruins, moss, and weeds ;
While, ever and anon, there falls
Huge heaps of hoary moulder'd walls.
Yet Time has seen, that lifts the low,
And level lays the lofty brow, 85
Has seen this broken pile compleat,
Big with the vanity of state :
But transient is the smile of Fate !
A little rule, a little sway,
A sunbeam in a winter's day, 90
Is all the proud and mighty have
Between the cradle and the grave.

And see the rivers how they run
 Thro' woods and meads, in shade and sun !
 Sometimes swift and sometimes slow, 95
 Wave succeeding wave, they go
 A various journey to the deep,
 Like human life to endless sleep :
 Thus is Nature's vesture wrought,
 To instruct our wand'ring thought ; 100
 Thus she dresses green and gay,
 'To disperse our cares away.

Ever charming, ever new,
 When will the landskip tire the view !
 'The fountain's fall, the river's flow, 105
 'The woody vallies warm and low ;
 'The windy summit, wild and high,
 Roughly rushing on the sky !
 The pleasant seat, the ruin'd tow'r,
 The naked rock, the shady bow'r ; 110
 The town and village, dome and farm,
 Each give each a double charm,
 As pearls upon an Ethiop's arm.

See on the mountain's southern side,
 Where the prospect opens wide, 115
 Where the ev'ning gilds the tide,
 How close and small the hedges lie !
 What streaks of meadows cross the eye !
 A step, methinks, may pass the stream,
 So little distant dangers seem ; 120
 So we mistake the future's face,
 Ey'd thro' Hope's deluding glass ;
 As yon summits soft and fair,
 Clad in colours of the air,
 Which, to those who journey near, 125
 Barren, brown, and rough appear ;

Still we tread the same coarse way ;
The present's still a cloudy day.

O may I with myself agree,
And never covet what I see ; 130
Content me with an humble shade,
My passions tam'd, my wishes laid ;
For while our wishes wildly roll,
We banish quiet from the soul ;
'Tis thus the busy beat the air, 135
And misers gather wealth and care.

Now, ev'n now, my joys run high,
As on the mountain-turf I lie ;
While the wanton Zephyr sings,
And in the vale perfumes his wings ; 140
While the waters murmur deep ;
While the shepherd charms his sheep ;
While the birds unbounded fly,
And with music fill the sky,
Now, ev'n now, my joys run high. 145

Be full, ye Courts ! be great who will ;
Search for Peace with all your skill :
Open wide the lofty door,
Seek her on the marble floor :
In vain ye search, she is not there ; 150
In vain ye search the domes of Care !
Grass and flowers Quiet treads,
On the meads and mountain-heads,
Along with pleasure close ally'd,
Ever by each other's side, 155
And often, by the mur'n'ring rill,
Hears the thrush, while all is still,
Within the groves of Grongar Hill.

THE COUNTRY WALK

THE morning's fair ; the lusty sun
With ruddy cheek begins to run,
And early birds, that wing the skies,
Sweetly sing to see him rise.

I am resolv'd, this charming day,
In the open field to stray,
And have no roof above my head,
But that whereon the gods do tread.

Before the yellow barn I see
A beautiful variety
Of strutting cocks, advancing stout,
And flirting empty chaff about :
Hens, ducks, and geese, and all their brood,
And turkeys gobbling for their food,
While rustics thrash the wealthy floor,
And tempt all to crowd the door.

What a fair face does Nature show !
Augusta ! wipe thy dusty brow ;
A landscape wide salutes my sight
Of shady vales and mountains bright ;
And azure heavens I behold,
And clouds of silver and of gold.
And now into the fields I go,
Where thousand flaming flowers glow,

And every neighb'ring hedge I greet, 25
With honey-suckles smelling sweet.

Now o'er the daisy-meads I stray,
And meet with, as I pace my way,
Sweetly shining on the eye,
A riv'let gliding smoothly by, 30

Which shows with what an easy tide
The moments of the happy glide :
Here, finding pleasure after pain,
Sleeping, I see a weary'd swain,
While his full scrip lies open by, 35
That does his healthy food supply.

Happy swain ! sure happier far
Than lofty kings and princes are !
Enjoy sweet sleep, which shuns the crown,
With all its easy beds of down. 40

The sun now shows his noon-tide blaze,
And sheds around me burning rays.
A little onward, and I go
Into the shade that groves bestow,
And on green moss I lay me down, 45
That o'er the root of oak has grown ;
Where all is silent, but some flood,
That sweetly murmurs in the wood ;
But birds that warble in the sprays,
And charm ev'n Silence with their lays. 50

Oh ! pow'rful Silence ! how you reign
In the poet's busy brain !
His num'rous thoughts obey the calls
Of the tuneful water-falls ;
Like moles, whene'er the coast is clear, 55
They rise before thee without fear,
And range in parties here and there.

Some wildly to Parnassus wing,
And view the fair Castalian spring,

Where they behold a lonely well 60
 Where now no tuneful Muses dwell,
 But now and then a slavish hind
 Paddling the troubled pool they find.

Some trace the pleasing paths of joy,
 Others the blissful scene destroy, 65
 In thorny tracks of sorrow stray,
 And pine for Clio far away.

But stay—Methinks her lays I hear,
 So smooth ! so sweet ! so deep ! so clear !
 No, it is not her voice I find ; 70
 'Tis but the echo stays behind.

Some meditate Ambition's brow,
 And the black gulf that gapes below ;
 Some peep in courts, and there they see
 The sneaking tribe of Flattery : 75

But, striking to the ear and eye,
 A nimble deer comes bounding by !
 When rushing from yon rustling spray
 It made them vanish all away.

I rouse me up, and on I rove ; 80
 'Tis more than time to leave the grove.

The sun declines, the evening breeze
 Begins to whisper thro' the trees ;
 And as I leave the sylvan gloom,
 As to the glare of day I come, 85

An old man's smoky nest I see
 Leaning on an aged tree,
 Whose willow walls, and furzy brow,
 A little garden sway below :

'Thro' spreading beds of blooming green, 90
 Matted with herbage sweet and clean,
 A vein of water limps along,
 And makes them ever green and young.

Here he puffs upon his spade,
 And digs up cabbage in the shade : 95
 His tatter'd rags are sable brown,
 His beard and hair are hoary grown ;
 The dying sap descends apace,
 And leaves a wither'd hand and face.

Up Grongar Hill I labour now, 100
 And catch at last his bushy brow.
 Oh ! how fresh, how pure, the air !
 Let me breathe a little here.
 Where am I, Nature ? I descry
 Thy magazine before me lie. 105
 Temples !—and towns !—and towers !—and woods !—
 And hills !—and vales !—and fields !—and floods !
 Crowding before me, edg'd around
 With naked wilds and barren ground.

See, below, the pleasant dome, 110
 The poet's pride, the poet's home,
 Which the sunbeams shine upon
 To the even from the dawn.
 See her woods, where Echo talks,
 Her gardens trim, her terrace walks, 115
 Her wildernesses, fragrant brakes,
 Her gloomy bow'rs and shining lakes.
 Keep, ye Gods ! this humble seat
 For ever pleasant, private, neat.

See yonder hill, uprising steep, 120
 Above the river slow and deep ;
 It looks from hence a pyramid,
 Beneath a verdant forest hid ;
 On whose high top there rises great
 The mighty remnant of a seat, 125
 An old green tow'r, whose batter'd brow
 Frowns upon the vale below.

Look upon that flow'ry plain,
 How the sheep surround their swain,
 How they crowd to hear his strain ! 130
 All careless with his legs across,
 Leaning on a bank of moss,
 He spends his empty hours at play,
 Which fly as light as down away.

And there behold a bloomy mead, 135
 A silver stream, a willow shade,
 Beneath the shade a fisher stand,
 Who, with the angle in his hand,
 Swings the nibbling fry to land.

In blushes the descending sun 140
 Kisses the streams, while slow they run ;
 And yonder hill remoter grows,
 Or dusky clouds do interpose.

The fields are left, the labouring hind
 His weary oxen does unbind ; 145
 And vocal mountains, as they low,
 Re-echo to the vales below ;

The jocund shepherds piping come,
 And drive the herd before them home ;
 And now begin to light their fires, 150
 Which send up smoke in curling spires ;
 While with light hearts all homeward tend,
 To Aberglasney I descend.

But, oh ! how bless'd would be the day
 Did I with Clio pace my way, 155
 And not alone and solitary stray.

AN EPISTLE

TO A FRIEND IN TOWN.

HAVE my friends in the town, in the gay busy town,
Forgot such a man as John Dyer?
Or heedless despise they, or pity the clown,
Whose bosom no pageantries fire?

No matter, no matter—content in the shades— 5
(Contented!—why everything charms me)
Fall in tunes all adown the green steep, ye cascades!
Till hence rigid virtue alarms me:

Till outrage arises, or misery needs
The swift, the intrepid avenger; 10
Till sacred religion or liberty bleeds,
Then mine be the deed and the danger.

Alas! what a folly, that wealth and domain
We heap up in sin and in sorrow!
Immense is the toil, yet the labour how vain! 15
Is not life to be over to-morrow,

Then glide on my moments, the few that I have,
Smooth-shaded, and quiet, and even,
While gently the body descends to the grave,
And the spirit arises to heaven.

TO AURELIA

SEE, the flowery Spring is blown,
Let us leave the smoky Town :
From the Mall, and from the Ring,
Every one has taken wing ;
Cloe, Strephon, Corydon, 5
To the meadows all are gone ;
What is left you worth your stay ?
Come, Aurelia, come away.

Come, Aurelia, come and see
What a lodge I've dress'd for thee ; 10
But the seat you cannot see,
'Tis so hid with jessamy,
With the vine that o'er the walls,
And in every window, crawls ;
Let us there be blithe and gay ! 15
Come, Aurelia, come away.

Come with all thy sweetest wiles,
With thy graces and thy smiles ;
Come, and we will merry be,
Who shall be so blest as we ? 20
We will frolic all the day,
Haste, Aurelia, while we may :
Ay ! and should not life be gay ?
Yes, Aurelia—come away.

THE RUINS OF ROME

“Aspice murorum moles, præruptaque saxa,
Obrutaque horrenti vasta theatra situ :
Hæc sunt Roma. Viden’ velut ipsa cadavera tantæ
Urbis adhuc spirent imperiosa minas?”—JANUS VITALIS.

[“Look at all the walls, the stones dislodged, the vast theatres brought low by the power of decay. That is Rome. And do you see how the very corpse of such a city is still imperial and seems to offer menaces?”]

ENOUGH of Grongar, and the shady dales
Of winding Towy, Merlin’s fabled haunt,
I sung inglorious. Now the love of arts,
And what in metal or in stone remains
Of proud Antiquity, thro’ various realms 5
And various languages and ages fam’d,
Bears me remote o’er Gallia’s woody bounds,
O’er the cloud-piercing Alps remote, beyond
The vale of Arno, purpled with the vine,
Beyond the Umbrian and Etruscan hills, 10
To Latium’s wide champaign, forlorn and waste,
Where yellow Tiber his neglected wave
Mournfully rolls. Yet once again, my Muse !
Yet once again, and soar a loftier flight ;
Lo ! the resistless theme, imperial Rome. 15
Fall’n, fall’n, a silent heap ! her heroes all
Sunk in their urns ; behold the pride of pomp,

The throne of nations, fall'n ! obscur'd in dust ;
 Ev'n yet majestic : the solemn scene
 Elates the soul, while now the rising sun 20
 Flames on the ruins in the purer air
 Tow'ring aloft upon the glittering plain,
 Like broken rocks, a vast circumference !
 Rent palaces, crush'd columns, rifled moles,
 Fanés roll'd on fanés, and tombs on bury'd tombs ! 25
 Deep lies in dust the Theban obelisk
 Immense along the waste ; minuter art,
 Gliconian forms, or Phidian, subtly fair,
 O'erwhelming ; as th' immense leviathan
 The finny brood, when near Ierne's shore 30
 Outstretch'd, unwieldy, his island length appears
 Above the foamy flood. Globose and huge,
 Gray-mouldering temples swell, and wide o'er cast
 The solitary landscape, hills and woods,
 And boundless wilds ; while the vine-mantled brows 35
 The pendent goats unveil, regardless they
 Of hourly peril, tho' the clefted domes
 Tremble to every wind. The pilgrim oft,
 At dead of night, 'mid his oraison hears
 Aghast the voice of Time, disparting tow'rs, 40
 Tumbling all precipitate down-dash'd,
 Rattling around, loud thund'ring to the moon ;
 While murmurs soothe each awful interval
 Of ever-falling waters ; shrouded Nile,
 Eridanus, and Tiber with his twins, 45
 And palmy Euphrates : they with dropping locks
 Hang o'er their urns, and mournfully among
 The plaintive echoing ruins pour their streams.
 Yet here, advent'rous in the sacred search
 Of ancient arts, the delicate of mind, 50
 Curious and modest, from all climes resort,
 Grateful society ! with these I raise

The toilsome step up the proud Palatin,
 Thro' spiry cypress groves, and tow'ring pine,
 Waving aloft o'er the big ruin's brows, 55
 On num'rous arches rear'd ; and, frequent stopp'd,
 The sunk ground startles me with dreadful chasm,
 Breathing forth darkness from the vast profound
 Of aisles and halls within the mountain's womb.
 Nor these the nether works ; all these beneath, 60
 And all beneath the vales and hills around,
 Extend the cavern'd sewers, massy, firm,
 As the Sibylline grot beside the dead
 Lake of Avernus ; such the sewers huge,
 Whither the great Tarquinian genius dooms 65
 Each wave impure ; and proud with added rains,
 Hark how the mighty billows lash their vaults,
 And thunder ! how they heave their rocks in vain !
 Tho' now incessant time has roll'd around
 A thousand winters o'er the changeful world, 70
 And yet a thousand since, th' indignant floods
 Roar loud in their firm bounds, and dash and swell
 In vain, convey'd to Tiber's lowest wave.

Hence over airy plains, by crystal founts,
 That weave their glitt'ring wave with tuneful lapse 75
 Among the sleeky pebbles, agate clear,
 Cerulean ophite, and the flow'ry vein
 Of orient jasper, pleas'd I move along,
 And vases boss'd, and huge inscriptive stones,
 And intermingling vines, and figur'd nymphs, 80
 Floras and Chloes of delicious mould,
 Cheering the darkness ; and deep empty tombs,
 And dells, and mould'ring shrines, with old decay
 Rustic and green, and wide-embow'ring shades,
 Shot from the crooked clefts of nodding tow'rs ; 85
 A solemn wlderness ! with error sweet
 I wind the lingering step, where'er the path

Mazy conducts me, which the vulgar foot
 O'er sculptures maim'd has made ; Anubis, Sphinx,
 Idols of antique guise, and horned Pan, 90
 Terrific, monstrous shapes ! prepost'rous gods
 Of fear and ignorance, by the sculptor's hand
 Hewn into form, and worshipp'd ; as ev'n now
 Blindly they worship at their breathless mouths
 In varied appellations : men to these 95
 (From depth to depth in dark'ning error fall'n)
 At length ascrib'd th' Inapplicable Name.

How doth it please and fill the memory
 With deeds of brave renown, while on each hand
 Historic urns and breathing statues rise, 100
 And speaking busts ! Sweet Scipio, Marius stern,
 Pompey superb, the spirit-stirring form
 Of Caesar, raptur'd with the charm of rule
 And boundless fame ; impatient for exploits,
 His eager eyes upcast, he soars in thought 105
 Above all height : and his own Brutus see,
 Desponding Brutus ! dubious of the right,
 In evil days of faith, of public weal,
 Solicitous and sad. Thy next regard
 Be Tully's graceful attitude ; uprais'd, 110
 His outstretch'd arm he waves, in act to speak
 Before the silent masters of the world,
 And eloquence arrays him. There behold,
 Prepar'd for combat in the front of war,
 The pious brothers ; jealous Alba stands 115
 In fearful expectation of the strife,
 And youthful Rome intent : the kindred foes
 Fall on each other's neck in silent tears ;
 In sorrowful benevolence embrace—
 Howe'er they soon unsheath the flashing sword 120
 Their country calls to arms ; now all in vain
 The mother clasps the knee, and ev'n the fair

Now weeps in vain ; their country calls to arms.
 Such virtue Clelia, Cocles, Manlius, rous'd ;
 Such were the Fabii, Decii ; so inspir'd 125
 The Scipios battled, and the Gracchi spoke :
 So rose the Roman state. Me now, of these
 Deep musing, high ambitious thoughts inflame
 Greatly to serve my country, distant land,
 And build me virtuous fame ; nor shall the dust 130
 Of these fall'n piles with show of sad decay
 Avert the good resolve, mean argument,
 The fate alone of matter. Now the brow
 We gain enraptur'd ; beauteously distinct
 The num'rous porticoes and domes upswell, 135
 With obelisks and columns interpos'd,
 And pine, and fir, and oak ; so fair a scene
 Sees not the dervise from the spiral tomb
 Of ancient Chammos, while his eye beholds
 Proud Memphis' relics o'er th' Egyptian plain ; 140
 Nor hoary hermit from Hymettus' brow,
 Tho' graceful Athens in the vale beneath.
 Along the windings of the Muse's stream,
 Lucid Ilyssus weeps her silent schools
 And groves, unvisited by bard or sage. 145
 Amid the tow'ry ruins, huge, supreme,
 Th' enormous amphitheatre behold,
 Mountainous pile ! o'er whose capacious womb
 Pours the broad firmament its vary'd light,
 While from the central floor the seats ascend 150
 Round above round, slow wid'ning to the verge,
 A circuit vast and high ; nor less had held
 Imperial Rome and her attendant realms,
 When, drunk with rule, she will'd the fierce delight,
 And op'd the gloomy caverns, whence out rush'd, 155
 Before th' innumerable shouting crowd,
 The fiery madd'd tyrants of the wilds,

Lions and tigers, wolves and elephants,
 And desp'rate men, more fell. Abhorr'd intent!
 By frequent converse with familiar death 160
 To kindle brutal daring apt for war;
 To lock the breast, and steel th' obdurate heart,
 Amid the piercing cries of sore distress
 Impenetrable.—But away thine eye!
 Behold yon' steepy cliff; the modern pile 165
 Perchance may now delight, while that rever'd
 In ancient days the page alone declares,
 Or narrow coin thro' dim cerulean rust.
 The fane was Jove's, its spacious golden roof,
 O'er thick-surrounding temples beaming wide, 170
 Appear'd, as when above the morning hills
 Half the round sun ascends, and tower'd aloft,
 Sustain'd by columns huge, innumeros
 As cedars proud on Canaan's verdant heights
 Dark'ning their idols, when Astarte lur'd 175
 Too-prosp'rous Israel from his living Strength.

And next regard yon' venerable dome
 Which virtuous Latium, with erroneous aim,
 Rais'd to her various deities, and nam'd
 Pantheon; plain and round, of this our world 180
 Majestic emblem; with peculiar grace
 Before its ample orb projected stands
 The many-pillar'd portal; noblest work
 Of human skill! Here, curious Architect,
 If thou essay'st, ambitious, to surpass 185
 Palladius, Angelus, or British Jones,
 On these fair walls extend the certain scale,
 And turn th' instructive compass: careful mark
 How far in hidden art the noble plan
 Extends, and where the lovely forms commence 190
 Of flowing sculpture; nor neglect to note
 How range the taper columns, and what weight

Their leafy brows sustain ; fair Corinth first
 Boasted their order, which Callimachus
 (Reclining studious on Asopus' banks 195
 Beneath an urn of some lamented nymph)
 Haply compos'd ; the urn with foliage curl'd
 Thinly conceal'd the chapter inform'd.

See the tall obelisks from Memphis old,
 One stone enormous each, or Thebes, convey'd ; 200
 Like Albion's spires they rush into the skies :
 And there the temple where the summon'd state
 In deep of night conven'd ; ev'n yet methinks
 The veh'ment orator in rent attire
 Persuasion pours ; Ambition sinks her crest ; 205
 And, lo ! the villain, like a troubled sea,
 That tosses up her mire ! Ever disguis'd
 Shall Treason walk ? shall proud Oppression yoke
 The neck of Virtue ? Lo ! the wretch abash'd,
 Self-betray'd Catiline ! O Liberty ! 210
 Parent of happiness, celestial born ;
 When the first man became a living soul
 His sacred genius thou : be Britain's care ;
 With her secure prolong thy lov'd retreat ;
 Thence bless mankind ; while yet among her sons, 215
 Ev'n yet there are, to shield thine equal laws,
 Whose bosoms kindle at the sacred names
 Of Cecil, Raleigh, Walsingham, and Drake.
 May others more delight in tuneful airs,
 In mask and dance excel ; to sculptur'd stone 220
 Give with superior skill the living look ;
 More pompous piles erect, or pencil soft
 With warmer touch the visionary board :
 But thou thy nobler Britons teach to rule,
 To check the ravage of tyrannic sway, 225
 To quell the proud, to spread the joys of peace,
 And various blessings of ingenious trade.

Be these our arts ; and ever may we guard,
 Ever defend, thee with undaunted heart.
 Inestimable good ! who giv'st us Truth, 230
 Whose hand upleads to light, divinest Truth !
 Array'd in ev'ry charm ; whose hand benign
 Teaches unwear'd Toil to clothe the fields,
 And on his various fruits inscribes the name
 Of Property : O nobly hail'd of old 235
 By thy majestic daughters, Judah fair,
 And Tyrus and Sidonia, lovely nymphs,
 And Libya bright, and all-enchancing Greece,
 Whose num'rous towns, and isles, and peopled seas,
 Rejoic'd around her lyre ; th' heroic note 240
 (Smit with sublime delight) Ausonia caught,
 And plann'd imperial Rome. Thy hand benign
 Rear'd up her tow'ry battlements in strength,
 Bent her wide bridges o'er the swelling stream
 Of Tuscan Tiber ; thine those solemn domes 245
 Devoted to the voice of humbler pray'r ;
 And thine those piles undeck'd, capacious, vast,
 In days of dearth, where tender Charity
 Dispens'd her timely succours to the poor.
 Thine, too, those musically-falling founts, 250
 To slake the clammy lip ; adown they fall,
 Musical ever, while from yon' blue hills,
 Dim in the clouds, the radiant aqueducts
 Turn their innumerable arches o'er
 The spacious desert, bright'ning in the sun, 255
 Proud and more proud in their august approach :
 High o'er irriguous vales, and woods, and towns,
 Glide the soft-whisp'ring waters in the wind,
 And, here united, pour their silver streams
 Among the figur'd rocks, in murm'ring falls, 260
 Musical ever. These thy beauteous works ;
 And what beside felicity could tell

Of human benefit : more late the rest ;
 At various times their turrets chanc'd to rise,
 When impious Tyranny vouchsaf'd to smile. 265
 Behold by Tiber's flood, where modern Rome
 Couches beneath the ruins ; there of old
 With arms and trophies gleam'd the Field of Mars :
 There to their daily sports the noble youth
 Rush'd emulous, to fling the pointed lance, 270
 To vault the steed, or with the kindling wheel
 In dusty whirlwinds sweep the trembling goal ;
 Or, wrestling, cope, with adverse swelling breasts,
 Strong grappling arms, close heads, and distant feet ;
 Or clash the lifted gauntlets : there they form'd 275
 Their ardent virtues : in the bossy piles,
 The proud triumphal arches, all their wars,
 Their conquests, honours, in the sculptures live.
 And see from ev'ry gate those ancient roads,
 With tombs high verg'd, the solemn paths of Fame ! 280
 Deserve they not regard ? o'er whose broad flints
 Such crowds have roll'd, so many storms of war,
 So many pomps, so many wond'ring realms :
 Yet still thro' mountains pierc'd, o'er vallies rais'd,
 In even state to distant seas around 285
 They stretch their pavements. Lo ! the fane of Peace
 Built by that prince who to the trust of pow'r
 Was honest, the delight of human-kind.
 Three nodding aisles remain, the rest an heap
 Of sand and weeds ; her shrines, her radiant roof 290
 And columns proud, that from her spacious floor,
 As from a shining sea, majestic rose
 An hundred foot aloft, like stately beech .
 Around the brim of Dion's glassy lake,
 Charming the mimic painter : on the walls 295
 Hung Salem's sacred spoils ; the golden board
 And golden trumpets, now conceal'd, entomb'd

By the sunk roof.—O'er which, in distant view,
 Th' Etruscan mountains swell, with ruins crown'd
 Of ancient towns ; and blue Soracte spires, 300
 Wrapping his sides in tempests. Eastward hence,
 Nigh where the Cestian pyramid divides
 The mould'ring wall, behold yon' fabric huge,
 Whose dust the solemn antiquarian turns,
 And thence, in broken sculptures cast abroad, 305
 Like Sibyl's leaves, collects the builder's name
 Rejoic'd, and the green medals frequent found
 Doom Caracalla to perpetual fame :
 The stately pines, that spread their branches wide
 In the dun ruins of its ample halls, 310
 Appear but tufts, as may whate'er is high
 Sink in comparison, minute and vile.

These and unnumber'd, yet their brows uplift,
 Rent of their graces ; as Britannia's oaks
 On Merlin's mount, or Snowden's rugged sides, 315
 Stand in the clouds, their branches scatter'd round
 After the tempest ; Mausoleums, Cirques,
 Naumachios, Forums ; Trajan's column tall,
 From whose low base the sculptures wind aloft,
 And lead thro' various toils up the rough steep 320
 Its hero to the skies ; and his dark tow'r
 Whose execrable hand the City fir'd,
 And while the dreadful conflagration blaz'd
 Play'd to the flames ; and Phœbus' letter'd dome ;
 And the rough relics of Carinæ's street, 325
 Where now the shepherd to his nibbling sheep
 Sits piping with his oaten reed, as erst
 There pip'd the shepherd to his nibbling sheep,
 When th' humble roof Anchises' son explor'd
 Of good Evander, wealth-despising king ! 330
 Amid the thickets : so revolves the scene ;
 So Time ordains, who rolls the things of pride

From dust again to dust. Behold that heap
 Of mould'ring urns (their ashes blown away,
 Dust of the mighty !) the same story tell ; 335
 And at its base, from whence the serpent glides
 Down the green desert street, yon' hoary monk
 Laments the same, the vision as he views,
 The solitary, silent, solemn scene,
 Where Cæsars, heroes, peasants, hermits, lie 340
 Blended in dust together ; where the slave
 Rests from his labours ; where th' insulting proud
 Resigns his pow'r ; the miser drops his hoard ;
 Where human folly sleeps.—There is a mood
 (I sing not to the vacant and the young), 345
 There is a kindly mood of melancholy
 That wings the soul, and points her to the skies :
 When tribulation clothes the child of man,
 When age descends with sorrow to the grave,
 'Tis sweetly-soothing sympathy to pain, 350
 A gently-wak'ning call to health and ease.
 How musical ! when all-devouring Time,
 Here sitting on his throne of ruins hoar,
 While winds and tempests sweep his various lyre,
 How sweet thy diapason, Melancholy ! 355
 Cool ev'ning comes ; the setting sun displays
 His visible great round between yon tow'rs,
 As thro' two shady cliffs : away, my Muse !
 Tho' yet the prospect pleases, ever new
 In vast variety, and yet delight 360
 The many-figur'd sculptures of the path
 Half beauteous, half effac'd ; the traveller
 Such antique marbles to his native land
 Oft hence conveys ; and ev'ry realm and state
 With Rome's august remains, heroes and gods, 365
 Deck their long galleries and winding groves ;
 Yet miss we not th' innumerable thefts ;

Yet still profuse of graces teems the waste.

Suffice it now th' Esquilian Mount to reach
With weary wing, and seek the sacred rests 370
Of Maro's humble tenement. A low
Plain wall remains ; a little sun-gilt heap,
Grotesque and wild : the gourd and olive brown
Weave the light roof ; the gourd and olive fan
Their am'rous foliage, mingling with the vine, 375
Who drops her purple clusters thro' the green.
Here let me lie, with pleasing fancy sooth'd :
Here flow'd his fountain, here his laurels grew ;
Here oft the meek good man, the lofty bard,
Fram'd the celestial song, or social walk'd 380
With Horace and the ruler of the world :
Happy Augustus ! who so well inspir'd
Could'st throw thy pomps and royalties aside,
Attentive to the wise, the great of soul,
And dignify thy mind. Thrice glorious days, 385
Auspicious to the Muses ! then rever'd,
Then hallow'd was the fount, or secret shade,
Or open mountain, or whatever scene
The poet chose to tune th' ennobling rhyme
Melodious ; ev'n the rugged sons of War, 390
Ev'n the rude hinds, rever'd the poet's name :
But now—another age, alas ! is ours—
Yet will the Muse a little longer soar,
Unless the clouds of care weigh down her wing
Since Nature's stores are shut with cruel hand, 395
And each aggrieves his brother ; since in vain
The thirsty pilgrim at the fountain asks
Th' o'erflowing wave—Enough—the plaint disdain.

Seest thou yon fane ? ev'n now incessant time
Sweeps her low mould'ring marbles to the dust ; 400
And Phœbus' temple, nodding with its woods,
Threatens huge ruin o'er the small rotund.

'Twas there, beneath a fig-tree's umbrage broad,
 Th' astonish'd swains with rev'rend awe beheld
 Thee, O Quirinus! and thy brother twin, 405
 Pressing the teat within a monster's grasp
 Sportive, while oft the gaunt and rugged wolf
 Turn'd her stretch'd neck, and form'd your tender
 limbs :

So taught of Jove, ev'n the fell savage fed
 Your sacred infancies ; your virtues, toils, 410
 The conquests, glories, of th' Ausonian state,
 Wrapp'd in their secret seeds. Each kindred soul,
 Robust and stout, ye grapple to your hearts,
 And little Rome appears. Her cots arise,
 Green twigs of osier weave the slender walls, 415
 Green rushes spread the roofs ; and here and there
 Opens beneath the rock the gloomy cave.
 Elate with joy, Etruscan Tiber views
 Her spreading scenes enamelling his waves,
 Her huts and hollow dells, and flocks and herds, 420
 And gath'ring swains, and rolls his yellow car
 To Neptune's court with more majestic train.

Her speedy growth alarm'd the states around,
 Jealous ; yet soon, by wondrous virtue won,
 They sink into her bosom. From the plough 425
 Rose her dictators ; fought, o'ercame, return'd ;
 Yes, to the plough return'd, and hail'd their peers !
 For then no private pomp, no household state,
 The public only swell'd the gen'rous breast.
 Who has not heard the Fabian heroes sung ? 430
 Dentatus' scars, or Mutius' flaming hand ?
 How Manlius sav'd the Capitol ? the choice
 Of steady Regulus ? As yet they stood,
 Simple of life ; as yet seducing wealth
 Was unexplor'd, and shame of poverty 435
 Yet unimagin'd—Shine not all the fields

With various fruitage? murmur not the brooks
 Along the flow'ry vallies? they, content,
 Feasted at Nature's hand, indelicate,
 Blithe, in their easy taste, and only sought 440
 To know their duties; that their only strife,
 Their gen'rous strife, and greatly to perform.
 They thro' all shapes of peril and of pain,
 Intent on honour, dar'd in thickest death
 To snatch the glorious deed. Nor Trebia quell'd, 445
 Nor Thrasymene, nor Cannæ's bloody field,
 Their dauntless courage: storming Hannibal
 In vain the thunder of the battle roll'd;
 The thunder of the battle they return'd
 Back on his Punic shores, till Carthage fell, 450
 And danger fled afar. The City gleam'd
 With precious spoils: alas, prosperity!
 Ah, baneful state! yet ebb'd not all their strength
 In soft luxurious pleasures; proud desire
 Of boundless sway, and feverish thirst of gold, 455
 Rouz'd them again to battle. Beauteous Greec,
 Torn from her joys, in vain with languid arm
 Half rais'd her rusty shield; nor could avail
 The sword of Dacia, nor the Parthian dart,
 Nor yet the car of that fam'd British chief 460
 Which sev'n brave years beneath the doubtful wing
 Of vict'ry dreadful roll'd its grinding wheels
 Over the bloody war: the Roman arms
 Triumph'd till Fame was silent of their foes.
 And now the world unrivall'd they enjoy'd 465
 In proud security: the crested helm,
 The plated greave and corselet, hung unbrac'd;
 Nor clank'd their arms, the spear and sounding shield,
 But on the glitt'ring trophy to the wind.
 Dissolv'd in ease and soft delights they lie, 470
 Till ev'ry sun annoys, and ev'ry wind

Has chilling force, and ev'ry rain offends ;
 For now the frame no more is girt with strength
 Masculine, nor in lustiness of heart
 Laughs at the winter-storm and summer-beam, 475
 Superior to their rage : enfeebling vice
 Withers each nerve, and opens ev'ry pore
 To painful feeling : flow'ry bow'rs they seek,
 (As ether prompts, as the sick sense approves)
 Or cool nymphan grotts, or tepid baths ; 480
 (Taught by the soft Ionians) they along
 The lawny vale, of ev'ry beauteous stone,
 Pile in the roseat air with fond expense :
 Thro' silver channels glide the vagrant waves,
 And fall on silver beds crystalline down, 485
 Melodious murmuring ; while Luxury
 Over their naked limbs, with wanton hand,
 Sheds roses, odours, sheds unheeded bane.
 Swift is the flight of wealth ; unnumber'd wants,
 Brood of Voluptuousness, cry out aloud 490
 Necessity, and seek the splendid bribe.
 The citron board, the bowl emboss'd with gems,
 And tender foliage wildly wreath'd around
 Of seeming ivy, by that artful hand,
 Corinthian Thericles ; whate'er is known 495
 Of rarest acquisition ; Tyrian garbs,
 Neptunian Albion's high testaceous food,
 And flavour'd Chian wines, with incense fum'd,
 To slake Patrician thirst : for these their rights
 In the vile streets they prostitute to sale ; 500
 Their ancient rights, their dignities, their laws,
 Their native glorious freedom. Is there none,
 Is there no villain, that will bind the neck
 Stretch'd to the yoke? They come; the market
 throngs.
 But who has most by fraud or force amass'd? 505

Who most can charm Corruption with his doles?
 He be the monarch of the state; and, lo!
 Didius, vile usurer! thro' the crowd he mounts,
 Beneath his feet the Roman Eagle cowers,
 And the red arrows fill his grasp uncouth. 510
 O Britons! O my countrymen! beware;
 Gird, gird your hearts: the Romans once were free,
 Were brave, were virtuous.—Tyranny howe'er
 Deign'd to walk forth a while in pageant state,
 And with licentious pleasures fed the rout, 515
 The thoughtless many: to the wanton sound
 Of fifes and drums they danc'd, or in the shade
 Sung Cæsar, great and terrible in war;
 Immortal Cæsar! Lo! a god, a god!
 He cleaves the yielding skies. Cæsar meanwhile 520
 Gathers the ocean pebbles, or the gnat
 Enrag'd pursues; or at his lonely meal
 Starves a wide province; tastes, dislikes, and flings
 To dogs and sycophants. A god, a god!
 The flow'ry shades and shrines obscene return. 525
 But see along the North the tempest swell
 O'er the rough Alps, and darken all their snows!
 Sudden the Goth and Vandal, dreaded names,
 Rush as the breach of waters, whelming all
 Their domes, their villas; down the festive piles, 530
 Down fall their Parian porches, gilded baths,
 And roll before the storm in clouds of dust.
 Vain end of human strength, of human skill,
 Conquest, and triumph, and domain, and pomp,
 And ease, and luxury! O Luxury! 535
 Bane of elated life, of affluent states,
 What dreary change, what ruin, is not thine?
 How doth thy bowl intoxicate the mind!
 To the soft entrance of thy rosy cave
 How dost thou lure the fortunate and great! 540

Dreadful attraction ! while behind thee gapes
Th' unfathomable gulf where Ashur lies
O'erwhelm'd, forgotten, and high-boasting Cham,
And Elam's haughty pomp, and beauteous Greece,
And the great queen of earth, imperial Rome ! 545

THE FLEECE

IN FOUR BOOKS

“Post majores quadrupedes ovilli pecoris secunda ratio est, quæ prima sit, si ad utilitatis magnitudinem referas: nam id præcipue nos contra frigoris violentiam protegit, corporibusque nostris liberaliora præbet velamina.”

—COLUMELIA.

[“After the larger animals, our concern is with sheep, which would come first, if extent of usefulness were considered; for they furnish us with excellent clothes, and before all others protect us from the cold.”]

BOOK I

THE care of sheep, the labours of the loom,
And arts of trade, I sing. Ye rural Nymphs!
Ye Swains, and princely Merchants! aid the verse.
And ye, high-trusted Guardians of our Isle
Whom public voice approves, or lot of birth, 5
To the great charge assigns! ye Good of all
Degrees, all sects! be present to my song.
So may distress, and wretchedness, and want,
The wide felicities of labour learn:
So may the proud attempts of restless Gaul 10
From our strong borders, like a broken wave,
In empty foam retire. But chiefly Thou,
The people's Shepherd, eminently plac'd

Over the numerous swains of every vale,
 With well-permitted power and watchful eye 15
 On each gay field to shed beneficence,
 Celestial office ! Thou protect the song.

On spacious airy downs and gentle hills,
 With grass and thyme o'erspread, and clover wild,
 Where smiling Phœbus tempers ev'ry breeze, 20
 The fairest flocks rejoice : they nor of halt,
 Hydropic tumours, nor of rot, complain,
 Evils deform'd and foul : nor with hoarse cough
 Disturb the music of the past'ral pipe ;
 But, crowding to the note, with silence soft 25
 'The close-woven carpet graze, where Nature blends
 Flow'rets and herbage of minutest size,
 Innocuous luxury. Wide airy downs
 Are Health's gay walks to shepherd and to sheep.

All arid soils, with sand or chalky flint, 30
 Or shells deluvian mingled, and the turf
 That mantles over rocks of brittle stone,
 Be thy regard ; and where low-tufted broom,
 Or box, or berry'd juniper, arise ;
 Or the tall growth of glossy-rinded beech ; 35
 And where the burrowing rabbit turns the dust ;
 And where the dappled deer delights to bound.

Such are the downs of Banstead, edg'd with woods
 And towery villas ; such Dorcestrian fields,
 Whose flocks innumerable whiten all the land : 40
 Such those slow-climbing wilds that lead the step
 Insensibly to Dover's windy cliff,
 Tremendous height ! and such the clover'd lawns
 And sunny mounts of beauteous Normanton,
 Health's cheerful haunt, and the selected walk 45
 Of Heathcote's leisure : such the spacious plain
 Of Sarum, spread like Ocean's boundless round,
 Where solitary Stonehenge, gray with moss,

Ruin of ages! nods : such, too, the leas
 And ruddy tilth which spiry Ross beholds, 50
 From a green hillock, o'er her lofty elms ;
 And Lemster's brooky tract and airy Croft ;
 And such Harleian Eywood's swelling turf,
 Wav'd as the billows of a rolling sea ;
 And Shobden, for its lofty terrace fam'd, 55
 Which from a mountain's ridge, elate o'er woods,
 And girt with all Siluria, seas around
 Regions on regions blended in the clouds.
 Pleasant Siluria ! land of various views,
 Hills, rivers, woods, and lawns, and purple groves 60
 Pomaceous, mingled with the curling growth
 Of tendril hops, that flaunt upon their poles,
 More airy wild than vines along the sides
 Of treacherous Falernum, or that hill
 Vesuvius, where the bowers of Bacchus rose, 65
 And Herculanean and Pompeian domes.

But if thy prudent care would cultivate
 Leicestrian Fleeces, what the sinewy arm
 Combs thro' the spiky steel in lengthen'd flakes ;
 Rich saponaceous loam, that slowly drinks 70
 The blackening shower, and fattens with the draught,
 Or heavy marl's deep clay, be then thy choice,
 Of one consistence, one complexion, spread
 Thro' all thy glebe ; where no deceitful veins
 Of envious gravel lurk beneath the turf, 75
 To loose the creeping waters from their springs,
 Tainting the pasturage : and let thy fields
 In slopes descend and mount, that chilling rains
 May trickle off, and hasten to the brooks.

Yet some defect in all on earth appears : 80
 All seek for help, all press for social aid.
 Too cold the grassy mantle of the marle,
 In stormy winter's long and dreary nights,

For cumbent sheep ; from broken slumber oft
 They rise benumb'd, and vainly shift the couch ; 85
 Their wasted sides their evil plight declare :
 Hence, tender in his care, the shepherd swain
 Seeks each contrivance. Here it would avail
 At a meet distance from the sheltr'ing mound
 To sink a trench, and on the hedge-long bank 90
 Sow frequent sand, with lime, and dark manure,
 Which to the liquid element will yield
 A porous way, a passage to the foe.
 Plough not such pastures ; deep in spongy grass
 The oldest carpet is the warmest lair, 95
 And soundest : in new herbage coughs are heard.
 Nor love too frequent shelter, such as decks
 The vale of Severn, Nature's garden wide,
 By the blue steeps of distant Malvern wall'd,
 Solemnly vast. The trees of various shade, 100
 Scene behind scene, with fair delusive pomp
 Enrich the prospect, but they rob the lawns.
 Nor prickly brambles, white with woolly theft,
 Should tuft thy fields. Applaud not the remiss
 Dimetians, who along their mossy dales 105
 Consume, like grasshoppers, the summer hour,
 While round them stubborn thorns and furze increase,
 And creeping briars. I knew a careful swain
 Who gave them to the crackling flames, and spread
 Their dust saline upon the deepening grass ; 110
 And oft with labour-strengthen'd arm he delv'd
 The draining trench across his verdant slopes,
 To intercept the small meandring rills
 Of upper hamlets. Haughty trees, that sour
 The shaded grass, that weaken thorn-set mounds, 115
 And harbour villain crows, he rare allow'd ;
 Only a slender tuft of useful ash,
 And mingled beech and elm, securely tall,

The little smiling cottage warm embower'd ;
 The little smiling cottage ! where at eve 120
 He meets his rosy children at the door,
 Prattling their welcomes, and his honest wife,
 With good brown cake and bacon slice, intent
 To cheer his hunger after labour hard.

Nor only soil, there also must be found 125
 Felicity of clime, and aspect bland,
 Where gentle sheep may nourish locks of price.
 In vain the silken Fleece on windy brows,
 And northern slopes of cloud-dividing hills,
 Is sought, tho' soft Iberia spreads her lap 130
 Beneath their rugged feet and names their heights
 Biscaian or Segovian. Bothnic realms,
 And dark Norwegian, with their choicest fields,
 Dingles, and dells, by lofty fir embower'd,
 In vain the bleaters court. Alike they shun 135
 Libya's hot plains. What taste have they for groves
 Of palm, or yellow dust of gold ? no more
 Food to the flock than to the miser wealth,
 Who kneels upon the glittering heap and starves.
 Ev'n Gallic Abbeville the shining Fleece, 140
 That richly decorates her loom, acquires
 Basely from Albion, by th' ensnaring bribe,
 The bate of avarice, which with felon fraud
 For its own wanton mouth from thousands steals.

How erring oft the judgment in its hate 145
 Or fond desire ! Those slow-descending showers,
 Those hovering fogs, that bathe our growing vales
 In deep November (loath'd by trifling Gaul,
 Effeminate), are gifts the Pleiads shed,
 Britannia's handmaids : as the beverage falls 150
 Her hills rejoice, her valleys laugh and sing.

Hail, noble Albion ! where no golden mines,
 No soft perfumes, nor oils, nor myrtle bowers,

The vigorous frame and lofty heart of man. . . .
 Enervate : round whose stern cerulean brows 155
 White-winged snow, and cloud, and pearly rain,
 Frequent attend, with solemn majesty :
 Rich queen of Mists and Vapours ! these thy sons
 With their cool arms compress, and twist their nerves
 For deeds of excellence and high renown. 160
 Thus form'd, our Edwards, Henries, Churchills,
 Blakes,
 Our Lockes, our Newtons, and our Miltons, rose.
 See the sun gleams ; the living pastures rise,
 After the nurture of the fallen shower,
 How beautiful ! how blue th' ethereal vault ! 165
 How verdurous the lawns ! how clear the brooks !
 Such noble warlike steeds, such herds of kine,
 So sleek, so vast ! such spacious flocks of sheep,
 Like flakes of gold illumining the green,
 What other paradise adorn but thine, 170
 Britannia ! happy if thy sons would know
 Their happiness. To these thy naval streams,
 Thy frequent towns superb of busy trade,
 And ports magnific, add, and stately ships
 Innumeros. But whither strays my Muse ? 175
 Pleas'd, like a traveller upon the strand
 Arriv'd of bright Augusta, wild he roves,
 From deck to deck, thro' groves immense of masts ;
 'Mong crowds, bales, cars, the wealth of either Ind ;
 Thro' wharfs, squares, and palaces, and domes, 180
 In sweet surprise, unable yet to fix
 His raptur'd mind, or scan in order'd course
 Each object singly, with discoveries new
 His native country studious to enrich.
 Ye Shepherds ! if your labours hope success, 185
 Be first your purpose to procure a breed
 To soil and clime adapted. Every soil

And clime, ev'n every tree and herb, receives
 Its habitant peculiar : each to each
 The Great Invisible, and each to all, 190
 Thro' earth, and sea, and air, harmonious suits.
 Tempestuous regions, Darwent's naked Peaks,
 Snowden and blue Plynlymmon, and the wide
 Aërial sides of Cader-ydris huge ;
 These are bestow'd on goat-horned sheep, of Fleece 195
 Hairy and coarse, of long and nimble shank,
 Who rove o'er bog or heath, and graze or brouze
 Alternate, to collect, with due dispatch,
 O'er the bleak wild, the thinly-scatter'd meal :
 But hills of milder air, that gently rise 200
 O'er dewy dales, a fairer species boast,
 Of shorter limb, and frontlet more ornate :
 Such the Silurian. If thy farm extends
 Near Cotswold Downs, or the delicious groves
 Of Symmonds, honour'd thro' the sandy soil 205
 Of elmy Ross, or Devon's myrtle vales,
 That drink clear rivers near the glassy sea,
 Regard this sort, and hence thy sire of lambs
 Select : his tawny Fleece in ringlets curl ;
 Long swings his slender tail ; his front is fenc'd 210
 With horns Ammonian, circulating twice
 Around each open ear, like those fair scrolls
 That grace the columns of th' Iönic dome.
 Yet should thy fertile glebe be marly clay,
 Like Melton pastures, or Tripontian fields, 215
 Where ever-gliding Avon's limpid wave
 Thwarts the long course of dusty Watling-street ;
 That larger sort, of head defenceless, seek,
 Whose Fleece is deep and clammy, close and plain ;
 The ram short-limbed, whose form compact
 describes 220
 One level line along his spacious back ;

Of full and ruddy eye, large ears, stretch'd head,
 Nostrils dilated, breast and shoulders broad,
 And spacious haunches, and a lofty dock.

'Thus to their kindred soil and air induc'd, 225

Thy thriving herd will bless thy skilful care,

That copies Nature, who, in every change,

In each variety, with wisdom works,

And powers diversifi'd of air and soil,

Her rich materials. Hence Sabæa's rocks, 230

Chaldæa's marle, Egyptus' water'd loam,

And dry Cyrene's sand, in climes alike,

With different stores supply the marts of trade :

Hence Zembla's icy tracks no bleaters hear :

Small are the Russian herds, and harsh their Fleece ; 235

Of light esteem Germanic, far remote

From soft sea-breezes, open winters mild,

And summers bath'd in dew : on Syrian sheep

The costly burden only loads their tails :

No locks Cormandel's, none Malacca's, tribe 240

Adorn ; but sleek of flix, and brown like deer,

Fearful and shepherdless, they bound along

The sands. No Fleeces wave in torrid climes,

Which verdure boast of trees and shrubs alone,

Shrubs aromatic, caffee wild, or thea, 245

Nutmeg, or cinnamon, or fiery clove,

Unapt to feed the Fleece. The food of wool

Is grass or herbage soft, that ever blooms

In temp'rate air, in the delicious downs

Of Albion, on the banks of all her streams. 250

Of grasses are unnumber'd kinds, and all

(Save where foul waters linger on the turf)

Salubrious. Early mark when tepid gleams

Oft mingle with the pearls of summer showers,

And swell too hastily the tender plains ; 255

Then snatch away thy sheep : beware the rot ;

And with deterrent bay-salt rub their mouths,
 Or urge them on a barren bank to feed,
 In hunger's kind distress, on tugged hay ;
 Or to the marsh guide their easy steps, 260
 If near thy tufted crofts the broad sea spreads.
 Sagacious care foreacts. When strong disease
 Breaks in, and stains the purple streams of health,
 Hard is the strife of art. The coughing pest
 From their green pasture sweeps whole flocks away. 265

That dire distemper, sometimes may the swain,
 Tho' late, discern ; when on the lifted lid,
 Or visual orb, the turgid veins are pale,
 The swelling liver then her putrid store
 Begins to drink : ev'n yet thy skill exert, 270
 Nor suffer weak despair to fold thy arms :
 Again deterrent salt apply, or shed
 The hoary med'cine o'er their arid food.

In cold stiff soils the bleaters oft complain
 Of gouty ails, by shepherds term'd the Halt : 275
 Those let the neighb'ring fold or ready crook
 Detain, and pour into their cloven feet
 Corrosive drugs, deep-searching arsenic,
 Dry allum, verdigrise, or vitriole keen :
 But if the doubtful mischief scarce appears, 280
 'Twill serve to shift them to a dryer turf,
 And salt again. Th' utility of salt
 Teach thy slow swains ; redundant humours cold
 Are the diseases of the bleating kind.

Th' infectious scab, arising from extremes 285
 Of want or surfeit, is by water cured
 Of lime, or sodden staves-acre, or oil
 Dispersive of Norwegian tar, renown'd
 By virtuous Berkeley, whose benevolence
 Explored its pow'rs, and easy med'cine thence 290
 Sought for the poor. Ye Poor ! with grateful voice

Invoke eternal blessings on his head.

Sheep also pleurisies and dropsies know,
Driven oft from Nature's path by artful man,
Who blindly turns aside, with haughty hand, 295
Whom sacred Instinct would securely lead.

But thou, more humble Swain! thy rural gates
Frequent unbar, and let thy flocks abroad
From lea to croft, from mead to arid field,
Noting the fickle seasons of the sky. 300

Rain-sated pastures let them shun, and seek
Changes of herbage and salubrious flowers.
By their All-perfect Master inly taught,
They best their food and physic can discern ;
For He, Supreme Existence! ever near, 305

Informs them. O'er the vivid green observe
With what a regular consent they crop,
At every fourth collection to the mouth,
Unsav'ry crow-flow'r ; whether to awake
Languor of appetite with lively change, 310
Or timely to repel approaching ills,

Hard to determine. Thou, whom Nature loves,
And with her salutary rules intrusts,
Benevolent Mackenzie ! say the cause.

This truth howe'er shines bright to human sense ; 315
Each strong affection of th' unconscious brute,
Each bent, each passion of the smallest mite,
Is wisely giv'n : harmonious they perform
The work of perfect reason (blush, vain Man !),
And turn the wheels of Nature's vast machine. 320

See that thy scip have store of healing tar,
And marking pitch and raddle ; nor forget
Thy shears true pointed, nor th' officious dog,
Faithful to teach thy stragglers to return ;
So may'st thou aid who lag along, or steal 325
Aside into the furrows or the shades,

Silent to droop ; or who at ev'ry gate
 Or hillock rub their sores and loosen'd wool.
 But rather these, the feeble of thy flock,
 Banish before th' autumnal months. Ev'n age 330
 Forbear too much to favour : oft renew
 And thro' thy fold let joyous youth appear.

Beware the season of imperial Love,
 Who thro' the world his ardent spirit pours ;
 Ev'n sheep are then intrepid ! the proud ram 335
 With jealous eye surveys the spacious field :
 All rivals keep aloof, or desp'rate war
 Suddenly rages ; with impetuous force,
 And fury irresistible, they dash
 Their hardy frontlets : the wide vale resounds : 340
 The flock, amaz'd, stands safe afar ; and oft
 Each to the other's might a victim falls ;
 As fell of old, before that engine's sway,
 Which hence ambition imitative wrought,
 The beauteous tow'rs of Salem to the dust. 345

Wise custom at the fifth or six return,
 Or ere they 'ave past the twelfth, of orient morn,
 Castrates the lambkins ; necessary rite,
 Ere they be number'd of the peaceful herd.
 But kindly watch whom thy sharp hand has grieved, 350
 In those rough months that lift the turning year :
 Not tedious is the office ; to thy aid
 Favonius hastens ; soon their wounds he heals,
 And leads them skipping to the flow'rs of May ;
 May ! who allows to fold, if poor the tilth, 355
 Like that of dreary houseless common fields,
 Worn by the plough ; but fold on fallows dry.
 Enfeeble not thy flock to feed thy land,
 Nor in too narrow bounds the pris'ners crowd ;
 Nor ope the wattled fence while balmy Morn 360
 Lies on the reeking pasture : wait till all

The crystal dews, impearl'd upon the grass,
 Are touch'd by Phœbus' beams, and mount aloft,
 With various clouds to paint the azure sky.

In teasing fly-time, dank or frosty days, 365
 With unctuous liquids, or the lees of oil,
 Rub their soft skins between the parted locks :
 'Thus the Brigantes: 't is not idle pains:
 Nor is that skill despis'd which trims their tails,
 Ere summer-heats, of filth and tagged wool. 370
 Coolness and cleanliness to health conduce.

To mend thy mounds, to trench, to clear, to soil,
 Thy grateful fields, to medicate thy sheep,
 Hurdles to weave, and cheerly shelters raise,
 Thy vacant hours require ; and ever learn 375
 Quick ether's motions: oft the scene is turn'd ;
 Now the blue vault, and now the murky cloud,
 Hail, rain, or radiance: these the moon will tell,
 Each bird and beast, and these thy fleecy tribe.
 When high the sapphire cope, supine they couch, 380
 And chew the cud delighted ; but ere rain
 Eager, and at unwonted hour, they feed.
 Slight not the warning ; soon the tempest rolls,
 Scatt'ring them wide, close rushing at the heels
 Of th' hurrying o'ertaken swains: forbear 385
 Such nights to fold ; such nights be theirs to shift
 On ridge or hillock ; or in homesteads soft,
 Or softer cots, detain them. Is thy lot
 A chill penurious turf, to all thy toils
 Untractable? Before harsh winter drowns 390
 The noisy dykes, and starves the rushy glebe,
 Shift the frail breed to sandy hamlets warm ;
 There let them sojourn, till gay Procne skims
 The thick'ning verdure and the rising flow'rs.
 And while departing autumn all embrowns 395
 The frequent-bitten fields, while thy free hand

Divides the tedded hay, then be their feet
 Accustom'd to the barriers of the rick,
 Or some warm umbrage ; left, in erring flight,
 When the broad dazzling snows descend, they run 400
 Dispers'd to ditches, where the swelling drift
 Wide overwhelms: anxious, the shepherd swains
 Issue with axe and spade, and, all abroad,
 In doubtful aim explore the glaring waste,
 And some, perchance, in the deep delve upraise, 405
 Drooping, ev'n at the twelfth cold dreary day,
 With still continu'd feeble pulse of life,
 The glebe, their Fleece, their flesh, by hunger gnaw'd.

Ah, gentle Shepherd ! thine the lot to tend,
 Of all that feel distress, the most assail'd, 410
 Feeble, defenceless : lenient be thy care ;
 But spread around thy tend'rest diligence
 In flow'ry spring-time, when the new-dropp'd lamb,
 Tott'ring with weakness by his mother's side,
 Feels the fresh world about him, and each thorn, 415
 Hillock, or furrow, trips his feeble feet :
 O ! guard his meek sweet innocence from all
 Th' innumerable ills that rush around his life ;
 Mark the quick kite, with beak and talons prone,
 Circling the skies to snatch him from the plain ; 420
 Observe the lurking crows ; beware the brake,
 There the sly fox the careless minute waits ;
 Nor trust thy neighbour's dog, nor earth, nor sky :
 Thy bosom to a thousand cares divide.
 Eurus oft slings his hail ; the tardy fields 425
 Pay not their promis'd food ; and oft the dam
 O'er her weak twins with empty udder mourns,
 Or fails to guard when the bold bird of prey
 Alights, and hops in many turns around,
 And tires her, also turning : to her aid 430
 Be nimble, and the weakest in thine arms

Gently convey to the warm cot and oft,
 Between the lark's note and the nightingale's,
 His hungry bleating still with tepid milk :
 In this soft office may thy children join, 435
 And charitable habits learn in sport :
 Nor yield him to himself ere vernal airs
 Sprinkle thy little croft with daisy flowers :
 Nor yet forget him ; life has rising ills :
 Various as ether is the past'ral care : 440
 Thro' slow experience, by a patient breast,
 The whole long lesson gradual is attain'd,
 By precept after precept, oft receiv'd
 With deep attention ; such as Nuceus sings
 To the full vale near Soar's enamour'd brook, 445
 While all is silence : sweet Hinclean swain !
 Whom rude Obscurity severely clasps :
 The Muse, howe'er, will deck thy simple cell
 With purple violets and primrose flowers,
 Well-pleas'd thy faithful lessons to repay. 450

Sheep no extremes can bear : both heat and cold
 Spread sores cutaneous ; but more frequent heat.
 The fly-blown vermin from their woolly nest
 Press to the tortur'd skin, and flesh, and bone,
 In littleness and number dreadful foes ! 455
 Long rains in miry winter cause the halt ;
 Rainy luxuriant summers rot your flock ;
 And all excess, ev'n of salubrious food,
 As sure destroys as famine or the wolf.
 Inferior theirs to man's world-roving frame, 460
 Which all extremes in every zone endures.

With grateful heart, ye British Swains ! enjoy
 Your gentle seasons and indulgent clime.
 Lo ! in the sprinkling clouds your bleating hills
 Rejoice with herbage, while the horrid rage 465
 Of winter irresistible o'erwhelms

Th' Hyperborean tracks : his arrowy frosts,
That pierce thro' flinty rocks, the Lappian flies,
And burrows deep beneath the snowy world ;
A drear abode ! from rose diffusing hours, 470
That dance before the wheels of radiant day,
Far, far remote ; where, by the squalid light
Of fetid oil inflam'd, sea-monsters' spume,
Or fir-wood, glaring in the weeping vault,
Twice three slow gloomy months with various ills 475
Sullen he struggles ; such the love of life !
His lank and scanty herds around him press,
As, hunger-stung, to gritty meal he grinds
The bones of fish, or inward bark of trees,
Their common sustenance ; while ye, O Swains ! 480
Ye, happy at your ease, behold your sheep
Feed on the open turf, or crowd the tilth,
Where, thick among the greens, with busy mouths
They scoop white turnips : little care is yours ;
Only at morning hour to interpose 485
Dry food of oats, or hay, or brittle straw,
The wat'ry juices of the bossy root
Absorbing ; or from noxious air to screen
Your heavy teeming ewes with wattled fence
Of furze or copse-wood in the lofty field, 490
Which bleak ascends among the whistling winds :
Or, if your sheep are of Silurian breed,
Nightly to house them dry on fern or straw,
Silk'ning their Fleeces. Ye nor rolling hut
Nor watchful dog require, where never roar 495
Of savage tears the air, where careless Night
In balmy sleep lies lull'd, and only wakes
To plenteous peace. Alas ! o'er warmer zones
Wild terror strides, their stubborn rocks are rent,
Their mountains sink, their yawning caverns flame, 500
And fiery torrents roll impetuous down,

Proud cities deluging ; Pompeian tow'rs,
 And Herculanean, and what riotous stood
 In Syrian valley, where now the Dead Sea
 'Mong solitary hills infectious lies. 505

See the swift Furies, famine, plague, and war,
 In frequent thunders rage o'er neighb'ring realms,
 And spread their plains with desolation wide !
 Yet your mild homesteads ever-blooming smile
 Among embracing woods, and waft on high 510
 The breath of plenty, from the ruddy tops
 Of chimneys curling o'er the gloomy trees
 In airy azure ringlets to the sky.

Nor ye by need are urg'd, as Attic swains,
 And Tarentine, with skins to clothe your sheep, 515
 Expensive toil, howe'er expedient found

In fervid climates, while from Phœbus' beams
 They fled to rugged woods and tangling brakes.
 But those expensive toils are now no more,
 Proud Tyranny devours their flocks and herds : 520
 Nor bleat of sheep may now, nor sound of pipe,
 Sooth the sad plains of once sweet Arcady,
 The shepherds' kingdom : dreary solitude
 Spreads o'er Hymettus, and the shaggy vale
 Of Athens, which in solemn silence sheds 525
 Her venerable ruins to the dust.

The weary Arabs roam from plain to plain,
 Guiding the languid herd in quest of food,
 And shift their little home's uncertain scene
 With frequent farewell ; strangers, pilgrims all, 530
 As were their fathers. No sweet fall of rain
 May there be heard ; nor sweeter liquid lapse
 Of river, o'er the pebbles gliding by
 In murmurs : goaded by the rage of thirst,
 Daily they journey to the distant clefts 535
 Of craggy rocks, where gloomy palms o'erhang

The ancient wells, deep sunk by toil immense,
 Toil of the patriarchs, with sublime intent
 Themselves and long posterity to serve.
 There, at the public hour of sultry noon, 540
 They share the bev'rage, when to wat'ring come,
 And grateful umbrage, all the tribes around,
 And their lean flocks, whose various bleatings fill
 The echoing caverns : then is absent none,
 Fair nymph or shepherd, each inspiring each 545
 To wit, and song, and dance, and active feats ;
 In the same rustic scene, where Jacob won
 Fair Rachel's bosom, when a rock's vast weight
 From the deep dark-mouth'd well his strength remov'd,
 And to her circling sheep refreshment gave. 550

Such are the perils, such the toils, of life,
 In foreign climes. But speed thy flight, my Muse !
 Swift turns the year, and our unnumber'd flocks
 On Fleeces overgrown uneasy lie.

Now, jolly Swains ! the harvest of your cares 555
 Prepare to reap, and seek the sounding caves
 Of high Brigantium, where, by ruddy flames,
 Vulcan's strong sons, with nervous arm, around
 The steady anvil and the glaring mass
 Clatter their heavy hammers down by turns, 560
 Flatt'ning the steel : from their rough hands receive
 The sharpen'd instrument that from the flock
 Severs the Fleece. If verdant elder spreads
 Her silver flow'rs ; if humble daisies yield
 To yellow crow-foot, and luxuriant grass, 565
 Gay shearing-time approaches. First, howe'er,
 Drive to the double fold, upon the brim
 Of a clear river, gently drive the flock,
 And plunge them one by one into the flood :
 Plung'd in the flood, not long the struggler sinks, 570
 With his white flakes that glisten thro' the tide ;

The sturdy rustic, in the middle wave,
 Awaits to seize him rising ; one arm bears
 His lifted head above the limpid stream,
 While the full clammy Fleece the other laves 575
 Around, laborious, with repeated toil ;
 And then resigns him to the sunny bank,
 Where, bleating loud, he shakes his dripping locks.

Shear them the fourth or fifth return of morn,
 Lest touch of busy fly-blows wound their skin. 580
 Thy peaceful subjects without murmur yield -
 Their yearly tribute : 'tis the prudent part
 To cherish and be gentle, while ye strip
 The downy vesture from their tender sides.

Press not too close ; with caution turn the points, 585
 And from the head in regular rounds proceed :
 But speedy, when ye chance to wound, with tar
 Prevent the wingy swarm and scorching heat ;
 And careful house them, if the low'ring clouds
 Mingle their stores tumultuous : thro' the gloom 590

Then thunder oft with pond'rous wheels rolls loud,
 And breaks the crystal urns of heav'n ; adown
 Falls streaming rain. Sometimes among the steeps
 Of Cambrian glades (pity the Cambrian glades !)
 Fast tumbling brooks on brooks enormous swell, 595
 And sudden overwhelm their vanish'd fields :

Down with the flood away the naked sheep,
 Bleating in vain, are borne, and straw-built huts,
 And rifted trees, and heavy enormous rocks,
 Down with the rapid torrent to the deep. 600

At shearing-time along the lively vales
 Rural festivities are often heard ;
 Beneath each blooming arbour all is joy
 And lusty merriment. While on the grass
 The mingled youth in gaudy circles sport, 605
 We think the Golden Age again return'd,

And all the fabled Dryades in dance :
 Leering they bound along, with laughing air,
 To the shrill pipe, and deep remurm'ring-cords
 Of th' ancient harp, or tabor's hollow sound. 610

While th' old apart, upon a bank reclin'd,
 Attend the tuneful carol, softly mix'd
 With every murmur of the sliding wave,
 And every warble of the feather'd choir,
 Music of Paradise! which still is heard 615
 When the heart listens, still the views appear
 Of the first happy garden, when Content
 To Nature's flowery scenes directs the sight.

Yet we abandon those Elysian walks,
 Then idly for the lost delight repine ; 620
 As greedy mariners, whose desp'rate sails
 Skim o'er the billows of the foamy flood,
 Fancy they see the lessening shores retire,
 And sigh a farewell to the sinking hills.

Could I recall those notes which once the Muse 625
 Heard at a shearing, near the woody sides
 Of blue-topp'd Wreakin! Yet the carols sweet
 Thro' the deep maze of the memorial cell
 Faintly remurmur. First arose in song
 Hoar-headed Damon, venerable Swain! 630
 The soothest shepherd of the flow'ry vale,
 " This is no vulgar scene ; no palace roof
 Was e'er so lofty, nor so nobly rise
 Their polish'd pillars as these aged oaks,
 Which o'er our Fleecy wealth and harmless sports 635
 Thus have expanded wide their shelt'ring arms
 Thrice told an hundred summers. Sweet Content,
 Ye gentle shepherds ! pillow us at night."

" Yes, tuneful Damon, for our cares are short,
 Rising and falling with the cheerful day," 640
 Colin reply'd ; " and pleasing weariness

Soon our unaching heads to sleep inclines.
 Is it in cities so? where, poets tell,
 The cries of Sorrow sadden all the streets,
 And the diseases of intemp'rate wealth. 645
 Alas! that any ills from wealth should rise!"

"May the sweet nightingale on yonder spray,
 May this clear stream, those lawns, these snow-white
 lambs,

Which with a pretty innocence of look
 Skip on the green, and race in little troops; 650
 May that great lamp which sinks behind the hills,
 And streams around variety of lights,
 Recall them erring! this is Damon's wish."

"Huge Breaden's stony summit once I climb'd
 After a kidling: Damon, what a scene! 655
 What various views unnumber'd spread beneath!
 Woods, tow'rs, vales, caves, dells, cliffs, and torrent
 floods,

And here and there, between the spiry rocks,
 The broad flat sea. Far nobler prospects these
 Than gardens black with smoke in dusty towns, 660
 Where stenchy vapours often blot the sun:
 Yet, flying from his quiet, thither crowds
 Each greedy wretch for tardy-rising wealth,
 Which comes too late, that courts the taste in vain,
 Or nauseates with distempers. Yes, ye Rich! 665
 Still, still be rich, if thus ye fashion life;
 And piping, careless, silly shepherds we,
 We silly shepherds, all intent to feed
 Our snowy flocks, and wind the sleeky Fleece."

"Deem not, however, our occupation mean," 670
 Damon reply'd, "while the Supreme accounts
 Well of the faithful shepherd, rank'd alike
 With king and priest: they also shepherds are;
 For so th' All-seeing styles them, to remind

Elated man, forgetful of his charge." 675

“ But haste, begin the rites : see purple Eve
 Stretches her shadows : all ye Nymphs and Swains !
 Hither assemble. Pleas'd with honours due,
 Sabrina, guardian of the crystal flood,
 Shall bless our cares, when she by moonlight clear 680
 Skims o'er the dales, and eyes our sleeping folds ;
 Or in hoar caves around Plynlymmon's brow,
 Where precious minerals dart their purple gleams,
 Among her sisters she reclines ; the lov'd
 Vaga, profuse of graces, Ryddol rough, 685
 Blithe Ystwith, and Clevedoc, swift of foot ;
 And mingles various seeds of flow'rs and herbs,
 In the divided torrents, ere they burst
 Thro' the dark clouds, and down the mountain roll.
 Nor taint-worm shall infect the yeaning herds, 690
 Nor penny-grass nor spearwort's pois'nous leaf.”

He said : with light fantastic toe the nymphs
 Thither assembled, thither every swain ;
 And o'er the dimpled stream a thousand flow'rs,
 Pale lilies, roses, violets, and pinks, 695
 Mix'd with the greens of burnet, mint, and thyme,
 And trefoil, sprinkled with their sportive arms.

Such custom holds along th' irriguous vales
 From Wreakin's brow to rocky Dolvoryn,
 Sabrina's early haunt, ere yet she fled 700
 The search of Guendolen, her stepdame proud,
 With envious hate enrag'd. The jolly cheer,
 Spread on a mossy bank, untouch'd abides
 Till cease the rites ; and now the mossy bank
 Is gaily circled, and the jolly cheer 705
 Dispers'd in copious measure ; early fruits,
 And those of frugal store, in husk or rind ;
 Steep'd grain, and curdled milk with dulcet cream
 Soft temper'd, in full merriment they quaff,

And cast about their gibes ; and some apace 710
 Whistle to roundelays : their little ones
 Look on delighted ; while the mountain-woods
 And winding valleys with the various notes
 Of pipe, sheep, kine, and birds, and liquid brooks,
 Unite their echoes : near at hand the wide 715
 Majestic wave of Severn slowly rolls
 Along the deep-divided glebe : the flood,
 And trading bark with low contracted sail,
 Linger among the reeds and copsy banks
 To listen, and to view the joyous scene. 720

 BOOK II

Now of the sever'd lock begin the song
 With various numbers, thro' the simple theme
 To win attention : this, ye Shepherd Swains !
 This is a labour. Yet, O Wray ! if thou
 Cease not with skilful hand to point her way, 5
 The lark-wing'd Muse above the grassy vale,
 And hills, and woods, shall, singing soar aloft ;
 And he whom learning, wisdom, candour, grace,
 Who glows with all the virtues of his sire,
 Royston ! approve, and patronise the strain. 10
 Thro' all the brute creation none as sheep
 To lordly man such ample tribute pay.
 For him their udders yield nectareous streams ;
 For him their downy vestures they resign ;
 For him they spread the feast : ah ! ne'er may he 1
 Glory in wants which doom to pain and death

His blameless fellow-creatures. Let disease,
Let wasted hunger, by destroying live,
And the permission use with trembling thanks,
Meekly reluctant : 't is the brute beyond ; 20
And gluttons ever murder when they kill.
Ev'n to the reptile every cruel deed
Is high impiety. Howe'er not all,
Not of the sanguinary tribe are all ;
All are not savage. Come, ye gentle Swains ! 25
Like Brama's healthy sons on Indus' banks,
Whom the pure stream and garden fruits sustain ;
Ye are the sons of Nature ; your mild hands
Are innocent : ye when ye shear relieve.
Come, gentle Swains ! the bright unsully'd locks 30
Collect ; alternate songs shall soothe your cares,
And warbling music break from every spray.
Be faithful, and the genuine locks alone
Wrap round ; nor alien flake nor pitch enfold ;
Stain not your stores with base desire to add 35
Fallacious weight ; nor yet, to mimic those,
Minute and light, of sandy Urchinfield,
Lessen, with subtle artifice, the Fleece ;
Equal the fraud : nor interpose delay,
Lest busy ether thro' the open wool 40
Debilitating pass, and every film
Ruffle and sully with the valley's dust.
Guard, too, from moisture, and the fretting moth
Pernicious : she, in gloomy shade conceal'd,
Her labyrinth cuts, and mocks the comber's care : 45
But in loose locks of fells she most delights,
And feeble Fleeces of distemper'd sheep,
Whither she hastens, by the morbid scent
Allur'd, as the swift eagle to the fields
Of slaught'ring war or carnage : such apart 50
Keep for their proper use : our ancestors

Selected such for hospitable beds
 To rest the stranger, or the gory chief
 From battle or the chase of wolves return'd.
 When many-colour'd ev'ning sinks behind 55
 The purple woods and hills, and opposite
 Rises, full-orb'd, the silver harvest moon,
 To light th' unwearied farmer, late a-field
 His scatter'd sheaves collecting, then expect
 The artists, bent on speed, from populous Leeds, 60
 Norwich, or Froome ; they traverse every plain
 And every dale where farm or cottage smokes :
 Reject them not ; and let the season's price
 Win thy soft treasures ; let the bulky wain
 Thro' dusty roads roll nodding ; or the bark, 65
 That silently adown the cerule stream
 Glides with white sails, dispense the downy freight
 To copsy villages on either side,
 And spiry towns, where ready Diligence,
 The grateful burden to receive, awaits, 70
 Like strong Briareus, with his hundred hands.
 In the same Fleece diversity of wool
 Grows intermingled, and excites the care
 Of curious skill to sort the several kinds.
 But in this subtle science none exceed 75
 Th' industrious Belgians, to the work who guide
 Each feeble hand of want : their spacious domes,
 With boundless hospitality, receive
 Each nation's outcasts : there the tender eye
 May view the maim'd, the blind, the lame, employ'd, 80
 And unreject'd age : ev'n childhood there
 Its little fingers turning to the toil
 Delighted : nimbly, with habitual speed,
 They sever lock from lock, and long, and short,
 And soft, and rigid, pile in sev'ral heaps. 85
 This the dusk hatter asks : another shines

Tempting the clothier ; that the hosier seeks ;
 The long bright lock is apt for airy stuffs ;
 But often it deceives the artist's care,
 Breaking unuseful in the steely comb : 90
 For this long spongy wool no more increase
 Receives while winter petrifies the fields :
 The growth of Autumn stops ; and what tho' Spring
 Succeeds with rosy finger, and spins on
 The texture ? yet in vain she strives to link 95
 The silver twine to that of Autumn's hand.
 Be then the swain advis'd to shield his flocks
 From winter's dead'ning frosts and whelming snows ;
 Let the loud tempest rattle on the roof,
 While they, secure within, warm cribs enjoy, 100
 And swell their Fleeces, equal to the worth
 Of cloath'd Apulian, by soft warmth improv'd ;
 Or let them inward heat and vigour find
 By food of cole or turnip, hardy plants.
 Besides, the lock of one continued growth 105
 Imbibes a clearer and more equal dye.

But lightest wool is theirs who poorly toil
 Thro' a dull round in unimproving farms
 Of common fields. Inclose, inclose, ye Swains !
 Why will you joy in common field, where pitch, 110
 Noxious to wood, must stain your motley flock,
 To mark your property ? the mark dilates,
 Enters the flake depreciated, defil'd,
 Unfit for beauteous tint. Besides, in fields
 Promiscuous held all culture languishes ; 115
 The glebe, exhausted, thin supply receives ;
 Dull waters rest upon the rushy flats
 And barren furrows : none the rising grove
 There plants for late posterity, nor hedge
 To shield the flock, nor copse for cheering fire ; 120
 And in the distant village every hearth

Devours the grassy sward, the verdant food
 Of injur'd herds and flocks, or what the plough
 Should turn and moulder for the bearded grain :
 Pernicious habit ! drawing gradual on 125
 Increasing beggary, and Nature's frowns.
 Add too, the idle pilf'rer easier there
 Eludes detection, when a lamb or ewe
 From intermingled flocks he steals ; or when,
 With loosen'd tether of his horse or cow, 130
 The milky stalk of the tall green-ear'd corn,
 The year's slow rip'ning fruit, the anxious hope
 Of his laborious neighbour, he destroys.

There are who over-rate our spungy stores,
 Who deem that Nature grants no clime but ours 135
 To spread upon its fields the dews of heav'n,
 And feed the silky Fleece ; that card nor comb
 The hairy wool of Gaul can ne'er subdue,
 To form the thread, and mingle in the loom,
 Unless a third from Britain swell the heap : 140
 Illusion all ; tho' of our sun and air
 Not trivial is the virtue, nor their fruit
 Upon our snowy flocks of small esteem :
 The grain of brightest tincture none so well
 Imbibes : the wealthy Gobelins must to this 145
 Bear witness, and the costliest of their looms.

And though with hue of crocus or of rose
 No pow'r of subtle food, or air, or soil,
 Can dye the living Fleece ; yet 't will avail
 To note their influence in the tinging vase : 150
 'Therefore from herbage of old pastur'd plains,
 Chief from the matted turf of azure marl
 Where grow the whitest locks, collect thy stores.
 Those fields regard not thro' whose recent turf
 The miry soil appears ; nor ev'n the streams 155
 Of Yare or silver Stroud can purify

Their frequent fully'd Fleece ; nor what rough winds,
Keen biting on tempestuous hills, imbrown.

Yet much may be perform'd to check the force
Of Nature's rigour : the high heath, by trees 160
Warm shelter'd, may despise the rage of storms :
Moors, bogs, and weeping fens, may learn to smile,
And leave in dikes their soon-forgotten tears.

Labour and Art will every aim achieve
Of noble bosoms. Bedford Level, erst 165

A dreary pathless waste, the coughing flock
Was wont with hairy Fleeces to deform,
And, smiling with her lure of summer flow'rs,
The heavy ox vain struggling to ingulf ;
Till one of that high honour'd patriot name, 170

Russel ! arose, who drain'd the rushy fen,
Confin'd the waves, bade groves and gardens bloom,
And thro' his new creation led the Ouze
And gentle Camus, silver-winding streams :
God-like beneficence ! from chaos drear 175
To raise the garden and the shady grove.

But see Ierne's moors and hideous bogs,
Immeasurable track ! the traveller
Slow tries his mazy step on th' yielding tuft,
Shudd'ring with fear : ev'n such perfidious wilds, 180

By labour won, have yielded to the comb
The fairest length of wool. See Deeping Fens,
And the long lawns of Bourn. 'Tis art and toil
Gives Nature value, multiplies her stores,
Varies, improves, creates : 'tis art and toil 185

Teaches her woody hills with fruits to shine,
The pear and tasteful apple ; decks with flow'rs
And foodful pulse the fields that often rise,
Admiring to behold their furrows wave
With yellow corn. What changes cannot Toil, 190
With patient Art, effect ? There was a time

When other regions were the swain's delight,
 And shepherdless Britannia's rushy vales,
 Inglorious, neither trade nor labour knew,
 But of rude baskets, homely rustic gear, 195
 Woven of the flexile willow ; till at length,
 The plains of Sarum open'd to the hand
 Of patient Culture, and o'er sinking woods
 High Cotswold show'd her summits. Urchinfield,
 And Lemster's crofts, beneath the pheasant's brake 200
 Long lay unnoted. Toil new pasture gives,
 And in the regions oft of active Gaul
 O'er less'ning vineyards spreads the growing turf.

In eldest times, when kings and hardy chiefs
 In bleating sheepfolds met, for purest wool 205
 Phœnicia's hilly tracks were most renown'd,
 And fertile Syria's and Judea's land,
 Hermon and Seir, and Hebron's brooky sides.
 Twice with these murex, crimson hue, they ting'd
 The shining Fleeces ; hence their gorgeous wealth ; 210
 And hence arose the walls of ancient Tyre.

Next busy Colchis, bless'd with frequent rains
 And lively verdure (who the lucid stream
 Of Phasis boasted, and a portly race
 Of fair inhabitants), improv'd the Fleece, 215
 When, o'er the deep by flying Phryxus brought,
 The fam'd Thessalian ram enrich'd her plains.

This rising Greece with indignation view'd,
 And youthful Jason an attempt conceiv'd
 Lofty and bold : along Peneus' banks, 220
 Around Olympus' brows, the Muses' haunts,
 He rouz'd the brave to re-demand the Fleece.
 Attend, ye British Swains ! the ancient song.
 From ev'ry region of Ægea's shore
 The brave assembled ; those illustrious twins, 225
 Castor and Pollux ; Orpheus, tuneful bard ;

Zetes and Calais, as the wind in speed ;
 Strong Hercules, and many a chief renown'd.
 On deep Iolcos' sandy shore they throng'd,
 Gleaming in armour, ardent of exploits ; 230
 And soon the laurel cord and the huge stone
 Uplifting to the deck, unmoor'd the bark,
 Whose keel, of wondrous length, the skilful hand
 Of Argus fashion'd for the proud attempt ;
 And in th' extended keel a lofty mast 235
 Uprais'd, and sails full swelling, to the chiefs
 Unwonted objects : now first, now they learn'd
 Their bolder steerage over ocean wave,
 Led by the golden stars, as Chiron's art
 Had mark'd the sphere celestial. Wide abroad 240
 Expands the purple deep ; the cloudy isles,
 Scyros and Scopelos, and Icos, rise,
 And Halonesos : soon huge Lemnos heaves
 Her azure head above the level brine,
 Shakes off her mists, and brightens all her cliffs ; 245
 While they, her flattering creeks and opening bowers
 Cautious approaching, in Myrina's port
 Cast out the cabled stone upon the strand.
 Next to the Mysian shore they shape their course,
 But with too eager haste : in the white foam 250
 His oar Alcides breaks ; howe'er, not long
 The chance detains ; he springs upon the shore,
 And rifting from the roots a tapering pine,
 Renews his stroke. Between the threat'ning tow'rs
 Of Hellespont they ply the rugged surge, 255
 To Hero's and Leander's ardent love
 Fatal ; then smooth Propontis' wid'ning wave,
 That like a glassy lake expands, with hills,
 Hills above hills, and gloomy woods, begirt :
 And now the Thracian Bosphorus they dare, 260
 Till the Symplegades, tremendous rocks !

Threaten approach ; but they, unterrify'd,
 Thro' the sharp-pointed cliffs and thund'ring floods
 Cleave their bold passage ; nathless by the crags.
 And torrents sorely shatter'd : as the strong 265
 Eagle or vulture, in th' entangling net
 Involv'd, breaks thro', yet leaves his plumes behind,
 Thus thro' the wide waves their slow way they force
 To Thynia's hospitable isle. The brave
 Pass many perils, and to fame by such 270
 Experience rise. Refresh'd, again they speed
 From cape to cape, and view unnumber'd streams,
 Halys, with hoary Lycus, and the mouths
 Of Apsarus and Glaucus, rolling swift
 'To the broad deep their tributary waves, 275
 Till in the long-sought harbour they arrive
 Of golden Phasis. Foremost on the strand
 Jason advanc'd : the deep capacious bay,
 'The crumbling terrace of the marble port,
 Wond'ring he view'd, and stately palace-domes, 280
 Pavilions proud of Luxury : around,
 In every glitt'ring hall, within, without,
 O'er all the timbrel-sounding squares and streets
 Nothing appear'd but luxury, and crowds
 Sunk deep in riot. To the public weal 285
 Attentive none he found ; for he, their chief
 Of shepherds, proud Aeëtes, by the name
 Sometimes of King distinguish'd, 'gan to slight
 The shepherd's trade, and turn to song and dance :
 Ev'n Hydrus ceas'd to watch ; Medea's songs 290
 Of joy, and rosy youth, and beauty's charms,
 With magic sweetness lull'd his cares asleep,
 'Till the bold heroes grasp'd the Golden Fleece.
 Nimbly they wing'd the bark, surrounded soon
 By Neptune's friendly waves : secure they speed 295
 O'er the known seas, by ev'ry guiding cape,

With prosperous return. The myrtle shores,
 And glassy mirror of Iolcos' lake,
 With loud acclaim receiv'd them. Every vale,
 And every hillock, touch'd the tuneful stops 300
 Of pipes unnumber'd, for the Ram regain'd.

Thus Phasis lost his pride : his slighted nymphs
 Along the withering dales and pastures mourn'd ;
 The trade-ship left his streams ; the merchant shunn'd
 His desert borders ; each ingenious art, 305
 Trade, Liberty, and Affluence, all retir'd,
 And left to Want and Servitude their seats ;
 Vile successors ! and gloomy Ignorance,
 Following like dreary Night, whose sable hand
 Hangs on the purple skirts of flying day. 310

Sithence the Fleeces of Arcadian plains,
 And Attic and Thessalian, bore esteem ;
 And those in Grecian colonies dispers'd,
 Caria and Doris, and Ionia's coast,
 And fam'd Tarentum, where Galesus' tide, 315
 Rolling by ruins hoar of ancient towns,
 Thro' solitary vallies seeks the sea :
 Or green Altinum, by an hundred Alps
 High-crown'd, whose woods and snowy peaks aloft
 Shield her low plains from the rough northern blast. 320
 Those too of Boetica's delicious fields,
 With golden fruitage bless'd of highest taste,
 What need I name ? the Turdetanian track,
 Or rich Coraxus, whose wide looms unroll'd
 The finest webs ? where scarce a talent weigh'd 325
 A ram's equivalent. Then only tin
 To late-improv'd Britannia gave renown.

Lo ! the revolving course of mighty Time,
 Who loftiness abases, tumbles down
 Olympus' brow, and lifts the lowly vale. 330
 Where is the majesty of ancient Rome,

The throng of heroes in her splendid streets,
 The snowy vest of peace, or purple robe,
 Slow trail'd triumphal? where the Attic Fleece,
 And Tarentine, in warmest litter'd cots, 335
 Or sunny meadows, cloth'd with costly care?
 All in the solitude of ruin lost,
 War's horrid carnage, vain Ambition's dust.

Long lay the mournful realms of elder Fame
 In gloomy desolation, till appear'd 340
 Beauteous Venetia, first of all the nymphs
 Who from the melancholy waste emerg'd :
 In Adria's gulf her clotted locks she lav'd,
 And rose another Venus : each soft joy,
 Each aid of life, her busy wit restor'd ; 345
 Science reviv'd, with all the lovely Arts,
 And all the Graces. Restituted Trade
 To every virtue lent his helping stores,
 And cheer'd the vales around ; again the pipe
 And bleating flocks awak'd the cheerful lawn. 350

The glossy Fleeces now, of prime esteem,
 Soft Asia boasts, where lovely Cassimere,
 Within a lofty mound of circling hills,
 Spreads her delicious stores ; woods, rocks, caves, lakes,
 Hills, lawns, and winding streams ; a region term'd 355
 The Paradise of Indus. Next the plains
 Of Lahor, by that arbour stretch'd immense,
 Thro' many a realm, to Agra, the proud throne
 Of India's worshipp'd prince, whose lust is law :
 Remote dominions, nor to ancient fame 360
 Nor modern known, till public-hearted Roe,
 Faithful, sagacious, active, patient, brave,
 Led to their distant climes advent'rous trade.

Add, too, the silky wool of Libyan lands,
 Of Caza's bowery dales, and brooky Caus, 365
 Where lofty Atlas spreads his verdant feet,

While in the clouds his hoary shoulders bend.

Next proud Iberia glories in the growth
Of high Castile, and mild Segovian glades.

And beauteous Albion, since great Edgar chas'd 370

The prowling wolf, with many a lock appears

Of silky lustre ; chief, Silurian, thine ;

Thine, Vaga, favour'd stream ; from sheep minute

On Cambria bred : a pound o'erweighs a Fleece :

Gay Epsom's too, and Banstead's, and what gleams 375

On Vecta's isle, that shelters Albion's fleet,

With all its thunders ; or Salopian stores,

Those which are gather'd in the fields of Clun :

High Cotswold also 'mong the shepherd swains

Is oft remember'd, tho' the greedy plough 380

Preys on its carpet. He whose rustic Muse

O'er heath and craggy holt her wing display'd,

And sung the bosky bourns of Alfred's shires,

Has favour'd Cotswold with luxuriant praise.

Need we the levels green of Lincoln note, 385

Or rich Leicestria's marly plains, for length

Of whitest locks and magnitude of Fleece

Peculiar ? envy of the neighbouring realms !

But why recount our grassy lawns alone,

While ev'n the tillage of our cultur'd plains, 390

With bossy turnip and luxuriant cole,

Learns thro' the circling year their flocks to feed ?

Ingenious Trade, to clothe the naked world

Her soft materials not from sheep alone,

From various animals, reeds, trees, and stones, 395

Collects sagacious. In Euboa's isle

A wondrous rock is found, of which are woven

Vests incombustible ; Batavia flax ;

Siam's warm marish yields the fissile cane ;

Soft Persia's silk ; Balasor's shady hills

400

Tough bark of trees ; Peruvian Pito grass ;

And every sultry clime the snowy down
 Of cotton, bursting from its stubborn shell
 To gleam amid the verdure of the grove.
 With glossy hair of Tibet's shagged goat 405
 Are light tiaras woven, that wreath the head,
 And airy float behind The beaver's flix
 Gives kindest warmth to weak enervate limbs,
 When the pale blood slow rises through the veins.
 Still shall o'er all prevail the shepherd's stores 410
 For num'rous uses known : none yield such warmth,
 Such beauteous hues receive, so long endure ;
 So pliant to the loom, so various, none.

Wild rove the flocks, no burd'ning Fleece they bear
 In fervid climes ; Nature gives not in vain. 415
 Carmenian wool on the broad tail alone
 Resplendent swells, enormous in its growth :
 As the sleek ram from green to green removes,
 On aiding wheels his heavy pride he draws,
 And glad resigns it for the hatters' use. 420

Ev'n in the new Columbian world appears
 The woolly covering : Apacheria's glades,
 And Canses', echo to the pipes and flocks
 Of foreign swains. While Time shakes down his sands,
 And works continual change, be none secure : 425
 Quicken your labours, brace your slackening nerves,
 Ye Britons ! nor sleep careless on the lap
 Of bounteous Nature ; she is elsewhere kind.
 See Mississippi lengthen on her lawns,
 Propitious to the shepherds ; see the sheep 430
 Of fertile Arica, like camels form'd,
 Which bear huge burdens to the sea-beat shore,
 And shine with Fleeces soft as feathery down.

Coarse Bothnic locks are not devoid of use ;
 They clothe the mountain carl, or mariner 435
 Labouring at the wet shrouds or stubborn helm,

While the loud billows dash the groaning deck,
 All may not Stroud's or Taunton's vestures wear,
 Nor what from Fleece Rataean mimic flowers
 Of rich Damascus: many a texture bright 440
 Of that material in Prætorium woven,
 Or in Norvicum, cheats the curious eye.

If any wool peculiar to our Isle
 Is given by Nature, it is the comber's lock,
 The soft, the snow-white, and the long-grown flake. 445
 Hither be turn'd the public's wakeful eye
 'This Golden Fleece to guard, with strictest watch,
 From the dark hand of pilfering Avarice,
 Who, like a spectre, haunts the midnight hour,
 When Nature wide around him lies supine 450
 And silent, in the tangles soft involv'd
 Of death-like sleep: he then the moment marks,
 While the pale moon illumes the trembling tide,
 Speedy to lift the canvass, bend the oar,
 And waft his thefts to the perfidious foe. 455

Happy the patriot who can teach the means
 To check his frauds, and yet untroubled leave
 Trade's open channels. Would a gen'rous aid
 To honest toil in Cambria's hilly tracks,
 Or where the Lune or Coker wind their streams, 460
 Be found sufficient? Far their airy fields,
 Far from infectious luxury, arise.
 O might their mazy dales and mountain sides
 With copious Fleeces of Ierne shine,
 And gulfy Caledonia, wisely bent 465
 On wealthy fisheries and flaxen webs,
 'Then would the sister realms amid their seas,
 Like the three Graces in harmonious fold,
 By mutual aid enhance their various charms,
 And bless remotest climes! —To this lov'd end 470
 Awake, Benevolence! to this lov'd end

Strain all thy nerves, and every thought explore.
 Far, far away whose passions would immure,
 In your own little hearts, the joys of life ;
 (Ye worms of pride !) for your repast alone 475
 Who claim all Nature's stores, woods, waters, meads,
 All her profusion ; whose vile hands would grasp
 The peasant's scantling, the weak widow's mite,
 And in the sepulchre of Self entomb
 Whate'er ye can, whate'er ye cannot, use. 480
 Know, for superior ends th' Almighty Pow'r
 (The Pow'r whose tender arms embrace the worm)
 Breathes o'er the foodful earth the breath of life,
 And forms us manifold ; allots to each
 His hair peculiar, wisdom, wit, and strength ; 485
 Wisdom, and wit, and strength, in sweet accord,
 To aid, to cheer, to counsel, to protect,
 And twist the mighty bond. Thus feeble man,
 With man united, is a nation strong ;
 Builds tow'ry cities, satiates every want, 490
 And makes the seas profound, and forests wild,
 'The gardens of his joys. Man, each man, 's born
 For the high bus'ness of the public good.

For me, 'tis mine to pray that men regard
 Their occupations with an honest heart 495
 And cheerful diligence : like the useful bee,
 To gather for the hive not sweets alone,
 But wax, and each material ; pleas'd to find
 Whate'er may sooth distress, and raise the fall'n,
 In life's rough race. O be it as my wish ! 500
 'Tis mine to teach th' inactive hand to reap
 Kind Nature's bounties, o'er the globe diffus'd.

For this I wake the weary hours of rest ;
 With this desire the merchant I attend ;
 By this impell'd the shepherd's hut I seek, 505
 And, as he tends his flock, his lectures hear

Attentive, pleas'd with pure simplicity,
 And rules divulg'd beneficent to sheep :
 Or turn the compass o'er the painted chart,
 To mark the ways of traffic ; Volga's stream, 510
 Cold Hudson's cloudy streights, warm Afric's cape,
 Latium's firm roads, the Ptolemean fosse,
 And China's long canals : those noble works,
 Those high effects of civilizing trade,
 Employ me, sedulous of public weal : 515
 Yet not unmindful of my sacred charge ;
 Thus also mindful, thus devising good
 At vacant seasons oft, when ev'ning mild
 Purples the vallies, and the shepherd counts
 His flock, returning to the quiet fold 520
 With dumb complacence ; for religion this,
 To give our every comfort to distress,
 And follow virtue with an humble mind ;
 This pure religion. Thus, in elder time,
 The reverend Blasius wore his leisure hours, 525
 And slumbers broken oft ; till, fill'd at length
 With inspiration, after various thought,
 And trials manifold, his well-known voice
 Gather'd the poor, and o'er Vulcanian stoves,
 With tepid lees of oil, and spiky comb, 530
 Shew'd how the Fleece might stretch to greater length,
 And cast a glossier whiteness. Wheels went round ;
 Matrons and maids with songs reliev'd their toils,
 And every loom receiv'd the softer yarn.
 What poor, what widow, Blasius ! did not bless 535
 Thy teaching hand ? thy bosom, like the morn,
 Op'ning its wealth, what nation did not seek
 Of thy new-modell'd wool the curious webs ?
 Hence the glad cities of the loom his name
 Honour with yearly festals : thro' their streets 540
 The pomp, with tuneful sounds and order just,

Denoting Labour's happy progress, moves,
 Procession slow and solemn : first the rout,
 Then servient youth, and magisterial eld ;
 Each after each, according to his rank, 545
 His sway, and office, in the commonweal ;
 And to the board of smiling Plenty's stores
 Assemble, where delicious cates and fruits
 Of every clime are pil'd ; and with free hand
 Toil only tastes the feast, by nerveless Ease 550
 Unrelish'd. Various mirth and song resound ;
 And oft they interpose improving talk,
 Divulging each to other knowledge rare,
 Sparks from experience that sometimes arise,
 Till night weighs down the sense, or morning's dawn 555
 Rouzes to labour man, to labour born.

Then the sleek brightening lock from hand to hand
 Renews its circling course ; this feels the card ;
 That in the comb admires its growing length ;
 This blanch'd, emerges from the oily wave ; 560
 And that the amber tint, or ruby, drinks.

For it suffices not in flow'ry vales
 Only to tend the flock, and shear soft wool ;
 Gums must be stor'd of Guinea's arid coast,
 Mexican woods, and India's brightening salts ; 565
 Fruits, herbage, sulphurs, minerals, to stain
 The Fleece prepar'd, which oil-imbibing earth
 Of Wooburn blanches, and keen alum-waves
 Intenerate. With curious eye observe
 In what variety the tribe of salts, 570
 Gums, ores, and liquors, eye-delighting hues
 Produce, abstersive or restrigent ; how
 Steel casts the sable ; how pale pewter, fus'd
 In fluid spirituous, the scarlet dye ;
 And how each tint is made, or mix'd, or chang'd, 575
 By mediums colourless ; why is the fume

Of sulphur kind to white and azure hues,
 Pernicious else? why no materials yield
 Singly their colours, those except that shine
 With topaz, sapphire, and cornelian rays : 580
 And why, tho' Nature's face is cloath'd in green,
 No green is found to beautify the Fleece
 But what repeated toil by mixture gives.

To find effects while causes lie conceal'd
 Reason uncertain tries : howe'er, kind Chance 585
 Oft, with equivalent discovery, pays
 Its wandering efforts. Thus the German sage,
 Diligent Drebet, o'er alchymic fire
 Seeking the secret source of gold, receiv'd
 Of alter'd cochineal the crimson store. 590

Tyrian Melcartus thus (the first who brought
 Tin's useful ore from Albion's distant isle,
 And for unwearied toils and arts the name
 Of Hercules acquir'd), when o'er the mouth
 Of his attendant sheep-dog he beheld 595
 The wounded murex strike a purple stain,
 The purple stain on Fleecy woofs he spread,
 Which lur'd the eye, adorning many a nymph,
 And drew the pomp of trade to rising Tyre.

Our vallies yield not, or but sparing yield, 600
 The dyer's gay materials. Only weld,
 Or root of madder, here, or purple woad,
 By which our naked ancestors obscur'd
 Their hardy limbs, inwrought with mystic forms,
 Like Egypt's obelisks. The powerful sun 605
 Hot India's zone with gaudy pencil paints,
 And drops delicious tints o'er hill and dale,
 Which trade to us conveys. Not tints alone ;
 Trade to the good physician gives his balms ;
 Gives cheering cordials to th' afflicted heart ; 610
 Gives to the wealthy delicacies high ;

Gives to the curious works of Nature rare ;
 And when the priest displays, in just discourse,
 Him, the all-wise Creator, and declares
 His presence, pow'r, and goodness, unconfin'd, 615
 'Tis Trade, attentive voyager, who fills
 His lips with argument. To censure Trade,
 Or hold her busy people in contempt,
 Let none presume. The dignity, and grace,
 And weal, of human life, their fountains owe 620
 To seeming imperfections, to vain wants
 Or real exigencies ; passions swift
 Forerunning reason ; strong contrarious bents,
 The steps of men dispersing wide abroad
 O'er realms and seas. There, in the solemn scene, 625
 Infinite wonders glare before their eyes,
 Humiliating the mind enlarg'd ; for they
 The clearest sense of Deity receive
 Who view the widest prospect of his works,
 Ranging the globe with trade thro' various climes ; 630
 Who see the signatures of boundless love,
 Nor less the judgments of Almighty Pow'r,
 That warn the wicked, and the wretch who 'scapes
 From human justice ; who, astonish'd, view
 Etna's loud thunders and tempestuous fires ; 635
 The dust of Carthage ; desert shores of Nile ;
 Or Tyre's abandon'd summit, crown'd of old
 With stately towers ; whose merchants, from their isles
 And radiant thrones, assembled in her marts ;
 Whither Arabia, whither Kedar, brought 640
 Their shaggy goats, their flocks, and bleating lambs ;
 Where rich Damascus pil'd his Fleeces white,
 Prepar'd, and thirsty for the double tint
 And flow'ring shuttle. While th' admiring world
 Crowded her streets, ah ! then the hand of Pride 645
 Sow'd imperceptible his pois'nous weed,

Which crept destructive up her lofty domes,
 As ivy creeps around the graceful trunk
 Of some tall oak. Her lofty domes no more,
 Not ev'n the ruins of her pomp, remain ; 650
 Not ev'n the dust they sunk in; by the breath
 Of the Omnipotent offended hurl'd
 Down to the bottom of the stormy deep :
 Only the solitary rock remains,
 Her ancient site ; a monument to those 655
 Who toil and wealth exchange for sloth and pride.

 BOOK III

PROCEED, Arcadian Muse ! resume the pipe
 Of Hermes, long disus'd, tho' sweet the tone,
 And to the songs of Nature's choristers
 Harmonious. Audience pure by thy delight,
 Tho' few ; for every note which Virtue wounds, 5
 However pleasing to the vulgar herd,
 To the purg'd ear is discord. Yet too oft
 Has false dissembling Vice to am'rous airs
 The reed apply'd and heedless youth allur'd ;
 Too oft, with bolder sound, inflam'd the rage 10
 Of horrid war. Let now the Fleecy looms
 Direct our rural numbers, as of old,
 When plains and sheepfolds were the Muses' haunts.
 So thou, the friend of every virtuous deed
 And aim, tho' feeble, shalt these rural lays 15
 Approve, O Heathcote ! whose benevolence
 Visits our vallies, where the pasture spreads,

And where the bramble, and would justly act
 True charity, by teaching idle Want
 And Vice the inclination to do good ; 20
 Good to themselves, and in themselves to all,
 Thro' grateful toil. Ev'n Nature lives by toil :
 Beast, bird, air, fire, the heav'ns, and rolling worlds,
 All live by action : nothing lies at rest
 But death and ruin : man is born to care ; 25
 Fashion'd, improv'd, by labour. This of old
 Wise states observing, gave that happy law
 Which doom'd the rich and needy, every rank,
 To manual occupation ; and oft call'd
 Their chieftains from the spade, or furrowing plough, 30
 Or bleating sheepfold. Hence utility
 Thro' all conditions ; hence the joys of health ;
 Hence strength of arm, and clear judicious thought ;
 Hence corn, and wine, and oil, and all in life
 Delectable. What simple Nature yields 35
 (And Nature does her part) are only rude
 Materials, cumbers on the thorny ground ;
 'Tis toil that makes them wealth ; that makes the
 (Yet useless, rising in unshapen heaps) [Fleece
 Anon, in curious woofs of beauteous hue, 40
 A vesture usefully succinct and warm,
 Or, trailing in the length of graceful folds,
 A royal mantle. Come, ye village Nymphs !
 The scattered mists reveal the dusky hills ;
 Gray dawn appears ; the golden Morn ascends, 45
 And paints the glitt'ring rocks, and purple woods,
 And flaming spires : arise, begin your toils ;
 Behold the Fleece beneath the spiky comb
 Drop its long locks, or from the mingling card
 Spread in soft flakes, and swell the whiten'd floor. 50
 Come, village Nymphs, ye Matrons, and ye Maids !
 Receive the soft material ; with light step

Whether ye turn around the spacious wheel,
 Or, patient-sitting, that revolve which forms
 A narrower circle. On the brittle work 55
 Point your quick eye, and let the hand assist
 To guide and stretch the gently-lessening thread ;
 Even, unknotted, twine will praise your skill.
 A diff'rent spinning every diff'rent web
 Asks from your glowing fingers ; some require 60
 The more compact and some the looser wreath ;
 The last for softness, to delight the touch
 Of chamber'd delicacy : scarce the cirque
 Need turn around, or twine the length'ning flake.
 There are, to speed their labour, who prefer 65
 Wheels double spol'd, which yield to either hand
 A sev'ral line ; and many yet adhere
 To th' ancient distaff, at the bosom fix'd,
 Casting the whirling spindle as they walk :
 At home, or in the sheepfold, or the mart, 70
 Alike the work proceeds. This method still
 Norvicum favours, and th' Icenian towns :
 It yields their airy stuffs an apter thread.
 This was of old, in no inglorious days,
 The mode of spinning when th' Egyptian prince 75
 A golden distaff gave that beauteous nymph,
 Too-beauteous Helen ! no uncourtly gift
 Then, when each gay diversion of the fair
 Led to ingenious use. But patient art,
 That on experience works, from hour to hour, 80
 Sagacious, has a spiral engine form'd,
 Which on an hundred spoles, an hundred threads,
 With one huge wheel, by lapse of water, twines,
 Few hands requiring, easy-tended work,
 That copiously supplies the greedy loom. 85
 Nor hence, ye Nymphs ! let anger cloud your brows ;
 The more is wrought the more is still requir'd :

Blithe o'er your toils, with wonted song, proceed :
 Fear not surcharge ; your hands will ever find
 Ample employment. In the strife of trade 90
 These curious instruments of speed obtain
 Various advantage, and the diligent
 Supply with exercise, as fountains sure,
 Which ever-gliding feed the flow'ry lawn :
 Nor, should the careful State, severely kind, 95
 In every province to the house of toil
 Compel the vagrant, and each implement
 Of ruder art, the comb, the card, the wheel,
 Teach their unwilling hands, nor yet complain :
 Yours with the public good shall ever rise, 100
 Ever, while o'er the lawns and airy downs
 The bleating sheep and shepherd's pipe are heard ;
 While in the brook ye blanch the glist'ning Fleece,
 And th' am'rous youth, delighted with your toils,
 Quavers the choicest of his sonnets, warm'd 105
 By growing traffic, friend to wedded love.

The am'rous youth, with various hopes inflam'd,
 Now on the busy stage see him step forth,
 With beating breast : high-honour'd he beholds
 Rich industry. First he bespeaks a loom ; 110
 From some thick wood the carpenter selects
 A slender oak, or beech of glossy trunk,
 Or sapling ash : he shapes the sturdy beam,
 The posts, and treadles, and the frame combines :
 The smith, with iron-screws and plated hoops, 115
 Confirms the strong machine, and gives the bolt
 That strains the roll. To these the turner's lathe
 And graver's knife the hollow shuttle add.
 Various professions in the work unite,
 For each on each depends. Thus he acquires 120
 The curious engine, work of subtle skill ;
 Howe'er in vulgar use around the globe

Frequent observ'd, of high antiquity
 No doubtful mark : th' advent'rous voyager,
 Toss'd over ocean to remotest shores, 125
 Hears on remotest shores the murm'ring loom,
 Sees the deep-furrowing plough and harrow'd field,
 The wheel-mov'd wagon, and the discipline
 Of strong-yok'd steers. What needful art is new?

Next the industrious youth employs his care 130
 To store soft yarn ; and now he strains the warp
 Along the garden-walk, or highway side,
 Smoothing each thread ; now fits it to the loom,
 And sits before the work : from hand to hand
 The thready shuttle glides along the lines, 135
 Which open to the woof and shut altern ;
 And ever and anon, to firm the work,
 Against the web is driv'n the noisy frame,
 That o'er the level rushes, like a surge
 Which, often dashing on the sandy beach, 140
 Compacts the traveller's road : from hand to hand
 Again, across the lines oft op'ning, glides
 The thready shuttle, while the web apace
 Increases, as the light of eastern skies,
 Spread by the rosy fingers of the morn, 145
 And all the fair expanse with beauty glows.

Or if the broader mantle be the task,
 He chuses some companion to his toil.
 From side to side, with amicable aim,
 Each to the other darts the nimble bolt, 150
 While friendly converse, prompted by the work,
 Kindles improvement in the op'ning mind.

What need we name the sev'ral kinds of looms ?
 Those delicate, to whose fair-colour'd threads
 Hang figur'd weights, whose various numbers
 guide 155

The artist's hand : he, unseen, flow'rs, and trees,

And vales, and azure hills, unerring works :
 Or that whose num'rous needles, glitt'ring bright,
 Weave the warm hose to cover tender limbs ;
 Modern invention ; modern is the want. 160

Next from the slacken'd beam the woof, unroll'd,
 Near some clear-sliding river, Aire or Stroud,
 Is by the noisy fulling-mill receiv'd,
 Where tumbling waters turn enormous wheels,
 And hammers, rising and descending, learn 165
 To imitate the industry of man.

Oft the wet web is steep'd, and often rais'd,
 Fast dripping, to the river's grassy bank,
 And sinewy arms of men, with full-strain'd strength
 Wring out the latent water : then up-hung 170
 On rugged tenters, to the fervid sun
 Its level surface, reeking, it expands,
 Still brightening in each rigid discipline,
 And gathering worth, as human life in pains,
 Conflicts, and troubles. Soon the clothier's shears 175
 And burler's thistle skim the surface sheen.
 The round of work goes on from day to day,
 Season to season. So the husbandman
 Pursues his cares ; his plough divides the glebe ;
 The seed is sown ; rough rattle o'er the clods 180
 The harrow's teeth ; quick weeds his hoe subdues ;
 The fickle labours, and the slow team strains,
 Till grateful harvest-home rewards his toils.

The ingenious artist, learn'd in drugs, bestows
 The last improvement ; for th' unlabour'd Fleece 185
 Rare is permitted to imbibe the dye.
 In penetrating waves of boiling vats
 The snowy web is steep'd, with grain of weld,
 Fustic, or logwood, mix'd, or cochineal,
 Or the dark purple pulp of Pictish woad, 190
 Of stain tenacious, deep as summer skies,

Like those that canopy the bow'rs of Stowe
 After soft rains, when birds their notes attune,
 Ere the melodious nightingale begins.

From yon broad vase behold the saffron woofs 195
 Beauteous emerge ; from these the azure rise ;
 This glows with crimson ; that the auburn holds ;
 These shall the prince with purple robes adorn,
 And those the warrior mark, and those the priest.

Few are the primal colours of the art ; 200
 Five only ; black, and yellow, blue, brown, red ;
 Yet hence innumerable hues arise.

That stain alone is good which bears unchang'd
 Dissolving waters, and calcining suns,
 And thieving air's attacks. How great the need 205
 With utmost caution to prepare the woof,
 To seek the best-adapted dyes, and salts,
 And purest gums ! since your whole skill consists
 In opening well the fibres of the woof
 For the reception of the beauteous dye, 210
 And wedging every grain in every pore,
 Firm as a diamond in rich gold enchas'd.

But what the pow'rs which lock them in the web ;
 Whether incrusting salts, or weight of air,
 Or fountain-water's cold contracting wave, 215
 Or all combin'd, it well befits to know.

Ah ! wherefore have we lost our old repute ?
 And who inquires the cause why Gallia's sons
 In depth and brilliancy of hues excel ?
 Yet yield not, Britons ! grasp in every art 220
 The foremost name. Let others tamely view,
 On crowded Smyrna's and Byzantium's strand,
 The haughty Turk despise their proffer'd bales.

Now see, o'er vales and peopled mountain-tops
 The welcome traders gathering every web, 225
 Industrious, every web too few. Alas !

Successful oft their industry, when cease
 The loom and shuttle in the troubled streets ;
 Their motion stopp'd by wild Intemperance,
 'Toil's scoffing foe, who lures the giddy rout 230
 To scorn their task-work, and to vagrant life
 Turns their rude steps, while Misery, among
 The cries of infants, haunts their mould'ring huts.

O when, thro' every province, shall be rais'd
 Houses of labour, seats of kind constraint, 235
 For those who now delight in fruitless sports
 More than in cheerful works of virtuous trade,
 Which honest wealth would yield, and portion due
 Of public welfare? Ho, ye Poor ! who seek,
 Among the dwellings of the diligent, 240
 For sustenance unearn'd ; who stroll abroad
 From house to house, with mischievous intent,
 Feigning misfortune : Ho, ye Lamé ! ye Blind !
 Ye languid limbs, with real want oppress'd,
 Who tread the rough highways, and mountains
 wild, 245

Thro' storms, and rains, and bitterness of heart ;
 Ye children of Affliction ! be compell'd
 To happiness : the long-wish'd daylight dawns,
 When charitable Rigcur shall detain
 Your step-bruis'd feet. Ev'n now the sons of
 Trade, 250

Where'er their cultivated hamlets smile,
 Erect the mansion ; here soft Fleeces shine ;
 The card awaits you, and the comb and wheel :
 Here shroud you from the thunder of the storm ;
 No rain shall wet your pillow : here abounds 255
 Pure beverage : here your viands are prepar'd :
 To heal each sickness the physician waits,
 And priest entreats to give your Maker praise.

Behold in Calder's vale, where wide around
 Unnumber'd villas creep the shrubby hills, 260
 A spacious dome for this fair purpose rise :
 High o'er the open gates, with gracious air,
 Eliza's image stands. By gentle steps
 Up-rais'd, from room to room we slowly walk,
 And view with wonder, and with silent joy, 265
 The sprightly scene ; where many a busy hand,
 Where spoles, cards, wheels, and looms, with motion
 quick,
 And ever-murm'ring sound, th' unwonted sense
 Wrap in surprise. To see them all employ'd,
 All blithe, it gives the spreading heart delight, 270
 As neither meats, nor drinks, nor aught of joy
 Corporeal can bestow. Nor less they gain
 Virtue than wealth, while, on their useful works
 From day to day intent, in their full minds
 Evil no place can find. With equal scale 275
 Some deal abroad the well-assorted Fleece ;
 These card the short, those comb the longer
 flake ;
 Others the harsh and clotted lock receive,
 Yet sever and refine with patient toil,
 And bring to proper use. Flax too, and hemp, 280
 Excite their diligence. The younger hands
 Ply at the easy work of winding yarn
 On swiftly-circling engines, and their notes
 Warble together as a choir of larks ;
 Such joy arises in the mind employ'd. 285
 Another scene displays the more robust
 Rasping or grinding tough Brasilian woods,
 And what Campeachy's disputable shore
 Copious affords to tinge the thrifty web,
 And the Caribbee isles, whose dulcet canes 290

Equal the honeycomb. We next are shown
 A circular machine, of new design,
 In conic shape : it draws and spins a thread
 Without the tedious toil of needless hands.
 A wheel, invisible, beneath the floor, 295
 To every member of th' harmonious frame
 Gives necessary motion. One, intent,
 O'erlooks the work : the carded wool, he says,
 Is smoothly lapp'd around those cylinders,
 Which, gently turning, yield it to yon' cirque 300
 Of upright spindles, which with rapid whirl
 Spin out, in long extent, an even twine.

From this delightful mansion (if we seek
 Still more to view the gifts which honest toil
 Distributes) take we now our eastward course 305
 To the rich fields of Burstal. Wide around
 Hillock and valley, farm and village, smile ;
 And ruddy roofs and chimney-tops appear
 Of busy Leeds, up-wafting to the clouds
 The incense of thanksgiving : all is joy ; 310
 And trade and bus'ness guide the living scene,
 Roll the full cars, adown the winding Aire
 Load the slow-sailing barges, pile the pack
 On the long tinkling train of slow-pac'd steeds.
 As when a sunny day invites abroad 315
 The sedulous ants, they issue from their cells
 In bands unnumber'd, eager for their work,
 O'er high o'er low they lift, they draw, they haste
 With warm affection to each other's aid,
 Repeat their virtuous efforts, and succeed. 320
 Thus all is here in motion, all is life :
 The creaking wain brings copious store of corn ;
 The grazier's sleeky kine obstruct the roads ;
 The neat-dress'd housewives, for the festal board

Crown'd with full baskets, in the field-way paths 325
 Come tripping on ; the echoing hills repeat
 The stroke of axe and hammer ; scaffolds rise,
 And growing edifices ; heaps of stone,
 Beneath the chisel, beauteous shapes assume
 Of frieze and column. Some, with even line, 330
 New streets are marking in the neighb'ring fields,
 And sacred domes of worship. Industry,
 Which dignifies the artist, lifts the swain,
 And the straw cottage to a palace turns,
 Over the work presides. Such was the scene 335
 Of hurrying Carthage, when the Trojan chief
 First view'd her growing turrets : so appear
 Th' increasing walls of busy Manchester,
 Sheffield, and Birmingham, whose reddening fields
 Rise and enlarge their suburbs. Lo ! in throngs, 340
 For every realm, the careful factors meet,
 Whispering each other. In long ranks the bales,
 Like War's bright files, beyond the sight extend.
 Straight, ere the sounding bell the signal strikes,
 Which ends the hour of traffic, they conclude 345
 The speedy compact ; and, well-pleas'd transfer,
 With mutual benefit, superior wealth
 To many a kingdom's rent, or tyrant's hoard.
 Whate'er is excellent in art proceeds
 From labour and endurance. Deep the oak 350
 Must sink in stubborn earth its roots obscure,
 That hopes to lift its branches to the skies.
 Gold cannot gold appear until man's toil
 Discloses wide the mountain's hidden ribs,
 And digs the dusky ore, and breaks and grinds 355
 Its gritty parts, and laves in limpid streams
 With oft-repeated toil, and oft in fire
 The metal purifies : with the fatigue
 And tedious process of its painful works

The lusty sicken, and the feeble die. 360
 But cheerful are the labours of the loom,
 By health and ease accompany'd : they bring
 Superior treasures speedier to the state
 Than those of deep Peruvian mines, where slaves
 (Wretched requital !) drink, with trembling hand, 365
 Pale Palsy's baneful cup. Our happy swains
 Behold arising in their fattening flocks
 A double wealth, more rich than Belgium's boast,
 Who tends the culture of the flaxen reed ;
 Or the Cathayans, whose ignobler care 370
 Nurses the silk-worm ; or of India's sons,
 Who plant the cotton grove by Ganges' stream.
 Nor do their toils and products furnish more
 Than gauds and dresses, of fantastic web,
 To the luxurious : but our kinder toils 375
 Give clothing to necessity ; keep warm
 Th' unhappy wanderer, on the mountain wild
 Benighted, while the tempest beats around.
 No, ye soft sons of Ganges, and of Ind, 380
 Ye feebly delicate ! life little needs
 Your feminine toys, nor asks your nerveless arm
 To cast the strong-slung shuttle or the spear.
 Can ye defend your country from the storm
 Of strong invasion ? Can ye want endure, 385
 In the besieged fort, with courage firm ?
 Can ye the weather-beaten vessel steer,
 Climb the tall mast, direct the stubborn helm
 Mid wild discordant waves with steady course ?
 Can ye lead out, to distant colonies,
 Th' o'erflowings of a people, or your wrong'd 390
 Brethren, by impious persecution driven,
 And arm their breasts with fortitude to try
 New regions, climes, tho' barren, yet beyond
 The baneful pow'r of tyrants ? These are deeds

To which their hardy labours well prepare 395
 The sinewy arm of Albion's sons. Pursue,
 Ye sons of Albion ! with unyielding heart,
 Your hardy labours : let the sounding loom
 Mix with the melody of every vale ;
 The loom, that long renown'd wide envy'd gift 400
 Of wealthy Flandria, who the boon receiv'd
 From fair Venetia ; she from Grecian nymphs ;
 They from Phenicé, who obtain'd the dole
 From old Ægyptus. Thus around the globe
 The golden-footed Sciences their path 405
 Mark, like the sun, enkindling life and joy,
 And follow'd close by Ignorance and Pride,
 Lead Day and Night o'er realms. Our day arose
 When Alva's tyranny the weaving arts
 Drove from the fertile vallies of the Scheld. 410
 With speedy wing and scatter'd course they fled,
 Like a community of bees, disturb'd
 By some relentless swain's rapacious hand ;
 While good Eliza to the fugitives
 Gave gracious welcome ; as wise Egypt erst 415
 To troubled Nilus, whose nutritious flood
 With annual gratitude enrich'd her meads.
 Then from fair Antwerp an industrious train
 Cross'd the smooth channel of our smiling seas,
 And in the vales of Cantium, on the banks 420
 Of Stour alighted, and the naval wave
 Of spacious Medway : some on gentle Yare
 And fertile Waveney pitch'd, and made their seats
 Pleasant Norvicum and Colcestria's tow'rs :
 Some to the Darent sped their happy way : 425
 Berghem, and Sluys, and elder Bruges, chose
 Antona's chalky plains, and stretched their tents
 Down to Clausentum, and that bay supine
 Beneath the shade of Vecta's cliffy isle.

Soon o'er the hospitable realm they spread, 430
 With cheer reviv'd, and in Sabrina's flood,
 And the Silurian Tame, their textures blanch'd
 Not undelighted with Vigornia's spires,
 Nor those by Vaga's stream, from ruins rais'd
 Of ancient Ariconium ; nor less pleas'd 435
 With Salop's various scenes, and that soft track
 Of Cambria deep embay'd, Dimetian land,
 By green hills fenc'd, by ocean's murmur lull'd,
 Nurse of the rustic bard who now resounds
 The fortunes of the Fleece ; whose ancestors 440
 Were fugitives from Superstition's rage,
 And erst from Devon thither brought the loom,
 Where ivy'd walls of old Kidwelly's tow'rs,
 Nodding, still on their gloomy brows project
 Lancastria's arms, emboss'd in mould'ring stone. 445

Thus, then, on Albion's coast the exil'd band,
 From rich Menapian towns, and the green banks
 Of Scheld, alighted, and, alighting, sang
 Grateful thanksgiving. Yet at times they shift
 Their habitations, when the hand of Pride, 450
 Restraint, or southern Luxury, disturbs
 Their industry, and urges them to vales
 Of the Brigantes ; where, with happier care
 Inspirited, their art improves the Fleece,
 Which occupation erst, and wealth immense, 455
 Gave Brabant's swarming habitants, what time
 We were their shepherds only ; from which state
 With friendly arm they rais'd us : nathless some
 Among our old and stubborn swains misdeem'd
 And envy'd who enrich'd them ; envy'd those 460
 Whose virtues taught the varlety of towns
 To useful toil to turn the pilfering hand.

And still when bigotry's black clouds arise,
 (For oft they sudden rise in Papal realms)

They from their isle, as from some ark secure, 465
 Careless, unpitying, view the fiery bolts
 Of Superstition and tyrannic rage,
 And all the fury of the rolling storm,
 Which fierce pursues the sufferers in their flight.
 Shall not our gates, shall not Britannia's arms, 470
 Spread ever open to receive their flight?
 A virtuous people, by distresses oft
 (Distresses for the sake of truth endur'd)
 Corrected, dignify'd ; creating good
 Wherever they inhabit : this our isle 475
 Has oft experienc'd ; witness all ye realms
 Of either hemisphere where commerce flows:
 Th' important truth is stamp'd on every bale ;
 Each glossy cloth, and drape of mantle warm,
 Receives th' impression ; every airy woof, 480
 Cheyney, and baize, and serge, and alepine,
 Tammy, and crape, and the long countless list
 Of woollen webs ; and every work of steel ;
 And that crystalline metal, blown or fus'd,
 Limpid as water dropping from the clefts 485
 Of mossy marble : not to name the aids
 Their wit has giv'n the Fleece, now taught to link
 With flax, or cotton, or the silk-worm's thread,
 And gain the graces of variety ;
 Whether to form the matron's decent robe, 490
 Or the thin-shading trail for Agra's nymphs ;
 Or solemn curtains, whose long gloomy folds
 Surround the soft pavilions of the rich.
 They, too, the many-colour'd Arras taught
 To mimic nature, and the airy shapes 495
 Of sportive fancy ; such as oft appear
 In old Mosaic pavements, when the plough
 Upturns the crumbling glebe of Weldon field,
 Or that o'ershaded erst by Woodstock's bower,

Now grac'd by Blenheim, in whose stately rooms 500
 Rise glowing tapestries that lure the eye
 With Marlborough's wars : here Schellenbergh exults
 Behind surrounding hills of ramparts steep,
 And vales of trenches dark ; each hideous pass
 Armies defend ; yet on the hero leads 505
 His Britons, like a torrent, o'er the mounds.
 Another scene is Blenheim's glorious field,
 And the red Danube. Here the rescued states
 Crowding beneath his shield ; there Ramillies'
 Important battle : next the tenfold chain 510
 Of Arleux burst, and th' adamantine gates
 Of Gaul flung open to the tyrant's throne.
 A shade obscures the rest—Ah ! then, what pow'r
 Invidious from the lifted sickle snatch'd
 The harvest of the plain ? So lively glows 515
 The fair delusion, that our passions rise
 In the beholding, and the glories share
 Of visionary battle. This bright art
 Did zealous Europe learn of Pagan hands,
 While she assay'd with rage of holy war, 520
 To desolate their fields : but old the skill ;
 Long were the Phrygians' picturing looms renown'd ;
 Tyre also, wealthy seat of arts, excell'd,
 And elder Sidon, in th' historic web.
 Far-distant Tibet in her gloomy woods 525
 Rears the gay tent, of blended wool unwoven.
 And glutinous materials : the Chinese
 Their porcelain, Japan its varnish, boasts.
 Some fair peculiar graces every realm,
 And each from each a share of wealth acquires. 530
 But chief by numbers of industrious hands
 A nation's wealth is counted : numbers raise
 Warm emulation : where that virtue dwells
 There will be Traffic's seat ; there will she build

Her rich emporium. Hence, ye happy Swains ! 535
 With hospitality inflame your breast,
 And emulation: the whole world receive,
 And with their arts, their virtues, deck your isle.
 Each clime, each sea, the spacious orb of each,
 Shall join their various stores, and amply feed 540
 The mighty brotherhood, while ye proceed,
 Active and enterprising, or to teach
 The stream a naval course, or till the wild,
 Or drain the fen, or stretch the long canal,
 Or plough the fertile billows of the deep: 545
 Why to the narrow circle of our coast
 Should we submit our limits, while each wind
 Assists the stream and sail, and the wide main
 Woos us in every port? See Belgium build
 Upon the foodful brine her envy'd power, 550
 And half her people floating on the wave,
 Expand her fishy regions: thus our Isle,
 Thus only may Britannia be enlarg'd.—
 But whither, by the visions of the theme
 Smit with sublime delight, but whither strays 555
 The raptur'd Muse, forgetful of her talk ?
 No common pleasure warms the gen'rous mind
 When it beholds the labours of the loom ;
 How widely round the globe they are dispers'd,
 From little tenements by wood or croft, 560
 Thro' many a slender path, how sedulous,
 As rills to rivers broad, they speed their way
 To public roads, to Fosse, or Watling-street,
 Or Armine, ancient works ; and thence explore,
 Thro' ev'ry navigable wave, the sea 565
 That laps the green earth round : thro' Tyne and Tees,
 Thro' Weare and Lune, and merchandising Hull,
 And Swale and Aire, whose crystal waves reflect
 The various colours of the tinctur'd web ;

Thro' Ken, swift rolling down his rocky dale, 570
 Like giddy youth impetuous, then at Wick
 Curbing his train, and with the sober pace
 Of cautious eld meand'ring to the deep ;
 Thro' Dart and sullen Exe, whose murm'ring wave
 En vies the Dune and Rother, who have won 575
 The serge and kersie to their blanching streams ;
 Thro' 'Towy, winding under Merlin's tow'rs,
 And Usk that, frequent among hoary rocks,
 On her deep waters paints th' impending scene,
 Wild torrents, crags, and woods, and mountain
 snows. 580
 The northern Cambrians, an industrious tribe,
 Carry their labours on pigmean steeds,
 Of size exceeding not Leicestrian sheep,
 Yet strong and sprightly : over hill and dale
 They travel unfatigu'd, and lay their bales 585
 In Salop's streets, beneath whose lofty walls
 Pearly Sabrina waits them with her barks,
 And spreads the swelling sheet. For nowhere far
 From some transparent river's naval course
 Arise and fall our various hills and vales, 590
 No where far distant from the masted wharf.
 We need not vex the strong laborious hand
 With toil enormous, as th' Egyptian king,
 Who joined the sable waters of the Nile
 From Memphis' towers to th' Erythræan gulf ; 595
 Or as the monarch of enfeebled Gaul,
 Whose will imperious forc'd an hundred streams
 Thro' many a forest, many a spacious wild,
 To stretch their scanty trains from sea to sea,
 That some unprofitable skiff might float 600
 Across irriguous dales and hollow'd rocks.
 Far easier pains may swell our gentler floods,
 And thro' the centre of the isle conduct

To naval union. Trent and Severn's wave,
By plains alone parted, woo to join 605
Majestic Thamisis. With their silver urns
The nimble-footed Naiads of the springs
Await, upon the dewy lawn, to speed
And celebrate the union ; and the light
Wood-nymphs, and those who o'er the grots preside, 610
Whose stores bituminous, with sparkling fires,
In summer's tedious absence, cheer the swains,
Long sitting at the loom ; and those besides
Who crown with yellow sheaves the farmer's hopes,
And all the genii of commercial toil : 615
These on the dewy lawns await to speed
And celebrate the union, that the Fleece
And glossy web to every port around
May lightly glide along. Ev'n now behold,
Adown a thousand floods the burden'd barks, 620
With white sails glist'ning, thro' the gloomy woods
Haste to their harbours. See the silver maze
Of stately Thamisis, ever checker'd o'er
With deeply-laden barges, gliding smooth
And constant as his stream : in growing pomp, 625
By Neptune still attended, slow he rolls
To great Augusta's mart, where lofty Trade,
Amid a thousand golden spires enthron'd,
Gives audience to the world ; the strand around
Close swarms with busy crowds of many a realm. 630
What bales, what wealth, what industry, what fleets !
Lo, from the simple Fleece how much proceeds !

BOOK IV

Now, with our woolly treasures amply stor'd,
 Glide the tall fleets into the wid'ning main,
 A floating forest : every sail unfurl'd
 Swells to the wind, and gilds the azure sky.
 Meantime, in pleasing care, the pilot steers 5
 Steady ; with eye intent upon the steel,
 Steady before the breeze the pilot steers,
 While gaily o'er the waves the mounting prows
 Dance, like a shoal of dolphins, and begin
 To streak with various paths the hoary deep. 10
 Batavia's shallow sounds by some are sought,
 Or sandy Elb or Weser, who receive
 The swain's and peasant's toil with grateful hand,
 Which copious gives return ; while some explore
 Deep Finnic gulfs, and a new shore and mart, 15
 The bold creation of that Kesar's power,
 Illustrious Peter ! whose magnificent toils
 Repair the distant Caspian, and restore
 To trade its ancient ports. Some Thanet's strand
 And Dover's chalky cliff behind them turn. 20
 Soon sinks away the green and level beach
 Of Rumney Marish and Rye's silent port,
 By angry Neptune clos'd, and Vecta's isle,
 Like the pale moon in vapour, faintly bright.
 An hundred op'ning marts are seen, are lost ; 25
 Devonia's hills retire, and Edgecumb Mount,
 Waving its gloomy groves, delicious scene !
 Yet steady o'er the waves they steer ; and now
 The fluctuating world of waters wide,

In boundless magnitude, around them swells, 30
 O'er whose imaginary brim nor towns,
 Nor woods, nor mountain-tops, nor aught appears,
 But Phœbus' orb, refulgent lamp of light,
 Millions of leagues aloft : heav'n's azure vault
 Bends overhead, majestic, to its base, 35
 Uninterrupted clear circumference ;
 'Till, rising o'er the flickering waves, the Cape
 Of Finisterre, a cloudy spot, appears.
 Again, and oft, the advent'rous sails disperse :
 These to Iberia, others to the coast 40
 Of Lusitania, th' ancient Tarshish deem'd
 Of Solomon ; fair regions ! with the webs
 Of Norwich pleas'd, or those of Manchester ;
 Light airy clothing for their vacant swains
 And visionary monks. We, in return, 45
 Receive Cantabrian steel, and Fleeces soft,
 Segovian or Castilian, far renowned ;
 And gold's attractive metal, pledge of wealth,
 Spur of activity, to good or ill
 Pow'rful incentive ; or Hesperian fruits, 50
 Fruits of spontaneous growth, the citron bright,
 'The fig, and orange, and heart-cheering wine.
 Those ships, from ocean broad, which voyage thro'
 The gates of Hercules, find many seas,
 And bays unnumber'd, opening to their keels ; 55
 But shores inhospitable oft to fraud
 And rapine turn'd or dreary tracks become
 Of desolation. The proud Roman coasts,
 Fall'n, like the Punic, to the dashing waves
 Resign their ruins. Tiber's boasted flood, 60
 Whose pompous moles o'erlook'd the subject deep,
 Now creeps along thro' brakes and yellow dust,
 While Neptune scarce perceives its murm'ring rill.
 Such are th' effects when virtue slacks her hand ;

Wild Nature back returns. Along these shores 65
 Neglected Trade with difficulty toils,
 Collecting slender stores, the sun-dry'd grape,
 Or capers from the rock, that prompt the taste
 Of Luxury. Ev'n Egypt's fertile strand,
 Bereft of human discipline has lost 70
 Its ancient lustre : Alexandria's port,
 Once the metropolis of trade, as Tyre
 And elder Sidon, as the Attic town,
 Beautiful Athens, as rich Corinth, Rhodes,
 Unhonour'd droops. Of all the num'rous marts 75
 That in those glitt'ring seas with splendour rose,
 Only Byzantium, of peculiar site,
 Remains in prosperous state, and Tripolis,
 And Smyrna, sacred ever to the Muse.

To these resort the delegates of Trade, 80
 Social in life, a virtuous brotherhood,
 And bales of softest wool from Bradford looms,
 Or Stroud, dispense ; yet see with vain regret
 Their stores, once highly priz'd, no longer now
 Or sought, or valued : copious webs arrive, 85
 Smooth wov'n, of other than Britannia's Fleece.
 On the throng'd strand alluring: the great skill
 Of Gaul, and greater industry, prevails,
 That proud imperious foe. Yet, ah—it is not—
 Wrong not the Gaul ; it is the foe within 90
 Impairs our ancient marts, it is the bribe ;
 'Tis he who pours into the shops of trade
 That impious poison : it is he who gains
 The sacred seat of parliament by means
 That vitiate and emasculate the mind ; 95
 By sloth, by lewd intemperance, and a scene
 Of riot worse than that which ruin'd Rome.
 This, this the Tartar and remote Chinese,
 And all the brotherhood of life, bewail.

Meantime (while those who dare be just oppose 100
 The various powers of many-headed Vice),
 Ye Delegates of Trade! by patience rise
 O'er difficulties, in this sultry clime
 Note what is found of use; the flix of goat,
 Red wool, and balm, and Caufee's berry brown 105
 Or drooping gum, or opium's lenient drug;
 Unnumbered arts await them, trifles oft,
 By skilful labour, rise to high esteem.
 Nor what the peasant, near some lucid wave
 Pactolus, Simois, or Mæander slow, 110
 Renowned in story, with his plough upturns,
 Neglect; the hoary medal, and the vase,
 Statue, and bust, of old magnificence
 Beautiful relics: oh! could modern time
 Restore the mimic art, and the clear mien 115
 Of patriot sages, Walsinghams and Yorkes,
 And Cecils in long-lasting stone preserve!
 But mimic art and nature are impair'd—
 Impair'd they seem—or in a varied dress
 Delude our eyes: the world in change delights: 120
 Change then your searches, with the varied modes
 And wants of realms. Sabean frankincense
 Rare is collected now: few altars smoke
 Now in the idol fane; Panchaia views
 Trade's busy fleets regardless pass her coast: 125
 Nor frequent are the freights of snow-white woofs
 Since Rome, no more the mistress of the world,
 Varies her garb, and treads her darken'd streets
 With gloomy cowl, majestic no more.

See the dark spirit of tyrannic pow'r! 130
 The Thracian channel, long the road of trade
 To the deep Euxine and its naval streams,
 And the Mæotis, now is barr'd with chains,
 And forts of hostile battlement. In aught

That joys mankind the arbitrary Turk 135
 Delights not : insolent of rule, he spreads
 Thralldom and desolation o'er his realms.
 Another path to Scythia's wide domains
 Commerce discovers : the Livonian gulf
 Receives her sails, and leads them to the port 140
 Of rising Petersburg, whose splendid streets
 Swell with the webs of Leeds ; the Cossac there,
 The Calmuc, and Mungalian, round the bales
 In crowds resort, and their warm'd limbs enfold,
 Delighted ; and the hardy Samoïd, 145
 Rough with the stings of frost, from his dark caves
 Ascends, and thither hastes, ere winter's rage
 O'ertake his homeward step ; and they that dwell
 Along the banks of Don's and Volga's streams,
 And borderers of the Caspian, who renew 150
 That ancient path to India's climes which fill'd
 With proudest affluence the Colchian state.
 Many have been the ways to those renown'd
 Luxuriant climes of Indus, early known
 To Memphis, to the port of wealthy Tyre, 155
 To Tadmor, beauty of the wilderness,
 Who down along Euphrates sent her sails,
 And sacred Salem, when her numerous fleets
 From Ezion-geber pass'd th' Arabian gulf.
 But later times, more fortunate, have found 160
 O'er ocean's open wave a surer course,
 Sailing the western coast of Afric's realms,
 Of Mauritania, and Nigritian tracks,
 And islands of the Orcades, the bounds,
 On the Atlantic brine, of ancient trade, 165
 But not of modern, by the virtue led
 Of Gama and Columbus. The whole globe
 Is now of commerce made the scene immense,
 Which daring ships frequent, associated

Like doves or swallows in th' ethereal flood, 170
Or, like the eagle, solitary seen.

Some with more open course to Indus steer ;
Some coast from port to port, with various men
And manners conversant, of th' angry surge,
That thunders loud, and spreads the cliffs with foam, 175
Regardless, or the monsters of the deep,
Porpoise or grampus, or the rav'nous shark
That chase their keels ; or threat'ning rock, o'erhead
Of Atlas old ; beneath the threatening rocks,
Reckless, they furl their sails, and bart'ring, take 180
Soft flakes of wool ; for in soft flakes of wool,
Like the Silurian, Atlas' dales abound.

The shores of Sus inhospitable rise,
And higher Bojador ; Zara, too, displays
Unfruitful deserts ; Gambia's wave inisles 185
An ouzy coast, and pestilential ill
Diffuses wide ; behind are burning sands,
Adverse to life, and Nilus' hidden fount.

On Guinea's sultry strand the drapery light
Of Manchester or Norwich is bestow'd 190
For clear transparent gums and ductile wax,
And snow-white ivory ; yet the valued trade
Along this barbarous coast in telling wounds
The generous heart, the sale of wretched slaves :
Slaves by their tribes condemn'd, exchanging death 195
For lifelong servitude ; severe exchange !
These till our fertile colonies, which yield
The sugar-cane and the Tobago leaf,
And various new productions, that invite
Increasing navies to their crowded wharfs. 200

But let the man whose rough tempestuous hours
In this advent'rous traffic are involv'd,
With just humanity of heart pursue
The gainful commerce : wickedness is blind :

Their sable chieftains may in future times 205
 Burst their frail bonds, and vengeance execute
 On cruel unrelenting pride of heart
 And avarice. There are ills to come for crimes.
 Hot Guinea, too, gives yellow dust of gold,
 Which, with her rivers, rolls adown the sides 210
 Of unknown hills, where fiery-winged winds,
 And sandy deserts, rous'd by sudden storms,
 All search forbid. Howe'er, on either hand,
 Vallies and pleasant plains, and many a track
 Deem'd uninhabitable erst, are found 215
 Fertile and populous; their sable tribes,
 In shade of verdant groves, and mountains tall,
 Frequent enjoy the cool descent of rain,
 And soft refreshing breezes: nor are lakes
 Here wanting; those a sea-wide surface spread, 220
 Which to the distant Nile and Senegal
 Send long meanders. Whate'er lies beyond,
 Of rich or barren, Ignorance o'ercasts
 With her dark mantle. Mon'motapa's coast
 Is seldom visited; and the rough shore 225
 Of Cafres, land of savage Hottentots,
 Whose hands unnatural hasten to the grave
 Their aged parents. What barbarity
 And brutal ignorance where social trade
 Is held contemptible! Ye gliding Sails! 230
 From these inhospitable gloomy shores
 Indignant turn, and to the friendly Cape,
 Which gives the cheerful mariner good hope
 Of prosperous voyage, steer. Rejoice to view
 What trade, with Belgian industry, creates, 235
 Prospects of civil life, fair towns, and lawns,
 And yellow tilth, and groves of various fruits,
 Delectable in husk or glossy rind:
 There the capacious vase from crystal springs

Replenish, and convenient store provide, 240
Like ants, intelligent of future need.

See! thro' the fragrance of delicious airs,
That breathe the smell of balms, how Traffic shapes
A winding voyage, by the lofty coast
Of Sofala, thought Ophir, in whose hills 245
Ev'n yet some portion of its ancient wealth
Remains, and sparkles in the yellow sand
Of its clear streams, tho' unregarded now ;
Ophirs more rich are found. With easy course
The vessels glide, unless their speed be stopp'd 250
By dead calms, that oft lie on those smooth seas
While ev'ry zephyr sleeps : then the shrouds drop ;
The downy feather, on the cordage hung,
Moves not ; the flat sea shines like yellow gold,
Fus'd in the fire ; or like the marble floor 255
Of some old temple wide. But where so wide,
In old or later time, its marble floor
Did ever temple boast as this, which here
Spreads its bright level many a league around ?
At solemn distances its pillars rise, 260
Sofal's blue rocks, Mozambic's palmy steeps,
And lofty Madagascar's glittering shores,
Where various woods of beauteous vein and hue,
And glossy shells in elegance of form,
For Pond's rich cabinet, or Sloan's, are found. 265
Such calm oft checks their course, till this bright
scene

Is brush'd away before the rising breeze,
That joys the busy crew, and speeds again
The sail full-swelling to Socotra's isle,
For aloes fam'd ; or to the wealthy marts 270
Of Ormus or Gombroon, whose streets are oft
With caravans and tawny merchants throng'd,
From neighbouring provinces and realms afar,

And fill'd with plenty, tho' dry sandy wastes
 Spread naked round; so great the power of trade. 275
 Persia few ports : more happy Indostan
 Beholds Surat and Goa on her coasts,
 And Bombay's wealthy isle, and harbour fam'd,
 Supine beneath the shade of cocoa groves.
 But what avails or many ports or few, 280
 Where wild Ambition frequent from his lair
 Starts up, while fell Revenge and Famine lead
 To havoc, reckless of the tyrant's whip,
 Which clanks along the vallies? Oft in vain
 The merchant seeks upon the strand whom erst, 285
 Associated by trade, he deck'd and cloath'd :
 In vain whom rage or famine has devour'd
 He seeks, and with increas'd affection thinks
 On Britain. Still howe'er Bombaya's wharfs
 Pile up blue indigo, and, of frequent use, 290
 Pungent salt-petre, woods of purple grain,
 And many-colour'd saps from leaf and flower,
 And various gums; the cloathier knows their worth;
 And wool resembling cotton, shorn from trees,
 Nor to the Fleece unfriendly, whether mix'd 295
 In warp or woof, or with the line of flax,
 Or softer silk's material, tho' its aid
 To vulgar eyes appears not. Let none deem
 The Fleece in any traffic unconcern'd;
 By every traffic aided, while each work 300
 Of art yields wealth to exercise the loom,
 And every loom employs each hand of art.
 Nor is there wheel in the machine of trade
 Which Leeds or Cairo, Lima or Bombay,
 Helps not, with harmony, to turn around, 305
 Tho' all unconscious of the union act.
 Few the peculiars of Canara's realm,
 Or sultry Malabar, where it behoves

The wary pilot, while he coasts their shores,
To mark o'er ocean the thick rising isles ; 310
Woody Cahetta, Birter rough with rocks,
Green-rising Barmur, Mincoy's purple hills,
And the minute Maldivias, as a swarm
Of bees in summer on a poplar's trunk,
Clustering innumerable : these behind 315
His stern receding, o'er the clouds he views
Ceylon's gray peaks, from whose volcanoes rise
Dark smoke and ruddy flame, and glaring rocks
Darted in air aloft ; around whose feet
Blue cliffs ascend, and aromatic groves, 320
In various prospect ; Ceylon also deem'd
The ancient Ophir. Next Bengala's bay,
On the vast globe the deepest, while the prow
Turns northward to the rich disputed strand
Of Cor'mandel, where Traffic grieves to see 325
Discord and Avarice invade her realms,
Portending ruinous war, and cries aloud,
" Peace, peace, ye blinded Britons ! and ye Gauls !
Nation to nation is a light, a fire,
Enkindling virtue, sciences, and arts " ; 330
But cries aloud in vain. Yet, wise defence
Against Ambition's wide-destroying pride,
Madrass erected, and Saint David's fort,
And those which rise on Ganges' twenty streams,
Guarding the woven Fleece, Calcutta's tower, 335
And Maldo's and Patana's : from their holds
The shining bales our factors deal abroad,
And see the country's products, in exchange,
Before them heap'd ; cotton's transparent webs,
Aloes, and cassia, salutiferous drugs, 340
Alom, and lacque, and clouded tortoiseshell,
And brilliant diamonds, to decorate
Britannia's blooming nymphs. For these, o'er all

The kingdoms round, our drap'ries are dispers'd,
 O'er Bukor, Cabul, and the Bactrian vales, 345
 And Cassimere, and Atoc, on the stream
 Of old Hydaspes, Porus' hardy realm ;
 And late-discover'd Tibet, where the Fleece,
 By art peculiar, is compress'd and wrought
 To threadless drapery, which in conic forms 350
 Of various hues their gaudy roofs adorns.

The keels which voyage thro' Molucca's Straits
 Amid a cloud of spicy odours sail,
 From Java and Sumatra breath'd, whose woods
 Yield fiery pepper, that destroys the moth 355
 In woolly vestures. Ternate and Tidore
 Give to the festal board the fragrant clove
 And nutmeg, to those narrow bounds confin'd,
 While gracious Nature, with unsparing hand,
 The needs of life o'er every region pours. 360

Near those delicious isles the beauteous coast
 Of China rears its summits. Know ye not,
 Ye sons of Trade ! that ever-flow'ry shore,
 Those azure hills, those woods and nodding rocks ?
 Compare them with the pictures of your chart ; 365
 Alike the woods and nodding rocks o'erhang.
 Now the tall glossy tow'rs of porcelain
 And pillar'd pagod shine ; rejoic'd they see
 The port of Canton opening to their prows,
 And in the winding of the river moor. 370

Upon the strand they heap their glossy bales ;
 And works of Birmingham, in brass or steel,
 And flint, and pond'rous lead, from deep cells rais'd,
 Fit ballast in the fury of the storm,
 That tears the shrouds, and bends the stubborn
 mast : 375

These for the artists of the Fleece procure
 Various materials ; and for affluent life

The flavour'd thea and glossy-painted vase ;
 Things elegant, ill-titled Luxuries,
 In temperance us'd delectable and good. 380
 They too from hence receive the strongest thread
 Of the green silkworm. Various is the wealth
 Of that renown'd and ancient land, secure
 In constant peace and commerce ; till'd to th' height
 Of rich fertility, where, thick as stars, 385
 Bright habitations glitter on each hill,
 And rock, and shady dale ; ev'n on the waves
 Of copious rivers, lakes, and bord'ring seas,
 Rise floating villages. No wonder, when
 In every province firm and level roads, 390
 And long canals, and navigable streams,
 Ever with ease conduct the works of toil
 To sure and speedy markets, thro' the length
 Of many a crowded region, many a clime,
 To the imperial tow'rs of Cambalu, 395
 Now Pekin, where the Fleece is not unknown ;
 Since Calder's woofs, and those of Exe and Frome,
 And Yare, and Avon flow, and rapid Trent,
 Thither by Russic caravans are brought,
 Thro' Scythia's num'rous regions, waste and wild, 400
 Journey immense ! which to th' attentive ear
 The Muse, in faithful notes, shall brief describe.
 From the proud mart of Petersburg, ere-while
 The watery seat of Desolation wide,
 Issue these trading caravans, and urge, 405
 Thro' dazzling snows, their dreary trackless road ;
 By compass steering oft from week to week,
 From month to month ; whole seasons view their
 toils.
 Neva they pass, and Kesma's gloomy flood,
 Volga, and Don, and Oka's torrent prone, 410
 Threatening in vain ; and many a cataract

In its fall stopp'd, and bound with bars of ice.

Close on the left unnumber'd tracks they view
 White with continual frost ; and on the right
 The Caspian Lake, and ever-flow'ry realms, 415
 Tho' now abhorr'd, behind them turn, the haunt
 Of arbitrary rule, where regions wide
 Are destin'd to the sword ; and on each hand
 Roads hung with carcasses, or under foot
 Thick strown ; while in their rough bewilder'd vales 420
 The blooming rose its fragrance breathes in vain,
 And silver fountains fall, and nightingales
 Attune their notes, where none are left to hear.

Sometimes o'er level ways, on easy sleds,
 The gen'rous horse conveys the sons of Trade, 425
 And ever and anon the docile dog,
 And now the light rein-deer, with rapid pace
 Skims over icy lakes : now slow they climb
 Aloft o'er clouds, and then adown descend
 To hollow vallies, till the eye beholds 430
 The roofs of Tobol, whose hill-crowning walls
 Shine, like the rising moon, thro' watery mists ;
 Tobol ! th' abode of those unfortunate
 Exiles of angry state, and thralls of war ;
 Solemn fraternity ! where earl and prince, 435
 Soldier and statesman, and uncrested chief,
 On the dark level of adversity
 Converse familiar ; while amid the cares
 And toils for hunger, thirst, and nakedness,
 Their little public smiles, and the bright sparks 440
 Of trade are kindled. Trade arises oft,
 And virtue, from adversity and want :
 Be witness, Carthage ! witness, ancient Tyre !
 And thou, Batavia ! daughter of distress.
 This with his hands, which erst the truncheon held, 445
 The hammer lifts ; another bends and weaves

The flexile willow ; that the mattoc drives :
 All are employ'd, and by their works acquire
 Our fleecy vestures. From their tenements,
 Pleas'd and refresh'd, proceeds the caravan 450
 Thro' lively-spreading cultures, pastures green,
 And yellow tillages in opening woods ;
 Thence on, thro' Narim's wilds, a pathless road
 They force, with rough entangling thorns perplex'd ;
 Land of the lazy Ostiacs, thin dispers'd, 455
 Who, by avoiding, meet the toils they loathe,
 Tenfold augmented ; miserable tribe !
 Void of commercial comforts ; who nor corn,
 Nor pulse, nor oil, nor heart-enlivening wine,
 Know to procure ; nor spade, nor scythe, nor share, 460
 Nor social aid : beneath their thorny bed
 The serpent hisses, while in thickets nigh
 Loud howls the hungry wolf. So on they fare,
 And pass by spacious lakes, begirt with rocks
 And azure mountains, and the heights admire 465
 Of white Imaus, whose snow-nodding crags
 Frighten the realms beneath, and from their urns
 Pour mighty rivers down, th' impetuous streams
 Of Oby' and Irtis, and Jenisca swift,
 Which rush upon the northern pole, upheave 470
 Its frozen seas, and lift their hills of ice.

These rugged paths and savage landscapes pass'd,
 A new scene strikes their eyes : among the clouds
 Aloft they view, what seems a chain of cliffs,
 Nature's proud work, that matchless work of art, 475
 The wall of China, by Chihoham's power,
 In earliest times, erected. Warlike troops
 Frequent are seen in haughty march along
 Its ridge, a vast extent ! beyond the length
 Of many a potent empire : towers and ports, 480
 Three times a thousand, lift thereon their brows

At equal spaces, and in prospect round
 Cities and plains, and kingdoms overlook.

At length the gloomy passage they attain
 Of its deep-vaulted gates, whose opening folds 485
 Conduct at length to Pekin's glittering spires,
 The destin'd mart, where joyous they arrive.
 Thus are the textures of the Fleece convey'd
 To China's distant realm, the utmost bound
 Of the flat floor of steadfast earth ; for so 490
 Fabled Antiquity, ere peaceful Trade
 Inform'd the opening mind of curious man.

Now to the other hemisphere, my Muse !
 A new world found, extend thy daring wing.
 Be thou the first of the harmonious Nine, 495
 From high Parnassus, the unwear'd toils
 Of industry and valour, in that world
 Triumphant, to reward with tuneful song.
 Happy the voyage o'er th' Atlantic brine
 By active Raleigh made, and great the joy 500
 When he discern'd, above the foamy surge,
 A rising coast, for future colonies
 Opening her bays, and figuring her capes,
 Ev'n from the northern tropic to the pole.
 No land gives more employment to the loom, 505
 Or kindlier feeds the indigent ; no land
 With more variety of wealth rewards
 The hand of Labour : thither from the wrongs
 Of lawless rule the free-born spirit flies ;
 Thither Affliction, thither Poverty, 510
 And Arts and Sciences : thrice happy clime,
 Which Britain makes th' asylum of mankind !

But joy superior far his bosom warms
 Who views those shores in ev'ry culture dress'd ;
 With habitations gay, and numerous towns, 515
 On hill and valley, and his countrymen

Form'd into various states, pow'rful and rich,
 In regions far remote ; who from our looms
 Take largely for themselves, and for those tribes
 Of Indians, ancient tenants of the land, 520
 In amity conjoin'd, of civil life
 The comforts taught, and various new desires,
 Which kindle arts, and occupy the poor,
 And spread Britannia's flocks o'er every dale.

Ye who the shuttle cast along the loom, 525
 The silk-worms' thread inweaving with the Fleece,
 Pray for the culture of the Georgian tract,
 Nor slight the green savannahs and the plains
 Of Carolina, where thick woods arise
 Of mulberries, and in whose water'd fields 530
 Upsprings the verdant blade of thirsty rice.
 Where are the happy regions which afford
 More implements of commerce and of wealth ?

Fertile Virginia, like a vigorous bough,
 Which overshades some crystal river, spreads 535
 Her wealthy cultivations wide around,
 And, more than many a spacious realm, rewards
 The Fleecy shuttle : to her growing marts,
 The Iroquese, Cheroques, and Oubacks, come,
 And quit their feathery ornaments uncouth 540
 For woolly garments ; and the cheers of life,
 The cheers, but not the vices, learn to taste.
 Blush, Europeans ! whom the circling cup
 Of Luxury intoxicates. Ye routs,
 Who for your crimes have fled your native land ; 545
 And ye voluptuous idle, who in vain
 Seek easy habitations, void of care ;
 The sons of Nature with astonishment
 And detestation mark your evil deeds,
 And view, no longer aw'd, your nerveless arms, 550
 Unfit to cultivate Ohio's banks.

See the bold emigrants of Accadie,
 And Massachuset, happy in those arts
 That join the polities of trade and war,
 Bearing the palm in either ; they appear 555
 Better exemplars ; and that hardy crew
 Who on the frozen beach of Newfoundland
 Hang their white fish amid the parching winds ;
 The kindly Fleece, in webs of Duffield woof,
 Their limbs, benumb'd, enfolds with cheerly
 warmth, 560
 And frize of Cambria, worn by those who seek,
 Thro' gulfs and dales of Hudson's winding bay,
 The beaver's fur, tho' oft they seek in vain,
 While winter's frosty rigour checks approach
 Ev'n in the fiftieth latitude. Say why, 565
 (If ye the travell'd sons of Commerce know)
 Wherefore lie bound their rivers, lakes, and dales,
 Half the sun's annual course, in chains of ice?
 While the Rhine's fertile shore, and Gallic realms,
 By the same zone encircled, long enjoy 570
 Warm beams of Phœbus, and, supine, behold
 Their plains and hillocks blush with clust'ring vines?
 Must it be ever thus? or may the hand
 Of mighty Labour drain their gusty lakes,
 Enlarge the bright'ning sky, and, peopling, warm 575
 The op'ning valleys and the yellowing plains?
 Or rather shall we burst strong Darien's chain,
 Steer our bold fleets between the cloven rocks,
 And thro' the great Pacific every joy
 Of civil life diffuse? Are not her isles 580
 Numerous and large? have they not harbours calm,
 Inhabitants, and manners? haply, too,
 Peculiar sciences, and other forms
 Of trade, and useful products, to exchange
 For woolly vestures? 'Tis a tedious course 585

By the Antarctic circle ; nor beyond
 Those sea-wrapt gardens of the dulcet reed,
 Bahama and Caribbee, may be found
 Safe mole or harbour, till on Falkland's Isle
 The standard of Britannia shall arise. 590
 Proud Buenos Aires, low-couched Paraguay,
 And rough Corrientes, mark, with hostile eye,
 The labouring vessel : neither may we trust
 The dreary naked Patagonian land,
 Which darkens in the wind : no traffic there, 595
 No barter, for the Fleece : there angry storms,
 Bend their black brows, and, raging, hurl around
 Their thunders. Ye adventurous Mariners !
 Be firm ; take courage from the brave : 't was there
 Perils and conflicts inexpressible 600
 Anson, with steady undespairing breast,
 Endur'd, when o'er the various globe he chas'd
 His country's foes. Fast-gathering tempests rouz'd
 Huge ocean, and involv'd him : all around
 Whirlwind, and snow, and hail, and horror : now, 605
 Rapidly, with the world of waters, down
 Descending to the channels of the deep,
 He view'd th' uncover'd bottom of th' abyss,
 And now the stars, upon the loftiest point
 Toss'd of the sky-mix'd surges. Oft the burst 610
 Of loudest thunder, with the dash of seas,
 Tore the wild-flying sails and tumbling masts,
 While flames, thick-flashing in the gloom, reveal'd
 Ruins of decks, and shrouds, and sights of death.
 Yet on he far'd, with fortitude his cheer, 615
 Gaining, at intervals, slow way beneath
 Del Fuego's rugged cliffs, and the white ridge
 Above all height, by opening clouds reveal'd,
 Of Montegorda, and inaccessible
 Wreck-threatening Staten Land's o'erhanging shore, 620

Enormous rocks on rocks, in ever wild
 Posture of falling ; as when Pelion rear'd
 On Ossa, and on Ossa's tottering head
 Woody Olympus, by the angry gods
 Precipitate on earth were doomed to fall. 625

At length, thro' every tempest, as some branch
 Which from a poplar falls into a loud
 Impetuous cataract, tho' deep immers'd,
 Yet re-ascends, and glides, on lake or stream,
 Smooth thro' the valleys ; so his way be won 630
 To the serene Pacific, flood immense !

And rear'd his lofty masts, and spread his sails.
 Then Paita's walls, in wasting flames involv'd,
 His vengeance felt, and fair occasion gave
 To show humanity and continence, 635

To Scipio's not inferior. Then was left
 No corner of the globe secure to Pride
 And Violence, altho' the far-stretch'd coast
 Of Chili, and Peru, and Mexico,

Arm'd in their evil cause ; tho' fell Disease, 640
 Un'bating Labour, tedious Time, conspir'd,
 And Heat inclement, to unnerve his force ;
 Tho' that wide sea, which spreads o'er half the
 world,

Deny'd all hospitable land or port ;
 Where, seasons voyaging, no road he found 645
 To moor, no bottom in th' abyss whereon
 To drop the fastening anchor ; tho' his brave
 Companions ceas'd, subdu'd by toil extreme ;
 Tho' solitary left in Tinian's seas,

Where never was before the dreaded sound 650
 Of Britain's thunder heard ; his wave-worn bark
 Met, fought the proud Iberian, and o'ercame.
 So fare it ever with our country's foes !

Rejoice, ye Nations ! vindicate the sway

Ordain'd for common happiness. Wide, o'er 655
 The globe terraqueous, let Britannia pour
 The fruits of plenty from her copious horn.
 What can avail to her, whose fertile earth
 By Ocean's briny waves are circumscrib'd,
 The armed host, and murdering sword of war, 660
 And conquest o'er her neighbours? She ne'er breaks
 Her solemn compacts in the lust of rule :
 Studious of arts and trade, she ne'er disturbs
 The holy peace of states. 'Tis her delight
 To fold the world with harmony, and spread, 665
 Among the habitations of mankind,
 The various wealth of toil, and what her Fleece,
 To clothe the naked, and her skilful looms
 Peculiar give. Ye, too, rejoice, ye Swains !
 Increasing commerce shall reward your cares. 670
 A day will come, if not too deep we drink
 The cup which luxury on careless wealth,
 Pernicious gift ! bestows ; a day will come
 When, thro' new channels sailing, we shall clothe
 The Californian coast, and all the realms 675
 That stretch from Hainan Straits to proud Japan,
 And the green isles, which on the left arise
 Upon the glassy brine, whose various capes
 Not yet are figur'd on the sailors' chart :
 Then every variation shall be told 680
 Of the magnetic steel, and currents mark'd
 Which drive the heedless vessel from her course.
 That portion, too, of land, a track immense,
 Beneath th' Antarctic spread, shall then be known,
 And new plantations on its coast arise. 685
 Then rigid winter's ice no more shall wound
 The only naked animal ; but man
 With the soft Fleece shall every where be cloath'd.
 Th' exulting Muse shall then, in vigour fresh,

Her flight renew : meanwhile, with weary wing 690
O'er ocean's wave returning, she explores
Siluria's flow'ry vales, her old delight,
The shepherd's haunts, where the first springs arise
Of Britain's happy trade, now spreading wide,
Wide as th' Atlantic and Pacific seas, 695
Or as air's vital fluid o'er the globe.

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