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AKENSIDE'S  
POETICAL WORKS.

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THE  
POETICAL WORKS  
OF  
MARK AKENSIDE.

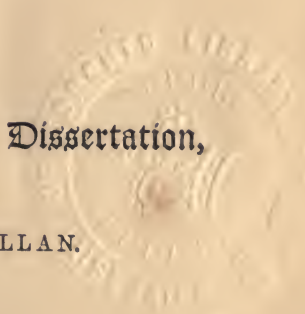
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With Memoir and Critical Dissertation,

BY THE

REV. GEORGE GILFILLAN.

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## LIFE OF AKENSIDE.

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MARK AKENSIDE was born at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on the 9th of November 1721. His family were Presbyterian Dissenters, and on the 30th of that month he was baptized in the meeting, then held in Hanover Square, by a Mr Benjamin Bennet. His father, Mark, was a butcher in respectable circumstances—his mother's name was Mary Lumsden. There may seem something grotesque in finding the author of the "Pleasures of Imagination" born in a place usually thought so anti-poetical as a butcher's shop. And yet similar anomalies abound in the histories of men of genius. Henry Kirke White, too, was a butcher's son, and for some time carried his father's basket. The late Thomas Atkinson, a very clever *littérateur* of the West of Scotland, was also what the Scotch call a "flesher's" son. The case of Cardinal Wolsey is well known. Indeed, we do not understand why any decent calling should be inimical to the existence—however it may be to the adequate development—of genius. That is a spark of supernal inspiration, lighting where it pleases, often conforming, and always striving to conform, circumstances to itself, and sometimes even strengthened and purified by the contradictions it meets in life. Nay, genius has sprung up in stranger quarters than in butcher's shops or tailor's attics—it has lived and flourished in the dens of robbers, and in the gross and fetid atmosphere of taverns. There was an Allen-

a-Dale in Robin Hood's gang; it was in the Bell Inn, at Gloucester, that George Whitefield, the most gifted of popular orators, was reared; and Bunyan's Muse found him at the disrespecktable trade of a tinker, and amidst the clatter of pots, and pans, and vulgar curses, made her whisper audible in his ear, "Come up hither to the Mount of Vision—to the summit of Mount Clear!"

It is said that Akenside was ashamed of his origin—and if so, he deserved the perpetual recollection of it, produced by a life-long lameness, originating in a cut from his father's cleaver. It is fitting that men, and especially great men, should suffer through their smallnesses of character. The boy was first sent to the Free School of Newcastle, and thence to a private academy kept by Mr Wilson, a Dissenting minister of the place. He began rather early to display a taste for poetry and verse-writing; and, in April 1737, we find in the *Gentleman's Magazine* a set of stanzas, entitled, "The Virtuoso, in imitation of Spenser's style and stanza," prefaced by a letter signed Marcus, in which the author, while requesting the insertion of his piece, pleads the apology of his extreme youth. One may see something of the future political zeal of the man in the boy's selection of one of the names of Brutus. The *Gentleman's Magazine* was then rising toward that character of a readable medley and agreeable *olla podrida*, which it long bore, although its principal contributor—Johnson—did not join its staff till the next year. Its old numbers will even still repay perusal—at least we seldom enjoyed a greater treat than when in our boyhood we lighted on and read some twenty of its brown-hued, stout-backed, strong-bound volumes, filled with the debates in the Senate of Lilliput—with Johnson's early Lives and Essays—with mediocre poetry—interesting scraps of meteorological and scientific information—ghost stories and fairy tales—alternating with timid politics, and with sarcasms at the great, veiled under initials, asterisks, and innuendoes; and even now many, we believe, feel it quite a luxury to recur from the personalities and floridities of modern periodicals to its quiet, cool, sober, and sensible pages. To it Akenside contributed afterwards a fable, called "Ambition



and Content," a "Hymn to Science," and a few more poetical pieces (written not, as commonly said, in Edinburgh, but in Newcastle, in 1739). It has been asserted that he composed his "Pleasures of Imagination" while visiting some relations at Morpeth, when only seventeen years of age; but although he himself assures us that he spent many happy and inspired hours in that region,

"Led

In silence by some powerful hand unseen,"

there is no direct evidence that he then fixed his vague, tumultuous, youthful impressions in verse. Indeed, the texture and style of the "Pleasures" forbid the thought that it was a hasty improvisation. When nearly eighteen years old, Akenside was sent to Edinburgh, to commence his studies for the pulpit, and received some pecuniary assistance from the Dissenters' Society. One winter, however, served to disgust him with the prospects of the profession—which he resigned for the pursuit of medicine, repaying the contribution he had received from the society. We know a similar case in the present day of a well-known, able *littérateur*—once the editor of the *Westminster Review*—who had been educated at the expense of the Congregational body in Scotland, but who, after a change of religious view and of profession, honourably refunded the whole sum. What were the special reasons why Akenside turned aside from the Church we are not informed. Perhaps he had fallen into youthful indiscretions or early scepticism; or perhaps he felt that the business of a Dissenting pastor was not then, any more than it is now, a very lucrative one. Presbyterian Dissent at that time, besides, did not stand very high in England. The leading Dissenting divines were Independents—and the Presbyterian body was fast sinking into Unitarian or Arian heresy. On the other hand, the Church of England was in the last state of lukewarmness; the Church of Scotland was groaning under the load of patronage; and the Secession body was newly formed, and as yet insignificant. In such circumstances we cannot wonder that an ardent, ambitious mind like that of Akenside should revolt from divinity as a study, and the

pulpit as a goal, although some may think it strange how the pursuit of medicine should commend itself instead to a genial and poetic mind. Yet let us remember that some eminent poets have been students or practisers of the art of medicine. Such—to name only a few—were Armstrong, Smollett, Crabbe, Darwin, Delta, Keats, and the two Thomas Browns, the Knight of the “*Religio Medici*,” and the Philosopher of the “*Lectures*,” both genuine poets, although their best poetry is in prose. There are, besides, connected with medicine, some departments of thought and study peculiarly exciting to the imagination. Such is anatomy, with its sad yet instructive revelations of the structure of the human frame—so “fearfully and wonderfully made”—wielding in its hand a scalpel which at first seems ruthless and disenchanting as the scythe of death, but which afterwards becomes a key to unlock some of the deepest mysteries, and leads us down whole galleries of wonder. There is botany, culling from every nook and corner of the earth weeds which are flowers, and flowers of all hues, and every plant, from the “cedar of Lebanon to the hyssop which springs out of the wall,” and finding a terrible and imaginative pleasure in handling the fell family of poisons, and in deriving the means of protracting life and healing sickness from the very blossoms of death. And there is chemistry, most poetical save astronomy of all the sciences, seeking to spiritualise the material—to hunt the atom to the point where it trembles over the gulf of nonentity—to weigh gases in scales, and the elements in a balance, and, in its more transcendental and daring shape, trying to interchange one kind of metal with another, and all kinds of forms with all, as in a music-led and mystic dance. Hence we find that such men as Beddoes, the author of the “*Bride’s Tragedy*,” have turned away from poetry to physiology, and found in it a grander if also ghastlier stimulus to their imaginative faculty. Hence Crabbe delighted to load himself with grasses and duckweed, and Goëthe to fill his carriage with every variety of plant and mountain flower. Hence Davy, and the late lamented Samuel Brown, analysed, in the spirit of poets as well as of philosophers, and gave to the crucible what it had long lost, some-

thing of the air of a weird cauldron, bubbling over with magical foam, and shining, not so much in the severe light of science as in the

“Light that never was on sea or shore,  
The consecration and the poet’s dream.”

And hence, in the then state of Church matters, and of his own effervescent soul, Akenside felt probably in medicine a deeper charm than in theology, and imagined that it opened up a more congenial field for his powers both of reason and of imagination.

In December 1740, Akenside was elected a member of the Edinburgh Medical Society. This society held meetings for discussion, and in them our poet set himself to shine as a speaker. His ambition, it is said, at this time, was to be a member of Parliament; and Dr Robertson, then a student in the University, used to attend the meetings of the society chiefly to hear the speeches of the young and fiery Southron. Indeed, the rhetoric of the “Pleasures of Imagination” is finer than its poetry; and none but an orator could have painted Brutus rising “refulgent from the stroke” which slew Cæsar, when he

“Call’d on Tully’s name,  
And bade the father of his country hail!”

Englishmen are naturally more eloquent than the Scotch; and once and again has the Mark Akenside, the Joseph Gerald, or the George Thompson overpowered and captivated even the sober and critical children of the Modern Athens. While electrifying the Medical Society, Akenside did not neglect, if he did not eminently excel in his professional studies; and he continued to write sonorous verse, some specimens of which, including an “Ode on the Winter Solstice,” and “Love, an Elegy,” he is said to have printed for private distribution.

In Edinburgh he became acquainted with Jeremiah Dyson, a young law-student of fortune, who was afterwards our poet’s principal patron. He seems to have returned to Newcastle in 1741; and we find him dating a letter to Dyson thence on the 18th of August 1742, and directing his correspondent to address his reply to him as “Surgeon, in Newcastle-upon-



Tyne." It is doubtful, however, if he had yet begun to practise; and there is reason to believe that he was busily occupied with his great poem. This he completed in the close of 1743. He offered the manuscript to Dodsley for £150. The bookseller, although a liberal and generous man, was disposed at first to *boggle* a little at such a price for a didactic poem by an unknown man. He carried the "Pleasures of Imagination" to Pope, who glanced at it, saw its merit, and advised Dodsley not to make a niggardly offer—for "this was no everyday writer." It appeared in January 1744, and, in spite of its faults, nay, perhaps, partly in consequence of them, was received with loud applause; and the author—only twenty-three years of age—"awoke one morning, and found himself famous;" for although his name was not attached to the poem, it soon transpired. One Rolt, an obscure scribbler, then in Ireland, claimed the authorship, transcribed the poem with his own hand; nay, according to Dr Johnson, published an edition with his own name, and was invited to the best tables as the ingenious Mr Rolt. His conversation did not indeed sparkle with poetic fire, nor was his appearance that of a poet, but people remembered that both Dryden and Addison were dull or silent in company till warmed with wine, and that it was not uncommon for authors to have sold all their thoughts to their booksellers. Akenside, hearing of this, was obliged to vindicate his claims by printing the next edition with his name, and then the bubble of the ingenious Mr Rolt burst.

All fame, and especially all sudden fame, has its drawbacks. Gray read the poem, and wrote of it to his friends, in a style thought at the time depreciatory, although it comes pretty near the truth. He says, "It seems to me above the middling, and now and then for a little while rises even to the best, particularly in description. It is often obscure and even unintelligible. In short, its great fault is, that it was published at least nine years too early." Gray, however, had not as yet himself emerged as a poet, and his word had chiefly weight with his friends. Warburton was a more formidable opponent. This divine acted then a good deal in the style of

a gigantic Church-bully, and seemed disposed to knock down all and sundry who differed from him either on great or small theological matters; and Humes, Churchills, Jortins, Middletons, Lowths, Shaftesburys, Wesleys, Whitefields, and Aken-sides all felt the fury of his onset, and the force of the "punishment" inflicted by his strong fists. Akenside, in his poem, and in one of his notes, had defended Shaftesbury's ridiculous notion that ridicule is the test of truth, and for this Warburton assailed him in the preface to "Remarks in Answer to Dr Middleton." In this, while indirectly disparaging the poem, he accuses the poet of infidelity, atheism, and insulting the clergy. The preface appeared in March 1744, and in the following May (Akenside being then in Holland) came forth a reply, in "An Epistle to the Rev. Mr Warburton, occasioned by his Treatment of the Author of the Pleasures of Imagination," which had been concocted between Dyson and our poet. This pamphlet was written with considerable spirit; and although it left the question where it found it, it augured no little courage on the part of the young physician and the young lawyer mating themselves against the matured author of the "Divine Legation of Moses." As to the question in dispute, Johnson disposes of it satisfactorily in a single sentence. "If ridicule be applied to any position as the test of truth, it will then become a question whether such ridicule be just, and this can only be decided by the application of truth as the test of ridicule." How easy to make any subject or any person ridiculous! To hold that ridicule is paramount to the discovery or attestation of truth, is to exalt the ape-element in man above the human and the angelic principles, which also belong to his nature, and to enthrone a Voltaire over a Newton or a Milton. Those who laugh proverbially do not always win, nor do they always deserve to win. Do we think less of "Paradise Lost," and Shakspeare, because Cobbett has derided both, or of the Old and New Testaments, because Paine has subjected parts of them to his clumsy satire? When we find, indeed, a system such as Jesuitism blasted by the ridicule of Pascal, we conclude that it was not true,—but why? not merely because

ridicule assailed it, for ridicule has assailed ten thousand systems which never even shook in the storm, but because, in the view of all candid and liberal thinkers, the ridicule *prevailed*. Should it be said that the question still recurs, How are we to be certain of the candour and liberality of the men who think that Pascal's satire damaged Jesuitism? we simply say, that it is not ridicule, but some stricter and more satisfactory method that can determine *this* inquiry. It is remarkable that Akenside modified his statements on this subject in his after revision of his poem.

In April 1744 we find our bard in Leyden, and Mr Dyce has published some interesting letters dated thence to Mr Dyson. He does not seem to have admired Holland much, whether in its scenery, manners, taste, or genius. On the 16th of May, he took his degree of Doctor of Physic at Leyden, the subject of his Dissertation (which, according to the usual custom, he published) being the "Origin and Growth of the Human Fœtus," in which he is reported to have opposed the views then prevalent, and to have maintained the theory which is now generally held. As soon as he received his diploma he returned to England, signalling his departure by an "Ode to Holland," as dull as any ditch in that country itself. In June he settled as a physician in Northampton, where the eminent Doddridge was at the time labouring. With him he is said to have held a friendly contest about the opinions of the old heathens in reference to a future state, Akenside, in keeping with the whole tenor of his intellectual history, supporting the side of the ancients. Indeed, he never appears to have had much religion, except that of the Pagan philosophy, Plato being his Paul, and Socrates his Christ; and most cordially would he have joined in Thorwaldsen's famous toast (announced at an evening party in Rome, while the planet Jupiter was shining in great glory), "Here's in honour of the ancient gods." In Northampton, partly owing to the overbearing influence of Dr Stonehouse, a long-established practitioner, and partly to his violent political zeal, he did not prosper. While residing there he produced his manly and spirited "Epistle to Curio." Curio was Pulteney, who had



been a flaming patriot, but who, like the majority of such characters, had, for the sake of a title—the earldom of Bath—subsided into a courtier. Him Akenside lashes with unsparing energy. He committed afterwards an egregious blunder in reference to this production. He frittered it down into a stupid ode. Indeed, he had always an injudicious trick—whether springing from fastidiousness or undue ambition—of tinkering and tampering with his very best poems.

In March 1745 he collected his odes into a quarto tract. It appeared at a time when lyrical poetry was all but extinct. Dryden was gone; Collins and Gray had not yet published their odes; and hence, and partly too from the prestige of his former poem, Akenside's odes, poor as they now seem, met with considerable acceptance, although they did not reach a new edition till 1760. In 1747 his friend Dyson, having been elected clerk to the House of Commons, took Akenside with him to his house at Northend, Hampstead. Here, however, he felt himself out of place, and in fine, in 1748, he settled down in Bloomsbury Square, London, where Dyson very generously allowed him £300 a-year, which, being equal to the value of twice that sum now, enabled him to keep a chariot, and live like a gentleman. During the years 1746, 1747, 1748, he composed a number of pieces, both in prose and verse—his "Hymn to the Naiads," his "Ode to the Evening Star," and several essays in *Dodsley's Museum*; such as these, "On Correctness;" "The Table of Modern Fame, a Vision;" "Letter from a Swiss Gentleman on English Liberty;" and "The Balance of Poets;" besides an ode to Caleb Hardinge, M.D., and another to the Earl of Huntingdon, which has been esteemed one of his best lyric poems. In London he did not attain rapidly a good practice, nor was it ever extensive. But for Mr Dyson's aid he might have written a chapter on "Early Struggles," nearly as rich and interesting as that famous one in Warren's "Diary of a late Physician." Even his poetical name was adverse to his prospects. His manners, too, were unconciliating and haughty. At Tom's Coffee-house, in Devereux Court, night after night, appeared the author of the "Pleasures of Imagination," full of knowledge,

dogmatism, and a love of self-display; eager for talk, fond of arguing—especially on politics and literature—and sometimes narrowly escaping duels and other misadventures springing from his hot and imperious temper. In sick chambers he was stiff, formal, and reserved, carrying a frown about with him, which itself damped the spirits and accelerated the pulse of his patients. It was only among intimate friends that he descended to familiarity, and even then it was with

“Compulsion and laborious flight.”

One of these intimates for a while was Charles Townshend, a man whose name now lives chiefly in the glowing encomium of Burke, a part of which we may quote:—“Before this splendid orb (Lord Chatham) was entirely set, and while the western horizon was in a blaze with his descending glory, on the opposite quarter of the heavens arose another luminary, and for his hour became lord of the ascendant. Townshend was the delight and ornament of this House, and the charm of every private society which he honoured with his presence. Perhaps there never arose in this country, nor in any country, a man of more pointed and finished wit, and of a more refined, exquisite, and penetrating judgment. He stated his matter skilfully and powerfully. He particularly excelled in a most luminous explanation and display of the subject. His style of argument was neither trite and vulgar, nor subtle and abstruse. He hit the House between wind and water. He had no failings which were not owing to a noble cause, to an ardent, generous, perhaps an immoderate passion for fame; a passion which is the instinct of all great souls. He worshipped that goddess wheresoever she appeared: but he paid his particular devotions to her in her favourite habitation, in her chosen temple, the House of Commons.” With this distinguished man Akenside was for some time on friendly terms, but for causes not well known, their friendship came to an abrupt termination; it might have been owing to Townshend’s rapid rise, or to Akenside’s presumptuous and overbearing disposition. Two odes, addressed by the latter to the former, immortalise this incomplete and abortive amity.



The years 1750 and 1751 were only signalised in Akenside's history by one or two dull odes from his pen. But if not witty at that time himself, he gave occasion to wit in others. Smollett, provoked, it is said, by some aspersions Akenside had in conversation cast on Scotland, and at all times prone to bitter and sarcastic views of men and manners, fell foul of him in "Peregrine Pickle." If our readers care for wading through that filthy novel—the most disagreeable, although not the dullest of Smollett's fictions—they will find a caricature of our poet in the character of the "Doctor," who talks nonsense about liberty, quotes and praises his own poetry, and invites his friends to an entertainment in the manner of the ancients—a feast hideously accurate in its imitation of antique cookery, and forming, if not an "entertainment" to the guests, a very rich one to the readers of the tale. How Akenside bore this we are not particularly informed. Probably he writhed in secret, but was too proud to acknowledge his feelings. In 1753 he was consoled by receiving a doctor's degree from Cambridge, and by being elected Fellow of the Royal Society. The next year he became Fellow of the College of Physicians.

In June 1755 he read the Galstonian lectures in anatomy before the College of Physicians, and in the next year the Croonian lectures before the same institution. The subject of the latter course was the "History of the Revival of Letters," which some of the learned Thebans thought not germane to the matter; and, consequently, after he had delivered three lectures, he desisted in disgust. This fact seems somewhat to contradict Dr Johnson's assertion, that "Akenside appears not to have been wanting to his own success, and placed himself in view by all the common methods." Had he been a thoroughly self-seeking man, he never would have committed the blunder of choosing literature as a subject of prelection to men who were probably most of them materialists, or at least destitute of literary taste. The Doctor says also, "He very eagerly forced himself into notice, by an ambitious ostentation of elegance and literature." But surely the author of such a popular poem as the "Pleasures of Imagination" had no need to claim notice by an ostentatious display of his

parts, and had too much good sense to imagine that such a vain display would conciliate any acute and sensible person. Johnson, in fact, throughout his cursory and careless "Life of Akenside," is manifestly labouring under deep prejudice against the poet—prejudice founded chiefly on Akenside's political sentiments.

In 1759 our poet was appointed physician to St Thomas's Hospital, and afterwards to Christ's Hospital. Here he ruled the patients and the under officials with a rod of iron. Dr Lettsom became a surgeon's dresser in St Thomas's Hospital. He was an admirer of poetry, especially of the "Pleasures of Imagination," and anticipated much delight from intercourse with the author. He was disappointed first of all with his personal appearance. He found him a stiff-limbed, starched personage, with a lame foot, a pale strumous face, a long sword, and a large white wig. Worse than this, he was cruel, almost barbarous, to the patients, particularly to females. Owing to an early love-disappointment, he had contracted a disgust and aversion to the sex, and chose to express it in a callous and cowardly harshness to those under his charge. It is possible, however, that Lettsom might be influenced by some private pique. Nothing is more common than for the hero-worshipper, disenchanted of his early idolatry, to rush to the opposite extreme, and to become the hero-hater; and the fault is as frequently his own as that of his idol. And it must be granted that an hospital—especially of that age—was no congenial atmosphere for a poet so Platonic and ideal as Akenside.

In October 1759 he delivered the Harveian oration before the College of Physicians, and by their order it was published the next year. In 1761 Mr T. Hollis presented him with a bed which had once belonged to Milton, on the condition that he would write an ode to the memory of that great poet. Akenside joyfully accepted the bed, had it set up in his house, and, we suppose, slept in it; but the muse forgot to visit *his* "slumbers nightly," and no ode was ever produced. We think that Akenside had sympathy enough with Milton's politics and poetry to have written a fine blank-verse tribute

to his memory, resembling that of Thomson to Sir Isaac Newton; but odes of much merit he could not produce, and yet at odes he was always sweltering

“ With labour dire and weary woe.”

In 1760, George the Third mounted the throne, and the author of the “ Epistle to Curio ” began to follow the precise path of Pulteney. In this he was preceded by Dyson, who became suddenly a supporter of Lord Bute, and drew his friend in his train. By Dyson’s influence Akenside was appointed, in 1761, physician to the Queen. His secession from the Whig ranks cost him a great deal of obloquy. Dr Hardinge had told the two turncoats long before “ that, like a couple of idiots, they did not leave themselves a loophole—they could not *sidle away* into the opposite creed.” He never, however, became a violent Tory partisan. It is singular how Johnson, with all his aversion to Akenside, has no allusion to his apostasy, in which we might have *à priori* expected him to glory, as a proof of the poet’s inconsistency, if not corruption.

In one point Akenside differed from the majority of his tuneful brethren, before, then, or since. He was a warm and wide-hearted commender of the works of other poets. Most of our sweet singers rather resemble birds of prey than nightingales or doves, and are at least as strong in their talons as they are musical in their tongues. And hence the groves of Parnassus have in all ages rung with the screams of wrath and contest, frightfully mingling with the melodies of song. Akenside, by a felicitous conjunction of elements, which you could not have expected from other parts of his character, was entirely exempted from this defect, and not only warmly admired Pope, Young, Thomson, and Dyer, whose “ Fleece ” he corrected, but had kind words to spare for even such “ small deer ” as Welsted and Fenton.

In 1763, he read a paper before the Royal Society, on the “ Effects of a Blow on the Heart,” which was published in the *Philosophical Transactions* of the year. And, in 1764, he established his character as a medical writer by an elegant and



elaborate treatise on "The Dysentery," still, we believe, consulted for its information, and studied for the purity and precision of its Latin style. About this time, too, he commenced a recasting of his "Pleasures of Imagination," which he did not live to finish; and in which, on the whole, there is more of laborious alteration than of felicitous improvement. In 1766, Warburton, his old foe, who had now been made a bishop, reprinted, in a new edition of his "Divine Legation of Moses," his attack on Akenside's notions about ridicule, without deigning to take any notice of the explanations he had given in his reply. This renewal of hostilities, coming, especially as it did, from the vantage ground of the Episcopal bench, enraged our poet, and, by way of rejoinder, he issued a lyrical satire which he had had lying past him in pickle for fifteen years, and which nothing but a fresh provocation would have induced him to publish. It was entitled "An Ode to the late Thomas Edwards, Esq." Edwards had opposed Warburton ably in a book entitled "Canons of Criticism," and was himself a poet. The real sting of this attack lay in Akenside's production of a letter from Warburton to Concanen, dated 2d January 1726, which had fallen accidentally into the hands of our poet; and in which Warburton had accused Addison of plagiarism, and said that when "Pope borrows it is from want of genius." Concanen was one of the "Dunces," and it was, of course, Akenside's purpose to shew Warburton's inconsistency in the different opinions he had expressed at different times of them and of their great adversary. We know not if the sturdy bishop took any notice of this ode. Even his Briarean arms were sometimes too full of the controversial work which his overbearing temper and fierce passions were constantly giving him.

In 1766, Akenside received the thanks of the College of Physicians for an edition of Harvey's works, which he prepared for the press, and to which he had prefixed a preface. In June 1767 he read before the College two papers, one on "Cancers and Asthmas," and the other on "White Swelling of the Joints," both of which were published the next year in the first volume of the *Medical Transactions*. In the same

year, one Archibald Campbell, a Scotchman, a purser in the navy, and called, from his ungainly countenance, "horrible Campbell," produced a small *jeu d'esprit*, entitled "Lexiphanes, imitated from Lucian, and suited to the present times," in which he tries to ridicule Johnson's prose and Akenside's poetry. His object was probably to attract their notice, but both passed over this grin of the "Grim Feature" in silent contempt. Akenside was still busy with the revisal of his poem, had finished two books, "made considerable progress with the third, and written a fragment of the fourth;" but death stepped in and blighted his prospects, both as a physician, with increasing practice and reputation, and as a poet, whose favourite work was approaching what he deemed perfection. He was seized with putrid fever; and, after a short illness, died on the 23d June 1770 at an age when many men are in their very prime, both of body and mind—that of 49. He died in his house in Burlington Street, and was buried on the 28th in St James's Church.

Akenside had been, notwithstanding his many acquaintances and friends, on the whole, a lonely man; without domestic connexions, and having, so far as we are informed, either no surviving relations or no intercourse with those who might be still alive. He was not especially loved in society; he wanted humour and good-humour both, and had little of that frank cordiality which, according to Sidney Smith, "warms and cheers more than meat or wine." He had far less geniality than genius. Yet, in certain select circles, his mind, which was richly stored with all knowledge, opened delightfully, and men felt that he *was* the author of his splendid poem. One of his biographers gives him the palm for learning, next to Ben Jonson, Milton, and Gray (he might perhaps have also excepted Landor and Coleridge), over all our English poets.

In 1772, Mr Dyson published an edition of his friend's poems, containing the original form of the "Pleasures of Imagination," as well as its half-finished second shape; his "Odes," "Inscriptions," "Hymn to the Naiads," &c., omitting, however, his poem to Curio in its first and best version, and

some of his smaller pieces. This edition, too, contained an account of Akenside's life by his friend, so short and so cold as either to say little for Dyson's heart, or a great deal for his modesty and reticence. His uniform and munificent kindness to the poet during his lifetime, however, determines us in favour of the latter side of the alternative.

Of Akenside, as a man, our previous remarks have perhaps indicated our opinion. He was rather a scholar somewhat out of his element, and unreconciled to the world, than a thorough gentleman; irritable, vehement, and proud—his finer traits were only known to his intimates, who probably felt that in Wordsworth's words,

"You must love him ere to you  
He doth seem worthy of your love."

In religion his opinions seem to have been rather unsettled; but, of whatever doubts he had, he gave the benefit latterly to the Christian side—at least he was ever ready to rebuke noisy and dogmatic infidelity. It is said that he intended to have included the doctrine of immortality in his later version of the "Pleasures of Imagination"—and even as the poem is, it contains some transient allusions to that great object of human hope, although none, it must be admitted, to its special Christian grounds.

We have now a very few sentences to enounce about his poetry, or, more properly speaking, about his two or three good poems, for we must dismiss the most of his odes, in their deep-sounding dulness, as nearly unworthy of their author's genius. Up to the days of Keats' "Endymion" and "Hyperion," Akenside's "Hymn to the Naiads" was thought one of the best attempts to reproduce the classical spirit and ideas. It now takes a secondary place; and at no time could be compared to an actual hymn of Callimachus or Pindar, any more than Smollett's "Supper after the Manner of the Ancients" was equal to a real Roman Cœna, the ideal of which Croly has so superbly described in "Salathiel." His "Epistle to Curio" is a masterpiece of vigorous composition, terse sentiment, and glowing invective. It gathers



around Pulteney as a ring of fire round the scorpion, and leaves him writhing and shrivelled. Out of Dryden and Pope, it is perhaps the best satiric piece in our poetry.

Of the "Pleasures of Imagination," it is not necessary to say a great deal. A poem that has been so widely circulated, so warmly praised, so frequently quoted and imitated—the whole of which nearly a man like Thomas Brown has quoted in the course of his lectures—must possess no ordinary merit. Its great beauty is its richness of description and language—its great fault is its obscurity; a beauty and a fault closely connected together, even as the luxuriance of a tropical forest implies intricacy, and its lavish loveliness creates a gloom. His attempt to express Plato's philosophy in blank verse is not always successful. Perhaps prose might better have answered his purpose in expressing the awfully sublime thought of the "archetypes of all things existing in God." We know that in certain objects of nature—in certain rocks, for instance (such as Coleridge describes in his "Wanderings of Cain")—there lie silent prefigurations and aboriginal types of artificial objects, such as ships, temples, and other orders of architecture; and it is so also in certain shells, woods, and even in clouds. How interesting and beautiful those painted prophecies of nature, those quiet hieroglyphics of God, those mystic letters, which, unlike those on the Babylonian wall, do *not*

"Careering shake,  
And blaze IMPATIENT to be read,"

but bide calmly the time when their artificial archetypes shall appear, and the "wisdom" in them shall be "justified" in these its children! So, according to Plato, comparing great to small things, there lay in the Divine mind the archetypes of all that was to be created, with this important difference, that they lay in God *spiritually* and consciously. How poetical and how solemn to approach, under the guidance of this thought, and gaze on the mind of God as on an ancient awful mirror; and even as in a clear lake we behold the forms of the surrounding scenery reflected from the white strip of pebbled shore up to the gray scalp of the mountain summit,

and tremble as we look down on the "skies of a far nether world," on an inverted sun, and on snow unmelted amidst the water; so to see the entire history of man, from the first glance of life in the eye of Adam, down to the last sparkle of the last ember of the general conflagration, lying silently and inverted there—how sublime, but at the same time how bewildering and how appalling! Our readers will find, in the "Pleasures of Imagination," an expansion—perhaps they may think it a dilution—of this Platonic idea.

They will find there, too, the germ of the famous theory of Alison and Jeffrey about Beauty. These theorists held "that beauty resides not so much in the object as in the mind; that we receive but what we give; that our own soul is the urn whence beauty is showered over the universe; that flower and star are lovely because the mind has breathed on them; that the imagination and the heart of man are the twin beautifiers of creation; that the dwelling of beauty is not in the light of setting suns, nor in the beams of morning stars, nor in the waves of summer seas, but in the human spirit; that sublimity tabernacles not in the palaces of the thunder, walks not on the wings of the wind, rides not on the forked lightning, but that it is the soul which is lifted up there; that it is the soul which, in its high aspirings,

‘Yokes with whirlwinds and the northern blast,’

and scatters grandeur around it on its way." All this seems anticipated, and, as it were, coiled up in the words of our poet:—

"Mind, mind alone (bear witness earth and heaven!)  
The living fountains in itself contains  
Of beauteous and sublime."

That Akenside was a real poet many expressions in his "Pleasures of Imagination" prove, such as that just quoted—

"Yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast  
Sweeps the long tract of day;"

but, taking his poem as a whole, it is rather a tissue of eloquence and philosophical declamation than of imagination.



He deals rather in sheet lightning than in forked flashes. As a didactic poem it has a high, but not the highest place. It must not be named beside the "De Rerum Natura" of Lucretius, or the "Georgics" of Virgil, or the "Night Thoughts" of Young; and in poetry, yields even to the "Queen Mab" of Shelley. It ranks high, however, amongst that fine class of works which have called themselves, by no misnomer, "Pleasures;" and to recount all the names of which were to give an "enumeration of sweets" as delightful as that in "Don Juan." How cheering to think of that beautiful bead-roll—of which the "Pleasures of Memory," "Pleasures of Hope," "Pleasures of Melancholy," "Pleasures of Imagination," are only a few! We may class, too, with them, Addison's essays on the "Pleasures of Imagination" in *The Spectator*, which, although in prose, glow throughout with the mildest and truest spirit of poetry; and if inferior to Akenside in richness and swelling pomp of words, and in dashing rhetorical force, far excel him in clearness, in chastened beauty, and in those inimitable touches and unconscious felicities of thought and expression which drop down, like ripe apples falling suddenly across your path from a laden bough, and which could only have proceeded from Addison's exquisite genius.



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AKENSIDE'S  
POETICAL WORKS.





# AKENSIDE'S POETICAL WORKS.

## THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

1747

A POEM, IN THREE BOOKS.

Ἄσπεβους μὲν ἔστιν ἀνθρώπου τὰς παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ χάριτας ἀτιμάζειν.  
EPICT. apud Arrian. II. 23.

### THE DESIGN.

THERE are certain powers in human nature which seem to hold a middle place between the organs of bodily sense and the faculties of moral perception: they have been called by a very general name, the Powers of Imagination. Like the external senses, they relate to matter and motion; and, at the same time, give the mind ideas analogous to those of moral approbation and dislike. As they are the inlets of some of the most exquisite pleasures with which we are acquainted, it has naturally happened that men of warm and sensible tempers have sought means to recall the delightful perceptions which they afford, independent of the objects which originally produced them. This gave rise to the imitative or designing arts; some of which, as painting and sculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admired in nature; others, as music and poetry, bring them back to remembrance by signs universally established and understood.

But these arts, as they grew more correct and deliberate, were, of course, led to extend their imitation beyond the peculiar objects of the imaginative powers; especially poetry, which, making use of language as the instrument by which it imitates, is consequently become an unlimited representative of every species and mode of being. Yet as their intention was only to express the objects of imagination, and as they still abound chiefly in ideas of that class, they, of course, retain their original character; and all the different pleasures which they excite, are termed, in general, Pleasures of Imagination.

The design of the following poem is to give a view of these in the largest acceptation of the term; so that whatever our imagination feels from the agreeable appearances of nature, and all the various entertainment we meet with, either in poetry, painting, music, or any of the elegant arts, might be deducible from one or other of those principles in the constitution of the human mind which are here established and explained.

In executing this general plan, it was necessary first of all to distinguish the imagination from our other faculties; and in the next place to characterise those original forms or properties of being, about which it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the understanding. These properties Mr Addison had reduced to the three general classes of greatness, novelty, and beauty; and into these we may analyse every object, however complex, which, properly speaking, is delightful to the imagination. But such an object may also include many other sources of pleasure; and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a stronger impression by reason of this concurrence. Besides which, the imitative arts, especially poetry, owe much of their effect to a similar exhibition of properties quite foreign to the imagination, insomuch that in every line of the most applauded poems, we meet with either ideas drawn from the external senses, or truths discovered to the understanding, or illustrations of contrivance and final causes, or, above all the rest, with circumstances proper to awaken and engage the passions. It was, therefore, necessary to enumerate and exemplify these different species of pleasure; especially that from the passions, which, as it is supreme in the noblest work of human genius, so being in some particulars not a little surprising, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactic turn of the poem, by introducing an allegory to account for the appearance.

After these parts of the subject which hold chiefly of admiration, or naturally warm and interest the mind, a pleasure of a very different nature, that which arises from ridicule, came next to be considered. As this is the foundation of the comic manner in all the arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illustration, and to distinguish the general sources from which the ridicule of characters is derived. Here, too, a change of style became necessary; such a one as might yet be consistent, if possible, with the general taste of composition in the serious parts of the subject: nor is it an easy task to give any tolerable force to images of this kind, without running either into the gigantic expressions of the mock heroic, or the familiar and poetical raillery of professed satire; neither of which would have been proper here.

The materials of all imitation being thus laid open, nothing now remained but to illustrate some particular pleasures which arise either from the relations of different objects one to another, or from the nature of imitation itself. Of the first kind is that various and complicated resemblance existing between several parts of the material and immaterial worlds, which is the foundation of metaphor and wit. As it seems in a great measure to depend on the early association of our ideas, and as this habit of associating is the source of many pleasures and pains in life, and on that account bears a great share in the influence of poetry and the other arts, it is therefore mentioned here, and its effects described. Then follows a general account of the production of these elegant arts, and of the secondary pleasure, as it is called, arising from the resemblance of their imitations to the original appearances of nature. After which, the work concludes with some reflections on the general conduct of the powers of imagination, and on their natural and moral usefulness in life.

Concerning the manner or turn of composition which prevails in this piece, little can be said with propriety by the author. He had two models; that ancient and simple one of the first Grecian poets, as it is refined by Virgil in



the Georgics, and the familiar epistolary way of Horace. This latter has several advantages. It admits of a greater variety of style; it more readily engages the generality of readers, as partaking more of the air of conversation; and, especially with the assistance of rhyme, leads to a closer and more concise expression. Add to this the example of the most perfect of modern poets, who has so happily applied this manner to the noblest parts of philosophy, that the public taste is in a great measure formed to it alone. Yet, after all, the subject before us, tending almost constantly to admiration and enthusiasm, seemed rather to demand a more open, pathetic, and figured style. This, too, appeared more natural, as the author's aim was not so much to give formal precepts, or enter into the way of direct argumentation, as, by exhibiting the most engaging prospects of nature, to enlarge and harmonise the imagination, and by that means insensibly dispose the minds of men to a similar taste and habit of thinking in religion, morals, and civil life. 'Tis on this account that he is so careful to point out the benevolent intention of the Author of Nature in every principle of the human constitution here insisted on; and also to unite the moral excellencies of life in the same point of view with the mere external objects of good taste; thus recommending them in common to our natural propensity for admiring what is beautiful and lovely. The same views have also led him to introduce some sentiments which may perhaps be looked upon as not quite direct to the subject; but since they bear an obvious relation to it, the authority of Virgil, the faultless model of didactic poetry, will best support him in this particular. For the sentiments themselves he makes no apology.

## BOOK I.

### ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Difficulty of treating it poetically. The ideas of the Divine Mind the origin of every quality pleasing to the imagination. The natural variety of constitution in the minds of men; with its final cause. The idea of a fine imagination, and the state of the mind in the enjoyment of those pleasures which it affords. All the primary pleasures of the imagination result from the perception of greatness, or wonderfulness, or beauty in objects. The pleasure from greatness, with its final cause. Pleasure from novelty or wonderfulness, with its final cause. Pleasure from beauty, with its final cause. The connexion of beauty with truth and good, applied to the conduct of life. Invitation to the study of moral philosophy. The different degrees of beauty in different species of objects; colour, shape, natural concretes, vegetables, animals, the mind. The sublime, the fair, the wonderful of the mind. The connexion of the imagination and the moral faculty. Conclusion.

WITH what attractive charms this goodly frame  
Of Nature touches the consenting hearts  
Of mortal men; and what the pleasing stores  
Which beauteous Imitation thence derives

To deck the poet's or the painter's toil, 5  
 My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle Powers  
 Of musical delight! and while I sing  
 Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.  
 Thou, smiling queen of every tuneful breast,  
 Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks 10  
 Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull  
 Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf  
 Where Shakspeare lies, be present: and with thee  
 Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings  
 Wafting ten thousand colours through the air,  
 Which, by the glances of her magic eye,  
 She blends and shifts at will, through countless forms,  
 Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre,  
 Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,  
 Wilt thou, eternal Harmony, descend 20  
 And join this festive train? for with thee comes  
 The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,  
 Majestic Truth; and where Truth deigns to come,  
 Her sister Liberty will not be far.  
 Be present all ye Genii, who conduct  
 The wandering footsteps of the youthful bard,  
 New to your springs and shades: who touch his ear  
 With finer sounds: who heighten to his eye  
 The bloom of Nature, and before him turn  
 The gayest, happiest attitude of things. 30  
 Oft have the laws of each poetic strain  
 The critic-verse employ'd; yet still unsung  
 Lay this prime subject, though importing most  
 A poet's name: for fruitless is the attempt,  
 By dull obedience and by creeping toil  
 Obscure to conquer the severe ascent  
 Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath  
 Must fire the chosen genius; Nature's hand

Must string his nerves, and imp his eagle-wings, 39  
Impatient of the painful steep, to soar  
High as the summit; there to breathe at large  
Æthereal air, with bards and sages old,  
Immortal sons of praise. These flattering scenes,  
To this neglected labour court my song;  
Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task  
To paint the finest features of the mind,  
And to most subtile and mysterious things  
Give colour, strength, and motion. But the love  
Of Nature and the Muses bids explore,  
Through secret paths erewhile untrod by man, 50  
The fair poetic region, to detect  
Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,  
And shade my temples with unfading flowers  
Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,  
Where never poet gain'd a wreath before.

From Heaven my strains begin: from Heaven descends  
The flame of genius to the human breast,  
And love and beauty, and poetic joy  
And inspiration. Ere the radiant sun  
Sprang from the east, or 'mid the vault of night 60  
The moon suspended her serener lamp;  
Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe,  
Or Wisdom taught the sons of men her lore;  
Then lived the Almighty One: then, deep retired  
In his unfathom'd essence, view'd the forms,  
The forms eternal of created things;  
The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,  
The mountains, woods, and streams, the rolling globe,  
And Wisdom's mien celestial. From the first  
Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd, 70  
His admiration: till in time complete  
What he admired and loved, his vital smile



Unfolded into being. Hence the breath / *newt. 8.* <sup>73</sup>  
 Of life informing each organic frame;  
 Hence the green earth, and wild resounding waves;  
 Hence light and shade alternate, warmth and cold,  
 And clear autumnal skies and vernal showers,  
 And all the fair variety of things.

But not alike to every mortal eye  
 Is this great scene unveil'd. For, since the claims 80  
 Of social life to different labours urge  
 The active powers of man, with wise intent  
 The hand of Nature on peculiar minds  
 Imprints a different bias, and to each  
 Decrees its province in the common toil.  
 To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,  
 The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,  
 The golden zones of heaven; to some she gave  
 To weigh the moment of eternal things,  
 Of time, and space, and fate's unbroken chain, 90  
 And will's quick impulse; others by the hand  
 She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore  
 What healing virtue swells the tender veins  
 Of herbs and flowers; or what the beams of morn  
 Draw forth, distilling from the clefted rind  
 In balmy tears. But some, to higher hopes  
 Were destined; some within a finer mould  
 She wrought and temper'd with a purer flame.  
 To these the Sire Omnipotent unfolds  
 The world's harmonious volume, there to read 100  
 The transcript of Himself. On every part  
 They trace the bright impressions of his hand: *newt. 8.*  
 In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,  
 The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form  
 Blooming with rosy smiles, they see portray'd  
 That uncreated beauty, which delights

*the more & more  
 intimate in nature*

The Mind Supreme. They also feel her charms, 107  
Enamour'd; they partake the eternal joy.

For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd *Epic. Long the renown'd* 110  
By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch

Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string

Consenting, sounded through the warbling air

Unbidden strains, even so did Nature's hand

To certain species of external things,

Attune the finer organs of the mind;

So the glad impulse of congenial powers,

Or of sweet sound, or fair proportion'd form,

The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,

Thrills through Imagination's tender frame,

From nerve to nerve; all naked and alive 120

They catch the spreading rays; till now the soul

At length discloses every tuneful spring,

To that harmonious movement from without

Responsive. Then the inexpressive strain

Diffuses its enchantment: Fancy dreams

Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,

And vales of bliss: the intellectual power

Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,

And smiles: the passions, gently soothed away,

Sink to divine repose, and love and joy 130

Alone are waking; love and joy, serene

As airs that fan the summer. Oh! attend,

Whoe'er thou art, whom these delights can touch,

Whose candid bosom the refining love

Of Nature warms, oh! listen to my song;

And I will guide thee to her favourite walks,

And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,

And point her loveliest features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of Nature's pregnant stores,

Whate'er of mimic Art's reflected forms 140



With love and admiration thus inflame 141

The powers of Fancy, her delighted sons  
To three illustrious orders have referr'd;  
Three sister graces, whom the painter's hand,  
The poet's tongue confesses—the Sublime,  
The Wonderful, the Fair. I see them dawn!

*Sullivan  
novelty of  
Beauty*

I see the radiant visions, where they rise,  
More lovely than when Lucifer displays  
His beaming forehead through the gates of morn,  
To lead the train of Phœbus and the spring. 150

Say, why was man <sup>A</sup> so eminently raised  
Amid the vast Creation; why ordain'd  
Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,  
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;  
But that the Omnipotent might send him forth  
In sight of mortal and immortal powers,  
As on a boundless theatre, to run

*Longinus*

The great career of justice; to exalt  
His generous aim to all diviner deeds;  
To chase each partial purpose from his breast; 160  
And through the mists of passion and of sense,  
And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,  
To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice  
Of truth and virtue, up the steep ascent  
Of nature, calls him to his high reward,  
The applauding smile of Heaven? Else wherefore burns  
In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,  
That breathes from day to day sublimer things,  
And mocks possession? Wherefore darts the mind,  
With such resistless ardour to embrace 170  
Majestic forms; impatient to be free,  
Spurning the gross control of wilful might;  
Proud of the strong contention of her toils;  
Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns

*perception*

To heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view, 175  
 Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame?  
 Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye  
 Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey  
 Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave  
 Through mountains, plains, through empires black with  
 shade, 180

And continents of sand, will turn his gaze  
 To mark the windings of a scanty rill  
 That murmurs at his feet? The high-born soul  
Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing  
Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth  
And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft  
 Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;  
 Rides on the vollied lightning through the heavens;  
 Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,  
 Sweeps the long tract of day. Then high she soars 190  
 The blue profound, and hovering round the sun  
 Beholds him pouring the redundant stream  
 Of light; beholds his unrelenting sway  
 Bend the reluctant planets to absolve  
 The fated rounds of Time. Thence far effused  
 She darts her swiftness up the long career  
 Of devious comets; through its burning signs  
 Exulting measures the perennial wheel  
 Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,  
 Whose blended light, as with a milky zone, 200  
 Invests the orient. Now amazed she views  
 The empyreal waste,<sup>B</sup> where happy spirits hold,  
 Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode;  
 And fields of radiance, whose unfading light<sup>C</sup>  
 Has travell'd the profound six thousand years,  
 Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.  
 Even on the barriers of the world untired

She meditates the eternal depth below; 208  
Till, half recoiling, down the headlong steep  
She plunges; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up  
In that immense of being. There her hopes  
Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth  
Of mortal man, the Sovereign Maker said,  
That not in humble nor in brief delight,  
Not in the fading echoes of renown,  
Power's purple robes, nor pleasure's flowery lap,  
The soul should find enjoyment: but from these  
Turning disdainful to an equal good,  
Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,  
Till every bound at length should disappear, 220  
And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high capacious powers  
Lie folded up in man; how far beyond  
The praise of mortals, may the eternal growth  
Of Nature to perfection half divine,  
Expand the blooming soul! What pity then  
Should sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth  
Her tender blossom; choke the streams of life,  
And blast her spring! Far otherwise design'd  
Almighty Wisdom; Nature's happy cares 230  
The obedient heart far otherwise incline.

Witness the sprightly joy when aught unknown  
Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active power  
To brisker measures: witness the neglect  
Of all familiar prospects,<sup>D</sup> though beheld  
With transport once; the fond attentive gaze  
Of young astonishment; the sober zeal  
Of age, commenting on prodigious things.  
For such the bounteous providence of Heaven,  
In every breast implanting this desire 240  
Of objects new and strange,<sup>E</sup> to urge us on



With unremitted labour to pursue 242  
Those sacred stores that wait the ripening soul,  
In Truth's exhaustless bosom. What need words  
To paint its power? For this the daring youth  
Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,  
In foreign climes to rove; the pensive sage,  
Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,  
Hangs o'er the sickly taper; and untired  
The virgin follows, with enchanted step, 250  
The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale,  
From morn to eve; unmindful of her form,  
Unmindful of the happy dress that stole  
The wishes of the youth, when every maid  
With envy pined. Hence, finally, by night  
The village matron, round the blazing hearth,  
Suspends the infant audience with her tales,  
Breathing astonishment! of witching rhymes,  
And evil spirits; of the death-bed call  
Of him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd 260  
The orphan's portion; of unquiet souls  
Risen from the grave to ease the heavy guilt  
Of deeds in life conceal'd; of shapes that walk  
At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave  
The torch of hell around the murderer's bed.  
At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,  
Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd  
With shivering sighs: till eager for the event,  
Around the beldame all erect they hang,  
Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd. 270  
But lo! disclosed in all her smiling pomp,  
Where Beauty onward moving claims the verse  
Her charms inspire: the freely-flowing verse  
In thy immortal praise, O form divine,  
Smooths her mellifluent stream. Thee, Beauty, thee

The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray 276

The mossy roofs adore : thou, better sun !

For ever beamest on the enchanted heart

Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight

Poetic. Brightest progeny of Heaven ! 280

How shall I trace thy features ? where select

— The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom ?

Haste then, my song, through Nature's wide expanse,

Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,

— Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,

Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,

To deck thy lovely labour. Wilt thou fly

With laughing Autumn to the Atlantic isles,

And range with him the Hesperian field, and see

Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove, 290

— The branches shoot with gold ; where'er his step

Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters grow

With purple ripeness, and invest each hill

— As with the blushes of an evening sky ?

Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume,

Where gliding through his daughter's honour'd shades,

The smooth Penéus from his glassy flood

— Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleasant scene ?

Fair Tempe ! haunt beloved of sylvan Powers,

Of Nymphs and Fauns ; where in the golden age 300

They play'd in secret on the shady brink

With ancient Pan : while round their choral steps

Young Hours and genial Gales with constant hand

Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial dews,

And spring's Elysian bloom. Her flowery store

To thee nor Tempe shall refuse ; nor watch

Of winged Hydra guard Hesperian fruits

From thy free spoil. Oh, bear then, unproved,

— Thy smiling treasures to the green recess



Where young Dione stays. With sweetest airs 310  
Entice her forth to lend her angel form  
For Beauty's honour'd image. Hither turn  
Thy graceful footsteps; hither, gentle maid,  
Incline thy polish'd forehead: let thy eyes —  
Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn; —  
And may the fanning breezes waft aside  
Thy radiant locks: disclosing, as it bends —  
With airy softness from the marble neck, —  
The cheek fair-blooming, and the rosy lip, —  
Where winning smiles and pleasures sweet as love, 320  
With sanctity and wisdom, tempering blend  
Their soft allurements. Then the pleasing force  
Of Nature, and her kind parental care  
Worthier I'd sing: then all the enamour'd youth,  
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre  
Should throng attentive, while I point on high  
Where Beauty's living image, like the Morn  
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May, —  
Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood  
Effulgent on the pearly car, and smiled, 330  
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,  
To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,  
And each cerulean sister of the flood —  
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,  
To seek the Idalian bower. Ye smiling band  
Of youths and virgins, who through all the maze  
Of young desire with rival steps pursue  
This charm of Beauty, if the pleasing toil  
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn  
Your favourable ear, and trust my words. 340  
I do not mean to wake the gloomy form  
Of Superstition dress'd in Wisdom's garb,  
To damp your tender hopes; I do not mean

To bid the jealous thunderer fire the heavens, 344  
Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth  
To fright you from your joys : my cheerful song  
With better omens calls you to the field,  
Pleased with your generous ardour in the chase,  
And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,  
Does Beauty ever deign to dwell where health 350  
And active use are strangers ? Is her charm  
Confess'd in aught, whose most peculiar ends  
Are lame and fruitless ? Or did Nature mean  
This pleasing call the herald of a lie,  
To hide the shame of discord and disease,  
And catch with fair hypocrisy the heart  
Of idle faith ? Oh, no ! with better cares  
The indulgent mother, conscious how infirm  
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,  
By this illustrious image, in each kind 360  
Still most illustrious where the object holds  
Its native powers most perfect, she by this  
Illumes the headstrong impulse of desire,  
And sanctifies his choice. The generous glebe  
Whose bosom smiles with verdure, the clear tract  
Of streams delicious to the thirsty soul,  
The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to sense,  
And every charm of animated things,  
Are only pledges of a state sincere,  
The integrity and order of their frame, 370  
When all is well within, and every end  
Accomplish'd. Thus was Beauty sent from heaven,  
The lovely mistress of Truth and Good  
In this dark world : for Truth and Good are one,  
And Beauty dwells in them,<sup>F</sup> and they in her,  
With like participation. Wherefore then,  
O sons of earth ! would ye dissolve the tie?

Oh! wherefore, with a rash impetuous aim,  
Seek ye those flowery joys with which the hand  
Of lavish Fancy paints each flattering scene  
Where Beauty seems to dwell, nor once inquire  
Where is the sanction of eternal Truth,  
Or where the seal of undeceitful Good,  
To save your search from folly! Wanting these,  
Lo! Beauty withers in your void embrace,  
And with the glittering of an idiot's toy  
Did Fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam  
Of youthful hope that shines upon your hearts,  
Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task,  
To learn the lore of undeceitful Good, 378  
And Truth eternal. Though the poisonous charms  
Of baleful Superstition guide the feet  
Of servile numbers, through a dreary way  
To their abode, through deserts, thorns, and mire;  
And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn  
To muse at last, amid the ghostly gloom  
Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells;  
To walk with spectres through the midnight shade,  
And to the screaming owl's accursed song  
Attune the dreadful workings of his heart; 390  
Yet be not ye dismay'd. A gentler star  
Your lovely search illumines. From the grove  
Where Wisdom talk'd with her Athenian sons,  
Could my ambitious hand entwine a wreath  
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,  
Then should my powerful verse at once dispel  
Those monkish horrors: then in light divine  
Disclose the Elysian prospect, where the steps  
Of those whom Nature charms, through blooming walks,  
Through fragrant mountains and poetic streams, 400  
Amid the train of sages, heroes, bards,



Led by their winged Genius, and the choir 412  
Of laurell'd science and harmonious art,  
Proceed exulting to the eternal shrine,  
Where Truth conspicuous with her sister-twins,  
The undivided partners of her sway,  
With Good and Beauty reigns. Oh, let not us,  
Lull'd by luxurious Pleasure's languid strain,  
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot rage,  
Oh, let us not a moment pause to join 420  
That godlike band. And if the gracious Power  
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song,  
Will to my invocation breathe anew  
The tuneful spirit; then through all our paths,  
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre  
Be wanting; whether on the rosy mead,  
When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart  
Of luxury's allurements; whether firm  
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill  
To urge bold Virtue's unremitted nerve, 430  
And wake the strong divinity of soul  
That conquers chance and fate; or whether struck  
For sounds of triumph, to proclaim her toils  
Upon the lofty summit, round her brow  
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise;  
To trace her hallow'd light through future worlds,  
And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man.

Thus with a faithful aim have we presumed,  
Adventurous, to delineate Nature's form;  
Whether in vast, majestic pomp array'd, 440  
Or dress'd for pleasing wonder, or serene  
In Beauty's rosy smile. It now remains,  
Through various being's fair proportion'd scale,  
To trace the rising lustre of her charms,  
From their first twilight, shining forth at length

To full meridian splendour. Of degree 446  
The least and lowliest, in the effusive warmth  
 Of colours mingling with a random blaze,  
 Doth Beauty dwell. Then higher in the line  
 And variation of determined shape, 450  
 Where Truth's eternal measures mark the bound  
 Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent  
Unites this varied symmetry of parts  
 With colour's bland allurements; as the pearl  
 Shines in the concave of its azure bed,  
 And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.  
 Then more attractive rise the blooming forms  
 Through which the breath of Nature has infused  
 Her genial power to draw with pregnant veins  
 Nutritious moisture from the bounteous earth, 460  
 In fruit and seed prolific: thus the flowers  
 Their purple honours with the Spring resume;  
 And such the stately tree which Autumn bends  
 With blushing treasures. But more lovely still  
 Is Nature's charm, where to the full consent  
 Of complicated members, to the bloom  
 Of colour, and the vital change of growth,  
 Life's holy flame and piercing sense are given,  
 And active motion speaks the temper'd soul:  
 So moves the bird of Juno; so the steed 470  
 With rival ardour beats the dusty plain,  
 And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy  
 Salute their fellows. Thus doth Beauty dwell  
 There most conspicuous, even in outward shape,  
 Where dawns the high expression of a mind:  
 By steps conducting our enraptured search  
 To that eternal origin, whose power,  
 Through all the unbounded symmetry of things,  
 Like rays effulging from the parent sun,



This endless mixture of her charms diffused.  
Mind, mind alone, (bear witness, earth and heaven!)

480

The living fountains in itself contains  
Of beauteous and sublime: here hand in hand,  
Sit paramount the Graces; here enthroned,  
Celestial Venus, with divinest airs,  
Invites the soul to never-fading joy.

Look then abroad through nature, to the range  
Of planets, suns, and adamantine spheres  
Wheeling unshaken through the void immense;  
And speak, O man! does this capacious scene

490

With half that kindling majesty dilate  
Thy strong conception, as when Brutus rose<sup>G</sup>  
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate,  
Amid the crowd of patriots; and his arm  
Aloft extending, like eternal Jove  
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud  
On Tully's name, and shook his crimson steel,  
And bade the father of his country, hail!

For lo! the tyrant prostrate on the dust,  
And Rome again is free! Is aught so fair  
In all the dewy landscapes of the Spring,  
In the bright eye of Hesper, or the morn,  
In Nature's fairest forms, is aught so fair

500

As virtuous friendship? as the candid blush  
Of him who strives with fortune to be just?  
The graceful tear that streams for others' woes?  
Or the mild majesty of private life,

Where Peace with ever blooming olive crowns  
The gate; where Honour's liberal hands effuse  
Unenvied treasures, and the snowy wings  
Of Innocence and Love protect the scene?

510

Once more search, undismay'd, the dark profound  
Where Nature works in secret; view the beds

Of mineral treasure, and the eternal vault 514  
That bounds the hoary ocean; trace the forms  
Of atoms moving with incessant change  
Their elemental round; behold the seeds  
Of being, and the energy of life  
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame;  
Then to the secrets of the working mind 520  
Attentive turn; from dim oblivion call  
Her fleet, ideal band; and bid them, go!  
Break through time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour  
That saw the heavens created: then declare  
If aught were found in those external scenes  
To move thy wonder now. For what are all  
The forms which brute, unconscious matter wears,  
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts?  
Not reaching to the heart, soon feeble grows  
The superficial impulse; dull their charms, 530  
And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.  
Not so the moral species, nor the powers.  
Of genius and design; the ambitious mind  
There sees herself: by these congenial forms  
Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act  
She bends each nerve, and meditates well pleased  
Her features in the mirror. For, of all  
The inhabitants of earth, to man alone  
Creative Wisdom gave to lift his eye  
To Truth's eternal measures; thence to frame 540  
The sacred laws of action and of will,  
Discerning justice from unequal deeds,  
And temperance from folly. But beyond  
This energy of Truth, whose dictates bind  
Assenting reason, the benignant Sire,  
To deck the honour'd paths of just and good,  
Has added bright Imagination's rays:

Not Connected to Truth

Where Virtue, rising from the awful depth  
Of Truth's mysterious bosom,<sup>H</sup> doth forsake  
The unadorn'd condition of her birth;  
And dress'd by Fancy in ten thousand hues,  
Assumes a various feature, to attract,  
With charms responsive to each gazer's eye,  
The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk,  
The ingenuous youth, whom solitude inspires  
With purest wishes, from the pensive shade  
Beholds her moving, like a virgin muse  
That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme  
Of harmony and wonder: while among  
The herd of servile minds, her strenuous form  
Indignant flashes on the patriot's eye,  
And through the rolls of memory appeals  
To ancient honour; or in act serene,  
Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword  
Of public Power, from dark Ambition's reach  
To guard the sacred volume of the laws.

548

560

Genius of ancient Greece! whose faithful steps  
Well pleased I follow through the sacred paths  
Of Nature and of Science; nurse divine  
Of all heroic deeds and fair desires!  
Oh! let the breath of thy extended praise  
Inspire my kindling bosom to the height  
Of this untempted theme. Nor be my thoughts  
Presumptuous counted, if, amid the calm  
That soothes this vernal evening into smiles,  
I steal impatient from the sordid haunts  
Of strife and low ambition, to attend  
Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,  
By their malignant footsteps ne'er profaned.  
Descend, propitious, to my favour'd eye!  
Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,

570

580

As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung 582  
With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth  
To see thee rend the pageants of his throne ;  
And at the lightning of thy lifted spear  
Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils,  
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,  
Thy smiling band of art, thy godlike sires  
Of civil wisdom, thy heroic youth  
Warm from the schools of glory. Guide my way 590  
Through fair Lycéum's<sup>I</sup> walk, the green retreats  
Of Academus,<sup>K</sup> and the thymy vale,  
Where oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,  
Ilissus<sup>L</sup> pure devolved his tuneful stream  
In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store  
Of these auspicious fields, may I unblamed  
Transplant some living blossoms to adorn  
My native clime : while far above the flight  
Of Fancy's plume aspiring, I unlock  
The springs of ancient wisdom ! while I join 600  
Thy name, thrice honour'd ! with the immortal praise  
Of Nature ; while to my compatriot youth  
I point the high example of thy sons,  
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

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## BOOK II.

## ARGUMENT.

THE separation of the works of Imagination from Philosophy, the cause of their abuse among the moderns. Prospect of their reunion under the influence of public Liberty. Enumeration of accidental pleasures, which increase the effect of objects delightful to the Imagination. The pleasures of sense. Particular circumstances of the mind. Discovery of truth. Perception of contrivance and design. Emotion of the passions. All the natural passions partake of a pleasing sensation; with the final cause of this constitution illustrated by an allegorical vision, and exemplified in sorrow, pity, terror, and indignation.

WHEN shall the laurel and the vocal string  
 Resume their honours? When shall we behold  
 The tuneful tongue, the Promethéan hand  
 Aspire to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,  
 How slow the dawn of Beauty and of Truth  
 Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothic night  
 Which yet involves the nations! Long they groan'd  
 Beneath the furies of rapacious force;  
 Oft as the gloomy north, with iron swarms  
 Tempestuous pouring from her frozen caves,  
 Blasted the Italian shore, and swept the works  
 Of Liberty and Wisdom down the gulf  
 Of all-devouring night. As long immured  
 In noontide darkness, by the glimmering lamp,  
 Each Muse and each fair Science pined away  
 The sordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands  
 Their mysteries profaned, unstrung the lyre,  
 And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.  
 At last the Muses rose,<sup>A</sup> and spurn'd their bonds,  
 And, wildly warbling, scatter'd as they flew,  
 Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's<sup>B</sup> bowers  
 To Arno's<sup>C</sup> myrtle border and the shore

of Coleridge  
 or Long

10

20



Of soft Parthenopée.<sup>D</sup> But still the rage  
 Of dire ambition<sup>E</sup> and gigantic power,  
 From public aims and from the busy walk  
 Of civil commerce, drove the bolder train  
 Of penetrating Science to the cells,  
 Where studious Ease consumes the silent hour } *Heath there*  
 In shadowy searches and unfruitful care. *seems to*  
 Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts<sup>F</sup> 30  
 Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy,  
 To priestly domination and the lust  
 Of lawless courts, their amiable toil  
 For three inglorious ages have resign'd,  
 In vain reluctant: and Torquato's tongue  
 Was tuned for slavish pæans at the throne  
 Of tinsel pomp: and Raphael's magic hand  
 Effused its fair creation to enchant  
 The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes  
 To blind belief; while on their prostrate necks 40  
 The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.  
 But now, behold! the radiant era dawns,  
 When freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length  
 For endless years on Albion's happy shore  
 In full proportion, once more shall extend  
 To all the kindred powers of social bliss  
 A common mansion, a parental roof.  
 There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train, >  
 Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,  
 Embrace the smiling family of Arts, 50  
 The Muses and the Graces. Then no more  
 Shall Vice, distracting their delicious gifts  
 To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn  
 Turn from their charms the philosophic eye,  
 The patriot bosom; then no more the paths  
 Of public care or intellectual toil,

Alone by footsteps haughty and severe 57  
 In gloomy state be trod: the harmonious Muse  
 And her persuasive sisters then shall plant  
 Their sheltering laurels o'er the bleak ascent,  
 And scatter flowers along the rugged way.  
 Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dared  
 To pierce divine Philosophy's retreats,  
 And teach the Muse her lore; already strove  
 Their long-divided honours to unite,  
 While tempering this deep argument we sang  
 Of Truth and Beauty. Now the same glad task  
 Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,  
 We hasten to recount the various springs  
 Of adventitious pleasure, which adjoin 70  
 Their grateful influence to the prime effect  
 Of objects grand or beauteous, and enlarge  
 The complicated joy. The sweets of sense,  
 Do they not oft with kind accession flow,  
 To raise harmonious Fancy's native charm? developed? unite?  
 So while we taste the fragrance of the rose,  
 Glows not her blush the fairer? While we view  
 Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill  
 Gush through the trickling herbage, to the thirst  
 Of summer yielding the delicious draught 80  
 Of cool refreshment, o'er the mossy brink  
 Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves  
 With sweeter music murmur as they flow?

Nor this alone; the various lot of life  
 Oft from external circumstance assumes  
 A moment's disposition to rejoice  
 In those delights which, at a different hour,  
 Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of Spring,  
 When rural songs and odours wake the morn,  
 To every eye; but how much more to his 90

Round whom the bed of sickness long diffused 91  
Its melancholy gloom ! how doubly fair,  
When first with fresh-born vigour he inhales  
The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun  
Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life  
Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain !

Or shall I mention, where celestial Truth  
Her awful light discloses, to bestow  
A more majestic pomp on Beauty's frame?  
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of Truth 100  
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,  
Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,  
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet  
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctured hues  
To me have shown so pleasing, as when first  
The hand of Science pointed out the path  
In which the sunbeams, gleaming from the west,  
Fall on the watery cloud, whose darksome veil  
Involves the orient ; and that trickling shower  
Piercing through every crystalline convex 110  
Of clustering dewdrops to their flight opposed,  
Recoil at length where concave all behind  
The internal surface of each glassy orb  
Repels their forward passage into air ;  
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal  
From which their course began ; and, as they strike  
In different lines the gazer's obvious eye,  
Assume a different lustre, through the brede  
Of colours changing from the splendid rose  
To the pale violet's dejected hue. 120

Or shall we touch that kind access of joy,  
That springs to each fair object, while we trace,  
Through all its fabric, Wisdom's artful aim,  
Disposing every part, and gaining still,



By means proportion'd, her benignant end? 125  
Speak ye, the pure delight, whose favour'd steps  
The lamp of Science through the jealous maze  
Of Nature guides, when haply you reveal  
Her secret honours: whether in the sky,  
The beauteous laws of light, the central powers 130  
That wheel the pensile planets round the year;  
Whether in wonders of the rolling deep,  
Or the rich fruits of all-sustaining earth,  
Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,  
Ye scan the counsels of their Author's hand.

What, when to raise the meditated scene,  
The flame of passion, through the struggling soul  
Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze  
The object of its rapture, vast of size,  
With fiercer colours and a night of shade? 140  
What, like a storm from their capacious bed  
The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might  
Of these eruptions, working from the depth  
Of man's strong apprehension, shakes his frame  
Even to the base; from every naked sense  
Of pain or pleasure, dissipating all  
Opinion's feeble coverings, and the veil  
Spun from the cobweb fashion of the times  
To hide the feeling heart? Then Nature speaks  
Her genuine language, and the words of men, 150  
Big with the very motion of their souls,  
Declare with what accumulated force  
The impetuous nerve of passion urges on  
The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more: her honours where nor Beauty claims,  
Nor shows of good the thirsty sense allure,  
From passion's power alone <sup>G</sup> our nature holds  
Essential pleasure. Passion's fierce illapse



Rouses the mind's whole fabric; with supplies 159  
 Of daily impulse keeps the elastic powers  
 Intensely poised, and polishes anew  
 By that collision all the fine machine:  
 Else rust would rise, and foulness, by degrees  
 Encumbering, choke at last what heaven design'd  
 For ceaseless motion and a round of toil.—

But say, does every passion thus to man  
 Administer delight? That name indeed  
 Becomes the rosy breath of love; becomes  
 The radiant smiles of joy, the applauding hand  
 Of admiration: but the bitter shower 170

That sorrow sheds upon a brother's grave;  
 But the dumb palsy of nocturnal fear,  
 Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart  
 Of panting indignation, find we there  
 To move delight?—Then listen while my tongue  
 The unalter'd will of Heaven with faithful awe  
 Reveals; what old Harmodius wont to teach  
 My early age; Harmodius, who had weigh'd  
 Within his learned mind whate'er the schools  
 Of Wisdom, or thy lonely-whispering voice, 180

O faithful Nature! dictate of the laws  
 Which govern and support this mighty frame  
 Of universal being. Oft the hours

From morn to eve have stolen unmark'd away,  
 While mute attention hung upon his lips,  
 As thus the sage his awful tale began:—

‘Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,  
 When spotless youth with solitude resigns  
 To sweet philosophy the studious day,  
 What time pale Autumn shades the silent eve, 190  
 Musing I roved. Of good and evil much,  
 And much of mortal man my thought revolved;

*Nature = God?  
 more to me  
 Kant*

When starting full on fancy's gushing eye 193

The mournful image of Parthenia's fate,  
That hour, O long beloved and long deplored!  
When blooming youth, nor gentlest wisdom's arts,  
Nor Hymen's honours gather'd for thy brow,  
Nor all thy lover's, all thy father's tears  
Avail'd to snatch thee from the cruel grave;

Thy agonising looks, thy last farewell 200  
Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul

As with the hand of Death. At once the shade  
More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds  
With hoarser murmuring shook the branches. Dark  
As midnight storms, the scene of human things  
Appear'd before me; deserts, burning sands,  
Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen south,  
And desolation blasting all the west

With rapine and with murder: tyrant power  
Here sits enthroned with blood; the baleful charms 210  
Of superstition there infect the skies,

And turn the sun to horror. Gracious Heaven!

What is the life of man? Or cannot these,

Not these portents thy awful will suffice,

That, propagated thus beyond their scope,

They rise to act their cruelties anew

In my afflicted bosom, thus decreed

The universal sensitive of pain,

The wretched heir of evils not its own?' 220

Thus I impatient: when, at once effused,  
A flashing torrent of celestial day

Burst through the shadowy void. With slow descent

A purple cloud came floating through the sky,

And, poised at length within the circling trees,

Hung obvious to my view; till opening wide

Its lucid orb, a more than human form

Emerging lean'd majestic o'er my head,  
And instant thunder shook the conscious grove.

227

Then melted into air the liquid cloud,  
And all the shining vision stood reveal'd. ✱

A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,  
And o'er his shoulder, mantling to his knee,  
Flow'd the transparent robe, around his waist  
Collected with a radiant zone of gold

Æthereal: there in mystic signs engraved,  
I read his office high and sacred name,

? Genius of human kind! Appall'd I gazed ✱

The godlike presence; for athwart his brow  
Displeasure, temper'd with a mild concern,  
Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words  
Like distant thunders broke the murmuring air:

240

'Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth!  
And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span  
Capacious of this universal frame?—

Thy wisdom all-sufficient? Thou, alas!

Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord  
Of Nature and his works—to lift thy voice  
Against the sovereign order he decreed,  
All good and lovely—to blaspheme the bands  
Of tenderness innate and social love,

Holiest of things! by which the general orb  
Of being, as by adamant links,

Was drawn to perfect union, and sustain'd  
From everlasting? Hast thou felt the pangs  
Of softening sorrow, of indignant zeal,

So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish  
The ties of Nature broken from thy frame,  
That so thy selfish, unrelenting heart  
Might cease to mourn its lot, no longer then  
The wretched heir of evils not its own?

260



O fair benevolence of generous minds !

261

O man by Nature form'd for all mankind !'

He spoke; abash'd and silent I remain'd,  
As conscious of my tongue's offence, and awed  
Before his presence, though my secret soul  
Disdain'd the imputation. On the ground  
I fix'd my eyes, till from his airy couch  
He stoop'd sublime, and touching with his hand  
My dazzling forehead, 'Raise thy sight,' he cried,  
'And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue.'

270

I look'd, and lo ! the former scene was changed;  
For verdant alleys and surrounding trees,  
A solitary prospect, wide and wild,  
Rush'd on my senses. 'Twas a horrid pile  
Of hills with many a shaggy forest mix'd,  
With many a sable cliff and glittering stream.  
Aloft, recumbent o'er the hanging ridge,  
The brown woods waved; while ever-trickling springs  
Wash'd from the naked roots of oak and pine  
The crumbling soil; and still at every fall  
Down the steep windings of the channel'd rock,  
Remurmuring rush'd the congregated floods  
With hoarser inundation; till at last  
They reach'd a grassy plain, which from the skirts  
Of that high desert spread her verdant lap,  
And drank the gushing moisture, where confined  
In one smooth current, o'er the lilied vale  
Clearer than glass it flow'd. Autumnal spoils  
Luxuriant spreading to the rays of morn,  
Blush'd o'er the cliffs, whose half-encircling mound  
As in a sylvan theatre enclosed  
That flowery level. On the river's brink  
I spied a fair pavilion, which diffused  
Its floating umbrage 'mid the silver shade

280

290



Of osiers. Now the western sun reveal'd  
 Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,  
 And pour'd across the shadow of the hills,  
 On rocks and floods, a yellow stream of light  
 That cheer'd the solemn scene. My listening  
     powers

295

Were awed, and every thought in silence hung,  
 And wondering expectation. Then the voice  
 Of that celestial power, the mystic show  
 Declaring, thus my deep attention call'd:—

300

‘Inhabitant of earth,<sup>H</sup> to whom is given  
 The gracious ways of Providence to learn,  
 Receive my sayings with a steadfast ear—  
 Know then, the Sovereign Spirit of the world,  
 Though, self-collected from eternal time,  
 Within his own deep essence he beheld

*Xu + Platonic*

The bounds of true felicity complete,  
 Yet by immense benignity inclined  
 To spread around him that primeval joy  
 Which fill'd himself, he raised his plastic arm,  
 And sounded through the hollow depths of space  
 The strong, creative mandate. Straight arose  
 These heavenly orbs, the glad abodes of life,  
 Effusive kindled by his breath divine

310

*Plato*

Through endless forms of being. Each inhaled  
From him its portion of the vital flame,

In measure such, that, from the wide complex  
 Of coexistent orders, one might rise,  
 One order,<sup>I</sup> all-involving and entire.

320

He too, beholding in the sacred light  
 Of his essential reason, all the shapes  
 Of swift contingency, all successive ties  
 Of action propagated through the sum  
 Of possible existence, he at once,

*propagated  
plenitude*

Down the long series of eventful time, 323  
 So fix'd the dates of being, so disposed,  
 To every living soul of every kind  
 The field of motion and the hour of rest,  
 That all conspired to his supreme design,  
 To universal good: with full accord  
 Answering the mighty model he had chose,  
 The best and fairest<sup>K</sup> of unnumber'd worlds a. V. optimism  
 That lay from everlasting in the store  
 Of his divine conceptions. Nor content,

By one exertion of creative power  
 His goodness to reveal; through every age,  
 Through every moment up the tract of time, 340  
 His parent hand with ever new increase *immanent*  
 Of happiness and virtue has adorn'd *contributions*  
 The vast harmonious frame: his parent hand, *Shape*  
 From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore, *gradations*  
 To men, to angels, to celestial minds,  
 For ever leads the generations on  
 To higher scenes of being; while, supplied  
 From day to day with his enlivening breath,  
 Inferior orders in succession rise

To fill the void below. As flame ascends,<sup>L</sup> 350  
 As bodies to their proper centre move,  
 As the poised ocean to the attracting moon  
 Obedient swells, and every headlong stream  
 Devolves its winding waters to the main;  
 So all things which have life aspire to God,  
 The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd,  
 Centre of souls! Nor does the faithful voice  
 Of Nature cease to prompt their eager steps  
 Aright; nor is the care of Heaven withheld  
 From granting to the task proportion'd aid; 360  
 That in their stations all may persevere

To climb the ascent of being, and approach  
For ever nearer to the life divine.— 362

‘That rocky pile thou seest, that verdant lawn  
Fresh-water’d from the mountains. Let the scene  
Paint in thy fancy the primeval seat  
Of man, and where the Will Supreme ordain’d  
His mansion, that pavilion fair-diffused  
Along the shady brink; in this recess  
To wear the appointed season of his youth, 370  
Till riper hours should open to his toil  
The high communion of superior minds,  
Of consecrated heroes and of gods.  
Nor did the Sire Omnipotent forget  
His tender bloom to cherish; nor withheld  
Celestial footsteps from his green abode.  
Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,  
He sent whom most he loved, the sovereign fair,  
The effluence of his glory, whom he placed  
Before his eyes for ever to behold; 380  
The goddess from whose inspiration flows  
The toil of patriots, the delight of friends;  
Without whose work divine, in heaven or earth,  
Nought lovely, nought propitious, comes to pass,  
Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. Her the Sire  
Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,  
The folded powers to open, to direct  
The growth luxuriant of his young desires,  
And from the laws of this majestic world  
To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph 390  
Her daily care attended, by her side  
With constant steps her gay companion stay’d,  
The fair Euphrosyné, the gentle queen  
Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights  
That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men



And powers immortal. See the shining pair! 396  
Behold, where from his dwelling now disclosed  
They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies.'

I look'd, and on the flowery turf there stood  
Between two radiant forms a smiling youth 400  
Whose tender cheeks display'd the vernal flower  
Of beauty: sweetest innocence illumed

His bashful eyes, and on his polish'd brow  
Sate young simplicity. With fond regard  
He view'd the associates, as their steps they moved;  
The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd,  
With mild regret invoking her return.

Bright as the star of evening she appear'd  
Amid the dusky scene. Eternal youth  
O'er all her form its glowing honours breathed; 410

And smiles eternal from her candid eyes  
Flow'd, like the dewy lustre of the morn  
Effusive trembling on the placid waves.

The spring of heaven had shed its blushing spoils  
To bind her sable tresses: full diffused  
Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze;

And in her hand she waved a living branch  
Rich with immortal fruits, of power to calm  
The wrathful heart, and from the brightening eyes  
To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime 420

The heavenly partner moved. The prime of age  
Composed her steps. The presence of a god,  
High on the circle of her brow enthroned,

From each majestic motion darted awe,  
Devoted awe! till, cherish'd by her looks

Benevolent and meek, confiding love

To filial rapture soften'd all the soul.

Free in her graceful hand she poised the sword  
Of chaste dominion. An heroic crown



Display'd the old simplicity of pomp 430  
 Around her honour'd head. A matron's robe,  
 White as the sunshine streams through vernal clouds,  
 Her stately form invested. Hand in hand  
 The immortal pair forsook the enamel'd green,  
 Ascending slowly. Rays of limpid light  
 Gleam'd round their path; celestial sounds were heard,  
 And through the fragrant air ethereal dews  
 Distill'd around them; till at once the clouds,  
 Disparting wide in midway sky, withdrew  
 Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse 440  
 Of empyrean flame, where, spent and drown'd,  
 Afflicted vision plunged in vain to scan  
 What object it involved. My feeble eyes  
 Endured not. Bending down to earth I stood,  
 With dumb attention. Soon a female voice,  
 As watery murmurs sweet, or warbling shades,  
 With sacred invocation thus began:  
 'Father of gods and mortals! whose right arm  
 With reins eternal guides the moving heavens,  
 Bend thy propitious ear. Behold well pleased 450  
 I seek to finish thy divine decree.  
 With frequent steps I visit yonder seat  
 Of man, thy offspring; from the tender seeds  
 Of justice and of wisdom, to evolve  
 The latent honours of his generous frame;  
 Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot  
 From earth's dim scene to these ethereal walks,  
 The temple of thy glory. But not me,  
 Not my directing voice he oft requires,  
 Or hears delighted: this enchanting maid, 460  
 The associate thou hast given me, her alone  
 He loves, O Father! absent, her he craves;  
 And but for her glad presence ever join'd,

Rejoices not in mine: that all my hopes 464  
This thy benignant purpose to fulfil,  
I deem uncertain: and my daily cares  
Unfruitful all and vain, unless by thee  
Still further aided in the work divine.'

She ceased; a voice more awful thus replied:—  
'O thou, in whom for ever I delight, 470  
Fairer than all the inhabitants of Heaven,  
Best image of thy Author! far from thee  
Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame;  
Who soon or late shalt every work fulfil,  
And no resistance find. If man refuse  
To hearken to thy dictates; or, allured  
By meaner joys, to any other power  
Transfer the honours due to thee alone;  
That joy which he pursues he ne'er shall taste,  
That power in whom delighteth ne'er behold. 480  
Go then, once more, and happy be thy toil;  
Go then! but let not this thy smiling friend *Pleasure*  
Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold!  
With thee the son of Nemesis I send;  
'The fiend abhorr'd! whose vengeance takes account  
Of sacred order's violated laws.  
See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,  
Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath  
On yon devoted head. But thou, my child,  
Control his cruel frenzy, and protect 490  
Thy tender charge; that when despair shall grasp  
His agonising bosom, he may learn,  
Then he may learn to love the gracious hand  
Alone sufficient in the hour of ill,  
To save his feeble spirit; then confess  
Thy genuine honours, O excelling fair!  
When all the plagues that wait the deadly will

Of this avenging demon, all the storms 498  
Of night infernal, serve but to display  
The energy of thy superior charms  
With mildest awe triumphant o'er his rage,  
And shining clearer in the horrid gloom.'

Here ceased that awful voice, and soon I felt  
The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve  
Was closed once more, from that immortal fire  
Sheltering my eyelids. Looking up, I view'd  
A vast gigantic spectre striding on  
Through murmuring thunders and a waste of clouds,  
With dreadful action. Black as night his brow  
Relentless frowns involved. His savage limbs 510  
With sharp impatience violent he writhed,  
As through convulsive anguish; and his hand,  
Arm'd with a scorpion lash, full oft he raised  
In madness to his bosom; while his eyes  
Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook  
The void with horror. Silent by his side  
The virgin came. No discomposure stirr'd  
Her features. From the glooms which hung around,  
No stain of darkness mingled with the beam  
Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop 526  
Upon the river bank; and now to hail  
His wonted guests, with eager steps advanced  
The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.

As when a famish'd wolf, that all night long  
Had ranged the Alpine snows, by chance at morn  
Sees from a cliff, incumbent o'er the smoke  
Of some lone village, a neglected kid  
That strays along the wild for herb or spring;  
Down from the winding ridge he sweeps amain,  
And thinks he tears him: so with tenfold rage, 530  
The monster sprung remorseless on his prey.

Amazed the stripling stood: with panting breast 532  
Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail

Of helpless consternation, struck at once,  
And rooted to the ground. The Queen beheld

His terror, and with looks of tenderest care  
Advanced to save him. Soon the tyrant felt

Her awful power. His keen tempestuous arm  
Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage 540

Had aim'd the deadly blow: then dumb retired  
With sullen rancour. Lo! the sovereign maid

Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy,  
Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek;

Then grasps his hands, and cheers him with her tongue:—

‘Oh, wake thee, rouse thy spirit! Shall the spite  
Of yon tormentor thus appal thy heart,

While I, thy friend and guardian, am at hand  
To rescue and to heal? Oh, let thy soul

Remember, what the will of heaven ordains  
Is ever good for all; and if for all, 550

Then good for thee. Nor only by the warmth  
And soothing sunshine of delightful things,

Do minds grow up and flourish. Oft misled  
By that bland light, the young unpractised views

Of reason wander through a fatal road,

Far from their native aim; as if to lie

Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait

The soft access of ever circling joys,

Were all the end of being. Ask thyself,

This pleasing error did it never lull 560

Thy wishes? Has thy constant heart refused

The silken fetters of delicious ease?

Or when divine Euphrosyné appear'd

Within this dwelling, did not thy desires

Hang far below the measure of thy fate,



Which I reveal'd before thee, and thy eyes, 566  
 Impatient of my counsels, turn away  
 To drink the soft effusion of her smiles?  
 Know then, for this the everlasting Sire  
 Deprives thee of her presence, and instead, 570  
 O wise and still benevolent! ordains  
 This horrid visage hither to pursue  
 My steps; that so thy nature may discern  
 Its real good, and what alone can save  
 Thy feeble spirit in this hour of ill  
 From folly and despair. O yet beloved!  
 Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm  
 Thy scatter'd powers; nor fatal deem the rage  
 Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,  
 While I am here to vindicate thy toil, 580  
 Above the generous question of thy arm.  
 Brave by thy fears and in thy weakness strong,  
 This hour he triumphs: but confront his might,  
 And dare him to the combat, then with ease  
 Disarm'd and quell'd, his fierceness he resigns  
 To bondage and to scorn: while thus inured  
 By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,  
 The immortal mind, superior to his fate,  
 Amid the outrage of external things,  
 Firm as the solid base of this great world, 590  
 Rests on his own foundations. Blow, ye winds!  
 Ye waves! ye thunders! roll your tempest on;  
 Shake, ye old pillars of the marble sky!  
 Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire  
 Be loosen'd from their seats; yet still serene,  
 The unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck;  
 And ever stronger as the storms advance,  
 Firm through the closing ruin holds his way,  
 Where Nature calls him to the destined goal.'

So spake the goddess; while through all her frame 600  
 Celestial raptures flow'd, in every word,  
 In every motion kindling warmth divine  
 To seize who listen'd. Vehement and swift  
 As lightning fires the aromatic shade  
 In Æthiopian fields, the stripling felt  
 Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,  
 And starting from his languor thus exclaim'd:—

‘Then let the trial come! and witness thou,  
 If terror be upon me; if I shrink  
 To meet the storm, or falter in my strength 610  
 When hardest it besets me. Do not think  
 That I am fearful and infirm of soul,  
 As late thy eyes beheld: for thou hast changed  
My nature; thy commanding voice has waked  
My languid powers to bear me boldly on,  
Where'er the will divine my path ordains  
Through toil or peril: only do not thou  
 Forsake me; Oh, be thou for ever near,  
 That I may listen to thy sacred voice,  
 And guide by thy decrees my constant feet. 620

But say, for ever are my eyes bereft?  
 Say, shall the fair Euphrosyné not once  
 Appear again to charm me? Thou, in heaven!  
O thou eternal arbiter of things!

Be thy great bidding done: for who am I,  
 To question thy appointment? Let the frowns  
 Of this avenger every morn o'ercast  
 The cheerful dawn, and every evening damp  
 With double night my dwelling; I will learn  
 To hail them both, and unrepining bear 630  
 His hateful presence: but permit my tongue  
 One glad request, and if my deeds may find  
 Thy awful eye propitious, oh! restore

The rosy-featured maid; again to cheer  
This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles.' 634

He spoke; when instant through the sable glooms  
With which that furious presence had involved  
The ambient air, a flood of radiance came  
Swift as the lightning flash; the melting clouds  
Flew diverse, and amid the blue serene 640  
Euphrosyné appear'd. With sprightly step  
The nymph alighted on the irriguous lawn,  
And to her wondering audience thus began:—

'Lo! I am here to answer to your vows,  
And be the meeting fortunate! I come  
With joyful tidings; we shall part no more—  
Hark! how the gentle echo from her cell  
Talks through the cliffs, and murmuring o'er the  
stream

Repeats the accents; we shall part no more.—  
O my delightful friends! well pleased on high 650  
The Father has beheld you, while the might  
Of that stern foe with bitter trial proved  
Your equal doings: then for ever spake  
The high decree, that thou, celestial maid!  
Howe'er that grisly phantom on thy steps  
May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more  
Shalt thou, descending to the abode of man,  
Alone endure the rancour of his arm,  
Or leave thy loved Euphrosyné behind.'

She ended, and the whole romantic scene 660  
Immediate vanish'd; rocks, and woods, and rills,  
The mantling tent, and each mysterious form  
Flew like the pictures of a morning dream,  
When sunshine fills the bed. Awhile I stood  
Perplex'd and giddy; till the radiant power  
Who bade the visionary landscape rise,



As up to him I turn'd, with gentlest looks  
Preventing my inquiry, thus began:—

667

‘There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint  
How blind, how impious! There behold the ways  
Of Heaven’s eternal destiny to man,  
For ever just, benevolent, and wise:

That Virtue’s awful steps, howe’er pursued  
By vexing fortune and intrusive pain,  
Should never be divided from her chaste,  
Her fair attendant, Pleasure. Need I urge  
Thy tardy thought through all the various round  
Of this existence, that thy softening soul  
At length may learn what energy the hand  
Of virtue mingles in the bitter tide

680

Of passion swelling with distress and pain,  
To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops  
Of cordial pleasure? Ask the faithful youth,  
Why the cold urn of her whom long he loved  
So often fills his arms; so often draws  
His lonely footsteps at the silent hour,  
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?  
Oh! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds  
Should ne’er seduce his bosom to forego

That sacred hour, when, stealing from the noise  
Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes  
With virtue’s kindest looks his aching breast,  
And turns his tears to rapture.—Ask the crowd  
Which flies impatient from the village walk  
To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below  
The cruel winds have hurl’d upon the coast  
Some helpless bark; while sacred Pity melts  
The general eye, or Terror’s icy hand  
Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair;  
While every mother closer to her breast

690

700



Catches her child, and pointing where the waves 701  
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud  
As one poor wretch that spreads his piteous arms  
For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge,  
As now another, dash'd against the rock,  
Drops lifeless down: Oh! deemest thou indeed  
No kind endearment here by Nature given  
To mutual terror and compassion's tears?  
No sweetly melting softness which attracts,  
O'er all that edge of pain, the social powers 710  
To this their proper action and their end?—  
Ask thy own heart, when, at the midnight hour,  
Slow through that studious gloom thy pausing eye,  
Led by the glimmering taper, moves around  
The sacred volumes of the dead, the songs  
Of Grecian bards, and records writ by Fame  
For Grecian heroes, where the present power  
Of heaven and earth surveys the immortal page,  
Even as a father blessing, while he reads  
The praises of his son. If then thy soul, 720  
Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,  
Mix in their deeds, and kindle with their flame,  
Say, when the prospect blackens on thy view,  
When, rooted from the base, heroic states  
Mourn in the dust, and tremble at the frown  
Of cursed ambition; when the pious band  
Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires,  
Lie side by side in gore; when ruffian pride  
Usurps the throne of Justice, turns the pomp  
Of public power, the majesty of rule, 730  
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,  
To slavish empty pageants, to adorn  
A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes  
Of such as bow the knee; when honour'd urns

Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust 735  
And storied arch, to glut the coward rage  
Of regal envy, strew the public way  
With hallow'd ruins; when the Muse's haunt,  
The marble porch where Wisdom went to talk  
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more, 740  
Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,  
Or female Superstition's midnight prayer;  
When ruthless Rapine from the hand of Time  
Tears the destroying scythe, with surer blow  
To sweep the works of glory from their base;  
Till Desolation o'er the grass-grown street  
Expands his raven wings, and up the wall,  
Where senates once the price of monarchs doom'd,  
Hisses the gliding snake through hoary weeds  
That clasp the mouldering column; thus defaced, 750  
Thus widely mournful when the prospect thrills  
Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear  
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm  
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove  
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's<sup>M</sup> brow,  
Or dash Octavius from the trophied car;  
Say, does thy secret soul repine to taste  
The big distress? Or wouldst thou then exchange  
Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot  
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd 760  
Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,  
And bears aloft his gold-invested front,  
And says within himself, I am a king,  
And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe  
Intrude upon mine ear?—The baleful dregs  
Of these late ages, this inglorious draught  
Of servitude and folly, have not yet,  
Bless'd be the eternal Ruler of the world!

Defiled to such a depth of sordid shame  
The native honours of the human soul,  
Nor so effaced the image of its Sire.'

769

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BOOK III.

## ARGUMENT.

PLEASURE in observing the tempers and manners of men, even where vicious or absurd. The origin of Vice, from false representations of the fancy, producing false opinions concerning good and evil. Inquiry into ridicule. The general sources of ridicule in the minds and characters of men, enumerated. Final cause of the sense of ridicule. The resemblance of certain aspects of inanimate things to the sensations and properties of the mind. The operations of the mind in the production of the works of Imagination, described. The secondary pleasure from Imitation. The benevolent order of the world illustrated in the arbitrary connexion of these pleasures with the objects which excite them. The nature and conduct of taste. Concluding with an account of the natural and moral advantages resulting from a sensible and well formed imagination.

WHAT wonder therefore, since the endearing ties  
Of passion link the universal kind  
Of man so close, what wonder if to search  
This common nature through the various change  
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame  
Of each peculiar, draw the busy mind  
With unresisted charms? The spacious west,  
And all the teeming regions of the south,  
Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight  
Of Knowledge, half so tempting or so fair,  
As man to man. Nor only where the smiles  
Of Love invite; nor only where the applause  
Of cordial Honour turns the attentive eye  
On Virtue's graceful deeds. For, since the course  
Of things external acts in different ways

10

On human apprehensions, as the hand 16  
 Of Nature temper'd to a different frame  
 Peculiar minds; so haply where the powers  
 Of Fancy<sup>A</sup> neither lessen nor enlarge  
 The images of things, but paint in all 20  
 Their genuine hues, the features which they wore  
 In Nature; there Opinion will be true,  
 And Action right. For Action treads the path  
 In which Opinion says he follows good,  
 Or flies from evil; and Opinion gives  
 Report of good or evil, as the scene  
 Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd:  
 Thus her report can never there be true  
 Where Fancy <sup>cheats</sup> the intellectual eye,  
 With glaring <sup>colours</sup> and distorted lines. 30  
 Is there a man, who, at the sound of death,  
 Sees ghastly shapes of terror conjured up,  
 And black before him; nought but death-bed groans  
 And fearful prayers, and plunging from the brink  
 Of light and being, down the gloomy air,  
 An unknown depth? Alas! in such a mind,  
 If no bright forms of excellence attend  
 The image of his country; nor the pomp  
 Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice  
 Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes 40  
 The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame;  
 Will not Opinion tell him, that to die,  
 Or stand the hazard, is a greater ill  
 Than to betray his country? And in act  
 Will he not choose to be a wretch and live?  
 Here vice begins then. From the enchanting cup  
Which Fancy holds to all, the unwary thirst  
Of youth oft swallows a Circean draught,  
That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye

Fancy, can't come near  
 in youth - least to avoid  
 horror.



Of Reason, till no longer he discerns,  
 And only guides to err. Then revel forth  
 A furious band that spurn him from the throne,  
 And all is uproar. Thus Ambition grasps  
 The empire of the soul; thus pale Revenge  
 Unsheaths her murderous dagger; and the hands  
 Of Lust and Rapine, with unholy arts,  
 Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws  
 That keeps them from their prey; thus all the plagues  
 The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene  
 The tragic Muse discloses, under shapes  
 Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease, or pomp,  
 Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all  
Those lying forms, which Fancy in the brain  
Engenders, are the kindling passions driven  
To guilty deeds; nor Reason bound in chains,  
That Vice alone may lord it: oft adorn'd

50

60

With solemn pageants, Folly mounts the throne,  
 And plays her idiot antics, like a queen.

A thousand garbs she wears; a thousand ways  
 She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far

70

With bold adventure, to the Mantuan lyre  
 I sing of Nature's charms, and touch well pleased

A stricter note: now haply must my song  
 Unbend her serious measure, and reveal

In lighter strains, how Folly's awkward arts<sup>B</sup>  
 Excite impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke;

The sportive province of the comic Muse.

See! in what crowds the uncouth forms advance:  
 Each would outstrip the other, each prevent  
 Our careful search, and offer to your gaze,  
 Unask'd, his motley features. Wait awhile,  
 My curious friends! and let us first arrange  
 In proper order your promiscuous throng.

80

Behold the foremost band; <sup>c</sup> of slender thought, 84  
And easy faith; whom flattering Fancy soothes  
With lying spectres, in themselves to view  
Illustrious forms of excellence and good,  
That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts  
They spread their spurious treasures to the sun,  
And bid the world admire! But chief the glance 90  
Of wishful Envy draws their joy-bright eyes,  
And lifts with self-applause each lordly brow.  
In number boundless as the blooms of Spring,  
Behold their glaring idols, empty shades  
By Fancy gilded o'er, and then set up  
For adoration. Some in Learning's garb,  
With formal band, and sable-cinctured gown,  
And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate  
With martial splendour, steely pikes and swords  
Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes 100  
Inwrought with flowery gold, assume the port  
Of stately Valour: listening by his side  
There stands a female form; to her, with looks  
Of earnest import, pregnant with amaze,  
He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms,  
And sulphurous mines, and ambush: then at once  
Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,  
And asks some wondering question of her fears.  
Others of graver mien; behold, adorn'd  
With holy ensigns, how sublime they move, 110  
And bending oft their sanctimonious eyes  
Take homage of the simple-minded throng;  
Ambassadors of Heaven! Nor much unlike  
Is he, whose visage in the lazy mist  
That mantles every feature, hides a brood  
Of politic conceits, of whispers, nods,  
And hints deep omen'd with unwieldy schemes,

And dark portents of state. Ten thousand more, 118  
 Prodigious habits and tumultuous tongues,  
 Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band. 120

Then comes the second order;<sup>D</sup> all who seek  
 The debt of praise, where watchful Unbelief  
 Darts through the thin pretence her squinting eye  
 On some retired appearance which belies  
 The boasted virtue, or annuls the applause  
 That Justice else would pay. Here side by side  
 I see two leaders of the solemn train

Approaching: one a female old and gray,  
 With eyes demure, and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,  
 Pale as the cheeks of death; yet still she stuns 130  
 The sickening audience with a nauseous tale,  
 How many youths her myrtle chains have worn,  
 How many virgins at her triumphs pined!  
 Yet how resolved she guards her cautious heart;  
 Such is her terror at the risks of love,

And man's seducing tongue! The other seems  
 A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,  
 And sordid all his habit; peevish Want  
 Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng  
 He stalks, resounding in magnificent praise 140

The vanity of riches, the contempt  
 Of pomp and power. Be prudent in your zeal,  
 Ye grave associates! let the silent grace  
 Of her who blushes at the fond regard  
 Her charms inspire, more eloquent unfold  
 The praise of spotless honour: let the man,  
 Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp  
 And ample store, but as indulgent streams  
 To cheer the barren soil and spread the fruits  
 Of joy, let him by juster measures fix 150  
 The price of riches and the end of power.



Another tribe succeeds; <sup>E</sup> deluded long 152  
By Fancy's dazzling optics, these behold  
The images of some peculiar things  
With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd  
With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd  
Their genuine objects. Hence the fever'd heart  
Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms;  
Hence oft obtrusive on the eye of scorn,  
Untimely zeal her witless pride betrays! 160  
And serious manhood from the towering aim  
Of wisdom, stoops to emulate the boast  
Of childish toil. Behold yon mystic form  
Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds, and shells!  
Not with intenser view the Samian sage  
Bent his fix'd eye on heaven's intenser fires,  
When first the order of that radiant scene  
Swell'd his exulting thought, than this surveys  
A muckworm's entrails, or a spider's fang.  
Next him a youth, with flowers and myrtles crown'd, 170  
Attends that virgin form, and blushing kneels,  
With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,  
To win her coy regard: adieu, for him,  
The dull engagements of the bustling world!  
Adieu the sick impertinence of praise!  
And hope, and action! for with her alone,  
By streams and shades, to steal these sighing hours,  
Is all he asks, and all that fate can give!  
Thee too, facetious Momion, wandering here,  
Thee, dreaded censor, oft have I beheld 180  
Bewilder'd unawares: alas! too long  
Flush'd with thy comic triumphs and the spoils  
Of sly derision! till on every side  
Hurling thy random bolts, offended Truth  
Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves



Of Folly. Thy once formidable name 186  
 Shall grace her humble records, and be heard  
 In scoffs and mockery bandied from the lips  
 Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,  
 So oft the patient victims of thy scorn. 190

But now, ye gay! <sup>F</sup> to whom indulgent fate, 190  
 Of all the Muse's empire hath assign'd  
 The fields of folly, hither each advance  
 Your sickles; here the teeming soil affords  
 Its richest growth. A favourite brood appears,  
 In whom the demon, with a mother's joy,  
 Views all her charms reflected, all her cares  
 At full repaid. Ye most illustrious band!  
 Who, scorning Reason's tame, pedantic rules,  
 And Order's vulgar bondage, never meant 200  
 For souls sublime as yours, with generous zeal  
 Pay Vice the reverence Virtue long usurp'd,  
 And yield Deformity the fond applause  
 Which Beauty wont to claim, forgive my song,  
 That for the blushing diffidence of youth,  
 It shuns the unequal province of your praise.

Thus far triumphant <sup>G</sup> in the pleasing guile  
Of bland Imagination, Folly's train  
 Have dared our search: but now a dastard kind 210  
 Advance reluctant, and with faltering feet  
 Shrink from the gazer's eye: enfeebled hearts  
 Whom Fancy chills with visionary fears,  
 Or bends to servile tameness with conceits  
 Of shame, of evil, or of base defect,  
 Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave  
 Who droops abash'd when sullen Pomp surveys  
 His humbler habit; here the trembling wretch  
 Unnerved and struck with Terror's icy bolts,  
 Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,

At every dream of danger : here, subdued 220  
By frontless laughter and the hardy scorn  
Of old, unfeeling vice, the abject soul,  
Who, blushing, half resigns the candid praise  
Of Temperance and Honour; half disowns  
A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride;  
And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth  
With foulest licence mock the patriot's name.

Last of the motley bands<sup>H</sup> on whom the power  
Of gay Derision bends her hostile aim,  
Is that where shameful Ignorance presides. 230

Beneath her sordid banners, lo! they march  
Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands  
Attempt, Confusion straight appears behind,  
And troubles all the work. Through many a maze,  
Perplex'd they struggle, changing every path,  
O'erturning every purpose; then at last  
Sit down dismay'd, and leave the entangled scene  
For Scorn to sport with. Such then is the abode  
Of Folly in the mind; and such the shapes  
In which she governs her obsequious train. 240

Through every scene of ridicule in things  
To lead the tenor of my devious lay;  
Through every swift occasion, which the hand  
Of Laughter points at, when the mirthful sting  
Distends her sallying nerves and chokes her tongue;  
What were it but to count each crystal drop  
Which Morning's dewy fingers on the blooms  
Of May distil? Suffice it to have said,<sup>I</sup>  
Where'er the power of Ridicule displays  
Her quaint-eyed visage, some incongruous form, 250  
Some stubborn dissonance of things combined,  
Strikes on the quick observer: whether Pomp,  
Or Praise, or Beauty, mix their partial claim

*Effect of ridicule*

Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds, 254  
 Where foul Deformity are wont to dwell;  
 Or whether these with violation loathed,  
 Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien,  
 The charms of Beauty, or the boast of Praise.

Ask we for what fair end,<sup>k</sup> the Almighty Sire  
 In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt, 260  
 These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust  
 Educing pleasure? Wherefore, but to aid — *funct of re*  
The tardy steps of Reason, and at once  
 By this prompt impulse urge us to depress  
 The giddy aims of Folly? Though the light  
 Of Truth slow dawning on the inquiring mind,  
 At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,  
 How these uncouth disorders end at last  
 In public evil! yet benignant Heaven,  
 Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears 270  
 To thousands; conscious what a scanty pause  
 From labours and from care, the wider lot  
 Of humble life affords for studious thought  
 To scan the maze of Nature; therefore stamp'd  
 The glaring scenes with characters of scorn,  
 As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown,  
 As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind—  
 Some heavenly genius, whose unclouded thoughts  
 Attain that secret harmony which blends 280  
 The etherial spirit with its mould of clay,  
 Oh! teach me to reveal the grateful charm  
 That searchless Nature o'er the sense of man  
 Diffuses, to behold, in lifeless things,  
 The inexpressive semblance<sup>l</sup> of himself,  
 Of thought and passion. Mark the sable woods  
 That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow:



With what religious awe the solemn scene 288  
 Commands your steps! as if the reverend form  
 Of Minos or of Numa should forsake  
 The Elysian seats, and down the embowering glade  
 Move to your pausing eye! Behold the expanse  
 Of yon gay landscape, where the silver clouds  
 Flit o'er the heavens before the sprightly breeze :  
 Now their gay cincture skirts the doubtful sun;  
 Now streams of splendour, through their opening veil  
 Effulgent, sweep from off the gilded lawn  
 The ærial shadows, on the curling brook,  
 And on the shady margin's quivering leaves  
 With quickest lustre glancing ; while you view 300  
 The prospect, say, within your cheerful breast  
 Plays not the lively sense of winning mirth  
 With clouds and sunshine chequer'd, while the round  
 Of social converse, to the inspiring tongue  
 Of some gay nymph amid her subject train,  
 Moves all obsequious? Whence is this effect,  
 This kindred power of such discordant things?  
 Or flows their semblance from that mystic tone  
 To which the new-born mind's harmonious powers ← *same*  
 At first were strung? Or rather from the links 310  
 Which artful custom twines around her frame?  
 For when the different images of things,  
 By chance combined, have struck the attentive soul  
 With deeper impulse, or, connected long,  
 Have drawn her frequent eye; howe'er distinct *do these*  
 The external scenes, yet oft the ideas gain *essences*  
 From that conjunction an eternal tie, *in class*  
 And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind *Rather*  
 Recall one partner of the various league,  
 Immediate, lo! the firm confederates rise, 320  
 And each his former station straight resumes:



One movement governs the consenting throng,  
 And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,  
 Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.  
 'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold,  
 Two faithful needles,<sup>M</sup> from the informing touch  
 Of the same parent stone, together drew  
 Its mystic virtue, and at first conspired  
 With fatal impulse quivering to the pole:  
 Then, though disjoin'd by kingdoms, though the  
     main

322

320

Roll'd its broad surge betwixt, and different stars  
 Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserved  
 The former friendship, and remember'd still  
 The alliance of their birth: whate'er the line  
 Which one possess'd, nor pause, nor quiet knew  
 The sure associate, ere with trembling speed  
 He found its path and fix'd unerring there.  
 Such is the secret union, when we feel *a-ssociate*  
 A song, a flower, a name, at once restore  
 Those long-connected scenes where first they moved 340  
 The attention, backward through her mazy walks  
 Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,  
 To temples, courts, or fields, with all the band  
 Of painted forms, of passions and designs  
 Attendant; whence, if pleasing in itself,  
 The prospect from that sweet accession gains  
 Redoubled influence o'er the listening mind.

By these mysterious ties,<sup>N</sup> the busy power  
 Of Memory her ideal train preserves  
 Entire; or when they would elude her watch,  
 Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste  
 Of dark oblivion; thus collecting all  
 The various forms of being to present,  
 Before the curious aim of mimic art,

350

Their largest choice; like Spring's unfolded blooms 355  
Exhaling sweetness, that the skilful bee  
May taste at will, from their selected spoils  
To work her dulcet food. For not the expanse  
Of living lakes in Summer's noontide calm,  
Reflects the bordering shade, and sun-bright heavens,  
With fairer semblance; not the sculptured gold 361  
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,  
Than he whose birth the sister powers of Art  
Propitious view'd, and from his genial star  
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind,  
Than his attemper'd bosom must preserve  
The seal of Nature. There alone unchanged,  
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May  
There breathe perennial sweets; the trembling chord  
Resounds for ever in the abstracted ear, 370  
Melodious; and the virgin's radiant eye,  
Superior to disease, to grief, and time,  
Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length  
Endow'd with all that nature can bestow,  
The child of Fancy oft in silence bends  
O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast  
With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves  
To frame he knows not what excelling things,  
And win he knows not what sublime reward  
Of praise and wonder. By degrees, the mind 380  
Feels her young nerves dilate: the plastic powers  
Labour for action: blind emotions heave  
His bosom; and with loveliest frenzy caught,  
From earth to heaven he rolls his daring eye,  
From heaven to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes,  
Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,  
Flit swift before him. From the womb of earth,  
From ocean's bed they come: the eternal heavens

Disclose their splendours, and the dark abyss 389  
 Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze  
 He marks the rising phantoms. Now compares  
 Their different forms; now blends them, now divides,  
 Enlarges and extenuates by turns;

Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,  
 And infinitely varies. Hither now, \* *such* *fantasy*  
 Now thither fluctuates his inconstant aim,  
 With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan  
 Begins to open. Lucid order dawns; ——— \* *end.*

And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds 400  
 Of Nature at the voice divine repair'd  
 Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd  
 Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun  
 Sprung up the blue serene; by swift degrees  
Thus disentangled, his entire design

Emerges. Colours mingle, features join,  
 And lines converge: the fainter parts retire;  
 The fairer eminent in light advance;  
 And every image on its neighbour smiles.  
 Awhile he stands, and with a father's joy  
 Contemplates. Then with Promethéan art, 410  
Into its proper vehicle<sup>o</sup> he breathes

The fair conception; which, embodied thus,  
 And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears  
 An object ascertain'd: while thus inform'd,  
 The various organs of his mimic skill,  
 The consonance of sounds, the featured rock,  
 The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,  
 Beyond their proper powers attract the soul  
 By that expressive semblance, while in sight  
Of Nature's great original we scan

The lively child of Art; while line by line,  
 And feature after feature we refer 420



To that sublime exemplar whence it stole 423  
Those animating charms. Thus Beauty's palm  
Betwixt them wavering hangs: applauding Love  
Doubts where to choose; and mortal man aspires  
To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud  
Of gathering hail, with limpid crusts of ice  
Enclosed and obvious to the beaming sun,  
Collects his large effulgence; straight the heavens 430  
With equal flames present on either hand  
The radiant visage; Persia stands at gaze,  
Appall'd; and on the brink of Ganges doubts  
The snowy-vested seer, in Mithra's name,  
To which the fragrance of the south shall burn,  
To which his warbled orisons ascend.

Such various bliss the well-tuned heart enjoys,  
Favour'd of Heaven! while, plunged in sordid cares,  
The unfeeling vulgar mocks the boon divine;  
And harsh Austerity, from whose rebuke 440  
Young Love and smiling Wonder shrink away  
Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns  
Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain,  
Perhaps even now, some cold, fastidious judge  
Casts a disdainful eye; and calls my toil,  
And calls the love and beauty which I sing,  
The dream of folly. Thou, grave censor! say,  
Is Beauty then a dream, because the glooms  
Of dulness hang too heavy on thy sense,  
To let her shine upon thee? So the man 450  
Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of heaven,  
Might smile with scorn while raptur'd vision tells  
Of the gay-colour'd radiance flushing bright  
O'er all creation. From the wise be far  
Such gross unhallow'd pride; nor needs my song  
Descend so low; but rather now unfold,



If human thought could reach, or words unfold, 457  
By what mysterious fabric of the mind,  
The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound  
Result from airy motion; and from shape 460  
The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.  
By what fine ties hath God connected things  
When present in the mind, which in themselves  
Have no connexion? Sure the rising sun  
O'er the cerulean convex of the sea,  
With equal brightness and with equal warmth  
Might roll his fiery orb, nor yet the soul  
Thus feel her frame expanded, and her powers  
Exulting in the splendour she beholds,  
Like a young conqueror moving through the pomp 470  
Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve,  
Soft murmuring streams and gales of gentlest breath  
Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain  
Attemper, could not man's discerning ear  
Through all its tones the sympathy pursue,  
Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy  
Steal through his veins and fan the awaken'd heart,  
Mild as the breeze, yet rapturous as the song?

But were not Nature still endow'd at large  
With all that life requires, though unadorn'd 480  
With such enchantment? Wherefore then her form  
So exquisitely fair? her breath perfumed  
With such ethereal sweetness? whence her voice  
Inform'd at will to raise or to depress  
The impassion'd soul? and whence the robes of light  
Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp  
Than Fancy can describe? Whence but from Thee,  
O source divine of ever-flowing love! *Smile / Beauty*  
And Thy unmeasured goodness? *Faith* Not content  
With every food of life to nourish man, 490

By kind illusions of the wondering sense 491  
 Thou mak'st all Nature beauty to his eye,  
 Or music to his ear; well pleased he scans  
 The goodly prospect, and with inward smiles  
 Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain,  
 Beholds the azure canopy of heaven,  
 And living lamps that over-arch his head  
 With more than regal splendour; bends his ears  
 To the full choir of water, air, and earth;  
 Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought, 500  
 Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,  
 Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds,  
 Than space, or motion, or eternal time;  
 So sweet he feels their influence to attract  
 The fixed soul, to brighten the dull glooms  
 Of care, and make the destined road of life  
 Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,  
 The adventurous hero, bound on hard exploits,  
 Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spells  
 Of some kind sage, the patron of his toils, 510  
 A visionary paradise disclosed  
 Amid the dubious wild; with streams, and shades,  
 And airy songs, the enchanted landscape smiles,  
 Cheers his long labours and renews his frame.

What then is taste, but these internal powers  
 Active, and strong, and feelingly alive  
 To each fine impulse,—a discerning sense  
 Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust *taste*  
 From things deform'd, or disarranged, or gross  
 In species? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold, 520  
 Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow;  
 But God alone, when first His active hand  
 Imprints the secret bias of the soul. *imprints*  
 He, mighty Parent! wise and just in all,

Free as the vital breeze or light of heaven, 525  
Reveals the charms of Nature. Ask the swain  
Who journeys homeward from a summer day's  
Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils  
And due repose, he loiters to behold  
The sunshine gleaming as through amber clouds, 530  
O'er all the western sky; full soon, I ween,  
His rude expression and untutor'd airs,  
Beyond the power of language, will unfold  
The form of beauty, smiling at his heart,  
How lovely! how commanding! But though Heaven  
In every breast hath sown these early seeds  
Of love and admiration, yet in vain,  
Without fair culture's kind parental aid,  
Without enlivening suns, and genial showers,  
And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope 540  
The tender plant should rear its blooming head,  
Or yield the harvest promised in its spring.  
Nor yet will every soul with equal stores  
Repay the tiller's labour, or attend  
His will, obsequious, whether to produce  
The olive or the laurel. Different minds  
Incline to different objects; one pursues  
The vast alone,<sup>P</sup> the wonderful, the wild;  
Another sighs for harmony, and grace,  
And gentlest beauty. Hence, when lightning fires 550  
The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground,  
When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,  
And ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,  
Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky;  
Amid the mighty uproar, while below  
The nations tremble, Shakspeare looks abroad  
From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys  
The elemental war. But Waller longs,<sup>Q</sup>



All on the margin of some flowery stream 559  
To spread his careless limbs amid the cool  
Of plantane shades, and to the listening deer  
The tale of slighted vows and love's disdain  
Resound soft-warbling all the livelong day;  
Consenting Zephyr sighs; the weeping rill  
Joins in his plaint, melodious; mute the groves;  
And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.  
Such and so various are the tastes of men.

Oh! bless'd of Heaven, whom not the languid songs  
Of Luxury, the siren! not the bribes  
Of sordid Wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils 570  
Of pageant Honour, can seduce to leave  
Those ever-blooming sweets, which from the store  
Of Nature fair Imagination culls  
To charm the enliven'd soul! What though not all  
Of mortal offspring can attain the heights  
Of envied life; though only few possess  
Patrician treasures or imperial state;  
Yet Nature's care, to all her children just,  
With richer treasures and an ampler state,  
Endows at large whatever happy man 580  
Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,  
The rural honours his. Whate'er adorns  
The princely dome, the column, and the arch,  
The breathing marbles and the sculptured gold,  
Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim,  
His tuneful breast enjoys. For him, the Spring  
Distils her dews, and from the silken gem  
Its lucid leaves unfolds; for him, the hand  
Of Autumn tinges every fertile branch  
With blooming gold and blushes like the morn. 590  
Each passing Hour sheds tribute from her wings;  
And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,



And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze<sup>R</sup> 593  
Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes  
The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain  
From all the tenants of the warbling shade  
Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake  
Fresh pleasure, unproved. Nor thence partakes  
Fresh pleasure only; for the attentive mind,  
By this harmonious action on her powers 600  
Becomes herself harmonious; wont so oft  
In outward things to meditate the charm  
Of sacred order, soon she seeks at home  
To find a kindred order, to exert  
Within herself this elegance of love,  
This fair-inspired delight; her temper'd powers  
Refine at length, and every passion wears  
A chaster, milder, more attractive mien.  
But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze  
On Nature's form, where, negligent of all 610  
These lesser graces, she assumes the port  
Of that Eternal Majesty that weigh'd  
The world's foundations, if to these the mind  
Exalts her daring eye, then mightier far  
Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms  
Of servile custom cramp her generous powers?  
Would sordid policies, the barbarous growth  
Of ignorance and rapine, bow her down  
To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear?  
Lo! she appeals to Nature, to the winds 620  
And rolling waves, the sun's unwearied course,  
The elements and seasons; all declare  
For what the Eternal Maker has ordain'd  
The powers of man; we feel within ourselves  
His energy divine; he tells the heart,  
He meant, he made us to behold and love

What he beholds and loves, the general orb 627  
Of life and being; to be great like him,  
Beneficent and active. Thus the men  
Whom Nature's works can charm, with God himself  
Hold converse; grow familiar, day by day,  
With his conceptions, act upon his plan;  
And form to his, the relish of their souls.

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## NOTES.

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### BOOK FIRST.

#### NOTE A.

*'Say why was man,'* &c.—P. 8.

IN apologising for the frequent negligences of the sublimest authors of Greece, 'Those godlike geniuses,' says Longinus, 'were well assured, that Nature had not intended man for a low-spirited or ignoble being : but bringing us into life and the midst of this wide universe, as before a multitude assembled at some heroic solemnity, that we might be spectators of all her magnificence, and candidates high in emulation for the prize of glory ; she has therefore implanted in our souls an inextinguishable love of everything great and exalted, of everything which appears divine beyond our comprehension. Whence it comes to pass, that even the whole world is not an object sufficient for the depth and rapidity of human imagination, which often sallies forth beyond the limits of all that surrounds us. Let any man cast his eye through the whole circle of our existence, and consider how especially it abounds in excellent and grand objects, he will soon acknowledge for what enjoyments and pursuits we were destined. Thus by the very propensity of nature we are led to admire, not little springs or shallow rivulets, however clear and delicious, but the Nile, the Rhine, the Danube, and, much more than all, the Ocean,' &c.—*Dionys. Longin. de Sublim.* § xxiv.

#### NOTE B.

*'The empyreal waste.'*—P. 9.

'Ne se peut-il point qu'il y a un grand espace au-delà de la région des étoiles ? Que ce soit le ciel empyrée, ou non, toujours cet espace immense qui environne toute cette région, pourra être rempli de bonheur et de gloire. Il pourra être conçu comme l'océan, où se rendent les fleuves de toutes les créatures bienheureuses, quand elles seront venues à leur perfection dans le système des étoiles.'—*Leibnitz dans la Theodicée*, part i. § 19.

#### NOTE C.

*'Whose unfading light,'* &c.—P. 9.

It was a notion of the great Mr Huygens, that there may be fixed stars at such a distance from our solar system, as that their light should not have had time to reach us, even from the creation of the world to this day.

## NOTE D.

‘*The neglect  
Of all familiar prospects,*’ &c.—P. 10.

It is here said, that in consequence of the love of novelty, objects which at first were highly delightful to the mind, lose that effect by repeated attention to them. But the instance of habit is opposed to this observation; for there, objects at first distasteful are in time rendered entirely agreeable by repeated attention.

The difficulty in this case will be removed if we consider, that, when objects at first agreeable, lose that influence by frequently recurring, the mind is wholly passive, and the perception involuntary; but habit, on the other hand, generally supposes choice and activity accompanying it: so that the pleasure arises here not from the object, but from the mind’s conscious determination of its own activity; and consequently increases in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

It will still be urged perhaps, that a familiarity with disagreeable objects renders them at length acceptable, even when there is no room for the mind to resolve or act at all. In this case, the appearance must be accounted for one of these ways.

The pleasure from habit may be merely negative. The object at first gave uneasiness: this uneasiness gradually wears off as the object grows familiar: and the mind, finding it at last entirely removed, reckons its situation really pleasurable, compared with what it had experienced before.

The dislike conceived of the object at first, might be owing to prejudice or want of attention. Consequently the mind being necessitated to review it often, may at length perceive its own mistake, and be reconciled to what it had looked on with aversion. In which case, a sort of instinctive justice naturally leads it to make amends for the injury, by running toward the other extreme of fondness and attachment.

Or lastly, though the object itself should always continue disagreeable, yet circumstances of pleasure or good fortune may occur along with it. Thus an association may arise in the mind, and the object never be remembered without those pleasing circumstances attending it; by which means the disagreeable impression which it at first occasioned will in time be quite obliterated.

## NOTE E.

‘*This desire  
Of objects new and strange.*’—P. 10.

These two ideas are oft confounded; though it is evident the mere novelty of an object makes it agreeable, even where the mind is not affected with the least degree of wonder: whereas wonder indeed always implies novelty, being never excited by common or well-known appearances. But the pleasure in both cases is explicable from the same final cause, the acquisition of knowledge and enlargement of our views of nature: on this account it is natural to treat of them together.



## NOTE F.

'Truth and Good are one,  
And Beauty dwells in them,' &c.—P. 14.

'Do you imagine,' says Socrates to Aristippus, 'that what is good is not beautiful? Have you not observed that these appearances always coincide? Virtue, for instance, in the same respect as to which we call it good, is ever acknowledged to be beautiful also. In the characters of men we always\* join the two denominations together. The beauty of human bodies corresponds, in like manner, with that economy of parts which constitutes them good; and in every circumstance of life, the same object is constantly accounted both beautiful and good, inasmuch as it answers the purposes for which it was designed.'—*Xenophont. Memorab. Socrat.* l. iii. c. 8.

This excellent observation has been illustrated and extended by the noble restorer of ancient philosophy. (See the *Characteristics*, vol. ii., pp. 339 and 422, and vol. iii., p. 181.) And another ingenious author has particularly shewn, that it holds in the general laws of nature, in the works of art, and the conduct of the sciences (*Inquiry into the Original of our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue*, treat. i. § 8). As to the connexion between beauty and truth, there are two opinions concerning it. Some philosophers assert an independent and invariable law in nature, in consequence of which all rational beings must alike perceive beauty in some certain proportions, and deformity in the contrary. And this necessity being supposed the same with that which commands the assent or dissent of the understanding, it follows, of course, that beauty is founded on the universal and unchangeable law of truth. Shaf test

But others there are who believe beauty to be merely a relative and arbitrary thing; that, indeed, it was a benevolent provision in nature to annex so delightful a sensation to those objects which are best and most perfect in themselves, that so we might be engaged to the choice of them at once, and without staying to infer their usefulness from their structure and effects; but that it is not impossible, in a physical sense, that two beings, of equal capacities for truth, should perceive, one of them beauty, and the other deformity, in the same proportions. And upon this supposition, by that truth which is always connected with beauty, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to those proportions upon which, after careful examination, the beauty of that species is found to depend. Polycleetus, for instance, a famous ancient sculptor, from an accurate mensuration of the several parts of the most perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or system of proportions, which was the rule of all succeeding artists. Suppose a statue modelled according to this: a man of mere natural taste, upon looking at it, without entering into its proportions, confesses and admires its beauty; whereas a professor of the art applies his measures to the head, the neck, or the hand, and, without attending to its beauty, pronounces the workmanship to be just and true.

\* This the Athenians did in a peculiar manner, by the words *καλοκἀγαθός* and *καλοκἀγαθία*.

## NOTE G.

'*As when Brutus rose,*' &c.—P. 18.

Cicero himself describes this fact—'*Cæsare interfecto—statim cruentum alte extollens M. Brutus pugionem, Ciceronem nominatim exclamavit, atque ei recuperatam libertatem est gratulatus.*'—*Cic. Philipp. ii. 12.*

## NOTE H.

'*Where Virtue rising from the awful depth  
Of Truth's mysterious bosom,*' &c.—P. 20.

According to the opinion of those who assert moral obligation to be founded on an immutable and universal law; and that which is usually called the moral sense, to be determined by the peculiar temper of the imagination and the earliest associations of ideas.

## NOTE I.

'*Lycéum.*'—P. 21.

The school of Aristotle.

## NOTE K.

'*Academos.*'—P. 21.

The school of Plato.

## NOTE L.

'*Ilissus.*'—P. 21.

One of the rivers on which Athens was situated. Plato, in some of his finest dialogues, lays the scene of the conversation with Socrates on its banks.

## BOOK SECOND.

## NOTE A.

'*At last the Muses rose,*' &c.—P. 22.

ABOUT the age of Hugh Capet, founder of the third race of French kings, the poets of Provence were in high reputation; a sort of strolling bards or rhapsodists, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen, entertaining them at festivals with music and poetry. They attempted both the epic, ode, and satire; and abounded in a wild and fantastic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the Saracen wars. These were the rudiments of Italian poetry. But their taste and composition must have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by those who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times; such as Boiardo, Bernardo, Tasso, Ariosto, &c.

## NOTE B.

'*Valclusa.*'—P. 22.

The famous retreat of Francisco Petrarcha, the father of Italian poetry, and his mistress, Laura, a lady of Avignon.

## NOTE C.

*'Arno.'*—P. 22.

The river which runs by Florence, the birth-place of Dante and Boccaccio.

## NOTE D.

*'Parthenope.'*—P. 23.

Or Naples, the birth-place of Sannazaro. The great Torquato Tasso was born at Sorrento in the kingdom of Naples.

## NOTE E.

*'The rage  
Of dire ambition,'* &c.—P. 23.

This relates to the cruel wars among the republics of Italy, and abominable politics of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. These, at last, in conjunction with the papal power, entirely extinguished the spirit of liberty in that country, and established that abuse of the fine arts which has been since propagated over all Europe.

## NOTE F.

*'Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts,'* &c.—P. 23.

Nor were they only losers by the separation. For philosophy itself, to use the words of a noble philosopher, 'being thus severed from the sprightly arts and sciences, must consequently grow dronish, insipid, pedantic, useless, and directly opposite to the real knowledge and practice of the world.' Inasmuch that 'a gentleman,' says another excellent writer, 'cannot easily bring himself to like so austere and ungainly a form: so greatly is it changed from what was once the delight of the finest gentlemen of antiquity, and their recreation after the hurry of public affairs! From this condition it cannot be recovered but by uniting it once more with the works of imagination; and we have had the pleasure of observing a very great progress made towards their union in England within these few years. It is hardly possible to conceive them at a greater distance from each other than at the Revolution, when Locke stood at the head of one party, and Dryden of the other. But the general spirit of liberty, which has ever since been growing, naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence which the arts of persuasion gave them with the people, by applying them to subjects of importance to society. Thus poetry and eloquence became considerable; and philosophy is now, of course, obliged to borrow of their embellishments, in order even to gain audience with the public.

## NOTE G.

*'From passion's power alone,'* &c.—P. 26.

This very mysterious kind of pleasure, which is often found in the exercise of passions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by several authors. Lucretius resolves it into self-love:—

*'Suave mari magno,'* &c. lib. ii. 1.

As if a man was never pleased in being moved at the distress of a tragedy, without a cool reflection that though these fictitious personages were so unhappy, yet he himself was perfectly at ease and in safety. The ingenious author of



the *Reflexions Critiques sur la Poésie et sur la Peinture* accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and inattentive state: and this, joined with the moral approbation of its own temper, which attends these emotions when natural and just, is certainly the true foundation of the pleasure, which, as it is the origin and basis of tragedy and epic, deserved a very particular consideration in this poem.

## NOTE H.

'*Inhabitant of earth,*' &c.—P. 31.

The account of the economy of Providence here introduced, as the most proper to calm and satisfy the mind when under the compunction of private evils, seems to have come originally from the Pythagorean school: but of the ancient philosophers, Plato has most largely insisted upon it, has established it with all the strength of his capacious understanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one passage so full and clear on this head, that I am persuaded the reader will be pleased to see it here, though somewhat long. Addressing himself to such as are not satisfied concerning divine Providence: 'The Being who presides over the whole,' says he, 'has disposed and complicated all things for the happiness and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and suffers what is fit and proper. One of these parts is yours, O unhappy man, which though in itself most inconsiderable and minute, yet being connected with the universe, ever seeks to co-operate with that supreme order. You in the meantime are ignorant of the very end for which all particular natures are brought into existence, that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be perfect and happy; existing, as it does, not for your sake, but the cause and reason of your existence, which, as in the symmetry of every artificial work, must of necessity concur with the general design of the artist, and be subservient to the whole of which it is a part. Your complaint therefore is ignorant and groundless; since, according to the various energy of creation, and the common laws of nature, there is a constant provision of that which is best at the same time for you and for the whole.—For the governing intelligence clearly beholding all the actions of animated and self-moving creatures, and that mixture of good and evil which diversifies them, considered first of all by what disposition of things, and by what situation of each individual in the general system, vice might be depressed and subdued, and virtue made secure of victory and happiness with the greatest facility and in the highest degree possible. In this manner he ordered through the entire circle of being, the internal constitution of every mind, where should be its station in the universal fabric, and through what variety of circumstances it should proceed in the whole tenor of its existence.' He goes on in his sublime manner to assert a future state of retribution, 'as well for those who, by the exercise of good dispositions being harmonised and assimilated into the divine virtue, are consequently removed to a place of unblemished sanctity and happiness; as of those who by the most flagitious arts have risen from contemptible beginnings to the greatest affluence and power, and whom you therefore look upon as unanswerable instances of negligence in the gods, because you are ignorant of the purposes to which they are subservient, and in



what manner they contribute to that supreme intention of good to the whole.'  
—*Plato de Leg.* x. 16.

This theory has been delivered of late, especially abroad, in a manner which subverts the freedom of human actions; whereas Plato appears very careful to preserve it, and has been in that respect imitated by the best of his followers.

## NOTE I.

'One might rise,  
One order,' &c.—P. 31.

See the *Meditations* of Antoninus and the *Characteristics*, passim.

## NOTE K.

'The best and fairest,' &c.—P. 32.

This opinion is so old, that Timæus Locrus calls the Supreme Being δημιουργός του βελτιονός, the artificer of that which is best; and represents him as resolving in the beginning to produce the most excellent work, and as copying the world most exactly from his own intelligible and essential idea; 'so that it yet remains, as it was at first, perfect in beauty, and will never stand in need of any correction or improvement.' There can be no room for a caution here, to understand the expressions, not of any particular circumstances of human life separately considered, but of the sum or universal system of life and being. See also the vision at the end of the *Theodicée* of Leibnitz.

## NOTE L.

'As flame ascends,' &c.—P. 32.

This opinion, though not held by Plato nor any of the ancients, is yet a very natural consequence of his principles. But the disquisition is too complex and extensive to be entered upon here.

## NOTE M.

'Philip.'—P. 44.

The Macedonian.

## BOOK THIRD.

## NOTE A.

'Where the powers  
Of Fancy,' &c.—P. 46.

THE influence of the imagination on the conduct of life is one of the most important points in moral philosophy. It were easy, by an induction of facts, to prove that the imagination directs almost all the passions, and mixes with almost every circumstance of action or pleasure. Let any man, even of the coldest head and soberest industry, analyse the idea of what he calls his interest; he will find that it consists chiefly of certain degrees of decency, beauty, and order, variously combined into one system, the idol which he seeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and self-denial. It is, on this account, of the last consequence to regulate these images by the standard of nature and the general

good; otherwise the imagination, by heightening some objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by representing others in a more odious or terrible shape than they deserve, may, of course, engage us in pursuits utterly inconsistent with the moral order of things.

If it be objected that this account of things supposes the passions to be merely accidental, whereas there appears in some a natural and hereditary disposition to certain passions prior to all circumstances of education or fortune, it may be answered, that though no man is born ambitious or a miser, yet he may inherit from his parents a peculiar temper or complexion of mind, which shall render his imagination more liable to be struck with some particular objects, consequently dispose him to form opinions of good and ill, and entertain passions of a particular turn. Some men, for instance, by the original frame of their minds, are more delighted with the vast and magnificent, others, on the contrary, with the elegant and gentle aspects of nature. And it is very remarkable, that the disposition of the moral powers is always similar to this of the imagination; that those who are most inclined to admire prodigious and sublime objects in the physical world, are also most inclined to applaud examples of fortitude and heroic virtue in the moral. While those who are charmed rather with the delicacy and sweetness of colours, and forms, and sounds, never fail in like manner to yield the preference to the softer scenes of virtue and the sympathies of a domestic life. And this is sufficient to account for the objection.

Among the ancient philosophers, though we have several hints concerning this influence of the imagination upon morals among the remains of the Socratic school, yet the Stoics were the first who paid it a due attention. Zeno, their founder, thought it impossible to preserve any tolerable regularity in life, without frequently inspecting those pictures or appearances of things, which the imagination offers to the mind (*Diog. Laërt.* l. vii.) The meditations of M. Aurelius, and the discourses of Epictetus, are full of the same sentiment; insomuch that the latter makes the *Χρησις οἷα δεῖ, φαντασιῶν*, or right management of the fancies, the only thing for which we are accountable to Providence, and without which a man is no other than stupid or frantic (*Arrian.* l. i. c. 12. and l. ii. c. 22). See also the *Characteristics*, vol. i. from p. 313 to 321, where this Stoical doctrine is embellished with all the elegance and graces of Plato.

## NOTE B.

'*How Folly's awkward arts,*' &c.—P. 47.

Notwithstanding the general influence of ridicule on private and civil life, as well as on learning and the sciences, it has been almost constantly neglected or misrepresented, by divines especially. The manner of treating these subjects in the science of human nature, should be precisely the same as in natural philosophy; from particular facts to investigate the stated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law, thus discovered, to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of useful arts.

## NOTE C.

'*Behold the foremost band,*' &c.—P. 48.

The first and most general source of ridicule in the characters of men, is

vanity or self-applause for some desirable quality or possession which evidently does not belong to those who assume it.

NOTE D.

*'Then comes the second order,'* &c.—P. 49.

Ridicule from the same vanity, where, though the possession be real, yet no merit can arise from it, because of some particular circumstances, which, though obvious to the spectator, are yet overlooked by the ridiculous character.

NOTE E.

*'Another tribe succeeds,'* &c.—P. 50.

Ridicule from a notion of excellence in particular objects disproportioned to their intrinsic value, and inconsistent with the order of nature.

NOTE F.

*'But now, ye gay,'* &c.—P. 51.

Ridicule from a notion of excellence, when the object is absolutely odious or contemptible. This is the highest degree of the ridiculous; as in the affectation of diseases or vices.

NOTE G.

*'Thus far triumphant,'* &c.—P. 51

Ridicule from false shame or groundless fear.

NOTE H.

*'Last of the motley bands,'* &c.—P. 52.

Ridicule from the ignorance of such things as our circumstances require us to know.

NOTE I.

*'Suffice it to have said,'* &c.—P. 52.

By comparing these general sources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it, equally applicable to every species. The most important circumstance of this definition is laid down in the lines referred to; but others more minute we shall subjoin here. Aristotle's account of the matter seems both imperfect and false. Τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον, says he, ἐστὶν ἀμάρτημά τι καὶ αἰσχος, ἀνώδυνον καὶ οὐ φθαρτικόν: 'The ridiculous is some certain fault or turpitude without pain, and not destructive to its subject' (*Poet.* c. 5). For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompanied with pain, yet we might produce many instances of such a fault or turpitude which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous. So that the definition does not distinguish the thing designed. Nay, further, even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the destruction of its subject, we may still be sensible of a ridiculous appearance, till the ruin become imminent, and the keener sensations of pity or terror banish the ludicrous apprehension from our minds; for the sensation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas, but a passion or emotion of the mind consequential to that perception; so that the mind may perceive the agreement or disagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, because it is engrossed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that some men think those objects ridiculous, to



which others cannot endure to apply the name, because in them they excite a much intenser and more important feeling. And this difference, among other causes, has brought a good deal of confusion into this question.

'That which makes objects ridiculous is some ground of admiration or esteem connected with other more general circumstances comparatively worthless or deformed; or it is some circumstance of turpitude or deformity connected with what is in general excellent or beautiful: the inconsistent properties existing either in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate, belonging always to the same order or class of being, implying sentiment or design, and exciting no acute or vehement emotion of the heart.'

To prove the several parts of this definition: 'The appearance of excellence or beauty connected with a general condition comparatively sordid or deformed' is ridiculous; for instance, pompous pretensions of wisdom joined with ignorance or folly in the Socrates of Aristophanes, and the ostentations of military glory with cowardice and stupidity in the Thraso of Terence.

'The appearance of deformity or turpitude in conjunction with what is in general excellent or venerable,' is also ridiculous: for instance, the personal weaknesses of a magistrate appearing in the solemn and public functions of his station.

'The incongruous properties may either exist in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate:' in the last-mentioned instance, they both exist in the objects; in the instances from Aristophanes and Terence, one of them is objective and real, the other only founded in the apprehension of the ridiculous character.

'The inconsistent properties must belong to the same order or class of being.' A coxcomb in fine clothes, bedaubed by accident in foul weather, is a ridiculous object, because his general apprehension of excellence and esteem is referred to the splendour and expense of his dress. A man of sense and merit, in the same circumstances, is not counted ridiculous, because the general ground of excellence and esteem in him is, both in fact and in his own apprehension, of a very different species.

'Every ridiculous object implies sentiment or design.' A column placed by an architect without a capital or base is laughed at: the same column in a ruin causes a very different sensation.

And lastly, 'the occurrence must excite no acute or vehement emotion of the heart,' such as terror, pity, or indignation; for in that case, as was observed above, the mind is not at leisure to contemplate the ridiculous.

Whether any appearance not ridiculous be involved in this description, and whether it comprehend every species and form of the ridiculous, must be determined by repeated applications of it to particular instances.

#### NOTE K.

'*Ask we for what fair end,*' &c.—P. 53.

Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a natural sense or feeling of the ridiculous, and since so good a reason may be assigned to justify the supreme Being for bestowing it, one cannot, without astonishment, reflect on the conduct of those men who imagine it is for the service of true religion to vilify and blacken it without distinction, and endeavour to persuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cause. Ridicule is not concerned with merespecu-



lative truth or falsehood. It is not in abstract propositions or theorems, but in actions and passions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all these terms are relative, implying approbation or blame. To ask them whether ridicule be a test of truth, is, in other words, to ask whether that which is ridiculous can be morally true, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming can be ridiculous?—a question that does not deserve a serious answer. For it is most evident, that, as in a metaphysical proposition offered to the understanding for its assent, the faculty of reason examines the terms of the proposition, and finding one idea, which was supposed equal to another, to be in fact unequal, of consequence rejects the proposition as a falsehood; so, in objects offered to the mind for its esteem or applause, the faculty of ridicule, finding an incongruity in the claim, urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When, therefore, we observe such a claim obtruded upon mankind, and the inconsistent circumstances carefully concealed from the eye of the public, it is our business, if the matter be of importance to society, to drag out those latent circumstances, and, by setting them in full view, to convince the world how ridiculous the claim is: and thus a double advantage is gained; for we both detect the moral falsehood sooner than in the way of speculative inquiry, and impress the minds of men with a stronger sense of the vanity and error of its authors. And this, and no more, is meant by the application of ridicule.

But it is said, the practice is dangerous, and may be inconsistent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I answer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous; men may be dishonest in obtruding circumstances foreign to the object, and we may be inadvertent in allowing those circumstances to impose upon us: but the sense of ridicule always judges right. The Socrates of Aristophanes is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn:—true; but it is not the character of Socrates, the divine moralist and father of ancient wisdom. What then? did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philosopher from detecting and disclaiming those foreign circumstances which he had falsely introduced into his character, and thus rendered the satirist doubly ridiculous in his turn? No; but it nevertheless had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And so has the reasoning of Spinoza made many atheists: he has founded it, indeed, on suppositions utterly false; but allow him these, and his conclusions are unavoidably true. And if we must reject the use of ridicule, because, by the imposition of false circumstances, things may be made to seem ridiculous, which are not so in themselves; why we ought not in the same manner to reject the use of reason, because, by proceeding on false principles, conclusions will appear true which are impossible in nature, let the vehement and obstinate declaimers against ridicule determine.

## NOTE L.

‘*The inexpressive semblance,*’ &c.—P. 53.

This similitude is the foundation of almost all the ornaments of poetic diction.

## NOTE M.

‘*Two faithful needles,*’ &c.—P. 55.

See the elegant poem recited by Cardinal Bembo in the character of Lucretius.—*Strada Prolus.* vi. *Academ.* 2. c. v.

## NOTE N.

'*By these mysterious ties,*' &c.—P. 55.

The act of remembering seems almost wholly to depend on the association of ideas.

## NOTE O.

'*Into its proper vehicle,*' &c.—P. 57.

This relates to the different sorts of corporeal mediums, by which the ideas of the artists are rendered palpable to the senses: as by sounds, in music; by lines and shadows, in painting; by diction, in poetry, &c.

## NOTE P.

'*One pursues*

*The vast alone,*' &c.—P. 61.

See the note to ver. 18 of this book.

## NOTE Q.

'*Waller longs,*' &c.—P. 61.

Oh! how I long my careless limbs to lay  
Under the plantane shade; and all the day  
With amorous airs my fancy entertain, &c.

WALLER, *Battle of the Summer-Islands*, Canto I.

And again,

While in the park I sing, the list'ning deer  
Attend my passion, and forget to fear, &c.

At Pens-hurst.

## NOTE R.

'*Not a breeze,*' &c.—P. 63.

That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than just in philosophy, it may be proper to produce the sentiment of one of the greatest, wisest, and best of men on this head; one so little to be suspected of partiality in the case, that he reckons it among those favours for which he was especially thankful to the gods, that they had not suffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, lest by that means he should have been diverted from pursuits of more importance to his high station. Speaking of the beauty of universal nature, he observes, that there 'is a pleasing and graceful aspect in every object we perceive,' when once we consider its connexion with that general order. He instances in many things which at first sight would be thought rather deformities; and then adds, 'that a man who enjoys a sensibility of temper with a just comprehension of the universal order—will discern many amiable things, not credible to every mind, but to those alone who have entered into an honourable familiarity with nature and her works.'—*M. Antonin.* iii. 2.

THE  
PLEASURES OF THE IMAGINATION.

A POEM.

---

GENERAL ARGUMENT.

THE pleasures of the imagination proceed either from natural objects, as from a flourishing grove, a clear and murmuring fountain, a calm sea by moonlight; or from works of art, such as a noble edifice, a musical tune, a statue, a picture, a poem. In treating of these pleasures, we must begin with the former class; they being original to the other; and nothing more being necessary, in order to explain them, than a view of our natural inclination toward greatness and beauty, and of those appearances, in the world around us, to which that inclination is adapted. This is the subject of the first book of the following poem.

But the pleasures which we receive from the elegant arts, from music, sculpture, painting, and poetry, are much more various and complicated. In them (besides greatness and beauty, or forms proper to the imagination) we find interwoven frequent representations of truth, of virtue and vice, of circumstances proper to move us with laughter, or to excite in us pity, fear, and the other passions. These moral and intellectual objects are described in the second book; to which the third properly belongs as an episode, though too large to have been included in it.

With the above-mentioned causes of pleasure, which are universal in the course of human life, and appertain to our higher faculties, many others do generally occur, more limited in their operation, or of an inferior origin: such are the novelty of objects, the association of ideas, affections of the bodily senses, influences of education, national habits, and the like. To illustrate these, and from the whole to determine the character of a perfect taste, is the argument of the fourth book.

Hitherto the pleasures of the imagination belong to the human species in general. But there are certain particular men whose imagination is endowed with powers, and susceptible of pleasures, which the generality of mankind never participate. These are the men of genius, destined by nature to excel in one or other of the arts already mentioned. It is proposed, therefore, in the

last place, to delineate that genius which in some degree appears common to them all; yet with a more peculiar consideration of poetry: inasmuch as poetry is the most extensive of those arts, the most philosophical, and the most useful.

## BOOK I. 1757.

### ARGUMENT.

THE subject proposed. Dedication. The ideas of the Supreme Being, the exemplars of all things. The variety of constitution in the minds of men; with its final cause. The general character of a fine imagination. All the immediate pleasures of the human imagination proceed either from Greatness or Beauty in external objects. The pleasure from Greatness; with its final cause. The natural connexion of Beauty with truth<sup>1</sup> and good. The different orders of Beauty in different objects. The infinite and all-comprehending form of Beauty, which belongs to the Divine Mind. The partial and artificial forms of Beauty, which belong to inferior intellectual beings. The origin and general conduct of beauty in man. The subordination of local beauties to the beauty of the Universe. Conclusion.

WITH what enchantment Nature's goodly scene  
 Attracts the sense of mortals; how the mind  
 For its own eye doth objects nobler still  
 Prepare; how men by various lessons learn  
 To judge of Beauty's praise; what raptures fill  
 The breast with fancy's native arts endow'd,  
 And what true culture guides it to renown,  
 My verse unfolds. Ye gods, or godlike powers,  
 Ye guardians of the sacred task, attend  
 Propitious. Hand in hand around your bard  
 Move in majestic measures, leading on  
 His doubtful step through many a solemn path,  
 Conscious of secrets which to human sight  
 Ye only can reveal. Be great in him:  
 And let your favour make him wise to speak  
 Of all your wondrous empire; with a voice

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<sup>1</sup> Truth is here taken, not in a logical, but in a mixed and popular sense, or for what has been called the truth of things; denoting as well their natural and regular condition, as a proper estimate or judgment concerning them.



So temper'd to his theme, that those who hear 17  
May yield perpetual homage to yourselves.  
Thou chief, O daughter of eternal Love,  
Whate'er thy name; or Muse, or Grace, adored  
By Grecian prophets; to the sons of Heaven  
Known, while with deep amazement thou dost there  
The perfect counsels read, the ideas old,  
Of thine omniscient Father; known on earth  
By the still horror and the blissful tear  
With which thou seizest on the soul of man;  
† Thou chief, Poetic Spirit, from the banks  
Of Avon, whence thy holy fingers cull  
Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf  
Where Shakspeare lies, be present. And with thee 30  
Let Fiction come, on her aërial wings  
Wafting ten thousand colours, which in sport,  
By the light glances of her magic eye,  
She blends and shifts at will through countless forms,  
Her wild creation. Goddess of the lyre,  
Whose awful tones control the moving sphere,  
Wilt thou, eternal Harmony, descend,  
And join this happy train? for with thee comes  
The guide, the guardian of their mystic rites,  
Wise Order: and, where Order deigns to come, 40  
Her sister, Liberty, will not be far.  
Be present all ye Genii, who conduct  
Of youthful bards the lonely wandering step  
New to your springs and shades; who touch their ear  
With finer sounds, and heighten to their eye  
The pomp of nature, and before them place  
‡ The fairest, loftiest countenance of things.  
Nor thou, my Dyson,<sup>1</sup> to the lay refuse  
Thy wonted partial audience. What though first,

<sup>1</sup> 'Dyson:' see *Life*.

In years unseason'd, haply ere the sports 50  
Of childhood yet were o'er, the adventurous lay  
With many splendid prospects, many charms,  
Allured my heart, nor conscious whence they sprung,  
Nor heedful of their end? yet serious Truth  
Her empire o'er the calm, sequester'd theme  
Asserted soon; while Falsehood's evil brood,  
Vice and deceitful Pleasure, she at once  
Excluded, and my fancy's careless toil  
Drew to the better cause. Maturer aid  
Thy friendship added, in the paths of life, 60  
The busy paths, my unaccustom'd feet  
Preserving: nor to Truth's recess divine,  
Through this wide argument's unbeaten space,  
Withholding surer guidance; while by turns  
We traced the sages old, or while the queen  
Of sciences (whom manners and the mind  
Acknowledge) to my true companion's voice  
Not unattentive, o'er the wintry lamp  
Inclined her sceptre, favouring. Now the fates  
Have other tasks imposed;—to thee, my friend, 70  
The ministry of freedom and the faith  
Of popular decrees, in early youth,  
Not vainly they committed; me they sent  
To wait on pain, and silent arts to urge,  
Inglorious; not ignoble, if my cares,  
To such as languish on a grievous bed,  
Ease and the sweet forgetfulness of ill  
Conciliate; nor delightless, if the Muse,  
Her shades to visit and to taste her springs,  
If some distinguish'd hours the bounteous Muse 80  
Impart, and grant (what she, and she alone,  
Can grant to mortals) that my hand those wreaths  
Of fame and honest favour, which the bless'd

Wear in Elysium, and which never felt 84  
 The breath of envy or malignant tongues,  
 That these my hand for thee and for myself  
 May gather. Meanwhile, O my faithful friend,  
 O early chosen, ever found the same,  
 And trusted and beloved, once more the verse  
 Long destined, always obvious to thine ear, 90  
 Attend, indulgent: so in latest years,  
 When time thy head with honours shall have clothed  
 Sacred to even virtue, may thy mind,  
 Amid the calm review of seasons past,  
 Fair offices of friendship, or kind peace,  
 Or public zeal, may then thy mind well pleased  
 Recall these happy studies of our prime.

† From Heaven my strains begin: from Heaven  
 descends

The flame of genius to the chosen breast,  
 And beauty with poetic wonder join'd, 100  
 And inspiration. Ere the rising sun  
 Shone o'er the deep, or 'mid the vault of night  
 The moon her silver lamp suspended; ere  
 The vales with springs were water'd, or with groves  
 Of oak or pine the ancient hills were crown'd;  
 Then the Great Spirit, whom his works adore,  
 Within his own deep essence view'd the forms,  
 The forms eternal of created things:  
 The radiant sun; the moon's nocturnal lamp;  
 The mountains and the streams; the ample stores 110  
 Of earth, of heaven, of nature. From the first,  
 On that full scene his love divine he fix'd,  
 His admiration: till, in time complete,  
 What he admired and loved his vital power  
 Unfolded into being. Hence the breath  
 Of life informing each organic frame:

Hence the green earth, and wild-resounding waves: 117  
Hence light and shade, alternate; warmth and  
cold;

And bright autumnal skies, and vernal showers,  
And all the fair variety of things. 120

But not alike to every mortal eye  
Is this great scene unveil'd, For while the claims  
Of social life to different labours urge  
The active powers of man, with wisest care  
Hath Nature on the multitude of minds  
Impress'd a various bias, and to each  
Decreed its province in the common toil.  
To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,  
The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,  
The golden zones of heaven; to some she gave 130  
To search the story of eternal thought;  
Of space, and time; of fate's unbroken chain,  
And will's quick movement; others by the hand  
She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore  
What healing virtue dwells in every vein  
Of herbs or trees. But some to nobler hopes  
Were destined; some within a finer mould  
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.  
To these the Sire Omnipotent unfolds,  
In fuller aspects and with fairer lights, 140  
This picture of the world. Through every part  
They trace the lofty sketches of his hand;  
In earth, or air, the meadow's flowery store,  
The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's mien  
Dress'd in attractive smiles, they see portray'd  
(As far as mortal eyes the portrait scan)  
Those lineaments of beauty which delight  
The Mind Supreme. They also feel their force,  
Enamour'd; they partake the eternal joy.



97 ( For as old Memnon's image, long renown'd 150  
 Through fabling Egypt, at the genial touch  
 Of morning, from its inmost frame sent forth  
 118 Spontaneous music, so doth Nature's hand,  
To certain attributes which matter claims,  
Adapt the finer organs of the mind;  
 ✓ So the glad impulse of those kindred powers  
 (Of form, of colour's cheerful pomp, of sound  
 Melodious, or of motion aptly sped),  
 Detains the enliven'd sense; till soon the soul  
 Feels the deep concord, and assents through all 160  
 Her functions. Then the charm by fate prepared  
 Diffuseth its enchantment Fancy dreams,  
 Rapt into high discourse with prophets old,  
 And wandering through Elysium, Fancy dreams  
 Of sacred fountains, of o'ershadowing groves,  
 Whose walks with godlike harmony resound:  
 Fountains, which Homer visits; happy groves,  
 Where Milton dwells; the intellectual power,  
 On the mind's throne, suspends his graver cares,  
 And smiles; the passions, to divine repose 170  
 Persuaded yield, and love and joy alone  
 Are waking: love and joy, such as await  
 An angel's meditation. Oh! attend,  
 Whoe'er thou art whom these delights can touch;  
 Whom Nature's aspect, Nature's simple garb  
 Can thus command; oh! listen to my song;  
 And I will guide thee to her blissful walks,  
 And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,  
 And point her gracious features to thy view.

Know then, whate'er of the world's ancient store, 180  
 Whate'er of mimic Art's reflected scenes,  
 With love and admiration thus inspire  
 Attentive Fancy, her delighted sons

In two illustrious orders comprehend, 184  
Self-taught: from him whose rustic toil the lark  
Cheers warbling, to the bard whose daring thoughts  
Range the full orb of being, still the form,  
Which Fancy worships, or sublime or fair,  
Her votaries proclaim. I see them dawn:  
I see the radiant visions where they rise, 190  
More lovely than when Lucifer displays  
His glittering forehead through the gates of morn,  
To lead the train of Phœbus and the Spring.

Say, why was man so eminently raised  
Amid the vast creation; why empower'd  
Through life and death to dart his watchful eye,  
With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame;  
But that the Omnipotent might send him forth,  
In sight of angels and immortal minds,  
As on an ample theatre to join 200  
In contest with his equals, who shall best  
The task achieve, the course of noble toils,  
By wisdom and by mercy preordain'd?  
Might send him forth the sovereign good to learn;  
To chase each meaner purpose from his breast;  
And through the mists of passion and of sense,  
And through the pelting storms of chance and pain,  
To hold straight on, with constant heart and eye  
Still fix'd upon his everlasting palm,  
The approving smile of Heaven? Else wherefore  
burns 210

In mortal bosoms this unquenchèd hope,  
That seeks from day to day sublimer ends,  
Happy, though restless? Why departs the soul  
Wide from the track and journey of her times,  
To grasp the good she knows not? In the field  
Of things which may be, in the spacious field

Of science, potent arts, or dreadful arms, 217  
To raise up scenes in which her own desires  
Contented may repose; when things, which are,  
Pall on her temper, like a twice-told tale:  
Her temper, still demanding to be free;  
Spurning the rude control of wilful might;  
Proud of her dangers braved, her griefs endured,  
Her strength severely proved? To these high aims,  
Which reason and affection prompt in man,  
Not adverse nor unapt hath Nature framed  
His bold imagination. For, amid  
The various forms which this full world presents  
Like rivals to his choice, what human breast  
E'er doubts, before the transient and minute, 230  
To prize the vast, the stable, the sublime?  
Who, that from heights aërial sends his eye  
Around a wild horizon, and surveys  
Indus or Ganges rolling his broad wave  
Through mountains, plains, through spacious cities old,  
And regions dark with woods, will turn away  
To mark the path of some penurious rill  
Which murmureth at his feet? Where does the soul  
Consent her soaring fancy to restrain,  
Which bears her up, as on an eagle's wings, 240  
Destined for highest heaven; or which of fate's  
Tremendous barriers shall confine her flight  
To any humbler quarry? The rich earth  
Cannot detain her; nor the ambient air  
With all its changes. For a while with joy  
She hovers o'er the sun, and views the small  
Attendant orbs, beneath his sacred beam,  
Emerging from the deep, like cluster'd isles  
Whose rocky shores to the glad sailor's eye  
Reflect the gleams of morning; for a while 250

With pride she sees his firm, paternal sway 251  
Bend the reluctant planets to move each  
Round its perpetual year. But soon she quits  
That prospect; meditating loftier views,  
She darts adventurous up the long career  
Of comets; through the constellations holds  
Her course, and now looks back on all the stars  
Whose blended flames as with a milky stream  
Part the blue region. Empyréan tracts,  
Where happy souls beyond this concave heaven 260  
Abide, she then explores, whence purer light  
For countless ages travels through the abyss,  
Nor hath in sight of mortals yet arrived.  
Upon the wide creation's utmost shore  
At length she stands, and the dread space beyond  
Contemplates, half-recoiling: nathless, down  
The gloomy void, astonish'd, yet unquell'd,  
She plungeth; down the unfathomable gulf  
Where God alone hath being. There her hopes  
Rest at the fated goal. For, from the birth 270  
Of human kind, the Sovereign Maker said  
That not in humble, nor in brief delight,  
Not in the fleeting echoes of renown,  
Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,  
The soul should find contentment; but, from these  
Turning disdainful to an equal good,  
Through Nature's opening walks enlarge her aim,  
Till every bound at length should disappear,  
And infinite perfection fill the scene.

But lo, where Beauty, dress'd in gentler pomp, 280  
With comely steps advancing, claims the verse  
Her charms inspire. O Beauty, source of praise,  
Of honour, even to mute and lifeless things;  
O thou that kindlest in each human heart



Love, and the wish of poets, when their tongue 285  
Would teach to other bosoms what so charms  
Their own; O child of Nature and the soul,  
In happiest hour brought forth; the doubtful garb  
Of words, of earthly language, all too mean,  
Too lowly I account, in which to clothe 290  
Thy form divine; for thee the mind alone  
Beholds, nor half thy brightness can reveal  
Through those dim organs, whose corporeal touch  
O'ershadoweth thy pure essence. Yet, my Muse,  
If Fortune call thee to the task, wait thou  
Thy favourable seasons; then, while fear  
And doubt are absent, through wide nature's bounds  
Expatriate with glad step, and choose at will  
Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,  
Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air, 300  
To manifest unblemish'd Beauty's praise,  
And o'er the breasts of mortals to extend  
Her gracious empire. Wilt thou to the isles  
Atlantic, to the rich Hesperian clime,  
Fly in the train of Autumn, and look on,  
And learn from him; while, as he roves around,  
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,  
The branches bloom with gold; where'er his foot  
Imprints the soil, the ripening clusters swell,  
Turning aside their foliage, and come forth 310  
In purple lights, till every hillock glows  
As with the blushes of an evening sky?  
Or wilt thou that Thessalian landscape trace,  
Where slow Penéus his clear glassy tide  
Draws smooth along, between the winding cliffs  
Of Ossa and the pathless woods unshorn  
That wave o'er huge Olympus? Down the stream,  
Look how the mountains with their double range

Embrace the vale of Tempé: from each side 319  
Ascending steep to heaven, a rocky mound  
Cover'd with ivy and the laurel boughs  
That crown'd young Phœbus for the Python slain.  
Fair Tempé! on whose primrose banks the morn  
Awoke most fragrant, and the noon reposed  
In pomp of lights and shadows most sublime:  
Whose lawns, whose glades, ere human footsteps yet  
Had traced an entrance, were the hallow'd haunt  
Of sylvan powers immortal: where they sate  
Oft in the golden age, the Nymphs and Fauns,  
Beneath some arbour branching o'er the flood, 330  
And leaning round hung on the instructive lips  
Of hoary Pan, or o'er some open dale  
Danced in light measures to his sevenfold pipe,  
While Zephyr's wanton hand along their path  
Flung showers of painted blossoms, fertile dews,  
And one perpetual spring. But if our task  
97 More lofty rites demand, with all good vows  
Then let us hasten to the rural haunt  
Where young Melissa dwells. Nor thou refuse  
The voice which calls thee from thy loved retreat, 340  
But hither, gentle maid, thy footsteps turn:  
Here, to thy own unquestionable theme,  
O fair, O graceful, bend thy polish'd brow,  
Assenting; and the gladness of thy eyes  
Impart to me, like morning's wish'd light  
Seen through the vernal air. By yonder stream,  
Where beech and elm along the bordering mead  
Send forth wild melody from every bough,  
Together let us wander; where the hills  
Cover'd with fleeces to the lowing vale 350  
Reply; where tidings of content and peace  
Each echo brings. Lo, how the western sun

O'er fields and floods, o'er every living soul, 353  
Diffuseth glad repose! There, while I speak  
Of Beauty's honours, thou, Melissa, thou  
Shalt hearken, not unconscious, while I tell  
How first from Heaven she came: how, after all  
The works of life, the elemental scenes,  
The hours, the seasons, she had oft explored,  
At length her favourite mansion and her throne 360  
She fix'd in woman's form; what pleasing ties  
To virtue bind her; what effectual aid  
They lend each other's power; and how divine  
Their union, should some unambitious maid,  
To all the enchantment of the Idalian queen,  
Add sanctity and wisdom; while my tongue  
Prolongs the tale, Melissa, thou may'st feign  
To wonder whence my rapture is inspired;  
But soon the smile which dawns upon thy lip  
Shall tell it, and the tenderer bloom o'er all 370  
That soft cheek springing to the marble neck,  
Which bends aside in vain, revealing more  
What it would thus keep silent, and in vain  
The sense of praise dissembling. Then my song  
Great Nature's winning arts, which thus inform  
With joy and love the rugged breast of man,  
Should sound in numbers worthy such a theme:  
While all whose souls have ever felt the force  
Of those enchanting passions, to my lyre  
Should throng attentive, and receive once more 380  
Their influence, unobscured by any cloud  
Of vulgar care, and purer than the hand  
Of Fortune can bestow; nor, to confirm  
Their sway, should awful Contemplation scorn  
To join his dictates to the genuine strain  
Of Pleasure's tongue; nor yet should Pleasure's ear

Be much averse. Ye chiefly, gentle band 387  
Of youths and virgins, who through many a wish  
And many a fond pursuit, as in some scene  
Of magic bright and fleeting, are allured  
By various Beauty, if the pleasing toil  
Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn  
Your favourable ear, and trust my words.  
I do not mean on bless'd Religion's seat,  
Presenting Superstition's gloomy form,  
To dash your soothing hopes; I do not mean  
To bid the jealous thunderer fire the heavens,  
Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth,  
And scare you from your joys. My cheerful song  
With happier omens calls you to the field, 400  
Pleased with your generous ardour in the chase,  
And warm like you. Then tell me (for ye know),  
Doth Beauty ever deign to dwell where use  
And aptitude are strangers? is her praise  
Confess'd in aught whose most peculiar ends  
Are lame and fruitless? or did Nature mean  
This pleasing call the herald of a lie,  
To hide the shame of discord and disease,  
And win each fond admirer into snares,  
Foil'd, baffled? No; with better providence 410  
The general mother, conscious how infirm  
Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,  
Thus, to the choice of credulous desire,  
Doth objects the completest of their tribe  
Distinguish and commend. Yon flowery bank  
Clothed in the soft magnificence of Spring,  
Will not the flocks approve it? will they ask  
The reedy fen for pasture? That clear rill  
Which trickleth murmuring from the mossy rock,  
Yields it less wholesome beverage to the worn 420



And thirsty traveller, than the standing pool 421  
With muddy weeds o'ergrown? You ragged vine  
Whose lean and sullen clusters mourn the rage  
Of Eurus, will the wine-press or the bowl  
Report of her, as of the swelling grape  
Which glitters through the tendrils, like a gem  
When first it meets the sun? Or what are all  
The various charms to life and sense adjoin'd?  
Are they not pledges of a state entire,  
Where native order reigns, with every part 430  
In health, and every function well perform'd?

p14 Thus, then, at first was Beauty sent from Heaven,  
The lovely minstress of Truth and Good  
In this dark world: for Truth and Good are one;  
And Beauty dwells in them, and they in her,  
With like participation. Wherefore then,  
O sons of earth, would ye dissolve the tie?  
Oh! wherefore with a rash and greedy aim  
Seek ye to rove through every flattering scene  
Which Beauty seems to deck, nor once inquire 440  
Where is the suffrage of eternal Truth,  
Or where the seal of undeceitful Good,  
To save your search from folly? Wanting these,  
Lo, Beauty withers in your void embrace;  
And with the glittering of an idiot's toy  
Did Fancy mock your vows. Nor yet let hope,  
That kindest inmate of the youthful breast,  
Be hence appall'd, be turn'd to coward sloth  
Sitting in silence, with dejected eyes  
Incurious and with folded hands; far less 450  
Let scorn of wild fantastic folly's dreams,  
Or hatred of the bigot's savage pride  
Persuade you e'er that Beauty, or the love  
Which waits on Beauty, may not brook to hear

The sacred lore of undeceitful Good 455  
And Truth eternal. From the vulgar crowd  
Though Superstition, tyranness abhorr'd,  
The reverence due to this majestic pair  
With threats and execration still demands;  
Though the tame wretch, who asks of her the way 460  
To their celestial dwelling, she constrains  
To quench or set at nought the lamp of God  
Within his frame; through many a cheerless wild  
Though forth she leads him credulous and dark  
And awed with dubious notion; though at length  
Haply she plunge him into cloister'd cells  
And mansions unrelenting as the grave,  
But void of quiet, there to watch the hours  
Of midnight; there, amid the screaming owl's  
Dire song, with spectres or with guilty shades 470  
To talk of pangs and everlasting woe;  
Yet be not ye dismay'd. A gentler star  
Presides o'er your adventure. From the bower  
Where Wisdom sat with her Athenian sons,  
Could but my happy hand entwine a wreath  
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay,  
Then (for what need of cruel fear to you,  
To you whom godlike love can well command?),  
Then should my powerful voice at once dispel  
Those monkish horrors; should in words divine 480  
Relate how favour'd minds like you inspired,  
And taught their inspiration to conduct  
By ruling Heaven's decree, through various walks  
And prospects various, but delightful all,  
Move onward; while now myrtle groves appear,  
Now arms and radiant trophies, now the rods  
Of empire with the curule throne, or now  
The domes of contemplation and the Muse.

Led by that hope sublime, whose cloudless eye 489  
Through the fair toils and ornaments of earth  
Discerns the nobler life reserved for heaven,  
Favour'd alike they worship round the shrine  
Where Truth conspicuous with her sister-twins,  
The undivided partners of her sway,  
With Good and Beauty reigns. Oh! let not us  
By Pleasure's lying blandishments detain'd,  
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot rage,  
Oh! let not us one moment pause to join  
That chosen band. And if the gracious Power,  
Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song, 500  
Will to my invocation grant anew  
The tuneful spirit, then through all our paths  
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre  
Be wanting; whether on the rosy mead  
When Summer smiles, to warn the melting heart  
Of Luxury's allurements; whether firm  
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill  
To urge free Virtue's steps, and to her side  
Summon that strong divinity of soul  
Which conquers Chance and Fate: or on the height,  
The goal assign'd her, haply to proclaim 511  
Her triumph; on her brow to place the crown  
Of uncorrupted praise; through future worlds  
To follow her interminated way,  
And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man.

Such is the worth of Beauty; such her power,  
So blameless, so revered. It now remains,  
In just gradation through the various ranks  
Of being, to contemplate how her gifts  
Rise in due measure, watchful to attend 520  
The steps of rising Nature. Last and least,  
In colours mingling with a random blaze,

(2) Doth Beauty dwell. Then higher in the forms 523  
(3) Of simplest, easiest measure; in the bounds  
Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent  
To symmetry adds colour: thus the pearl  
Shines in the concave of its purple bed,  
And painted shells along some winding shore  
Catch with indented folds the glancing sun.  
(4) Next, as we rise, appear the blooming tribes 530  
Which clothe the fragrant earth; which draw from her  
Their own nutrition; which are born and die,  
Yet, in their seed, immortal; such the flowers  
With which young Maia pays the village maids  
That hail her natal morn; and such the groves  
Which blithe Pomona rears on Vaga's bank,  
To feed the bowl of Ariconian swains  
(5) Who quaff beneath her branches. Nobler still  
Is Beauty's name where, to the full consent  
Of members and of features, to the pride 540  
Of colour, and the vital change of growth,  
Life's holy flame with piercing sense is given,  
While active motion speaks the temper'd soul:  
So moves the bird of Juno: so the steed  
With rival swiftness beats the dusty plain,  
And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy  
Salute their fellows. What sublimer pomp  
Adorns the seat where Virtue dwells on earth,  
And Truth's eternal day-light shines around,  
What palm belongs to man's imperial front, 550  
And woman powerful with becoming smiles,  
Chief of terrestrial natures, need we now  
Strive to inculcate? Thus hath Beauty there  
Her most conspicuous praise to matter lent,  
Where most conspicuous through that shadowy veil  
(6) Breaks forth the bright expression of a mind,



7) By steps directing our enraptured search 557  
 To Him, the first of minds; the chief; the sole;  
 From whom, through this wide, complicated world,  
 Did all her various lineaments begin;  
 To whom alone, consenting and entire,  
 At once their mutual influence all display.  
 He, God most high (bear witness, Earth and Heaven),  
 The living fountains in himself contains  
 Of beauteous and sublime; with him enthroned  
 Ere days or years trod their ethereal way,  
 In his supreme intelligence enthroned,  
 The queen of love holds her unclouded state,  
 Urania. Thee, O Father! this extent  
 Of matter; thee the sluggish earth and tract 570  
 Of seas, the heavens and heavenly splendours feel  
 Pervading, quickening, moving. From the depth  
 Of thy great essence, forth didst thou conduct  
 Eternal Form: and there, where Chaos reign'd,  
 Gav'st her dominion to erect her seat,  
 And sanctify the mansion. All her works  
 Well pleased thou didst behold: the gloomy fires  
 Of storm or earthquake, and the purest light  
 Of summer; soft Campania's new-born rose,  
 And the slow weed which pines on Russian hills 580  
 Comely alike to thy full vision stand:  
 To thy surrounding vision, which unites  
All essences and powers of the great world  
In one sole order, fair alike they stand,  
As features well consenting, and alike  
Required by Nature ere she could attain  
Her just resemblance to the perfect shape  
Of universal Beauty, which with thee  
Dwelt from the first. Thou also, ancient Mind,  
 Whom love and free beneficence await 590

features  
 Essence  
 world  
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In all thy doings; to inferior minds, 591  
Thy offspring, and to man, thy youngest son,  
Refusing no convenient gift nor good;  
Their eyes didst open, in this earth, yon heaven,  
Those starry worlds, the countenance divine  
Of Beauty to behold. But not to them  
Didst thou her awful magnitude reveal  
Such as before thine own unbounded sight  
She stands (for never shall created soul  
Conceive that object), nor, to all their kinds, 600  
The same in shape or features didst thou frame  
Her image. Measuring well their different spheres  
Of sense and action, thy paternal hand  
Hath for each race prepared a different test  
Of Beauty, own'd and reverenced as their guide  
Most apt, most faithful. Thence inform'd, they scan  
The objects that surround them; and select,  
Since the great whole disclaims their scanty view,  
Each for himself selects peculiar parts  
Of Nature; what the standard fix'd by Heaven 610  
Within his breast approves, acquiring thus  
A partial Beauty, which becomes his lot;  
A Beauty which his eye may comprehend,  
His hand may copy, leaving, O Supreme,  
O thou whom none hath utter'd, leaving all  
To thee that infinite, consummate form,  
Which the great powers, the gods around thy throne  
And nearest to thy counsels, know with thee  
For ever to have been; but who she is,  
Or what her likeness, know not. Man surveys 620  
A narrower scene, where, by the mix'd effect  
Of things corporeal on his passive mind,  
He judgeth what is fair. Corporeal things  
The mind of man impel with various powers,

And various features to his eye disclose. 625  
The powers which move his sense with instant joy,  
The features which attract his heart to love,  
He marks, combines, reposit. Other powers  
And features of the self-same thing (unless  
The beauteous form, the creature of his mind, 630  
Request their close alliance) he o'erlooks  
Forgotten; or with self-beguiling zeal,  
Whene'er his passions mingle in the work,  
Half alters, half disowns. The tribes of men  
Thus from their different functions and the shapes  
Familiar to their eye, with art obtain,  
Unconscious of their purpose, yet with art  
Obtain the Beauty fitting man to love;  
Whose proud desires from Nature's homely toil  
Oft turn away, fastidious, asking still 640  
His mind's high aid, to purify the form  
From matter's gross communion; to secure  
For ever, from the meddling hand of Change  
Or rude Decay, her features; and to add  
Whatever ornaments may suit her mien,  
Where'er he finds them scatter'd through the paths  
Of Nature or of Fortune. Then he seats  
The accomplish'd image deep within his breast,  
Reviews it, and accounts it good and fair.

Thus the one Beauty of the world entire, 650  
The universal Venus, far beyond  
The keenest effort of created eyes,  
And their most wide horizon, dwells enthroned  
In ancient silence. At her footstool stands  
An altar burning with eternal fire  
Unsullied, unconsumed. Here every hour,  
Here every moment, in their turns arrive  
Her offspring; an innumerable band



Of sisters, comely all! but differing far 659  
In age, in stature, and expressive mien,  
More than bright Helen from her new-born babe.  
To this maternal shrine in turns they come,  
Each with her sacred lamp; that from the source  
Of living flame, which here immortal flows,  
Their portions of its lustre they may draw  
For days, or months, or years; for ages, some;  
As their great parent's discipline requires.  
Then to their several mansions they depart,  
In stars, in planets, through the unknown shores  
Of yon ethereal ocean. Who can tell, 670  
Even on the surface of this rolling earth,  
How many make abode? The fields, the groves,  
The winding rivers and the azure main,  
Are render'd solemn by their frequent feet,  
Their rites sublime. There each her destined home  
Informs with that pure radiance from the skies  
Brought down, and shines throughout her little sphere,  
Exulting. Straight, as travellers by night  
Turn toward a distant flame, so some fit eye,  
Among the various tenants of the scene, 680  
Discerns the heaven-born phantom seated there,  
And owns her charms. Hence the wide universe,  
Through all the seasons of revolving worlds,  
Bears witness with its people, gods and men,  
To Beauty's blissful power, and with the voice  
Of grateful admiration still resounds:  
That voice, to which is Beauty's frame divine  
As is the cunning of the master's hand  
To the sweet accent of the well-tuned lyre.  
Genius of ancient Greece, whose faithful steps 690  
Have led us to these awful solitudes  
Of Nature and of Science; nurse revered



Of generous counsels and heroic deeds; 693  
Oh! let some portion of thy matchless praise  
Dwell in my breast, and teach me to adorn  
This unattempted theme. Nor be my thoughts  
Presumptuous counted, if, amid the calm  
Which Hesper sheds along the vernal heaven,  
If I, from vulgar Superstition's walk,  
Impatient steal, and from the unseemly rites 700  
Of splendid Adulation, to attend  
With hymns thy presence in the sylvan shade,  
By their malignant footsteps unprofaned.  
Come, O renownèd power; thy glowing mien  
Such, and so elevated all thy form,  
As when the great barbaric lord, again  
And yet again diminish'd, hid his face  
Among the herd of satraps and of kings;  
And, at the lightning of thy lifted spear,  
Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial spoils, 710  
Thy palms, thy laurels, thy triumphal songs,  
Thy smiling band of Arts, thy godlike sires  
Of civil wisdom, thy unconquer'd youth,  
After some glorious day rejoicing round  
Their new-erected trophy. Guide my feet  
Through fair Lycéum's walk, the olive shades  
Of Academus, and the sacred vale  
Haunted by steps divine, where once, beneath  
That ever living platane's ample boughs,  
Ilissus, by Socratic sounds detain'd, 720  
On his neglected urn attentive lay;  
While Boreas, lingering on the neighbouring steep  
With beauteous Orithyía, his love tale  
In silent awe suspended. There let me  
With blameless hand, from thy unenvious fields,  
Transplant some living blossoms, to adorn

My native clime; while, far beyond the meed 727  
Of Fancy's toil aspiring, I unlock  
The springs of ancient wisdom; while I add  
(What cannot be disjoin'd from Beauty's praise)  
Thy name and native dress, thy works beloved  
And honour'd; while to my compatriot youth  
I point the great example of thy sons,  
And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

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## BOOK II. 1765.

## ARGUMENT.

INTRODUCTION to this more difficult part of the subject. Of Truth and its three classes, matter of fact, experimental or scientific truth (contradistinguished from opinion), and universal truth; which last is either metaphysical or geometrical, either purely intellectual or perfectly abstracted. On the power of discerning truth depends that of acting with the view of an end; a circumstance essential to virtue. Of Virtue, considered in the divine mind as a perpetual and universal beneficence. Of human virtue, considered as a system of particular sentiments and actions, suitable to the design of Providence and the condition of man; to whom it constitutes the chief good and the first beauty. Of Vice, and its origin. Of Ridicule: its general nature and final cause. Of the Passions: particularly of those which relate to evil natural or moral, and which are generally accounted painful, though not always unattended with pleasure.

THUS far of Beauty and the pleasing forms  
Which man's untutor'd fancy, from the scenes  
Imperfect of this ever changing world,  
Creates; and views, enamour'd. Now my song  
Severer themes demand: mysterious Truth;  
And Virtue, sovereign good: the spells, the trains,  
The progeny of Error; the dread sway  
Of Passion; and whatever hidden stores  
From her own lofty deeds and from herself  
The mind acquires. Severer argument:

Not less attractive; nor deserving less 11

A constant ear. For what are all the forms

Educed by fancy from corporeal things,

Greatness, or pomp, or symmetry of parts?

Not tending to the heart, soon feeble grows,

As the blunt arrow 'gainst the knotty trunk,

Their impulse on the sense: while the pall'd eye

Expects in vain its tribute; asks in vain,

Where are the ornaments it once admired?

Not so the moral species, nor the powers 20

Of Passion and of Thought. The ambitious mind

With objects boundless as her own desires

Can there converse: by these unfading forms

Touch'd and awaken'd still, with eager act

She bends each nerve, and meditates well pleased

Her gifts, her godlike fortune. Such the scenes

Now opening round us. May the destined verse

Maintain its equal tenor, though in tracts

Obscure and arduous! May the source of light,

All-present, all-sufficient, guide our steps 30

Through every maze! and whom, in childish years,

From the loud throng, the beaten paths of wealth

And power, thou didst apart send forth to speak

In tuneful words concerning highest things,

Him still do thou, O Father, at those hours

Of pensive freedom, when the human soul

Shuts out the rumour of the world, him still

Touch thou with secret lessons; call thou back

Each erring thought; and let the yielding strains

From his full bosom, like a welcome rill 40

Spontaneous from its healthy fountain, flow!

But from what name, what favourable sign,

What heavenly auspice, rather shall I date

My perilous excursion, than from Truth,

That nearest inmate of the human soul; 45  
Estranged from whom, the countenance divine  
Of man, disfigured and dishonour'd, sinks  
Among inferior things? For to the brutes  
Perception and the transient boons of sense  
Hath Fate imparted; but to man alone 50  
Of sublunary beings was it given  
Each fleeting impulse on the sensual powers  
At leisure to review; with equal eye  
To scan the passion of the stricken nerve,  
Or the vague object striking; to conduct  
From sense, the portal turbulent and loud,  
Into the mind's wide palace one by one  
The frequent, pressing, fluctuating forms,  
And question and compare them. Thus he learns  
Their birth and fortunes; how allied they haunt 60  
The avenues of sense; what laws direct  
Their union; and what various discords rise,  
Or fixed, or casual; which when his clear thought  
Retains and when his faithful words express,  
That living image of the external scene,  
As in a polish'd mirror held to view,  
Is Truth; where'er it varies from the shape  
And hue of its exemplar, in that part  
Dim Error lurks. Moreover, from without  
When oft the same society of forms 70  
In the same order have approach'd his mind,  
He deigns no more their steps with curious heed  
To trace; no more their features or their garb  
He now examines; but of them and their  
Condition, as with some diviner's tongue,  
Affirms what Heaven in every distant place,  
Through every future season, will decree.  
This too is Truth; where'er his prudent lips



Wait till experience diligent and slow 79  
Has authorised their sentence, this is Truth;  
A second, higher kind: the parent this  
Of Science; or the lofty power herself,  
Science herself, on whom the wants and cares  
Of social life depend; the substitute  
Of God's own wisdom in this toilsome world;  
The providence of man. Yet oft in vain,  
To earn her aid, with fix'd and anxious eye  
He looks on Nature's and on Fortune's course:  
Too much in vain. His duller visual ray  
The stillness and the persevering acts 90  
Of Nature oft elude; and Fortune oft  
With step fantastic from her wonted walk  
Turns into mazes dim; his sight is foil'd;  
And the crude sentence of his faltering tongue  
Is but opinion's verdict, half believed,  
And prone to change. Here thou, who feel'st thine ear  
Congenial to my lyre's profounder tone,  
Pause, and be watchful. Hitherto the stores,  
Which feed thy mind and exercise her powers,  
Partake the relish of their native soil, 100  
Their parent earth. But know, a nobler dower  
Her Sire at birth decreed her; purer gifts  
From his own treasure; forms which never deign'd  
In eyes or ears to dwell, within the sense  
Of earthly organs; but sublime were placed  
In his essential reason, leading there  
That vast ideal host which all his works  
Through endless ages never will reveal.  
Thus then endow'd, the feeble creature man,  
The slave of hunger and the prey of death, 110  
Even now, even here, in earth's dim prison bound,  
The language of intelligence divine

Attains; repeating oft concerning one 113  
And many, past and present, parts and whole,  
Those sovereign dictates which in furthest heaven,  
Where no orb rolls, Eternity's fix'd ear  
Hears from coëval Truth, when Chance nor Change,  
Nature's loud progeny, nor Nature's self  
Dares intermeddle or approach her throne.  
Ere long, o'er this corporeal world he learns 120  
To extend her sway; while calling from the deep,  
From earth and air, their multitudes untold  
Of figures and of motions round his walk,  
For each wide family some single birth  
He sets in view, the impartial type of all  
Its brethren; suffering it to claim, beyond  
Their common heritage, no private gift,  
No proper fortune. Then whate'er his eye  
In this discerns, his bold unerring tongue  
Pronounceth of the kindred, without bound, 130  
Without condition. Such the rise of forms  
Sequester'd far from sense and every spot  
Peculiar in the realms of space or time;  
Such is the throne which man for Truth amid  
The paths of mutability hath built  
Secure, unshaken, still; and whence he views,  
In matter's mouldering structures, the pure forms  
Of triangle or circle, cube or cone,  
Impassive all; whose attributes nor force  
Nor fate can alter. There he first conceives 140  
True being, and an intellectual world  
The same this hour and ever. Thence he deems  
Of his own lot; above the painted shapes  
That fleeting move o'er this terrestrial scene  
Looks up; beyond the adamantine gates  
Of death expatiates; as his birthright, claims

Inheritance in all the works of God; 147  
Prepares for endless time his plan of life,  
And counts the universe itself his home.

Whence also but from Truth, the light of minds,  
Is human fortune gladden'd with the rays  
Of Virtue? with the moral colours thrown  
On every walk of this our social scene,  
Adorning for the eye of gods and men  
The passions, actions, habitudes of life,  
And rendering earth like heaven, a sacred place  
Where Love and Praise may take delight to dwell?

Let none with heedless tongue from Truth disjoin  
The reign of Virtue. Ere the dayspring flow'd,  
Like sisters link'd in Concord's golden chain, 160  
They stood before the great Eternal Mind,  
Their common parent, and by him were both  
Sent forth among his creatures, hand in hand,  
Inseparably join'd; nor e'er did Truth  
Find an apt ear to listen to her lore,  
Which knew not Virtue's voice; nor, save where Truth's  
Majestic words are heard and understood,  
Doth Virtue deign to inhabit. Go, inquire  
Of Nature; not among Tartarian rocks,  
Whither the hungry vulture with its prey 170  
Returns; not where the lion's sullen roar  
At noon resounds along the lonely banks  
Of ancient Tigris; but her gentler scenes,  
The dovecote and the shepherd's fold at morn,  
Consult; or by the meadow's fragrant hedge,  
In spring-time when the woodlands first are green,  
Attend the linnet singing to his mate  
Couch'd o'er their tender young. To this fond care  
Thou dost not Virtue's honourable name  
Attribute; wherefore, save that not one gleam 180



Of Truth did e'er discover to themselves 181  
Their little hearts, or teach them, by the effects  
Of that parental love, the love itself  
To judge, and measure its officious deeds?  
But man, whose eyelids Truth has fill'd with day,  
Discerns how skilfully to bounteous ends  
His wise affections move; with free accord  
Adopts their guidance; yields himself secure  
To Nature's prudent impulse; and converts  
Instinct to duty and to sacred law. 190

Hence Right and Fit on earth; while thus to man  
The Almighty Legislator hath explain'd  
The springs of action fix'd within his breast;  
Hath given him power to slacken or restrain  
Their effort; and hath shewn him how they join  
Their partial movements with the master-wheel  
Of the great world, and serve that sacred end  
Which he, the unerring reason, keeps in view.

For (if a mortal tongue may speak of him  
And his dread ways) even as his boundless eye, 200  
Connecting every form and every change,  
Beholds the perfect Beauty; so his will,  
Through every hour producing good to all  
The family of creatures, is itself  
The perfect Virtue. Let the grateful swain  
Remember this, as oft with joy and praise  
He looks upon the falling dews which clothe  
His lawns with verdure, and the tender seed  
Nourish within his furrows; when between  
Dead seas and burning skies, where long unmoved 210  
The bark had languish'd, now a rustling gale  
Lifts o'er the fickle waves her dancing prow,  
Let the glad pilot, bursting out in thanks,  
Remember this; lest blind o'erweening pride



Pollute their offerings; lest their selfish heart 215  
Say to the heavenly ruler, 'At our call  
Relents thy power; by us thy arm is moved.'  
Fools! who of God as of each other deem;  
Who his invariable acts deduce  
From sudden counsels transient as their own; 220  
Nor further of his bounty, than the event  
Which haply meets their loud and eager prayer,  
Acknowledge; nor, beyond the drop minute  
Which haply they have tasted, heed the source  
That flows for all; the fountain of his love  
Which, from the summit where he sits enthroned,  
Pours health and joy, unfailing streams, throughout  
The spacious region flourishing in view,  
The goodly work of his eternal day,  
His own fair universe; on which alone 230  
His counsels fix, and whence alone his will  
Assumes her strong direction. Such is now  
His sovereign purpose; such it was before  
All multitude of years. For his right arm  
Was never idle; his bestowing love  
Knew no beginning; was not as a change  
Of mood that woke at last and started up  
After a deep and solitary sloth  
Of boundless ages. No; he now is good,  
He ever was. The feet of hoary Time 240  
Through their eternal course have travell'd o'er  
No speechless, lifeless desert; but through scenes  
Cheerful with bounty still; among a pomp  
Of worlds, for gladness round the Maker's throne  
Loud-shouting, or, in many dialects  
Of hope and filial trust, imploring thence  
The fortunes of their people: where so fix'd  
Were all the dates of being, so disposed

To every living soul of every kind 249  
The field of motion and the hour of rest,  
That each the general happiness might serve;  
And, by the discipline of laws divine  
Convinced of folly or chastised from guilt,  
Each might at length be happy. What remains  
Shall be like what is past; but fairer still,  
And still increasing in the godlike gifts  
Of Life and Truth. The same paternal hand,  
From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore,  
To men, to angels, to celestial minds,  
Will ever lead the generations on 260  
Through higher scenes of being; while, supplied  
From day to day by his enlivening breath,  
Inferior orders in succession rise  
To fill the void below. As flame ascends,  
As vapours to the earth in showers return,  
As the poised ocean towards the attracting moon  
Swells, and the ever-listening planets, charm'd  
By the sun's call, their onward pace incline,  
So all things which have life aspire to God,  
Exhaustless fount of intellectual day! 270  
Centre of souls! Nor doth the mastering voice  
Of Nature cease within to prompt aright  
Their steps; nor is the care of Heaven withheld  
From sending to the toil external aid;  
That in their stations all may persevere  
To climb the ascent of being, and approach  
For ever nearer to the life divine.

But this eternal fabric was not raised  
For man's inspection. Though to some be given  
To catch a transient visionary glimpse 280  
Of that majestic scene which boundless power  
Prepares for perfect goodness, yet in vain

Would human life her faculties expand 283  
To embosom such an object. Nor could e'er  
Virtue or praise have touch'd the hearts of men,  
Had not the Sovereign Guide, through every stage  
Of this their various journey, pointed out  
New hopes, new toils, which, to their humble sphere  
Of sight and strength, might such importance hold  
As doth the wide creation to his own. 290  
Hence all the little charities of life,  
With all their duties; hence that favourite palm  
Of human will, when duty is sufficed,  
And still the liberal soul in ampler deeds  
Would manifest herself; that sacred sign  
Of her revered affinity to Him  
Whose bounties are his own; to whom none said,  
'Create the wisest, fullest, fairest world,  
And make its offspring happy;' who, intent  
Some likeness of Himself among his works 300  
To view, hath pour'd into the human breast  
A ray of knowledge and of love, which guides  
Earth's feeble race to act their Maker's part,  
Self-judging, self-obliged; while, from before  
That godlike function, the gigantic power  
Necessity, though wont to curb the force  
Of Chaos and the savage elements,  
Retires abash'd, as from a scene too high  
For her brute tyranny, and with her bears  
Her scorn'd followers, Terror, and base Awe 310  
Who blinds herself, and that ill-suited pair,  
Obedience link'd with Hatred. Then the soul  
Arises in her strength; and, looking round  
Her busy sphere, whatever work she views,  
Whatever counsel bearing any trace  
Of her Creator's likeness, whether apt

*Necessity  
charity aff  
not*

To aid her fellows or preserve herself 317  
In her superior functions unimpair'd,  
Thither she turns exulting: that she claims  
As her peculiar good: on that, through all  
The fickle seasons of the day, she looks  
With reverence still: to that, as to a fence  
Against affliction and the darts of pain,  
Her drooping hopes repair; and, once opposed  
To that, all other pleasure, other wealth,  
Vile, as the dross upon the molten gold,  
Appears, and loathsome as the briny sea  
To him who languishes with thirst, and sighs  
For some known fountain pure. For what can strive  
With Virtue? Which of Nature's regions vast 330  
Can in so many forms produce to sight  
Such powerful Beauty? Beauty, which the eye  
Of Hatred cannot look upon secure:  
Which Envy's self contemplates, and is turn'd  
Ere long to tenderness, to infant smiles,  
Or tears of humblest love. Is aught so fair  
In all the dewy landscapes of the Spring,  
The Summer's noontide groves, the purple eve  
At harvest-home, or in the frosty moon  
Glittering on some smooth sea; is aught so fair 340  
As virtuous friendship? as the honour'd roof  
Whither, from highest heaven, immortal Love  
His torch ethereal and his golden bow  
Propitious brings, and there a temple holds  
To whose unspotted service gladly vow'd  
The social band of parent, brother, child,  
With smiles and sweet discourse and gentle deeds  
Adore his power? What gift of richest clime  
E'er drew such eager eyes, or prompted such  
Deep wishes, as the zeal that snatcheth back 350



From Slander's poisonous tooth a foe's renown; 351  
Or crosseth Danger in his lion walk,  
A rival's life to rescue? as the young  
Athenian warrior sitting down in bonds,  
That his great father's body might not want  
A peaceful, humble tomb? the Roman wife  
Teaching her lord how harmless was the wound  
Of death, how impotent the tyrant's rage,  
Who nothing more could threaten to afflict  
Their faithful love? Or is there in the abyss, 360  
Is there, among the adamantine spheres  
Wheeling unshaken through the boundless void,  
Aught that with half such majesty can fill  
The human bosom, as when Brutus rose  
Refulgent from the stroke of Cæsar's fate  
Amid the crowd of patriots; and his arm  
Aloft extending like eternal Jove  
When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud  
On Tully's name, and shook the crimson sword  
Of justice in his rapt astonish'd eye, 370  
And bade the father of his country hail,  
For lo, the tyrant prostrate on the dust,  
And Rome again is free? Thus, through the paths  
Of human life, in various pomp array'd  
Walks the wise daughter of the judge of heaven,  
Fair Virtue; from her father's throne supreme  
Sent down to utter laws, such as on earth  
Most apt he knew, most powerful to promote  
The weal of all his works, the gracious end  
Of his dread empire. And, though haply man's 380  
Obscurer sight, so far beyond himself  
And the brief labours of his little home,  
Extends not; yet, by the bright presence won  
Of this divine instructress, to her sway

Pleased he assents, nor heeds the distant goal 385  
To which her voice conducts him. Thus hath God,  
Still looking toward his own high purpose, fix'd  
The virtues of his creatures; thus he rules  
The parent's fondness and the patriot's zeal;  
Thus the warm sense of honour and of shame; 390  
The vows of gratitude, the faith of love;  
And all the comely intercourse of praise,  
The joy of human life, the earthly heaven!

How far unlike them must the lot of guilt  
Be found! Or what terrestrial woe can match  
The self-convicted bosom, which hath wrought  
The bane of others, or enslaved itself  
With shackles vile? Not poison, nor sharp fire,  
Nor the worst pangs that ever monkish hate  
Suggested, or despotic rage imposed, 400  
Were at that season an unwish'd exchange,  
When the soul loathes herself; when, flying thence  
To crowds, on every brow she sees portray'd  
Fell demons, Hate or Scorn, which drive her back  
To solitude, her judge's voice divine  
To hear in secret, haply sounding through  
The troubled dreams of midnight, and still, still  
Demanding for his violated laws  
Fit recompense, or charging her own tongue  
To speak the award of justice on herself. 410  
For well she knows what faithful hints within  
Were whisper'd, to beware the lying forms  
Which turn'd her footsteps from the safer way,  
What cautions to suspect their painted dress,  
And look with steady eyelid on their smiles,  
Their frowns, their tears. In vain; the dazzling hues  
Of Fancy, and Opinion's eager voice,  
Too much prevail'd. For mortals tread the path

In which Opinion says they follow good 419  
Or fly from evil; and Opinion gives  
Report of good or evil, as the scene  
Was drawn by Fancy, pleasing or deform'd;  
Thus her report can never there be true  
Where Fancy cheats the intellectual eye  
With glaring colours and distorted lines.  
Is there a man to whom the name of death  
Brings terror's ghastly pageants conjured up  
Before him, death-bed groans, and dismal vows,  
And the frail soul plunged headlong from the brink  
Of life and daylight down the gloomy air, 430  
An unknown depth, to gulfs of torturing fire  
Unvisited by mercy? Then what hand  
Can snatch this dreamer from the fatal toils  
Which Fancy and Opinion thus conspire  
To twine around his heart? Or who shall hush  
Their clamour, when they tell him that to die,  
To risk those horrors, is a direr curse  
Than basest life can bring? Though Love with prayers  
Most tender, with affliction's sacred tears,  
Beseech his aid; though Gratitude and Faith 440  
Condemn each step which loiters; yet let none  
Make answer for him that if any frown  
Of Danger thwart his path, he will not stay  
Content, and be a wretch to be secure.  
Here Vice begins then: at the gate of life,  
Ere the young multitude to diverse roads  
Part, like fond pilgrims on a journey unknown,  
Sits Fancy, deep enchantress; and to each  
With kind maternal looks presents her bowl,  
A potent beverage. Heedless they comply, 450  
Till the whole soul from that mysterious draught  
Is tinged, and every transient thought imbibes

Of gladness or disgust, desire or fear, 453  
One homebred colour, which not all the lights  
Of Science e'er shall change; not all the storms  
Of adverse Fortune wash away, nor yet  
The robe of purest Virtue quite conceal.  
Thence on they pass, where, meeting frequent shapes  
Of good and evil, cunning phantoms apt  
To fire or freeze the breast, with them they join 460  
In dangerous parley; listening oft, and oft  
Gazing with reckless passion, while its garb  
The spectre heightens, and its pompous tale  
Repeats, with some new circumstance to suit  
That early tincture of the hearer's soul.  
And should the guardian, Reason, but for one  
Short moment yield to this illusive scene  
His ear and eye, the intoxicating charm  
Involves him, till no longer he discerns,  
Or only guides to err. Then revel forth 470  
A furious band that spurn him from the throne,  
And all is uproar. Hence Ambition climbs  
With sliding feet and hands impure, to grasp  
Those solemn toys which glitter in his view  
On Fortune's rugged steep; hence pale Revenge  
Unsheaths her murderous dagger; Rapine hence  
And envious Lust, by venal fraud upborne,  
Surmount the reverend barrier of the laws  
Which kept them from their prey; hence all the crimes  
That e'er defiled the earth, and all the plagues 480  
That follow them for vengeance, in the guise  
Of Honour, Safety, Pleasure, Ease, or Pomp,  
Stole first into the fond believing mind.

Yet not by Fancy's witchcraft on the brain  
Are always the tumultuous passions driven  
To guilty deeds, nor Reason bound in chains



That Vice alone may lord it. Oft, adorn'd 487  
With motley pageants, Folly mounts his throne,  
And plays her idiot antics, like a queen.  
A thousand garbs she wears: a thousand ways  
She whirls her giddy empire. Lo, thus far  
With bold adventure to the Mantuan lyre  
I sing for contemplation link'd with love,  
A pensive theme. Now haply should my song  
Unbend that serious countenance, and learn  
Thalia's tripping gait, her shrill-toned voice,  
Her wiles familiar: whether scorn she darts  
In wanton ambush from her lip or eye,  
Or whether, with a sad disguise of care  
O'ermantling her gay brow, she acts in sport 500  
The deeds of Folly, and from all sides round  
Calls forth impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke;  
Her province. But through every comic scene  
To lead my Muse with her light pencil arm'd;  
Through every swift occasion which the hand  
Of Laughter points at, when the mirthful sting  
Distends her labouring sides and chokes her tongue,  
Were endless as to sound each grating note  
With which the rooks, and chattering daws, and grave  
Unwieldy inmates of the village pond, 510  
The changing seasons of the sky proclaim;  
Sun, cloud, or shower. Suffice it to have said,  
Where'er the power of Ridicule displays  
Her quaint-eyed visage, some incongruous form,  
Some stubborn dissonance of things combined,  
Strikes on her quick perception: whether Pomp,  
Or Praise, or Beauty be dragg'd in and shewn  
Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,  
Where foul Deformity is wont to dwell;  
Or whether these with shrewd and wayward spite 520

Invade resplendent Pomp's imperious mien, 521  
The charms of Beauty, or the boast of Praise.

Ask we for what fair end the Almighty Sire  
In mortal bosoms stirs this gay contempt,  
These grateful pangs of laughter; from disgust  
Educing pleasure? Wherefore, but to aid  
The tardy steps of Reason, and at once  
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress  
Wild Folly's aims? For, though the sober light  
Of Truth slow dawning on the watchful mind 530  
At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,  
How these uncouth disorders end at last  
In public evil; yet benignant Heaven,  
Conscious how dim the dawn of Truth appears  
To thousands, conscious what a scanty pause  
From labour and from care the wider lot  
Of humble life affords for studious thought  
To scan the maze of Nature, therefore stamp'd  
These glaring scenes with characters of scorn,  
As broad, as obvious to the passing clown 540  
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

But other evils o'er the steps of man  
Through all his walks impend; against whose might  
The slender darts of Laughter nought avail:  
A trivial warfare. Some, like cruel guards,  
On Nature's ever-moving throne attend;  
With mischief arm'd for him who'er shall thwart  
The path of her inexorable wheels,  
While she pursues the work that must be done  
Through ocean, earth, and air. Hence, frequent forms  
Of woe; the merchant, with his wealthy bark, 551  
Buried by dashing waves; the traveller,  
Pierced by the pointed lightning in his haste;  
And the poor husbandman, with folded arms,

Surveying his lost labours, and a heap 555  
 Of blasted chaff the product of the field  
 Whence he expected bread. But worse than these,  
 I deem far worse, that other race of ills  
 Which human kind rear up among themselves;  
 That horrid offspring which misgovern'd Will 560  
 Bears to fantastic Error; vices, crimes,  
 Furies that curse the earth, and make the blows,  
 The heaviest blows, of Nature's innocent hand  
 Seem sport: which are indeed but as the care  
 Of a wise parent, who solicits good  
 To all her house, though haply at the price  
 Of tears and froward wailing and reproach  
 From some unthinking child, whom not the less  
 Its mother destines to be happy still.

These sources then of pain, this double lot 570  
 Of evil in the inheritance of man,  
 Required for his protection no slight force,  
 No careless watch; and therefore was his breast  
 Fenced round with passions quick to be alarm'd,  
 Or stubborn to oppose; with Fear, more swift  
 Than beacons catching flame from hill to hill,  
 Where armies land: with Anger, uncontroll'd  
 As the young lion bounding on his prey;  
 With Sorrow, that locks up the struggling heart;  
 And Shame, that overcasts the drooping eye 580  
 As with a cloud of lightning. These the part  
 Perform of eager monitors, and goad  
 The soul more sharply than with points of steel,  
 Her enemies to shun or to resist.  
 And as those passions, that converse with good,  
 Are good themselves; as Hope and Love and Joy,  
 Among the fairest and the sweetest boons  
 Of life, we rightly count: so these, which guard

Against invading evil, still excite 589  
Some pain, some tumult; these, within the mind  
Too oft admitted or too long retain'd,  
Shock their frail seat, and by their uncurb'd rage  
To savages more fell than Libya breeds  
Transform themselves, till human thought becomes  
A gloomy ruin, haunt of shapes unblest'd,  
Of self-tormenting fiends; Horror, Despair,  
Hatred, and wicked Envy: foes to all  
The works of Nature and the gifts of Heaven.

But when through blameless paths to righteous ends  
Those keener passions urge the awaken'd soul, 600  
I would not, as ungracious violence,  
Their sway describe, nor from their free career  
The fellowship of Pleasure quite exclude.  
For what can render, to the self-approved,  
Their temper void of comfort, though in pain?  
Who knows not with what majesty divine  
The forms of Truth and Justice to the mind  
Appear, ennobling oft the sharpest woe  
With triumph and rejoicing? Who, that bears  
A human bosom, hath not often felt 610  
How dear are all those ties which bind our race  
In gentleness together, and how sweet  
Their force, let Fortune's wayward hand the while  
Be kind or cruel? Ask the faithful youth,  
Why the cold urn of her whom long he loved  
So often fills his arms; so often draws  
His lonely footsteps, silent and unseen,  
To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?  
Oh! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds  
Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego 620  
Those sacred hours when, stealing from the noise  
Of care and envy, sweet remembrance soothes



With Virtue's kindest looks his aching breast, 623  
And turns his tears to rapture. Ask the crowd,  
Which flies impatient from the village walk  
To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below  
The savage winds have hurl'd upon the coast  
Some helpless bark; while holy Pity melts  
The general eye, or Terror's icy hand  
Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair; 630  
While every mother closer to her breast  
Catcheth her child, and, pointing where the waves  
Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud  
As one poor wretch, who spreads his piteous arms  
For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge,  
As now another, dash'd against the rock,  
Drops lifeless down. Oh! deemest thou indeed  
No pleasing influence here by Nature given  
To mutual terror and compassion's tears?  
No tender charm mysterious, which attracts 640  
O'er all that edge of pain the social powers  
To this their proper action and their end?  
Ask thy own heart; when at the midnight hour,  
Slow through that pensive gloom thy pausing eye,  
Led by the glimmering taper, moves around  
The reverend volumes of the dead, the songs  
Of Grecian bards, and records writ by fame  
For Grecian heroes, where the sovereign Power  
Of heaven and earth surveys the immortal page,  
Even as a father meditating all 650  
The praises of his son, and bids the rest  
Of mankind there the fairest model learn  
Of their own nature, and the noblest deeds  
Which yet the world hath seen. If then thy soul  
Join in the lot of those diviner men;  
Say, when the prospect darkens on thy view;

When, sunk by many a wound, heroic states 657  
Mourn in the dust and tremble at the frown  
Of hard Ambition; when the generous band  
Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires  
Lie side by side in death; when brutal Force  
Usurps the throne of Justice, turns the pomp  
Of guardian power, the majesty of rule,  
The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,  
To poor dishonest pageants, to adorn  
A robber's walk, and glitter in the eyes  
Of such as bow the knee; when beauteous works,  
Rewards of virtue, sculptured forms which deck'd  
With more than human grace the warrior's arch,  
Or patriot's tomb, now victims to appease 670  
Tyrannic envy, strew the common path  
With awful ruins; when the Muse's haunt,  
The marble porch where Wisdom wont to talk  
With Socrates or Tully, hears no more  
Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,  
Or female Superstition's midnight prayer;  
When ruthless Havoc from the hand of Time  
Tears the destroying scythe, with surer stroke  
To mow the monuments of Glory down;  
Till Desolation o'er the grass-grown street 680  
Expands her raven wings, and, from the gate  
Where senates once the weal of nations plann'd,  
Hisseth the gliding snake through hoary weeds  
That clasp the mouldering column: thus when all  
The widely-mournful scene is fix'd within  
Thy throbbing bosom; when the patriot's tear  
Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm  
In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of Jove  
To fire the impious wreath on Philip's brow,  
Or dash Octavius from the trophied car; 690

Say, doth thy secret soul repine to taste 691  
The big distress? Or wouldst thou then exchange  
Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot  
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd  
Of silent flatterers bending to his nod;  
And o'er them, like a giant, casts his eye,  
And says within himself, 'I am a King,  
And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe  
Intrude upon mine ear?' The dregs corrupt  
Of barbarous ages, that Circæan draught 700  
Of servitude and folly, have not yet,  
Bless'd be the Eternal Ruler of the world!  
Yet have not so dishonour'd, so deform'd  
The native judgment of the human soul,  
Nor so effaced the image of her Sire.

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BOOK III. 1770.

WHAT tongue then may explain the various fate  
Which reigns o'er earth? or who to mortal eyes  
Illustrate this perplexing labyrinth  
Of joy and woe, through which the feet of man  
Are doom'd to wander? That Eternal Mind  
From passions, wants, and envy far estranged,  
Who built the spacious universe, and deck'd  
Each part so richly with whate'er pertains  
To life, to health, to pleasure, why bade he  
The viper Evil, creeping in, pollute 10  
The goodly scene, and with insidious rage,  
While the poor inmate looks around and smiles  
Dart her fell sting with poison to his soul?  
Hard is the question, and from ancient days

Hath still oppress'd with care the sage's thought; 15  
 Hath drawn forth accents from the poet's lyre  
 Too sad, too deeply plaintive; nor did e'er  
 Those chiefs of human kind, from whom the light  
 Of heavenly truth first gleam'd on barbarous lands,  
 Forget this dreadful secret when they told 20  
 What wondrous things had to their favour'd eyes  
 And ears on cloudy mountain been reveal'd,  
 Or in deep cave by nymph or power divine,  
 Portentous oft, and wild. Yet one I know,  
 Could I the speech of lawgivers assume,  
 One old and splendid tale I would record,  
 With which the Muse of Solon in sweet strains  
 Adorn'd this theme profound, and render'd all  
 Its darkness, all its terrors, bright as noon,  
 Or gentle as the golden star of eve. 30  
 Who knows not Solon,—last, and wisest far,  
 Of those whom Greece, triumphant in the height  
 Of glory, styl'd her fathers,—him whose voice  
 Through Athens hush'd the storm of civil wrath;  
 Taught envious Want and cruel Wealth to join  
 In friendship; and, with sweet compulsion, tamed  
 Minerva's eager people to his laws,  
 Which their own goddess in his breast inspired?

'Twas now the time when his heroic task  
 Seem'd but perform'd in vain; when, soothed by years  
 Of flattering service, the fond multitude 41 *fool*  
 Hung with their sudden counsels on the breath  
 Of great Pisistratus, that chief renown'd,  
 Whom Hermes and the Idalian queen had train'd,  
 Even from his birth, to every powerful art  
 Of pleasing and persuading; from whose lips  
 Flow'd eloquence which, like the vows of love,  
 Could steal away suspicion from the hearts  
 Of all who listen'd. Thus from day to day



He won the general suffrage, and beheld 50  
Each rival overshadow'd and depress'd  
Beneath his ampler state; yet oft complain'd,  
As one less kindly treated, who had hoped  
To merit favour, but submits perforce  
To find another's services preferr'd,  
Nor yet relaxeth aught of faith or zeal.  
Then tales were scatter'd of his envious foes,  
Of snares that watch'd his fame, of daggers aim'd  
Against his life. At last, with trembling limbs,  
His hair diffused and wild, his garments loose, 60  
And stain'd with blood from self-inflicted wounds,  
He burst into the public place, as there,  
There only, were his refuge; and declared  
In broken words, with sighs of deep regret,  
The mortal danger he had scarce repell'd.  
Fired with his tragic tale, the indignant crowd,  
To guard his steps, forthwith a menial band,  
Array'd beneath his eye for deeds of war,  
Decree. Oh! still too liberal of their trust,  
And oft betray'd by over-grateful love, 70  
The generous people! Now behold him fenced  
By mercenary weapons, like a king,  
Forth issuing from the city-gate at eve  
To seek his rural mansion, and with pomp  
Crowding the public road. The swain stops short,  
And sighs; the officious townsmen stand at gaze,  
And shrinking give the sullen pageant room.  
Yet not the less obsequious was his brow;  
Nor less profuse of courteous words his tongue,  
Of gracious gifts his hand; the while by stealth, 80  
Like a small torrent fed with evening showers,  
His train increased; till, at that fatal time  
Just as the public eye, with doubt and shame  
Startled, began to question what it saw,

Swift as the sound of earthquakes rush'd a voice 85  
Through Athens, that Pisistratus had fill'd  
The rocky citadel with hostile arms,  
Had barr'd the steep ascent, and sate within  
Amid his hirelings, meditating death  
To all whose stubborn necks his yoke refused. 90  
Where then was Solon? After ten long years  
Of absence, full of haste from foreign shores,  
The sage, the lawgiver had now arrived:  
Arrived, alas! to see that Athens, that  
Fair temple raised by him and sacred call'd  
To Liberty and Concord, now profaned  
By savage hate, or sunk into a den  
Of slaves who crouch beneath the master's scourge,  
And deprecate his wrath, and court his chains.  
Yet did not the wise patriot's grief impede 100  
His virtuous will, nor was his heart inclined  
One moment with such woman-like distress  
To view the transient storms of civil war,  
As thence to yield his country and her hopes  
To all-devouring bondage. His bright helm,  
Even while the traitor's impious act is told,  
He buckles on his hoary head; he girds  
With mail his stooping breast; the shield, the spear  
He snatcheth; and with swift indignant strides  
The assembled people seeks; proclaims aloud 110  
It was no time for counsel; in their spears  
Lay all their prudence now; the tyrant yet  
Was not so firmly seated on his throne,  
But that one shock of their united force  
Would dash him from the summit of his pride,  
Headlong and grovelling in the dust. 'What else  
Can reassert the lost Athenian name,  
So cheaply to the laughter of the world

Betray'd; by guile beneath an infant's faith 119  
So mock'd and scorn'd? Away, then: Freedom now  
And Safety dwell not but with Fame in arms;  
Myself will shew you where their mansion lies,  
And through the walks of Danger or of Death  
Conduct you to them.'—While he spake, through all  
Their crowded ranks his quick sagacious eye  
He darted; where no cheerful voice was heard  
Of social daring; no stretch'd arm was seen  
Hastening their common task: but pale mistrust  
Wrinkled each brow; they shook their head, and down  
Their slack hands hung; cold sighs and whisper'd doubts  
From breath to breath stole round. The sage meantime  
Look'd speechless on, while his big bosom heaved, 132  
Struggling with shame and sorrow, till at last  
A tear broke forth; and, 'O immortal shades,  
O Theseus,' he exclaim'd, 'O Codrus, where,  
Where are ye now? behold for what ye toil'd  
Through life! behold for whom ye chose to die!'  
No more he added; but with lonely steps  
Weary and slow, his silver beard depress'd,  
And his stern eyes bent heedless on the ground, 140  
Back to his silent dwelling he repair'd.  
There o'er the gate, his armour, as a man  
Whom from the service of the war his chief  
Dismisseth after no inglorious toil,  
He fix'd in general view. One wishful look  
He sent, unconscious, toward the public place  
At parting; then beneath his quiet roof  
Without a word, without a sigh, retired.

Scarce had the morrow's sun his golden rays  
From sweet Hymettus darted o'er the fanes 150  
Of Cecrops to the Salaminian shores,  
When, lo, on Solon's threshold met the feet

Of four Athenians, by the same sad care 153  
Conducted all, than whom the state beheld  
None nobler. First came Megacles, the son  
Of great Alcmaeon, whom the Lydian king,  
The mild, unhappy Cræsus, in his days  
Of glory had with costly gifts adorn'd,  
Fair vessels, splendid garments, tinctured webs  
And heaps of treasured gold, beyond the lot 160  
Of many sovereigns; thus requiting well  
That hospitable favour which erewhile  
Alcmaeon to his messengers had shown,  
Whom he, with offerings worthy of the god,  
Sent from his throne in Sardis, to revere  
Apollo's Delphic shrine. With Megacles  
Approach'd his son, whom Agarista bore,  
The virtuous child of Clisthenes, whose hand  
Of Grecian sceptres the most ancient far  
In Sicyon sway'd: but greater fame he drew 170  
From arms controll'd by justice, from the love  
Of the wise Muses, and the unenvied wreath  
Which glad Olympia gave. For thither once  
His warlike steeds the hero led, and there  
Contended through the tumult of the course  
With skilful wheels. Then victor at the goal,  
Amid the applauses of assembled Greece,  
High on his car he stood and waved his arm.  
Silence ensued: when straight the herald's voice  
Was heard, inviting every Grecian youth, 180  
Whom Clisthenes content might call his son,  
To visit, ere twice thirty days were pass'd,  
The towers of Sicyon. There the chief decreed,  
Within the circuit of the following year,  
To join at Hymen's altar, hand in hand  
With his fair daughter, him among the guests



Whom worthiest he should deem. Forthwith from all 187  
The bounds of Greece the ambitious wooers came :  
From rich Hesperia ; from the Illyrian shore,  
Where Epidamnus over Adria's surge  
Looks on the setting sun ; from those brave tribes  
Chaonian or Molossian, whom the race  
Of great Achilles governs, glorying still  
In Troy o'erthrown ; from rough Ætolia, nurse  
Of men who first among the Greeks threw off  
The yoke of kings, to commerce and to arms  
Devoted ; from Thessalia's fertile meads,  
Where flows Penéus near the lofty walls  
Of Cranon old ; from strong Eretria, queen  
Of all Eubœan cities, who, sublime 200  
On the steep margin of Euripus, views  
Across the tide the Marathonian plain,  
Not yet the haunt of glory. Athens too,  
Minerva's care, among her graceful sons  
Found equal lovers for the princely maid :  
Nor was proud Argos wanting ; nor the domes  
Of sacred Elis ; nor the Arcadian groves  
That overshadow Alphéus, echoing oft  
Some shepherd's song. But through the illustrious band  
Was none who might with Megacles compare 210  
In all the honours of unblemish'd youth.  
His was the beauteous bride ; and now their son,  
Young Clisthenes, betimes, at Solon's gate  
Stood anxious ; leaning forward on the arm  
Of his great sire, with earnest eyes that ask'd  
When the slow hinge would turn, with restless feet,  
And cheeks now pale, now glowing ; for his heart  
Throbb'd full of bursting passions, anger, grief  
With scorn imbitter'd, by the generous boy  
Scarce understood, but which, like noble seeds, 220

Are destined for his country and himself 221  
In riper years to bring forth fruits divine  
Of liberty and glory. Next appear'd  
Two brave companions, whom one mother bore  
To different lords; but whom the better ties  
Of firm esteem and friendship render'd more  
Than brothers: first Miltiades, who drew  
From godlike Æacus his ancient line;  
That Æacus whose unimpeach'd renown 230  
For sanctity and justice won the lyre  
Of elder bards to celebrate him throned  
In Hades o'er the dead, where his decrees  
The guilty soul within the burning gates  
Of Tartarus compel, or send the good  
To inhabit with eternal health and peace  
The valleys of Elysium. From a stem  
So sacred, ne'er could worthier scion spring  
Than this Miltiades; whose aid ere long  
The chiefs of Thrace, already on their ways,  
Sent by the inspired foreknowing maid who sits 240  
Upon the Delphic tripod, shall implore  
To wield their sceptre, and the rural wealth  
Of fruitful Chersonesus to protect  
With arms and laws. But, nothing careful now  
Save for his injured country, here he stands  
In deep solicitude with Cimon join'd:  
Unconscious both what widely different lots  
Await them, taught by nature as they are  
To know one common good, one common ill.  
For Cimon, not his valour, not his birth 250  
Derived from Codrus, not a thousand gifts  
Dealt round him with a wise, benignant hand;  
No, not the Olympic olive, by himself  
From his own brow transferr'd to soothe the mind

Of this Pisistratus, can long preserve 255  
From the fell envy of the tyrant's sons,  
And their assassin dagger. But if death  
Obscure upon his gentle steps attend,  
Yet fate an ample recompense prepares  
In his victorious son, that other great 260  
Miltiades, who o'er the very throne  
Of Glory shall with Time's assiduous hand  
In adamant characters engrave  
The name of Athens; and, by Freedom arm'd  
'Gainst the gigantic pride of Asia's king,  
Shall all the achievements of the heroes old  
Surmount, of Hercules, of all who sail'd  
From Thessaly with Jason, all who fought  
For empire or for fame at Thebes or Troy.

Such were the patriots who within the porch 270  
Of Solon had assembled. But the gate  
Now opens, and across the ample floor  
Straight they proceed into an open space  
Bright with the beams of morn: a verdant spot,  
Where stands a rural altar, piled with sods  
Cut from the grassy turf and girt with wreaths,  
Of branching palm. Here Solon's self they found  
Clad in a robe of purple pure, and deck'd  
With leaves of olive on his reverend brow.  
He bow'd before the altar, and o'er cakes 280  
Of barley from two earthen vessels pour'd  
Of honey and of milk a plenteous stream;  
Calling meantime the Muses to accept  
His simple offering, by no victim tinged  
With blood, nor sullied by destroying fire,  
But such as for himself Apollo claims  
In his own Delos, where his favourite haunt  
Is thence the Altar of the Pious named.

Unseen the guests drew near, and silent view'd 289  
That worship; till the hero-priest his eye  
Turn'd toward a seat on which prepared there lay  
A branch of laurel. Then his friends confess'd  
Before him stood. Backward his step he drew,  
As loath that care or tumult should approach  
Those early rites divine; but soon their looks,  
So anxious, and their hands, held forth with such  
Desponding gesture, bring him on perforce  
To speak to their affliction. 'Are ye come,'  
He cried, 'to mourn with me this common shame?  
Or ask ye some new effort which may break 300  
Our fetters? Know then, of the public cause  
Not for yon traitor's cunning or his might  
Do I despair; nor could I wish from Jove  
Aught dearer, than at this late hour of life,  
As once by laws, so now by strenuous arms,  
From impious violation to assert  
The rights our fathers left us. But, alas!  
What arms? or who shall wield them? Ye beheld  
The Athenian people. Many bitter days  
Must pass, and many wounds from cruel pride 310  
Be felt, ere yet their partial hearts find room  
For just resentment, or their hands indure  
To smite this tyrant brood, so near to all  
Their hopes, so oft admired, so long beloved.  
That time will come, however. Be it yours  
To watch its fair approach, and urge it on  
With honest prudence; me it ill beseems  
Again to supplicate the unwilling crowd  
To rescue from a vile deceiver's hold  
That envied power, which once with eager zeal 320  
They offer'd to myself; nor can I plunge  
In counsels deep and various, nor prepare



For distant wars, thus faltering as I tread 323  
On life's last verge, ere long to join the shades  
Of Minos and Lycurgus. But behold  
What care employs me now. My vows I pay  
To the sweet Muses, teachers of my youth  
And solace of my age. If right I deem  
Of the still voice that whispers at my heart,  
The immortal sisters have not quite withdrawn 330  
Their old harmonious influence. Let your tongues  
With sacred silence favour what I speak,  
And haply shall my faithful lips be taught  
To unfold celestial counsels, which may arm,  
As with impenetrable steel your breasts,  
For the long strife before you, and repel  
The darts of adverse fate.'—He said, and snatch'd  
The laurel bough, and sate in silence down,  
Fix'd, wrapp'd in solemn musing, full before  
The sun, who now from all his radiant orb 340  
Drove the gray clouds, and pour'd his genial light  
Upon the breast of Solon. Solon raised  
Aloft the leafy rod, and thus began:—  
    'Ye beauteous offspring of Olympian Jove  
And Memory divine, Pierian maids,  
Hear me, propitious. In the morn of life,  
When hope shone bright and all the prospect smiled,  
To your sequester'd mansion oft my steps  
Were turn'd, O Muses, and within your gate  
My offerings paid. Ye taught me then with strains 350  
Of flowing harmony to soften war's  
Dire voice, or in fair colours, that might charm  
The public eye, to clothe the form austere  
Of civil counsel. Now my feeble age,  
Neglected, and supplanted of the hope  
On which it lean'd, yet sinks not, but to you,

To your mild wisdom flies, refuge beloved 357  
Of solitude and silence. Ye can teach  
The visions of my bed whate'er the gods  
In the rude ages of the world inspired,  
Or the first heroes acted; ye can make  
The morning light more gladsome to my sense  
Than ever it appear'd to active youth  
Pursuing careless pleasure; ye can give  
To this long leisure, these unheeded hours,  
A labour as sublime, as when the sons  
Of Athens throng'd and speechless round me stood,  
To hear pronounced for all their future deeds  
The bounds of right and wrong. Celestial powers!  
I feel that ye are near me: and behold, 370  
To meet your energy divine, I bring  
A high and sacred theme; not less than those  
Which to the eternal custody of Fame  
Your lips intrusted, when of old ye deign'd  
With Orpheus or with Homer to frequent  
The groves of Hæmus or the Chian shore.

‘Ye know, harmonious maids, (for what of all  
My various life was e'er from you estranged?)  
Oft hath my solitary song to you  
Reveal'd that duteous pride which turn'd my steps 380  
To willing exile; earnest to withdraw  
From envy and the disappointed thirst  
Of lucre, lest the bold familiar strife,  
Which in the eye of Athens they upheld  
Against her legislator, should impair  
With trivial doubt the reverence of his laws.  
To Egypt therefore through the Ægean isles  
My course I steer'd, and by the banks of Nile  
Dwelt in Canopus. Thence the hallow'd domes  
Of Saïs, and the rites to Isis paid, 390

I sought, and in her temple's silent courts, 391  
Through many changing moons, attentive heard  
The venerable Sonchis, while his tongue  
At morn or midnight the deep story told  
Of her who represents whate'er has been,  
Or is, or shall be; whose mysterious veil  
No mortal hand hath ever yet removed.  
By him exhorted, southward to the walls  
Of On I pass'd, the city of the sun,  
The ever-youthful god. 'Twas there, amid 400  
His priests and sages, who the livelong night  
Watch the dread movements of the starry sphere,  
Or who in wondrous fables half disclose  
The secrets of the elements, 'twas there  
That great Psenophis taught my raptured ears  
The fame of old Atlantis, of her chiefs,  
And her pure laws, the first which earth obey'd.  
Deep in my bosom sunk the noble tale;  
And often, while I listen'd, did my mind  
Foretell with what delight her own free lyre 410  
Should sometime for an Attic audience raise  
Anew that lofty scene, and from their tombs  
Call forth those ancient demigods, to speak  
Of Justice and the hidden Providence  
That walks among mankind. But yet meantime  
The mystic pomp of Ammon's gloomy sons  
Became less pleasing. With contempt I gazed  
On that tame garb and those unvarying paths,  
To which the double yoke of king and priest  
Had cramp'd the sullen race. At last, with hymns 420  
Invoking our own Pallas and the gods  
Of cheerful Greece, a glad farewell I gave  
To Egypt, and before the southern wind  
Spread my full sails. What climes I then survey'd,



What fortunes I encounter'd in the realm 425  
Of Cræsus or upon the Cyprian shore,  
The Muse, who prompts my bosom, doth not now  
Consent that I reveal. But when at length  
Ten times the sun returning from the south  
Had strow'd with flowers the verdant earth, and fill'd 430  
The groves with music, pleased I then beheld  
The term of those long errors drawing nigh.  
Nor yet, I said, will I sit down within  
The walls of Athens, till my feet have trod  
The Cretan soil, have pierced those reverend haunts  
Whence Law and Civil Concord issued forth  
As from their ancient home, and still to Greece  
Their wisest, loftiest discipline proclaim.  
Straight where Amnisus, mart of wealthy ships,  
Appears beneath famed Cnossus and her towers, 440  
Like the fair handmaid of a stately queen,  
I check'd my prow, and thence with eager steps  
The city of Minos enter'd. O ye gods,  
Who taught the leaders of the simpler time  
By written words to curb the untoward will  
Of mortals, how within that generous isle  
Have ye the triumphs of your power display'd  
Munificent! Those splendid merchants, lords  
Of traffic and the sea, with what delight  
I saw them, at their public meal, like sons 450  
Of the same household, join the plainer sort  
Whose wealth was only freedom! whence to these  
Vile envy, and to those fantastic pride,  
Alike was strange; but noble concord still  
Cherish'd the strength untamed, the rustic faith,  
Of their first fathers. Then the growing race,  
How pleasing to behold them in their schools,  
Their sports, their labours, ever placed within,



O shade of Minos! thy controlling eye. 459  
Here was a docile band in tuneful tones  
Thy laws pronouncing, or with lofty hymns  
Praising the bounteous gods, or, to preserve  
Their country's heroes from oblivious night,  
Resounding what the Muse inspired of old;  
There, on the verge of manhood, others met,  
In heavy armour through the heats of noon  
To march, the rugged mountain's height to climb  
With measured swiftness, from the hard-bent bow  
To send resistless arrows to their mark,  
Or for the fame of prowess to contend, 470  
Now wrestling, now with fists and staves opposed,  
Now with the biting falchion, and the fence  
Of brazen shields; while still the warbling flute  
Presided o'er the combat, breathing strains  
Grave, solemn, soft; and changing headlong spite  
To thoughtful resolution cool and clear.  
Such I beheld those islanders renown'd,  
So tutor'd from their birth to meet in war  
Each bold invader, and in peace to guard  
That living flame of reverence for their laws, 480  
Which nor the storms of fortune, nor the flood  
Of foreign wealth diffused o'er all the land,  
Could quench or slacken. First of human names  
In every Cretan's heart was Minos still;  
And holiest far, of what the sun surveys  
Through his whole course, were those primeval seats  
Which with religious footsteps he had taught  
Their sires to approach; the wild Dictæan cave  
Where Jove was born: the ever verdant meads  
Of Ida, and the spacious grotto, where 490  
His active youth he pass'd, and where his throne  
Yet stands mysterious; whither Minos came

Each ninth returning year, the king of gods 493  
And mortals there in secret to consult  
On justice, and the tables of his law  
To inscribe anew. Oft also with like zeal  
Great Rhea's mansion from the Cnossian gates  
Men visit; nor less oft the antique fane  
Built on that sacred spot, along the banks  
Of shady Theron, where benignant Jove 500  
And his majestic consort join'd their hands  
And spoke their nuptial vows. Alas, 'twas there  
That the dire fame of Athens sunk in bonds  
I first received; what time an annual feast  
Had summon'd all the genial country round,  
By sacrifice and pomp to bring to mind  
That first great spousal; while the enamour'd youths  
And virgins, with the priest before the shrine,  
Observe the same pure ritual, and invoke  
The same glad omens. There, among the crowd 510  
Of strangers from those naval cities drawn  
Which deck, like gems, the island's northern shore,  
A merchant of Ægina I descried,  
My ancient host; but, forward as I sprung  
To meet him, he, with dark dejected brow,  
Stopp'd half averse; and, "O Athenian guest,"  
He said, "art thou in Crete, these joyful rites  
Partaking? Know thy laws are blotted out:  
Thy country kneels before a tyrant's throne."  
He added names of men, with hostile deeds 520  
Disastrous; which obscure and indistinct  
I heard: for, while he spake, my heart grew cold  
And my eyes dim; the altars and their train  
No more were present to me; how I fared,  
Or whither turn'd, I know not; nor recall  
Aught of those moments, other than the sense

Of one who struggles in oppressive sleep, 527  
 And, from the toils of some distressful dream  
 To break away, with palpitating heart,  
 Weak limbs, and temples bathed in death-like dew,  
 Makes many a painful effort. When at last  
 'The sun and nature's face again appear'd,  
 Not far I found me, where the public path,  
 Winding through cypress groves and swelling meads,  
 From Cnossus to the cave of Jove ascends.  
 Heedless I follow'd on; till soon the skirts  
 Of Ida rose before me, and the vault  
 Wide opening pierced the mountain's rocky side.  
 Entering within the threshold, on the ground  
 I flung me, sad, faint, overworn with toil.' 540

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THE BEGINNING OF THE  
 FOURTH BOOK OF THE PLEASURES OF  
 THE IMAGINATION. 1770.

ONE effort more, one cheerful sally more,  
 Our destined course will finish; and in peace  
 Then, for an offering sacred to the powers  
 Who lent us gracious guidance, we will then  
 Inscribe a monument of deathless praise,  
 O my adventurous song! With steady speed  
 Long hast thou, on an untried voyage bound,  
 Sail'd between earth and heaven: hast now survey'd,  
 Stretch'd out beneath thee, all the mazy tracts  
 Of Passion and Opinion; like a waste 10  
 Of sands and flowery lawns and tangling woods,

Where mortals roam bewilder'd: and hast now 12  
Exulting soar'd among the worlds above,  
Or hover'd near the eternal gates of heaven,  
If haply the discourses of the gods,  
A curious, but an unpresuming guest,  
Thou mightst partake, and carry back some strain  
Of divine wisdom, lawful to repeat,  
And apt to be conceived of man below.  
A different task remains; the secret paths 20  
Of early genius to explore: to trace  
Those haunts where Fancy her predestined sons,  
Like to the demigods of old, doth nurse  
Remote from eyes profane. Ye happy souls  
Who now her tender discipline obey,  
Where dwell ye? What wild river's brink at eve  
Imprint your steps? What solemn groves at noon  
Use ye to visit, often breaking forth  
In rapture 'mid your dilatory walk,  
Or musing, as in slumber, on the green?— 30  
Would I again were with you!—O ye dales  
Of Tyne, and ye most ancient woodlands; where,  
Oft as the giant flood obliquely strides,  
And his banks open, and his lawns extend,  
Stops short the pleasèd traveller to view  
Presiding o'er the scene some rustic tower  
Founded by Norman or by Saxon hands:  
O ye Northumbrian shades, which overlook  
The rocky pavement and the mossy falls  
Of solitary Wensbeck's limpid stream; 40  
How gladly I recall your well-known seats  
Beloved of old, and that delightful time  
When all alone, for many a summer's day,  
I wander'd through your calm recesses, led  
In silence by some powerful hand unseen.



Nor will I e'er forget you; nor shall e'er 46  
The graver tasks of manhood, or the advice  
Of vulgar wisdom, move me to disclaim  
Those studies which possess'd me in the dawn  
Of life, and fix'd the colour of my mind 50  
For every future year: whence even now  
From sleep I rescue the clear hours of morn,  
And, while the world around lies overwhelm'd  
In idle darkness, am alive to thoughts  
Of honourable fame, of truth divine  
Or moral, and of minds to virtue won  
By the sweet magic of harmonious verse;  
The themes which now expect us. For thus far  
On general habits, and on arts which grow  
Spontaneous in the minds of all mankind, 60  
Hath dwelt our argument; and how, self-taught,  
Though seldom conscious of their own employ,  
In Nature's or in Fortune's changeful scene  
Men learn to judge of Beauty, and acquire  
Those forms set up, as idols in the soul  
For love and zealous praise. Yet indistinct,  
In vulgar bosoms, and unnoticed lie  
These pleasing stores, unless the casual force  
Of things external prompt the heedless mind  
To recognise her wealth. But some there are 70  
Conscious of Nature, and the rule which man  
O'er Nature holds; some who, within themselves  
Retiring from the trivial scenes of chance  
And momentary passion, can at will  
Call up these fair exemplars of the mind;  
Review their features; scan the secret laws  
Which bind them to each other: and display  
By forms, or sounds, or colours, to the sense  
Of all the world their latent charms display;

Even as in Nature's frame (if such a word, 80  
If such a word, so bold, may from the lips  
Of man proceed) as in this outward frame  
Of things, the great Artificer portrays  
His own immense idea. Various names  
These among mortals bear, as various signs  
They use, and by peculiar organs speak  
To human sense. There are who, by the flight  
Of air through tubes with moving stops distinct,  
Or by extended chords in measure taught  
To vibrate, can assemble powerful sounds 90  
Expressing every temper of the mind  
From every cause, and charming all the soul  
With passion void of care. Others mean time  
The rugged mass of metal, wood, or stone,  
Patiently taming; or with easier hand  
Describing lines, and with more ample scope  
Uniting colours; can to general sight  
Produce those permanent and perfect forms,  
Those characters of heroes and of gods,  
Which from the crude materials of the world, 100  
Their own high minds created. But the chief  
Are poets; eloquent men, who dwell on earth  
To clothe whate'er the soul admires or loves  
With language and with numbers. Hence to these  
A field is open'd wide as Nature's sphere;  
Nay, wider: various as the sudden acts  
Of human wit, and vast as the demands  
Of human will. The bard nor length, nor depth,  
Nor place, nor form controls. To eyes, to ears,  
To every organ of the copious mind, 110  
He offereth all its treasures. Him the hours,  
The seasons him obey, and changeful Time  
Sees him at will keep measure with his flight,

At will outstrip it. To enhance his toil, 114  
He summoneth, from the uttermost extent  
Of things which God hath taught him, every form  
Auxiliar, every power; and all beside  
Excludes imperious. His prevailing hand  
Gives, to corporeal essence, life and sense  
And every stately function of the soul. 120  
The soul itself to him obsequious lies,  
Like matter's passive heap; and as he wills,  
To reason and affection he assigns  
Their just alliances, their just degrees:  
Whence his peculiar honours; whence the race  
Of men who people his delightful world,  
Men genuine and according to themselves,  
Transcend as far the uncertain sons of earth,  
As earth itself to his delightful world,  
The palm of spotless Beauty doth resign. 130

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## ODES ON SEVERAL SUBJECTS.

IN TWO BOOKS. BOOK I.

## ODE I.

## PREFACE.

- 1 ON yonder verdant hillock laid,  
Where oaks and elms, a friendly shade,  
O'erlook the falling stream,  
O master of the Latin lyre,  
A while with thee will I retire  
From summer's noontide beam.
- 2 And, lo, within my lonely bower,  
The industrious bee from many a flower  
Collects her balmy dews:  
'For me,' she sings, 'the gems are born,  
For me their silken robe adorn,  
Their fragrant breath diffuse.'
- 3 Sweet murmurer! may no rude storm  
This hospitable scene deform,  
Nor check thy gladsome toils;  
Still may the buds unsullied spring,  
Still showers and sunshine court thy wing  
To these ambrosial spoils.



- 4 Nor shall my Muse hereafter fail  
Her fellow labourer thee to hail;  
And lucky be the strains!  
For long ago did Nature frame  
Your seasons and your arts the same,  
Your pleasures and your pains.
- 5 Like thee, in lowly, sylvan scenes,  
On river banks and flowery greens,  
My Muse delighted plays;  
Nor through the desert of the air,  
Though swans or eagles triumph there,  
With fond ambition strays.
- 6 Nor where the boding raven chaunts,  
Nor near the owl's unhallow'd haunts  
Will she her cares employ;  
But flies from ruins and from tombs,  
From Superstition's horrid glooms,  
To day-light and to joy.
- 7 Nor will she tempt the barren waste;  
Nor deigns the lurking strength to taste  
Of any noxious thing;  
But leaves with scorn to Envy's use  
The insipid nightshade's baneful juice,  
The nettle's sordid sting.
- 8 From all which Nature fairest knows,  
The vernal blooms, the summer rose,  
She draws her blameless wealth;  
And, when the generous task is done,  
She consecrates a double boon,  
To Pleasure and to Health.

## ODE II.

ON THE WINTER-SOLSTICE. 1740.

- 1 THE radiant ruler of the year  
At length his wintry goal attains;  
Soon to reverse the long career,  
And northward bend his steady reins.  
Now, piercing half Potosi's height,  
Prone rush the fiery floods of light  
Ripening the mountain's silver stores:  
While, in some cavern's horrid shade,  
The panting Indian hides his head,  
And oft the approach of eve implores.
- 2 But lo, on this deserted coast,  
How pale the sun! how thick the air!  
Mustering his storms, a sordid host,  
Lo, Winter desolates the year.  
The fields resign their latest bloom;  
No more the breezes waft perfume,  
No more the streams in music roll:  
But snows fall dark, or rains resound;  
And, while great Nature mourns around,  
Her griefs infect the human soul.
- 3 Hence the loud city's busy throngs  
Urge the warm bowl and splendid fire:  
Harmonious dances, festive songs,  
Against the spiteful heaven conspire.  
Meantime, perhaps, with tender fears  
Some village dame the curfew hears,

While round the hearth her children play:  
At morn their father went abroad;  
The moon is sunk, and deep the road;  
She sighs, and wonders at his stay.

- 4 But thou, my lyre, awake, arise,  
And hail the sun's returning force:  
Even now he climbs the northern skies,  
And health and hope attend his course.  
Then louder howl the ærial waste,  
Be earth with keener cold embraced,  
Yet gentle hours advance their wing;  
And Fancy, mocking Winter's might,  
With flowers and dews and streaming  
light  
Already decks the new-born Spring.

- 5 O fountain of the golden day,  
Could mortal vows promote thy speed,  
How soon before thy vernal ray  
Should each unkindly damp recede!  
How soon each hovering tempest fly,  
Whose stores for mischief arm the sky,  
Prompt on our heads to burst amain,  
To rend the forest from the steep,  
Or, thundering o'er the Baltic deep,  
To whelm the merchant's hopes of gain!

- 6 But let not man's unequal views  
Presume o'er Nature and her laws:  
'Tis his with grateful joy to use  
The indulgence of the Sovereign Cause;  
Secure that health and beauty springs  
Through this majestic frame of things,

Beyond what he can reach to know ;  
And that Heaven's all-subduing will,  
With good, the progeny of ill,  
Attempereth every state below.

7 How pleasing wears the wintry night,  
Spent with the old illustrious dead!  
While, by the taper's trembling light,  
I seem those awful scenes to tread  
Where chiefs or legislators lie,  
Whose triumphs move before my eye,  
In arms and antique pomp array'd;  
While now I taste the Ionian song,  
Now bend to Plato's godlike tongue  
Resounding through the olive shade.

8 But should some cheerful, equal friend  
Bid leave the studious page a while,  
Let mirth on wisdom then attend,  
And social ease on learned toil.  
Then while, at love's uncareful shrine,  
Each dictates to the god of wine  
Her name whom all his hopes obey,  
What flattering dreams each bosom warm,  
While absence, heightening every charm,  
Invokes the slow-returning May!

9 May, thou delight of heaven and earth,  
When will thy genial star arise?  
The auspicious morn, which gives thee  
birth,  
Shall bring Eudora to my eyes.  
Within her sylvan haunt, behold,  
As in the happy garden old,



She moves like that primeval fair :  
Thither, ye silver-sounding lyres,  
Ye tender smiles, ye chaste desires,  
Fond hope and mutual faith, repair.

- 10 And if believing love can read  
His better omens in her eye,  
Then shall my fears, O charming maid,  
And every pain of absence die:  
Then shall my jocund harp, attuned  
To thy true ear, with sweeter sound  
> Pursue the free Horatian song:  
Old Tyne shall listen to my tale,  
And Echo, down the bordering vale,  
The liquid melody prolong.

FOR THE WINTER SOLSTICE, DECEMBER 11, 1740.

AS ORIGINALLY WRITTEN.

- 1 Now to the utmost southern goal  
The sun has traced his annual way,  
And backward now prepares to roll,  
And bless the north with earlier day.  
Prone on Potosi's lofty brow  
Floods of sublimer splendour flow,  
Ripening the latent seeds of gold,  
Whilst, panting in the lonely shade,  
Th' afflicted Indian hides his head,  
Nor dares the blaze of noon behold.
- 2 But lo! on this deserted coast  
How faint the light, how chill the air!  
Lo! arm'd with whirlwind, hail, and frost,  
Fierce Winter desolates the year.

The fields resign their cheerful bloom,  
No more the breezes breathe perfume,  
No more the warbling waters roll;  
Deserts of snow fatigue the eye,  
Successive tempests bloat the sky,  
And gloomy damps oppress the soul.

- 3 But let my drooping genius rise,  
And hail the sun's remotest ray:  
Now, now he climbs the northern skies,  
To-morrow nearer than to-day.  
Then louder howl the stormy waste,  
Be land and ocean worse defaced,  
Yet brighter hours are on the wing,  
And Fancy, through the wintry gloom,  
Radiant with dews and flowers in  
bloom,  
Already hails th' emerging spring.

- 4 O fountain of the golden day!  
Could mortal vows but urge thy speed,  
How soon before thy vernal ray  
Should each unkindly damp recede!  
How soon each tempest hovering fly,  
That now fermenting loads the sky,  
Prompt on our heads to burst amain,  
To rend the forest from the steep,  
And thundering o'er the Baltic deep,  
To whelm the merchant's hopes of gain!

- 5 But let not man's imperfect views  
Presume to tax wise Nature's laws;  
'Tis his with silent joy to use  
Th' indulgence of the Sovereign Cause;

Secure that from the whole of things  
Beauty and good consummate springs,  
Beyond what he can reach to know;  
And that the providence of Heaven  
Has some peculiar blessing given  
To each allotted state below.

- 6 Even now how sweet the wintry night  
Spent with the old illustrious dead!  
While, by the taper's trembling light,  
I seem those awful courts to tread,  
Where chiefs and legislators lie,  
Whose triumphs move before my eye,  
With every laurel fresh display'd;  
While charm'd I rove in classic song,  
Or bend to freedom's fearless tongue,  
Or walk the academic shade.

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### ODE III.

TO A FRIEND, UNSUCCESSFUL IN LOVE.

- 1 INDEED, my Phædria, if to find  
That wealth can female wishes gain,  
Had e'er disturb'd your thoughtful mind,  
Or caused one serious moment's pain,  
I should have said that all the rules  
You learn'd of moralists and schools  
Were very useless, very vain.
- 2 Yet I perhaps mistake the case—  
Say, though with this heroic air,

Like one that holds a nobler chase,  
You try the tender loss to bear,  
Does not your heart renounce your tongue?  
Seems not my censure strangely wrong  
To count it such a slight affair?

3 When Hesper gilds the shaded sky,  
Oft as you seek the well-known grove,  
Methinks I see you cast your eye  
Back to the morning scenes of love:  
Each pleasing word you heard her say,  
Her gentle look, her graceful way,  
Again your struggling fancy move.

4 Then tell me, is your soul entire?  
Does Wisdom calmly hold her throne?  
Then can you question each desire,  
Bid this remain, and that be gone?  
No tear half-starting from your eye?  
No kindling blush, you know not why?  
No stealing sigh, nor stifled groan?

5 Away with this unmanly mood!  
See where the hoary churl appears,  
Whose hand hath seized the favourite good  
Which you reserved for happier years:  
While, side by side, the blushing maid  
Shrinks from his visage, half afraid,  
Spite of the sickly joy she wears.

6 Ye guardian powers of love and fame,  
This chaste, harmonious pair behold;  
And thus reward the generous flame  
Of all who barter vows for gold.



O bloom of youth, O tender charms  
Well-buried in a dotard's arms!  
O equal price of beauty sold!

7 Cease then to gaze with looks of love:  
Bid her adieu, the venal fair:  
Unworthy she your bliss to prove;  
Then wherefore should she prove your care?  
No: lay your myrtle garland down;  
And let a while the willow's crown  
With luckier omens bind your hair.

8 O just escaped the faithless main,  
Though driven unwilling on the land;  
To guide your favour'd steps again,  
Behold your better Genius stand:  
Where Truth revolves her page divine,  
Where Virtue leads to Honour's shrine,  
Behold, he lifts his awful hand.

9 Fix but on these your ruling aim,  
And Time, the sire of manly care,  
Will fancy's dazzling colours tame;  
A soberer dress will beauty wear:  
Then shall esteem, by knowledge led,  
Enthroned within your heart and head  
Some happier love, some truer fair.

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## ODE IV.

AFFECTED INDIFFERENCE. TO THE SAME.

- 1 YES: you condemn the perjured maid  
Who all your favourite hopes betray'd:  
Nor, though her heart should home return,  
Her tuneful tongue its falsehood mourn,  
Her winning eyes your faith implore,  
Would you her hand receive again,  
Or once dissemble your disdain,  
Or listen to the syren's theme,  
Or stoop to love: since now esteem  
And confidence, and friendship, is no more.
- 2 Yet tell me, Phædria, tell me why,  
When, summoning your pride, you try  
To meet her looks with cool neglect,  
Or cross her walk with slight respect  
(For so is falsehood best repaid),  
Whence do your cheeks indignant glow?  
Why is your struggling tongue so slow?  
What means that darkness on your brow,  
As if with all her broken vow  
You meant the fair apostate to upbraid?
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## ODE V.

AGAINST SUSPICION.

- 1 OH, fly! 'tis dire Suspicion's mien;  
And, meditating plagues unseen,

The sorceress hither bends:  
Behold her touch in gall imbrued:  
Behold—her garment drops with blood  
Of lovers and of friends.

- 2 Fly far! Already in your eyes  
I see a pale suffusion rise;  
And soon through every vein,  
Soon will her secret venom spread,  
And all your heart and all your head  
Imbibe the potent stain.
- 3 Then many a demon will she raise  
To vex your sleep, to haunt your ways;  
While gleams of lost delight  
Raise the dark tempest of the brain,  
As lightning shines across the main  
Through whirlwinds and through night.
- 4 No more can faith or candour move;  
But each ingenuous deed of love,  
Which reason would applaud,  
Now, smiling o'er her dark distress,  
Fancy malignant strives to dress  
Like injury and fraud.
- 5 Farewell to virtue's peaceful times:  
Soon will you stoop to act the crimes  
Which thus you stoop to fear:  
Guilt follows guilt; and where the train  
Begins with wrongs of such a stain,  
What horrors form the rear!
- 6 'Tis thus to work her baleful power,  
Suspicion waits the sullen hour

Of fretfulness and strife,  
When care the infirmer bosom wrings,  
Or Eurus waves his murky wings  
To damp the seats of life.

7 But come, forsake the scene unblest'd,  
Which first beheld your faithful breast  
To groundless fears a prey :  
Come where, with my prevailing lyre,  
The skies, the streams, the groves conspire  
To charm your doubts away.

8 Throned in the sun's descending car,  
What power unseen diffuseth far  
This tenderness of mind?  
What Genius smiles on yonder flood?  
What God, in whispers from the wood,  
Bids every thought be kind?

9 O Thou, whate'er thy awful name,  
Whose wisdom our untoward frame  
With social love restrains;  
Thou, who by fair affection's ties  
Giv'st us to double all our joys,  
And half disarm our pains;

10 If far from Dyson and from me  
Suspicion took, by thy decree,  
Her everlasting flight;  
If firm on virtue's ample base  
Thy parent hand has deign'd to raise  
Our friendship's honour'd height;

11 Let universal candour still,  
Clear as yon heaven-reflecting rill,



Preserve my open mind;  
Nor this nor that man's crooked ways  
One sordid doubt within me raise  
To injure human kind.

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## ODE VI.

## HYMN TO CHEERFULNESS.

How thick the shades of evening close!  
How pale the sky with weight of snows!  
Haste, light the tapers, urge the fire,  
And bid the joyless day retire.—  
Alas, in vain I try within  
To brighten the dejected scene,  
While, roused by grief, these fiery pains  
Tear the frail texture of my veins;  
While Winter's voice, that storms around,  
And yon deep death-bell's groaning sound 10  
Renew my mind's oppressive gloom,  
Till starting Horror shakes the room.

Is there in nature no kind power  
To soothe affliction's lonely hour?  
To blunt the edge of dire disease,  
And teach these wintry shades to please?  
Come, Cheerfulness, triumphant fair,  
Shine through the hovering cloud of care:  
O sweet of language, mild of mien,  
O Virtue's friend and Pleasure's queen, 20  
Assuage the flames that burn my breast,  
Compose my jarring thoughts to rest;  
And while thy gracious gifts I feel,  
My song shall all thy praise reveal.

As once ('twas in Astræa's reign) 25  
The vernal powers renew'd their train,  
It happen'd that immortal Love  
Was ranging through the spheres above,  
And downward hither cast his eye  
The year's returning pomp to spy. 30  
He saw the radiant god of day  
Waft in his car the rosy May;  
The fragrant Airs and genial Hours  
Were shedding round him dews and flowers;  
Before his wheels Aurora pass'd,  
And Hesper's golden lamp was last.  
But, fairest of the blooming throng,  
When Health majestic moved along,  
Delighted to survey below  
The joys which from her presence flow, 40  
While earth enliven'd hears her voice,  
And swains, and flocks, and fields rejoice;  
Then mighty Love her charms confess'd,  
And soon his vows inclined her breast,  
And, known from that auspicious morn,  
The pleasing Cheerfulness was born.

Thou, Cheerfulness, by heaven design'd  
To sway the movements of the mind,  
Whatever fretful passion springs,  
Whatever wayward fortune brings 50  
To disarrange the power within,  
And strain the musical machine;  
Thou Goddess, thy attempering hand  
Doth each discordant string command,  
Refines the soft, and swells the strong;  
And, joining Nature's general song,  
Through many a varying tone unfolds  
The harmony of human souls.

Fair guardian of domestic life, 59  
Kind banisher of homebred strife,  
Nor sullen lip, nor taunting eye  
Deforms the scene where thou art by:  
No sickening husband damns the hour  
Which bound his joys to female power;  
No pining mother weeps the cares  
Which parents waste on thankless heirs:  
The officious daughters pleased attend;  
The brother adds the name of friend:  
By thee with flowers their board is crown'd,  
With songs from thee their walks resound; 70  
And morn with welcome lustre shines,  
And evening unperceived declines.

Is there a youth whose anxious heart  
Labours with love's unpitied smart?  
Though now he stray by rills and bowers,  
And weeping waste the lonely hours,  
Or if the nymph her audience deign,  
Debase the story of his pain  
With slavish looks, discolour'd eyes,  
And accents faltering into sighs; 80  
Yet thou, auspicious power, with ease  
Canst yield him happier arts to please,  
Inform his mien with manlier charms,  
Instruct his tongue with nobler arms,  
With more commanding passion move,  
And teach the dignity of love.

Friend to the Muse and all her train,  
For thee I court the Muse again:  
The Muse for thee may well exert  
Her pomp, her charms, her fondest art, 90  
Who owes to thee that pleasing sway  
Which earth and peopled heaven obey.

Let Melancholy's plaintive tongue 93  
Repeat what later bards have sung;  
But thine was Homer's ancient might,  
And thine victorious Pindar's flight:  
Thy hand each Lesbian wreath attired:  
Thy lip Sicilian reeds inspired:  
Thy spirit lent the glad perfume  
Whence yet the flowers of Teos bloom; 100  
Whence yet from Tibur's Sabine vale  
Delicious blows the enlivening gale,  
While Horace calls thy sportive choir,  
Heroes and nymphs, around his lyre.

But see, where yonder pensive sage  
(A prey perhaps to fortune's rage,  
Perhaps by tender griefs oppress'd,  
Or glooms congenial to his breast)  
Retires in desert scenes to dwell, 110  
And bids the joyless world farewell.  
Alone he treads the autumnal shade,  
Alone beneath the mountain laid  
He sees the nightly damps ascend,  
And gathering storms aloft impend;  
He hears the neighbouring surges roll,  
And raging thunders shake the pole;  
Then, struck by every object round,  
And stunn'd by every horrid sound,  
He asks a clue for Nature's ways;  
But evil haunts him through the maze: 120  
He sees ten thousand demons rise  
To wield the empire of the skies,  
And Chance and Fate assume the rod,  
And Malice blot the throne of God.—  
O thou, whose pleasing power I sing,  
Thy lenient influence hither bring;



Compose the storm, dispel the gloom, 127  
Till Nature wear her wonted bloom,  
Till fields and shades their sweets exhale,  
And music swell each opening gale:  
Then o'er his breast thy softness pour,  
And let him learn the timely hour  
✓ To trace the world's benignant laws,  
And judge of that presiding cause  
Who founds on discord beauty's reign,  
Converts to pleasure every pain,  
Subdues each hostile form to rest,  
And bids the universe be bless'd.

O thou, whose pleasing power I sing,  
If right I touch the votive string, 140  
If equal praise I yield thy name,  
Still govern thou thy poet's flame;  
Still with the Muse my bosom share,  
And soothe to peace intruding care.  
But most exert thy pleasing power  
On friendship's consecrated hour;  
And while my Sophron points the road  
To godlike wisdom's calm abode,  
Or warm in freedom's ancient cause  
Traceth the source of Albion's laws, 150  
Add thou o'er all the generous toil  
The light of thy unclouded smile.  
But if, by fortune's stubborn sway  
From him and friendship torn away,  
I court the Muse's healing spell  
For griefs that still with absence dwell,  
Do thou conduct my fancy's dreams  
To such indulgent placid themes,  
As just the struggling breast may cheer,  
And just suspend the starting tear, 160

Yet leave that sacred sense of woe  
Which none but friends and lovers know.

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## ODE VII.

## ON THE USE OF POETRY.

- 1 Not for themselves did human kind  
Contrive the parts by heaven assign'd  
On life's wide scene to play:  
Not Scipio's force nor Cæsar's skill  
Can conquer Glory's arduous hill,  
If Fortune close the way.
- 2 Yet still the self-depending soul,  
Though last and least in Fortune's roll,  
His proper sphere commands;  
And knows what Nature's seal bestow'd,  
And sees, before the throne of God,  
The rank in which he stands.
- 3 Who train'd by laws the future age,  
Who rescued nations from the rage  
Of partial, factious power,  
My heart with distant homage views;  
Content, if thou, celestial Muse,  
Didst rule my natal hour.
- 4 Not far beneath the hero's feet,  
Nor from the legislator's seat  
Stands far remote the bard.  
'Though not with public terrors crown'd,  
Yet wider shall his rule be found,  
More lasting his award.

- 5 Lycurgus fashion'd Sparta's fame,  
 And Pompey to the Roman name  
     Gave universal sway:  
 Where are they?—Homer's reverend page  
 Holds empire to the thirtieth age,  
     And tongues and climes obey.
- 6 And thus when William's acts divine  
 No longer shall from Bourbon's line  
     Draw one vindictive vow;  
 When Sydney shall with Cato rest,  
 And Russel move the patriot's breast  
     No more than Brutus now;
- 7 Yet then shall Shakspeare's powerful art  
 O'er every passion, every heart,  
     Confirm his awful throne:  
 Tyrants shall bow before his laws;  
 And Freedom's, Glory's, Virtue's cause,  
     Their dread assertor own.

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### ODE VIII.

#### ON LEAVING HOLLAND.

##### I.—1.

FAREWELL to Leyden's lonely bound,  
 The Belgian Muse's sober seat;  
 Where, dealing frugal gifts around  
 To all the favourites at her feet,  
 She trains the body's bulky frame  
 For passive persevering toils;

And lest, from any prouder aim,  
The daring mind should scorn her homely spoils,  
She breathes maternal fogs to damp its restless flame.

## I.—2.

Farewell the grave, pacific air,  
Where never mountain zephyr blew:  
The marshy levels lank and bare,  
Which Pan, which Ceres never knew:  
The Naiads, with obscene attire,  
Urging in vain their urns to flow;  
While round them chant the croaking choir,  
And haply soothe some lover's prudent woe,  
Or prompt some restive bard and modulate his lyre.

## I.—3.

Farewell, ye nymphs, whom sober care of gain  
Snatch'd in your cradles from the god of Love:  
She render'd all his boasted arrows vain;  
And all his gifts did he in spite remove.  
Ye too, the slow-eyed fathers of the land,  
With whom dominion steals from hand to hand,  
Unown'd, undignified by public choice,  
I go where Liberty to all is known,  
And tells a monarch on his throne,  
He reigns not but by her preserving voice.

## II.—1.

O my loved England, when with thee  
Shall I sit down, to part no more?  
Far from this pale, discolour'd sea,  
That sleeps upon the reedy shore:  
When shall I plough thy azure tide?  
When on thy hills the flocks admire,



Like mountain snows; till down their side  
I trace the village and the sacred spire,  
While bowers and copses green the golden slope  
divide?

## II.—2.

Ye nymphs who guard the pathless grove,  
Ye blue-eyed sisters of the streams,  
With whom I wont at morn to rove,  
With whom at noon I talk'd in dreams;  
Oh! take me to your haunts again,  
The rocky spring, the greenwood glade;  
To guide my lonely footsteps deign,  
To prompt my slumbers in the murmuring shade,  
And soothe my vacant ear with many an airy  
strain.

## II.—3.

And thou, my faithful harp, no longer mourn  
Thy drooping master's inauspicious hand:  
Now brighter skies and fresher gales return,  
Now fairer maids thy melody demand.  
Daughters of Albion, listen to my lyre!  
O Phœbus, guardian of the Aonian choir,  
Why sounds not mine harmonious as thy own,  
When all the virgin deities above  
With Venus and with Juno move  
In concert round the Olympian father's throne?

## III.—1.

Thee too, protectress of my lays,  
Elate with whose majestic call  
Above degenerate Latium's praise,  
Above the slavish boast of Gaul,

I dare from impious thrones reclaim,  
And wanton sloth's ignoble charms,  
The honours of a poet's name  
To Somers' counsels, or to Hampden's arms,  
Thee, Freedom, I rejoin, and bless thy genuine flame.

## III.—2.

Great citizen of Albion! Thee  
Heroic Valour still attends,  
And useful Science, pleased to see  
How Art her studious toil extends:  
While Truth, diffusing from on high  
A lustre unconfined as day,  
Fills and commands the public eye;  
Till, pierced and sinking by her powerful ray,  
Tame Faith and monkish Awe, like nightly demons,  
fly.

## III.—3.

Hence the whole land the patriot's ardour  
shares:  
Hence dread Religion dwells with social Joy;  
And holy passions and unsullied cares,  
In youth, in age, domestic life employ.  
O fair Britannia, hail!—With partial love  
The tribes of men their native seats approve,  
Unjust and hostile to each foreign fame:  
But when for generous minds and manly laws  
A nation holds her prime applause,  
There public zeal shall all reproof disclaim.

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## ODE IX.

TO CURIO.<sup>1</sup> 1744.

- 1 THRICE hath the spring beheld thy faded fame  
Since I exulting grasp'd the tuneful shell:  
Eager through endless years to sound thy name,  
Proud that my memory with thine should dwell.  
How hast thou stain'd the splendour of my choice!  
Those godlike forms which hover'd round thy  
voice,  
Laws, freedom, glory, whither are they flown?  
What can I now of thee to Time report,  
Save thy fond country made thy impious sport,  
Her fortune and her hope the victims of thy own?
- 2 There are, with eyes unmoved and reckless heart  
Who saw thee from thy summit fall thus low,  
Who deem'd thy arm extended but to dart  
The public vengeance on thy private foe.  
But, spite of every gloss of envious minds,  
The owl-eyed race whom virtue's lustre blinds,  
Who sagely prove that each man hath his price,  
I still believed thy aim from blemish free,  
I yet, even yet, believe it, spite of thee,  
And all thy painted pleas to greatness and to vice.
- 3 'Thou didst not dream of liberty decay'd,  
Nor wish to make her guardian laws more strong:  
But the rash many, first by thee misled,  
Bore thee at length unwillingly along.'  
Rise from your sad abodes, ye cursed of old  
For faith deserted or for cities sold,

<sup>1</sup> 'To Curio : ' see *Life*.

Own here one untried, unexampled, deed;  
One mystery of shame from Curio learn,  
To beg the infamy he did not earn,  
And scape in Guilt's disguise from Virtue's offer'd  
    need.

4 For saw we not that dangerous power avow'd  
Whom Freedom oft hath found her mortal bane,  
Whom public Wisdom ever strove to exclude,  
And but with blushes suffereth in her train?  
Corruption vaunted her bewitching spoils,  
O'er court, o'er senate, spread in pomp her toils,  
And call'd herself the state's directing soul:  
Till Curio, like a good magician, tried  
With Eloquence and Reason at his side,  
By strength of holier spells the enchantress to control.

5 Soon with thy country's hope thy fame extends:  
The rescued merchant oft thy words resounds:  
Thee and thy cause the rural hearth defends:  
His bowl to thee the grateful sailor crowns:  
The learn'd recluse, with awful zeal who read  
Of Grecian heroes, Roman patriots dead,  
Now with like awe doth living merit scan:  
While he, whom virtue in his bless'd retreat  
Bade social ease and public passions meet,  
Ascends the civil scene, and knows to be a man.

6 At length in view the glorious end appear'd:  
We saw thy spirit through the senate reign;  
And Freedom's friends thy instant omen heard  
Of laws for which their fathers bled in vain.  
Waked in the strife the public Genius rose  
More keen, more ardent from his long repose;



Deep through her bounds the city felt his call;  
Each crowded haunt was stirr'd beneath his power,  
And murmuring challenged the deciding hour  
Of that too vast event, the hope and dread of all.

7 O ye good powers who look on human kind,  
Instruct the mighty moments as they roll;  
And watch the fleeting shapes in Curio's mind,  
And steer his passions steady to the goal.  
O Alfred, father of the English name,  
O valiant Edward, first in civil fame,  
O William, height of public virtue pure,  
Bend from your radiant seats a joyful eye,  
Behold the sum of all your labours nigh,  
Your plans of law complete, your ends of rule secure.

8 'Twas then—O shame! O soul from faith  
    estranged!  
O Albion, oft to flattering vows a prey!  
'Twas then—Thy thought what sudden frenzy  
    changed?  
What rushing palsy took thy strength away?  
Is this the man in Freedom's cause approved—  
The man so great, so honour'd, so beloved—  
Whom the dead envied and the living bless'd—  
This patient slave by tinsel bonds allured—  
This wretched suitor for a boon abjured—  
Whom those that fear'd him scorn; that trusted him,  
    detest?

9 O lost alike to action and repose!  
With all that habit of familiar fame,  
Sold to the mockery of relentless foes,  
And doom'd to exhaust the dregs of life in shame,

To act with burning brow and throbbing heart  
A poor deserter's dull exploded part,  
To slight the favour thou canst hope no more,  
Renounce the giddy crowd, the vulgar wind,  
Charge thy own lightness on thy country's mind,  
And from her voice appeal to each tame foreign  
shore.

10 But England's sons, to purchase thence applause,  
Shall ne'er the loyalty of slaves pretend,  
By courtly passions try the public cause;  
Nor to the forms of rule betray the end.  
O race erect! by manliest passions moved,  
The labours which to Virtue stand approved,  
Prompt with a lover's fondness to survey;  
Yet, where Injustice works her wilful claim,  
Fierce as the flight of Jove's destroying flame,  
Impatient to confront, and dreadful to repay.

11 These thy heart owns no longer. In their room  
See the grave queen of pageants, Honour, dwell  
Couch'd in thy bosom's deep tempestuous gloom,  
Like some grim idol in a sorcerer's cell.  
Before her rites thy sickening reason flew,  
Divine Persuasion from thy tongue withdrew,  
While Laughter mock'd, or Pity stole a sigh:  
Can Wit her tender movements rightly frame  
Where the prime function of the soul is lame?  
Can Fancy's feeble springs the force of Truth supply?

12 But come: 'tis time: strong Destiny impends  
To shut thee from the joys thou hast betray'd:  
With princes fill'd, the solemn fane ascends,  
By Infamy, the mindful demon sway'd.

There vengeful vows for guardian laws effaced,  
From nations fetter'd, and from towns laid waste,  
For ever through the spacious courts resound:  
There long posterity's united groan,  
And the sad charge of horrors not their own,  
Assail the giant chiefs, and press them to the ground.

13 In sight, old Time, imperious judge, awaits:  
Above revenge, or fear, or pity, just,  
He urgeth onward to those guilty gates  
The great, the sage, the happy, and august.  
And still he asks them of the hidden plan  
Whence every treaty, every war began,  
Evolves their secrets and their guilt proclaims:  
And still his hands despoil them on the road  
Of each vain wreath by lying bards bestow'd,  
And crush their trophies huge, and raze their  
sculptured names.

14 Ye mighty shades, arise, give place, attend:  
Here his eternal mansion Curio seeks.  
Low doth proud Wentworth to the stranger bend,  
And his dire welcome hardy Clifford speaks:—  
'He comes, whom fate with surer arts prepared  
To accomplish all which we but vainly dared;  
Whom o'er the stubborn herd she taught to reign:  
Who soothed with gaudy dreams their raging  
power  
Even to its last irrevocable hour;  
Then baffled their rude strength, and broke them to  
the chain.'

15 But ye, whom yet wise Liberty inspires,  
Whom for her champions o'er the world she claims

(That household godhead whom of old your sires  
Sought in the woods of Elbe and bore to Thames),  
Drive ye this hostile omen far away;  
Their own fell efforts on her foes repay;  
Your wealth, your arts, your fame, be hers alone:  
Still gird your swords to combat on her side;  
Still frame your laws her generous test to abide;  
And win to her defence the altar and the throne.

- 16 Protect her from yourselves, ere yet the flood  
Of golden Luxury, which Commerce pours,  
Hath spread that selfish fierceness through your  
    blood,  
Which not her lightest discipline endures:  
Snatch from fantastic demagogues her cause:  
Dream not of Numa's manners, Plato's laws:  
A wiser founder, and a nobler plan,  
O sons of Alfred, were for you assign'd:  
Bring to that birthright but an equal mind,  
And no sublimer lot will fate reserve for man.

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## ODE X.

TO THE MUSE.

- 1 QUEEN of my songs, harmonious maid,  
Ah! why hast thou withdrawn thy aid?  
Ah! why forsaken thus my breast  
With inauspicious damps oppress'd?  
Where is the dread prophetic heat  
With which my bosom wont to beat?  
Where all the bright mysterious dreams  
Of haunted groves and tuneful streams,  
That woo'd my genius to divinest themes?



2 Say, goddess, can the festal board,  
Or young Olympia's form adored;  
Say, can the pomp of promised fame  
Relume thy faint, thy dying flame?  
Or have melodious airs the power  
To give one free, poetic hour?  
Or, from amid the Elysian train,  
The soul of Milton shall I gain,  
To win thee back with some celestial strain?

3 O powerful strain! O sacred soul!  
His numbers every sense control:  
And now again my bosom burns;  
The Muse, the Muse herself returns.  
Such on the banks of Tyne, confess'd,  
I hail'd the fair immortal guest,  
When first she seal'd me for her own,  
Made all her blissful treasures known,  
And bade me swear to follow Her alone.

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## ODE XI.

ON LOVE. TO A FRIEND.

1 No, foolish youth—to virtuous fame  
If now thy early hopes be vow'd,  
If true ambition's nobler flame  
Command thy footsteps from the crowd,  
Lean not to Love's enchanting snare;  
His songs, his words, his looks beware,  
Nor join his votaries, the young and fair.

2 By thought, by dangers, and by toils,  
The wreath of just renown is worn;  
Nor will ambition's awful spoils  
The flowery pomp of ease adorn;  
But Love unbends the force of thought;  
By Love unmanly fears are taught;  
And Love's reward with gaudy sloth is bought.

3 Yet thou hast read in tuneful lays,  
And heard from many a zealous breast,  
The pleasing tale of beauty's praise  
In wisdom's lofty language dress'd;  
Of beauty powerful to impart  
Each finer sense, each comelier art,  
And soothe and polish man's ungente heart.

4 If then, from Love's deceit secure,  
Thus far alone thy wishes tend,  
Go; see the white-wing'd evening hour  
On Delia's vernal walk descend:  
Go, while the golden light serene,  
The grove, the lawn, the soften'd scene  
Becomes the presence of the rural queen.

5 Attend, while that harmonious tongue  
Each bosom, each desire commands:  
Apollo's lute by Hermes strung,  
And touch'd by chaste Minerva's hands,  
Attend. I feel a force divine,  
O Delia, win my thoughts to thine;  
That half the colour of thy life is mine.

6 Yet conscious of the dangerous charm,  
Soon would I turn my steps away;

Nor oft provoke the lovely harm,  
Nor lull my reason's watchful sway.  
But thou, my friend—I hear thy sighs:  
Alas, I read thy downcast eyes;  
And thy tongue falters, and thy colour flies.

7 So soon again to meet the fair?  
So pensive all this absent hour?—  
O yet, unlucky youth, beware,  
While yet to think is in thy power.  
In vain with friendship's flattering name  
Thy passion veils its inward shame;  
Friendship, the treacherous fuel of thy flame!

8 Once, I remember, new to Love,  
And dreading his tyrannic chain,  
I sought a gentle maid to prove  
What peaceful joys in friendship reign:  
Whence we forsooth might safely stand,  
And pitying view the love-sick band,  
And mock the wingèd boy's malicious hand.

9 Thus frequent pass'd the cloudless day,  
To smiles and sweet discourse resign'd;  
While I exulted to survey  
One generous woman's real mind:  
Till friendship soon my languid breast  
Each night with unknown cares possess'd,  
Dash'd my coy slumbers, or my dreams distress'd.

10 Fool that I was—And now, even now  
While thus I preach the Stoic strain,  
Unless I shun Olympia's view,  
An hour unsays it all again.

O friend!—when Love directs her eyes  
To pierce where every passion lies,  
Where is the firm, the cautious, or the wise?

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## ODE XII.

TO SIR FRANCIS HENRY DRAKE, BARONET.

- 1 BEHOLD, the Balance in the sky  
Swift on the wintry scale inclines:  
To earthy caves the Dryads fly,  
And the bare pastures Pan resigns.  
Late did the farmer's fork o'erspread  
With recent soil the twice-mown mead,  
Tainting the bloom which Autumn knows:  
He whets the rusty coulter now,  
He binds his oxen to the plough,  
And wide his future harvest throws.
- 2 Now, London's busy confines round,  
By Kensington's imperial towers,  
From Highgate's rough descent profound,  
Essexian heaths, or Kentish bowers,  
Where'er I pass, I see approach  
Some rural statesman's eager coach,  
Hurried by senatorial cares:  
While rural nymphs (alike, within,  
Aspiring courtly praise to win)  
Debate their dress, reform their airs.
- 3 Say, what can now the country boast,  
O Drake, thy footsteps to detain,



When peevish winds and gloomy frost  
The sunshine of the temper stain?  
Say, are the priests of Devon grown  
Friends to this tolerating throne,  
Champions for George's legal right?  
Have general freedom, equal law,  
Won to the glory of Nassau  
Each bold Wessexian squire and knight?

- 4 I doubt it much; and guess at least  
That when the day, which made us  
free,

Shall next return, that sacred feast  
Thou better may'st observe with me.  
With me the sulphurous treason old  
A far inferior part shall hold  
In that glad day's triumphal strain;  
And generous William be revered,  
Nor one untimely accent heard  
Of James, or his ignoble reign.

- 5 Then, while the Gascon's fragrant wine  
With modest cups our joy supplies,  
We'll truly thank the power divine  
Who bade the chief, the patriot rise;  
Rise from heroic ease (the spoil  
Due, for his youth's Herculean toil,  
From Belgium to her saviour son),  
Rise with the same unconquer'd zeal  
For our Britannia's injured weal,  
Her laws defaced, her shrines o'erthrown.

- 6 He came. The tyrant from our shore,  
Like a forbidden demon, fled;

And to eternal exile bore  
Pontific rage and vassal dread.  
There sunk the mouldering Gothic reign:  
New years came forth, a liberal train,  
Call'd by the people's great decree.  
That day, my friend, let blessings crown;—  
Fill, to the demigod's renown  
From whom thou hast that thou art free.

7 Then, Drake, (for wherefore should we part  
The public and the private weal?)  
In vows to her who sways thy heart,  
Fair health, glad fortune, will we deal.  
Whether Aglaia's blooming cheek,  
Or the soft ornaments that speak  
So eloquent in Daphne's smile,  
Whether the piercing lights that fly  
From the dark heaven of Myrto's eye,  
Haply thy fancy then beguile.

8 For so it is:—thy stubborn breast,  
Though touch'd by many a slighter wound,  
Hath no full conquest yet confess'd,  
Nor the one fatal charmer found;  
While I, a true and loyal swain,  
My fair Olympia's gentle reign  
Through all the varying seasons own.  
Her genius still my bosom warms:  
No other maid for me hath charms,  
Or I have eyes for her alone.

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## ODE XIII.

## ON LYRIC POETRY.

## I.—1.

ONCE more I join the Thespian choir,  
And taste the inspiring fount again :  
O parent of the Grecian lyre,  
Admit me to thy powerful strain—  
And lo, with ease my step invades  
The pathless vale and opening shades,  
Till now I spy her verdant seat ;  
And now at large I drink the sound,  
While these her offspring, listening round,  
By turns her melody repeat.

## I.—2.

I see Anacreon smile and sing,  
His silver tresses breathe perfume :  
His cheek displays a second spring  
Of roses, taught by wine to bloom.  
Away, deceitful cares, away,  
And let me listen to his lay ;  
Let me the wanton pomp enjoy,  
While in smooth dance the light-wing'd Hours  
Lead round his lyre its patron powers,  
Kind Laughter and Convivial Joy.

## I.—3.

Broke from the fetters of his native land,  
Devoting shame and vengeance to her lords,  
With louder impulse and a threatening hand  
The Lesbian patriot<sup>1</sup> smites the sounding chords :

<sup>1</sup> 'The Lesbian patriot : ' Alcæus.

Ye wretches, ye perfidious train,  
Ye cursed of gods and free-born men,  
Ye murderers of the laws,  
Though now ye glory in your lust,  
Though now ye tread the feeble neck in dust,  
Yet Time and righteous Jove will judge your dreadful  
cause.

## II.—1.

But lo, to Sappho's melting airs  
Descends the radiant queen of love:  
She smiles, and asks what fonder cares  
Her suppliant's plaintive measures move:  
Why is my faithful maid distress'd?  
Who, Sappho, wounds thy tender breast?  
Say, flies he?—Soon he shall pursue:  
Shuns he thy gifts?—He soon shall give:  
Slights he thy sorrows?—He shall  
grieve,  
And soon to all thy wishes bow.

## II.—2.

But, O Melpomene, for whom  
Awakes thy golden shell again?  
What mortal breath shall e'er presume  
To echo that unbounded strain?  
Majestic in the frown of years,  
Behold, the man of Thebes<sup>1</sup> appears:  
For some there are, whose mighty frame  
The hand of Jove at birth endow'd  
With hopes that mock the gazing  
crowd;  
As eagles drink the noontide flame;

<sup>1</sup> 'The man of Thebes:' Pindar.



## II.—3.

While the dim raven beats her weary wings,  
And clamours far below.—Propitious Muse,  
While I so late unlock thy purer springs,  
And breathe whate'er thy ancient airs infuse,  
    Wilt thou for Albion's sons around  
    (Ne'er hadst thou audience more renown'd)  
    Thy charming arts employ,  
    As when the winds from shore to shore  
Through Greece thy lyre's persuasive language  
    bore,  
Till towns, and isles, and seas return'd the vocal  
    joy?

## III.—1.

Yet then did Pleasure's lawless throng,  
Oft rushing forth in loose attire,  
Thy virgin dance, thy graceful song  
Pollute with impious revels dire.  
O fair, O chaste, thy echoing shade  
May no foul discord here invade:  
Nor let thy strings one accent move,  
Except what earth's untroubled ear  
'Mid all her social tribes may hear,  
And heaven's unerring throne approve.

## III.—2.

Queen of the lyre, in thy retreat  
The fairest flowers of Pindus glow;  
The vine aspires to crown thy seat,  
And myrtles round thy laurel grow.  
Thy strings adapt their varied strain  
To every pleasure, every pain,

Which mortal tribes were born to prove;  
And straight our passions rise or fall,  
As at the wind's imperious call  
The ocean swells, the billows move.

## III.—3.

When midnight listens o'er the slumbering earth,  
Let me, O Muse, thy solemn whispers hear:  
When morning sends her fragrant breezes forth,  
With airy murmurs touch my opening ear.  
And ever watchful at thy side,  
Let Wisdom's awful suffrage guide  
The tenor of thy lay:  
To her of old by Jove was given  
To judge the various deeds of earth and heaven;  
'Twas thine by gentle arts to win us to her sway.

## IV.—1.

Oft as, to well-earn'd ease resign'd,  
I quit the maze where Science toils,  
Do thou refresh my yielding mind  
With all thy gay, delusive spoils.  
But, O indulgent, come not nigh  
The busy steps, the jealous eye  
Of wealthy care or gainful age;  
Whose barren souls thy joys disdain,  
And hold as foes to reason's reign  
Whome'er thy lovely works engage.

## IV.—2.

When friendship and when letter'd mirth  
Haply partake my simple board,  
Then let thy blameless hand call forth  
The music of the Teian chord.

Or if invoked at softer hours,  
Oh! seek with me the happy bowers  
That hear Olympia's gentle tongue;  
To beauty link'd with virtue's train,  
To love devoid of jealous pain,  
There let the Sapphic lute be strung.

## IV.—3.

But when from envy and from death to  
claim  
A hero bleeding for his native land;  
When to throw incense on the vestal flame  
Of Liberty my genius gives command,  
Nor Theban voice nor Lesbian lyre  
From thee, O Muse, do I require;  
While my presaging mind,  
Conscious of powers she never knew,  
Astonish'd, grasps at things beyond her view,  
Nor by another's fate submits to be confined.

---

ODE XIV.

TO THE HONOURABLE CHARLES TOWNSHEND;  
FROM THE COUNTRY.

- 1 SAY, Townshend, what can London boast  
To pay thee for the pleasures lost,  
The health to-day resign'd,  
When Spring from this her favourite seat  
Bade Winter hasten his retreat,  
And met the western wind.

- 2 Oh, knew'st thou how the balmy air,  
The sun, the azure heavens prepare  
To heal thy languid frame,  
No more would noisy courts engage;  
In vain would lying Faction's rage  
Thy sacred leisure claim.
- 3 Oft I look'd forth, and oft admired;  
Till with the studious volume tired  
I sought the open day;  
And sure, I cried, the rural gods  
Expect me in their green abodes,  
And chide my tardy lay.
- 4 But ah, in vain my restless feet  
Traced every silent shady seat  
Which knew their forms of old:  
Nor Naiad by her fountain laid,  
Nor Wood-nymph tripping through her glade,  
Did now their rites unfold:
- 5 Whether to nurse some infant oak  
They turn the slowly tinkling brook,  
And catch the pearly showers,  
Or brush the mildew from the woods,  
Or paint with noontide beams the buds,  
Or breathe on opening flowers.
- 6 Such rites, which they with Spring renew,  
The eyes of care can never view;  
And care hath long been mine:  
And hence offended with their guest,  
Since grief of love my soul oppress'd,  
They hide their toils divine.



- 7 But soon shall thy enlivening tongue  
This heart, by dear affliction wrung,  
With noble hope inspire:  
Then will the sylvan powers again  
Receive me in their genial train,  
And listen to my lyre.
- 8 Beneath yon Dryad's lonely shade  
A rustic altar shall be paid,  
Of turf with laurel framed;  
And thou the inscription wilt approve:  
'This for the peace which, lost by love,  
By friendship was reclaim'd.'
- 

## ODE XV.

## TO THE EVENING STAR.

- 1 To-NIGHT retired, the queen of heaven  
With young Endymion stays:  
And now to Hesper it is given  
A while to rule the vacant sky,  
Till she shall to her lamp supply  
A stream of brighter rays.
- 2 O Hesper, while the starry throng  
With awe thy path surrounds,  
Oh, listen to my suppliant song,  
If haply now the vocal sphere  
Can suffer thy delighted ear  
To stoop to mortal sounds.

- 3 So may the bridegroom's genial strain  
Thee still invoke to shine :  
So may the bride's unmarried train  
To Hymen chant their flattering vow,  
Still that his lucky torch may glow  
With lustre pure as thine.
- 4 Far other vows must I prefer  
To thy indulgent power.  
Alas, but now I paid my tear  
On fair Olympia's virgin tomb :  
And lo, from thence, in quest I roam  
Of Philomela's bower.
- 5 Propitious send thy golden ray,  
Thou purest light above :  
Let no false flame seduce to stray  
Where gulf or steep lie hid for harm :  
But lead where music's healing charm  
May soothe afflicted love.
- 6 To them, by many a grateful song  
In happier seasons vow'd,  
These lawns, Olympia's haunt, belong :  
Oft by yon silver stream we walk'd,  
Or fix'd, while Philomela talk'd,  
Beneath yon copses stood.
- 7 Nor seldom, where the beechen boughs  
That roofless tower invade,  
We came while her enchanting Muse  
The radiant moon above us held :  
Till by a clamorous owl compell'd  
She fled the solemn shade.

- ✓ 8 But hark; I hear her liquid tone.  
Now, Hesper, guide my feet  
Down the red marl with moss o'ergrown,  
Through yon wild thicket next the plain,  
Whose hawthorns choke the winding lane,  
Which leads to her retreat.
- ✓ 9 See the green space; on either hand  
Enlarged it spreads around:  
See, in the midst she takes her stand,  
Where one old oak his awful shade  
Extends o'er half the level mead  
Enclosed in woods profound.
- ✓ 10 Hark, through many a melting note  
She now prolongs her lays:  
How sweetly down the void they float!  
The breeze their magic path attends,  
The stars shine out, the forest bends,  
The wakeful heifers gaze.
- 11 Whoe'er thou art whom chance may bring  
To this sequester'd spot,  
If then the plaintive Syren sing,  
Oh! softly tread beneath her bower,  
And think of heaven's disposing power,  
Of man's uncertain lot.
- 12 Oh! think, o'er all this mortal stage,  
What mournful scenes arise:  
What ruin waits on kingly rage,  
How often virtue dwells with woe,  
How many griefs from knowledge flow,  
How swiftly pleasure flies.

just opposite  
of classical  
naturalist  
imagery

escape

- 13 O sacred bird, let me at eve,  
Thus wandering all alone,  
Thy tender counsel oft receive,  
Bear witness to thy pensive airs,  
And pity Nature's common cares,  
Till I forget my own.
- 

## ODE XVI.

TO CALEB HARDINGE, M.D.

- 1 WITH sordid floods the wintry Urn<sup>1</sup>  
Hath stain'd fair Richmond's level green;  
Her naked hill the Dryads mourn,  
No longer a poetic scene.  
No longer there the raptured eye  
The beauteous forms of earth or sky  
Surveys as in their Author's mind;  
And London shelters from the year  
Those whom thy social hours to share  
The Attic Muse design'd.
- 2 From Hampstead's airy summit me  
Her guest the city shall behold,  
What day the people's stern decree  
To unbelieving kings is told,  
When common men (the dread of fame)  
Adjudged as one of evil name,  
Before the sun, the anointed head.  
Then seek thou too the pious town,  
With no unworthy cares to crown  
That evening's awful shade.

<sup>1</sup> 'The wintry Urn:' Aquarius.



- 3 Deem not I call thee to deplore  
The sacred martyr of the day,  
By fast, and penitential lore  
To purge our ancient guilt away.  
For this, on humble faith I rest  
That still our advocate, the priest,  
From heavenly wrath will save the land;  
Nor ask what rites our pardon gain,  
Nor how his potent sounds restrain  
The thunderer's lifted hand.
- 4 No, Hardinge; peace to church and state!  
That evening, let the Muse give law;  
While I anew the theme relate  
Which my first youth enamour'd saw.  
Then will I oft explore thy thought,  
What to reject which Locke hath taught,  
What to pursue in Virgil's lay;  
Till hope ascends to loftiest things,  
Nor envies demagogues or kings  
Their frail and vulgar sway.
- 5 O versed in all the human frame,  
Lead thou where'er my labour lies,  
And English fancy's eager flame  
To Grecian purity chastise;  
While hand in hand, at Wisdom's shrine,  
Beauty with truth I strive to join,  
And grave assent with glad applause;  
To paint the story of the soul,  
And Plato's visions to control  
By Verulamian laws.

## ODE XVII.

ON A SERMON AGAINST GLORY. 1747.

- 1 COME then, tell me, sage divine,  
Is it an offence to own  
That our bosoms e'er incline  
Toward immortal Glory's throne?  
For with me, nor pomp, nor pleasure,  
Bourbon's might, Braganza's treasure,  
So can Fancy's dream rejoice,  
So conciliate Reason's choice,  
As one approving word of her impartial voice.
- 2 If to spurn at noble praise  
Be the passport to thy heaven,  
Follow thou those gloomy ways;  
No such law to me was given,  
Nor, I trust, shall I deplore me,  
Faring like my friends before me;  
Nor an holier place desire  
Than Timoleon's arms acquire,  
And Tully's curule chair, and Milton's golden lyre.
- 

## ODE XVIII.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE FRANCIS, EARL  
OF HUNTINGDON. 1747.

I.—1.

THE wise and great of every clime,  
Through all the spacious walks of time,

Where'er the Muse her power display'd,  
With joy have listen'd and obey'd.  
For, taught of heaven, the sacred Nine  
Persuasive numbers, forms divine,  
    To mortal sense impart:  
They best the soul with glory fire;  
They noblest counsels, boldest deeds inspire;  
And high o'er Fortune's rage enthrone the fixed heart.

## I.—2.

Nor less prevailing is their charm  
The vengeful bosom to disarm;  
To melt the proud with human woe,  
And prompt unwilling tears to flow.  
Can wealth a power like this afford?  
Can Cromwell's arts or Marlborough's sword,  
    An equal empire claim?  
No, Hastings. Thou my words wilt own:  
Thy breast the gifts of every Muse hath known;  
Nor shall the giver's love disgrace thy noble name.

## I.—3.

The Muse's awful art,  
And the blest function of the poet's tongue,  
Ne'er shalt thou blush to honour; to assert  
From all that scorned vice or slavish fear hath sung.  
Nor shall the blandishment of Tuscan strings  
Warbling at will in Pleasure's myrtle bower;  
Nor shall the servile notes to Celtic kings  
By flattering minstrels paid in evil hour,  
Move thee to spurn the heavenly Muse's reign.  
    A different strain,  
    And other themes  
From her prophetic shades and hallow'd streams

(Thou well canst witness), meet the purgèd  
ear:

Such, as when Greece to her immortal shell  
Rejoicing listen'd, godlike sounds to hear;  
To hear the sweet instructress tell  
(While men and heroes throng'd around)  
How life its noblest use may find,  
How well for freedom be resign'd;  
And how, by glory, virtue shall be crown'd.

II.—1.

Such was the Chian father's strain  
To many a kind domestic train,  
Whose pious hearth and genial bowl  
Had cheer'd the reverend pilgrim's soul:  
When, every hospitable rite  
With equal bounty to requite,  
He struck his magic strings,  
And pour'd spontaneous numbers forth,  
And seized their ears with tales of ancient worth,  
And fill'd their musing hearts with vast heroic things.

II.—2.

Now oft, where happy spirits dwell,  
Where yet he tunes his charming shell,  
Oft near him, with applauding hands,  
The Genius of his country stands.  
To listening gods he makes him known,  
That man divine, by whom were sown  
The seeds of Grecian fame:  
Who first the race with freedom fired;  
From whom Lycurgus Sparta's sons inspired;  
From whom Platean palms and Cyprian trophies  
came.



## II.—3.

O noblest, happiest age!  
When Aristides ruled, and Cimon fought;  
When all the generous fruits of Homer's page  
Exulting Pindar saw to full perfection brought.  
O Pindar, oft shalt thou be hail'd of me:  
Not that Apollo fed thee from his shrine;  
Not that thy lips drank sweetness from the bee;  
Nor yet that, studious of thy notes divine,  
Pan danced their measure with the sylvan throng:  
But that thy song  
Was proud to unfold  
What thy base rulers trembled to behold;  
Amid corrupted Thebes was proud to tell  
The deeds of Athens and the Persian shame:  
Hence on thy head their impious vengeance fell.  
But thou, O faithful to thy fame,  
The Muse's law didst rightly know;  
That who would animate his lays,  
And other minds to virtue raise,  
Must feel his own with all her spirit glow.

## III.—1.

Are there, approved of later times,  
Whose verse adorn'd a tyrant's<sup>1</sup> crimes?  
Who saw majestic Rome betray'd,  
And lent the imperial ruffian aid?  
Alas! not one polluted bard,  
No, not the strains that Mincius heard,  
Or Tibur's hills replied,  
Dare to the Muse's ear aspire;  
Save that, instructed by the Grecian lyre,  
With Freedom's ancient notes their shameful task they hide.

<sup>1</sup> 'A tyrant:' Octavianus Cæsar.

## III.—2.

Mark, how the dread Pantheon stands,  
Amid the domes of modern hands:  
Amid the toys of idle state,  
How simply, how severely great!  
Then turn, and, while each western clime  
Presents her tuneful sons to Time,  
    So mark thou Milton's name;  
And add, 'Thus differs from the throng  
The spirit which inform'd thy awful song,  
Which bade thy potent voice protect thy country's fame.'

## III.—3.

Yet hence barbaric zeal  
His memory with unholy rage pursues;  
While from these arduous cares of public weal  
She bids each bard begone, and rest him with his  
    Muse.  
O fool! to think the man, whose ample mind  
Must grasp at all that yonder stars survey;  
Must join the noblest forms of every kind,  
The world's most perfect image to display,  
Can e'er his country's majesty behold,  
    Unmoved or cold!  
    O fool! to deem  
That he, whose thought must visit every theme,  
Whose heart must every strong emotion know  
Inspired by Nature, or by Fortune taught;  
That he, if haply some presumptuous foe,  
    With false ignoble science fraught,  
    Shall spurn at Freedom's faithful band:  
    That he their dear defence will shun,  
    Or hide their glories from the sun,  
Or deal their vengeance with a woman's hand!

## IV.—1.

I care not that in Arno's plain,  
Or on the sportive banks of Seine,  
From public themes the Muse's choir  
Content with polish'd ease retire.  
Where priests the studious head command,  
Where tyrants bow the warlike hand  
    To vile ambition's aim,  
Say, what can public themes afford,  
Save venal honours to a hateful lord,  
Reserved for angry heaven and scorn'd of honest fame?

## IV.—2.

But here, where Freedom's equal throne  
To all her valiant sons is known;  
Where all are conscious of her cares,  
And each the power, that rules him, shares;  
Here let the bard, whose dastard tongue  
Leaves public arguments unsung,  
    Bid public praise farewell:  
Let him to fitter climes remove,  
Far from the hero's and the patriot's love,  
And lull mysterious monks to slumber in their cell.

## IV.—3.

O Hastings, not to all  
Can ruling Heaven the same endowments lend:  
Yet still doth Nature to her offspring call,  
That to one general weal their different powers they bend,  
Unenvious. Thus alone, though strains divine  
Inform the bosom of the Muse's son;  
Though with new honours the patrician's line  
Advance from age to age; yet thus alone  
They win the suffrage of impartial fame.

The poet's name  
He best shall prove,  
Whose lays the soul with noblest passions move.  
But thee, O progeny of heroes old,  
Thee to severer toils thy fate requires:  
The fate which form'd thee in a chosen mould,  
The grateful country of thy sires,  
Thee to sublimer paths demand;  
Sublimer than thy sires could trace,  
Or thy own Edward teach his race,  
Though Gaul's proud genius sank beneath his hand.

## V.—1.

From rich domains, and subject farms,  
They led the rustic youth to arms;  
And kings their stern achievements fear'd,  
While private strife their banners rear'd.  
But loftier scenes to thee are shown,  
Where empire's wide establish'd throne  
No private master fills:  
Where, long foretold, the People reigns;  
Where each a vassal's humble heart disdains;  
And judgeth what he sees; and, as he judgeth, wills.

## V.—2.

Here be it thine to calm and guide  
The swelling democratic tide;  
To watch the state's uncertain frame,  
And baffle Faction's partial aim:  
But chiefly, with determined zeal,  
To quell that servile band, who kneel  
To Freedom's banish'd foes;  
That monster, which is daily found  
Expert and bold thy country's peace to wound;  
Yet dreads to handle arms, nor manly counsel knows.



## V.—3.

'Tis highest Heaven's command,  
That guilty aims should sordid paths pursue;  
That what ensnares the heart should maim the hand,  
And Virtue's worthless foes be false to glory too.  
But look on Freedom;—see, through every age,  
What labours, perils, griefs, hath she disdain'd!  
What arms, what regal pride, what priestly rage,  
Have her dread offspring conquer'd or sustain'd!  
For Albion well have conquer'd. Let the strains  
Of happy swains,  
Which now resound  
Where Scarsdale's cliffs the swelling pastures bound,  
Bear witness;—there, oft let the farmer hail  
The sacred orchard which embowers his gate,  
And show to strangers passing down the vale,  
Where Ca'ndish, Booth, and Osborne sate;  
When, bursting from their country's chain,  
Even in the midst of deadly harms,  
Of papal snares and lawless arms,  
They plann'd for Freedom this her noblest reign.

## VI.—1.

This reign, these laws, this public care,  
Which Nassau gave us all to share,  
Had ne'er adorn'd the English name,  
Could Fear have silenced Freedom's claim.  
But Fear in vain attempts to bind  
Those lofty efforts of the mind  
Which social good inspires;  
Where men, for this, assault a throne,  
Each adds the common welfare to his own;  
And each unconquer'd heart the strength of all  
acquires.

## VI.—2.

Say, was it thus, when late we view'd  
Our fields in civil blood imbrued?  
When fortune crown'd the barbarous host,  
And half the astonish'd isle was lost?  
Did one of all that vaunting train,  
Who dare affront a peaceful reign,  
Durst one in arms appear?  
Durst one in counsels pledge his life?  
Stake his luxurious fortunes in the strife?  
Or lend his boasted name his vagrant friends to cheer?

## VI.—3.

Yet, Hastings, these are they  
Who challenge to themselves thy country's love;  
The true; the constant: who alone can weigh,  
What glory should demand, or liberty approve!  
But let their works declare them. Thy free powers,  
The generous powers of thy prevailing mind,  
Not for the tasks of their confederate hours,  
Lewd brawls and lurking slander, were design'd.  
Be thou thy own approver. Honest praise  
Oft nobly sways  
Ingenuous youth;  
But, sought from cowards and the lying mouth,  
Praise is reproach. Eternal God alone  
For mortals fixeth that sublime award.  
He, from the faithful records of his throne,  
Bids the historian and the bard  
Dispose of honour and of scorn;  
Discern the patriot from the slave;  
And write the good, the wise, the brave,  
For lessons to the multitude unborn.

## BOOK II.

## ODE I.

## THE REMONSTRANCE OF SHAKSPEARE:

SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN SPOKEN AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL, WHILE THE  
FRENCH COMEDIANS WERE ACTING BY SUBSCRIPTION. 1749.

IF, yet regardful of your native land,  
Old Shakspeare's tongue you deign to understand,  
Lo, from the blissful bowers where heaven rewards  
Instructive sages and unblemish'd bards,  
I come, the ancient founder of the stage,  
Intent to learn, in this discerning age,  
What form of wit your fancies have embraced,  
And whither tends your elegance of taste,  
That thus at length our homely toils you spurn,  
That thus to foreign scenes you proudly turn, 10  
That from my brow the laurel wreath you claim  
To crown the rivals of your country's fame.

What though the footsteps of my devious Muse  
The measured walks of Grecian art refuse?  
Or though the frankness of my hardy style  
Mock the nice touches of the critic's file?  
Yet, what my age and climate held to view,  
Impartial I survey'd and fearless drew.  
And say, ye skilful in the human heart,  
Who know to prize a poet's noblest part, 20  
What age, what clime, could e'er an ampler field  
For lofty thought, for daring fancy, yield?  
I saw this England break the shameful bands  
Forged for the souls of men by sacred hands:

I saw each groaning realm her aid implore; 25  
Her sons the heroes of each warlike shore:  
Her naval standard (the dire Spaniard's bane)  
Obey'd through all the circuit of the main.  
Then, too, great Commerce, for a late found world,  
Around your coast her eager sails unfurl'd! 30  
New hopes, new passions, thence the bosom fired;  
New plans, new arts, the genius thence inspired;  
Thence every scene, which private fortune knows,  
In stronger life, with bolder spirit, rose.

Disgraced I this full prospect which I drew,  
My colours languid, or my strokes untrue?  
Have not your sages, warriors, swains, and kings,  
Confess'd the living draught of men and things?  
What other bard in any clime appears  
Alike the master of your smiles and tears? 40  
Yet have I deign'd your audience to entice  
With wretched bribes to luxury and vice?  
Or have my various scenes a purpose known  
Which freedom, virtue, glory, might not own?

Such from the first was my dramatic plan;  
It should be yours to crown what I began:  
And now that England spurns her Gothic chain,  
And equal laws and social science reign,  
I thought, Now surely shall my zealous eyes  
View nobler bards and juster critics rise, 50  
Intent with learned labour to refine  
The copious ore of Albion's native mine,  
Our stately Muse more graceful airs to teach,  
And form her tongue to more attractive speech,  
Till rival nations listen at her feet,  
And own her polish'd as they own her great.

But do you thus my favourite hopes fulfil?  
Is France at last the standard of your skill?



Alas for you! that so betray a mind 59  
Of art unconscious and to beauty blind.  
Say, does her language your ambition raise,  
Her barren, trivial, unharmonious phrase,  
Which fetters eloquence to scantiest bounds,  
And maims the cadence of poetic sounds?  
Say, does your humble admiration choose  
The gentle prattle of her Comic Muse,  
While wits, plain-dealers, fops, and fools appear,  
Charged to say nought but what the king may hear?  
Or rather melt your sympathising hearts  
Won by her tragic scene's romantic arts, 70  
Where old and young declaim on soft desire,  
And heroes never, but for love, expire?

No. Though the charms of novelty, a while,  
Perhaps too fondly win your thoughtless smile,  
Yet not for you design'd indulgent fate  
The modes or manners of the Bourbon state.  
And ill your minds my partial judgment reads,  
And many an augury my hope misleads,  
If the fair maids of yonder blooming train  
To their light courtship would an audience deign, 80  
Or those chaste matrons a Parisian wife  
Choose for the model of domestic life;  
Or if one youth of all that generous band,  
The strength and splendour of their native land,  
Would yield his portion of his country's fame,  
And quit old freedom's patrimonial claim,  
With lying smiles oppression's pomp to see,  
And judge of glory by a king's decree.

O bless'd at home with justly-envied laws,  
O long the chiefs of Europe's general cause, 90  
Whom heaven hath chosen at each dangerous hour  
To check the inroads of barbaric power,

The rights of trampled nations to reclaim, 93  
And guard the social world from bonds and shame;  
Oh! let not luxury's fantastic charms  
Thus give the lie to your heroic arms:  
Nor for the ornaments of life embrace  
Dishonest lessons from that vaunting race,  
Whom fate's dread laws (for, in eternal fate  
Despotic rule was heir to freedom's hate), 100  
Whom in each warlike, each commercial part,  
In civil council, and in pleasing art,  
The judge of earth predestined for your foes,  
And made it fame and virtue to oppose.

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## ODE II.

### TO SLEEP.

1 THOU silent power, whose welcome sway  
Charms every anxious thought away;  
In whose divine oblivion drown'd,  
Sore pain and weary toil grow mild,  
Love is with kinder looks beguiled,  
And grief forgets her fondly cherish'd wound;  
Oh, whither hast thou flown, indulgent god?  
God of kind shadows and of healing dews,  
Whom dost thou touch with thy Lethæan rod?  
Around whose temples now thy opiate airs diffuse?

2 Lo, Midnight from her starry reign  
Looks awful down on earth and main.  
The tuneful birds lie hush'd in sleep,  
With all that crop the verdant food,  
With all that skim the crystal flood,  
Or haunt the caverns of the rocky steep.

No rushing winds disturb the tufted bowers;  
No wakeful sound the moonlight valley knows,  
Save where the brook its liquid murmur pours,  
And lulls the waving scene to more profound repose.

3 Oh, let not me alone complain,  
Alone invoke thy power in vain!  
Descend, propitious, on my eyes;  
Not from the couch that bears a crown,  
Not from the courtly statesman's down,  
Nor where the miser and his treasure lies:  
Bring not the shapes that break the murderer's  
rest,  
Nor those the hireling soldier loves to see,  
Nor those which haunt the bigot's gloomy breast:  
Far be their guilty nights, and far their dreams  
from me!

4 Nor yet those awful forms present,  
For chiefs and heroes only meant:  
The figured brass, the choral song,  
The rescued people's glad applause,  
The listening senate, and the laws  
Fix'd by the counsels of Timoleon's<sup>1</sup> tongue,  
Are scenes too grand for fortune's private ways;  
And though they shine in youth's ingenuous view,  
The sober gainful arts of modern days  
To such romantic thoughts have bid a long adieu.

5 I ask not, god of dreams, thy care  
To banish Love's presentments fair:

<sup>1</sup> After Timoleon had delivered Syracuse from the tyranny of Dionysius, the people on every important deliberation sent for him into the public assembly, asked his advice, and voted according to it.—*Plutarch*.

Nor rosy cheek nor radiant eye  
Can arm him with such strong command  
That the young sorcerer's fatal hand  
Should round my soul his pleasing fetters tie.  
Nor yet the courtier's hope, the giving smile  
(A lighter phantom, and a baser chain)  
Did e'er in slumber my proud lyre beguile  
To lend the pomp of thrones her ill-according  
strain.

6 But, Morpheus, on thy balmy wing  
Such honourable visions bring,  
As soothed great Milton's injured age,  
When in prophetic dreams he saw  
The race unborn with pious awe  
Imbibe each virtue from his heavenly page:  
Or such as Mead's benignant fancy knows  
When health's deep treasures, by his art explored,  
Have saved the infant from an orphan's woes,  
Or to the trembling sire his age's hope restored.

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### ODE III.

TO THE CUCKOO.

1 O RUSTIC herald of the spring,  
At length in yonder woody vale  
Fast by the brook I hear thee sing;  
And, studious of thy homely tale,  
Amid the vespers of the grove,  
Amid the chanting choir of love,  
Thy sage responses hail.



2 The time has been when I have frown'd  
To hear thy voice the woods invade;  
And while thy solemn accent drown'd  
Some sweeter poet of the shade,  
Thus, thought I, thus the sons of care  
Some constant youth or generous fair  
With dull advice upbraid.

3 I said, ' While Philomela's song  
Proclaims the passion of the grove,  
It ill beseems a cuckoo's tongue  
Her charming language to reprove'—  
Alas, how much a lover's ear  
Hates all the sober truth to hear,  
The sober truth of love!

4 When hearts are in each other bless'd,  
When nought but lofty faith can rule  
The nymph's and swain's consenting breast,  
How cuckoo-like in Cupid's school,  
With store of grave prudential saws  
On fortune's power and custom's laws,  
Appears each friendly fool!

5 Yet think betimes, ye gentle train  
Whom love, and hope, and fancy sway,  
Who every harsher care disdain,  
Who by the morning judge the day,  
Think that, in April's fairest hours,  
To warbling shades and painted flowers  
The cuckoo joins his lay.

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## ODE IV.

TO THE HONOURABLE CHARLES TOWNSHEND;  
IN THE COUNTRY. 1750.

## I.—1.

How oft shall I survey  
This humble roof, the lawn, the greenwood shade,  
The vale with sheaves o'erspread,  
The glassy brook, the flocks which round thee stray?  
When will thy cheerful mind  
Of these have utter'd all her dear esteem?  
Or, tell me, dost thou deem  
No more to join in glory's toilsome race,  
But here content embrace  
That happy leisure which thou hadst resign'd?

## I.—2.

Alas, ye happy hours,  
When books and youthful sport the soul could share,  
Ere one ambitious care  
Of civil life had awed her simpler powers;  
Oft as your winged train  
Revisit here my friend in white array,  
Oh, fail not to display  
Each fairer scene where I perchance had part,  
That so his generous heart  
The abode of even friendship may remain.

## I.—3.

For not imprudent of my loss to come,  
I saw from Contemplation's quiet cell  
His feet ascending to another home,  
Where public praise and envied greatness dwell.

But shall we therefore, O my lyre,  
Reprove ambition's best desire,—  
Extinguish glory's flame?  
Far other was the task enjoin'd  
When to my hand thy strings were first assign'd:  
Far other faith belongs to friendship's honour'd name.

## II.—1.

Thee, Townshend, not the arms  
Of slumbering Ease, nor Pleasure's rosy chain,  
Were destined to detain;  
No, nor bright Science, nor the Muse's charms.  
For them high heaven prepares  
Their proper votaries, an humbler band:  
And ne'er would Spenser's hand  
Have deign'd to strike the warbling Tuscan shell,  
Nor Harrington to tell  
What habit an immortal city wears;

## II.—2.

Had this been born to shield  
The cause which Cromwell's impious hand betray'd,  
Or that, like Vere, display'd  
His redcross banner o'er the Belgian field;  
Yet where the will divine  
Hath shut those loftiest paths, it next remains,  
With reason clad in strains  
Of harmony, selected minds to inspire,  
And virtue's living fire  
To feed and eternise in hearts like thine.

## II.—3.

For never shall the herd, whom envy sways,  
So quell my purpose or my tongue control,

That I should fear illustrious worth to praise,  
Because its master's friendship moved my soul.  
Yet, if this undissembling strain  
Should now perhaps thine ear detain  
With any pleasing sound,  
Remember thou that righteous Fame  
From hoary age a strict account will claim  
Of each auspicious palm with which thy youth was  
crown'd.

## III.—1.

Nor obvious is the way  
Where heaven expects thee nor the traveller leads;  
Through flowers or fragrant meads,  
Or groves that hark to Philomela's lay.  
The impartial laws of fate  
To nobler virtues wed severer cares.  
Is there a man who shares  
The summit next where heavenly natures dwell?  
Ask him (for he can tell)  
What storms beat round that rough laborious  
height.

## III.—2.

Ye heroes, who of old  
Did generous England Freedom's throne ordain;  
From Alfred's parent reign  
To Nassau, great deliverer, wise and bold;  
I know your perils hard,  
Your wounds, your painful marches, wintry seas,  
The night estranged from ease,  
The day by cowardice and falsehood vex'd,  
The head with doubt perplex'd,  
The indignant heart disdaining the reward,



## III.—3.

Which envy hardly grants. But, O renown,  
O praise from judging heaven and virtuous men,  
If thus they purchased thy divinest crown,  
Say, who shall hesitate, or who complain?  
And now they sit on thrones above:  
And when among the gods they move  
Before the Sovereign Mind,  
'Lo, these,' he saith, 'lo, these are they  
Who to the laws of mine eternal sway  
From violence and fear asserted human kind.'

## IV.—1.

Thus honour'd while the train  
Of legislators in his presence dwell;  
If I may aught foretell,  
The statesman shall the second palm obtain.  
For dreadful deeds of arms  
Let vulgar bards, with undiscerning praise,  
More glittering trophies raise:  
But wisest Heaven what deeds may chiefly move  
To favour and to love?  
What, save wide blessings, or averted harms?

## IV.—2.

Nor to the embattled field  
Shall these achievements of the peaceful gown,  
The green immortal crown  
Of valour, or the songs of conquest, yield.  
Not Fairfax wildly bold,  
While bare of crest he hew'd his fatal way  
Through Naseby's firm array,  
To heavier dangers did his breast oppose  
Than Pym's free virtue chose,  
When the proud force of Strafford he controll'd.

## IV.—3.

But what is man at enmity with truth?  
What were the fruits of Wentworth's copious mind,  
When (blighted all the promise of his youth)  
The patriot in a tyrant's league had join'd?  
Let Ireland's loud-lamenting plains,  
Let Tyne's and Humber's trampled swains,  
Let menaced London tell  
How impious guile made wisdom base;  
How generous zeal to cruel rage gave place;  
And how unblest'd he lived and how dishonour'd fell.

## V.—1.

Thence never hath the Muse  
Around his tomb Pierian roses flung:  
Nor shall one poet's tongue  
His name for music's pleasing labour choose.  
And sure, when Nature kind  
Hath deck'd some favour'd breast above the throng.  
That man with grievous wrong  
Affronts and wounds his genius, if he bends  
To guilt's ignoble ends  
The functions of his ill-submitting mind.

## V.—2.

For worthy of the wise  
Nothing can seem but virtue; nor earth yield  
Their fame an equal field,  
Save where impartial freedom gives the prize.  
There Somers fix'd his name,  
Enroll'd the next to William. There shall Time  
To every wondering clime  
Point out that Somers, who from faction's crowd,  
The slanderous and the loud,  
Could fair assent and modest reverence claim.

## V.—3.

Nor aught did laws or social arts acquire,  
Nor this majestic weal of Albion's land  
Did aught accomplish, or to aught aspire,  
Without his guidance, his superior hand.  
And rightly shall the Muse's care  
Wreaths like her own for him prepare,  
Whose mind's enamour'd aim  
Could forms of civil beauty draw  
Sublime as ever sage or poet saw,  
Yet still to life's rude scene the proud ideas tame.

## VI.—1.

Let none profane be near!  
The Muse was never foreign to his breast:  
On power's grave seat confess'd,  
Still to her voice he bent a lover's ear.  
And if the blessed know  
Their ancient cares, even now the unfading groves,  
Where haply Milton roves  
With Spenser, hear the enchanted echoes round  
Through farthest heaven resound  
Wise Somers, guardian of their fame below.

## VI.—2.

He knew, the patriot knew,  
That letters and the Muse's powerful art  
Exalt the ingenuous heart,  
And brighten every form of just and true.  
They lend a nobler sway  
To civil wisdom, than corruption's lure  
Could ever yet procure:  
They, too, from envy's pale malignant light  
Conduct her forth to sight,  
Clothed in the fairest colours of the day.

## VI.—3.

O Townshend, thus may Time, the judge severe,  
Instruct my happy tongue of thee to tell:  
And when I speak of one to Freedom dear  
For planning wisely and for acting well,  
Of one whom Glory loves to own,  
Who still by liberal means alone  
Hath liberal ends pursued;  
Then, for the guerdon of my lay,  
'This man with faithful friendship,' will I say,  
'From youth to honour'd age my arts and me hath  
view'd.'

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## ODE V.

## ON LOVE OF PRAISE.

- 1 OF all the springs within the mind  
Which prompt her steps in fortune's maze,  
From none more pleasing aid we find  
Than from the genuine love of praise.
- 2 Nor any partial, private end  
Such reverence to the public bears;  
Nor any passion, virtue's friend,  
So like to virtue's self appears.
- 3 For who in glory can delight  
Without delight in glorious deeds?  
What man a charming voice can slight,  
Who courts the echo that succeeds?



- 4 But not the echo on the voice  
More than on virtue praise depends;  
To which, of course, its real price  
The judgment of the praiser lends.
- 5 If praise, then, with religious awe  
From the sole perfect judge be sought,  
A nobler aim, a purer law,  
Nor priest, nor bard, nor sage hath taught.
- 6 With which in character the same,  
Though in an humbler sphere it lies,  
I count that soul of human fame,  
The suffrage of the good and wise.
- 

## ODE VI.

TO WILLIAM HALL, ESQUIRE; WITH THE WORKS OF  
CHAULIEU.

- 1 ATTEND to Chaulieu's wanton lyre;  
While, fluent as the skylark sings  
When first the morn allures its wings,  
The epicure his theme pursues:  
And tell me if, among the choir  
Whose music charms the banks of Seine,  
So full, so free, so rich a strain  
E'er dictated the warbling Muse.
- 2 Yet, Hall, while thy judicious ear  
Admires the well-dissembled art  
That can such harmony impart  
To the lame pace of Gallic rhymes;

While wit from affectation clear,  
Bright images, and passions true,  
Recall to thy assenting view  
The envied bards of nobler times;

- 3 Say, is not oft his doctrine wrong?  
This priest of Pleasure, who aspires  
To lead us to her sacred fires,  
Knows he the ritual of her shrine?  
Say (her sweet influence to thy song  
So may the goddess still afford),  
Doth she consent to be adored  
With shameless love and frantic wine?
- 4 Nor Cato, nor Chrysippus here  
Need we in high indignant phrase  
From their Elysian quiet raise:  
But Pleasure's oracle alone  
Consult; attentive, not severe.  
O Pleasure, we blaspheme not thee;  
Nor emulate the rigid knee  
Which bends but at the Stoic throne.
- 5 We own, had fate to man assign'd  
Nor sense, nor wish but what obey,  
Or Venus soft, or Bacchus gay,  
Then might our bard's voluptuous creed  
Most aptly govern human kind:  
Unless perchance what he hath sung  
Of tortured joints and nerves unstrung,  
Some wrangling heretic should plead.
- 6 But now, with all these proud desires  
For dauntless truth and honest fame;

With that strong master of our frame,  
The inexorable judge within,  
What can be done? Alas, ye fires  
Of love; alas, ye rosy smiles,  
Ye nectar'd cups from happier soils,—  
Ye have no bribe his grace to win.

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## ODE VII.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND BENJAMIN, LORD BISHOP  
OF WINCHESTER. 1754.

## I.—1.

FOR toils which patriots have endured,  
For treason quell'd and laws secured,  
In every nation Time displays  
The palm of honourable praise.  
Envy may rail, and Faction fierce  
May strive; but what, alas, can those  
(Though bold, yet blind and sordid foes)  
To Gratitude and Love oppose,  
To faithful story and persuasive verse?

## I.—2.

O nurse of freedom, Albion, say,  
Thou tamer of despotic sway,  
What man, among thy sons around,  
Thus heir to glory hast thou found?  
What page, in all thy annals bright,  
Hast thou with purer joy survey'd  
Than that where truth, by Hoadly's aid,  
Shines through imposture's solemn shade,  
Through kingly and through sacerdotal night?

## I.—3.

To him the Teacher bless'd,  
Who sent religion, from the palmy field  
By Jordan, like the morn to cheer the west,  
And lifted up the veil which heaven from earth conceal'd,  
To Hoadly thus his mandate he address'd:—  
'Go thou, and rescue my dishonour'd law  
From hands rapacious, and from tongues impure:  
Let not my peaceful name be made a lure,  
Fell persecution's mortal snares to aid:  
Let not my words be impious chains to draw  
The freeborn soul in more than brutal awe,  
To faith without assent, allegiance unrepaid.'

## II.—1.

No cold or unperforming hand  
Was arm'd by Heaven with this command.  
The world soon felt it; and, on high,  
To William's ear with welcome joy  
Did Locke among the blest unfold  
The rising hope of Hoadly's name;  
Godolphin then confirm'd the fame;  
And Somers, when from earth he came,  
And generous Stanhope the fair sequel told.

## II.—2.

Then drew the lawgivers around  
(Sires of the Grecian name renown'd),  
And listening ask'd, and wondering knew,  
What private force could thus subdue  
The vulgar and the great combined;  
Could war with sacred folly wage;  
Could a whole nation disengage  
From the dread bonds of many an age,  
And to new habits mould the public mind.



## II.—3.

For not a conqueror's sword,  
Nor the strong powers to civil founders known,  
Were his; but truth by faithful search explored,  
And social sense, like seed, in genial plenty sown.  
Wherever it took root, the soul (restored  
To freedom) freedom too for others sought.  
Not monkish craft, the tyrant's claim divine,  
Not regal zeal, the bigot's cruel shrine,  
Could longer guard from reason's warfare sage;  
Nor the wild rabble to sedition wrought,  
Nor synods by the papal Genius taught,  
Nor St John's spirit loose, nor Atterbury's rage.

## III.—1.

But where shall recompense be found?  
Or how such arduous merit crown'd?  
For look on life's laborious scene:  
What rugged spaces lie between  
Adventurous Virtue's early toils  
And her triumphal throne! The shade  
Of death, meantime, does oft invade  
Her progress; nor, to us display'd,  
Wears the bright heroine her expected spoils.

## III.—2.

Yet born to conquer is her power;—  
O Hoadly, if that favourite hour  
On earth arrive, with thankful awe  
We own just Heaven's indulgent law,  
And proudly thy success behold;  
We attend thy reverend length of days  
With benediction and with praise,  
And hail thee in our public ways  
Like some great spirit famed in ages old.

## III.—3.

While thus our vows prolong  
Thy steps on earth, and when by us resign'd  
Thou join'st thy seniors, that heroic throng  
Who rescued or preserved the rights of human kind,  
Oh! not unworthy may thy Albion's tongue  
Thee still, her friend and benefactor, name :  
Oh! never, Hoadly, in thy country's eyes,  
May impious gold, or pleasure's gaudy prize,  
Make public virtue, public freedom, vile ;  
Nor our own manners tempt us to disclaim  
That heritage, our noblest wealth and fame,  
Which thou hast kept entire from force and factious  
guile.

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## ODE VIII.

- 1 If rightly tuneful bards decide,  
    If it be fix'd in Love's decrees,  
That Beauty ought not to be tried  
    But by its native power to please,  
Then tell me, youths and lovers, tell,  
What fair can Amoret excel?
- 2 Behold that bright unsullied smile,  
    And wisdom speaking in her mien :  
Yet (she so artless all the while,  
    So little studious to be seen)  
We nought but instant gladness know,  
Nor think to whom the gift we owe.
- 3 But neither music, nor the powers  
    Of youth and mirth and frolic cheer,

- Add half that sunshine to the hours,  
Or make life's prospect half so clear,  
As memory brings it to the eye  
From scenes where Amoret was by.
- 4 Yet not a satirist could there  
Or fault or indiscretion find;  
Nor any prouder sage declare  
One virtue, pictured in his mind,  
Whose form with lovelier colours glows  
Than Amoret's demeanour shows.
- 5 This sure is Beauty's happiest part:  
This gives the most unbounded sway:  
This shall enchant the subject heart  
When rose and lily fade away;  
And she be still, in spite of time,  
Sweet Amoret in all her prime.
- 

## ODE IX.

## AT STUDY.

- 1 WHITHER did my fancy stray?  
By what magic drawn away  
Have I left my studious theme,  
From this philosophic page,  
From the problems of the sage,  
Wandering through a pleasing dream?
- 2 'Tis in vain, alas! I find,  
Much in vain, my zealous mind

Would to learned Wisdom's throne  
Dedicate each thoughtful hour:  
Nature bids a softer power  
Claim some minutes for his own.

3 Let the busy or the wise  
View him with contemptuous eyes;  
Love is native to the heart:  
Guide its wishes as you will;  
Without Love you'll find it still  
Void in one essential part.

4 Me though no peculiar fair  
Touches with a lover's care;  
Though the pride of my desire  
Asks immortal friendship's name,  
Asks the palm of honest fame,  
And the old heroic lyre;

5 Though the day have smoothly gone,  
Or to letter'd leisure known,  
Or in social duty spent;  
Yet at eve my lonely breast  
Seeks in vain for perfect rest;  
Languishes for true content.

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### ODE X.

TO THOMAS EDWARDS, ESQ.; ON THE LATE EDITION OF  
MR POPE'S WORKS. 1751.

1 BELIEVE me, Edwards, to restrain  
The licence of a railer's tongue



- Is what but seldom men obtain  
By sense or wit, by prose or song:  
A task for more Herculean powers,  
Nor suited to the sacred hours  
Of leisure in the Muse's bowers.
- 2 In bowers where laurel weds with palm,  
The Muse, the blameless queen, resides:  
Fair Fame attends, and Wisdom calm  
Her eloquence harmonious guides:  
While, shut for ever from her gate,  
Oft trying, still repining, wait  
Fierce Envy and calumnious Hate.
- 3 Who, then, from her delightful bounds  
Would step one moment forth to heed  
What impotent and savage sounds  
From their unhappy mouths proceed?  
No: rather Spenser's lyre again  
Prepare, and let thy pious strain  
For Pope's dishonour'd shade complain.
- 4 Tell how displeased was every bard,  
When lately in the Elysian grove  
They of his Muse's guardian heard,  
His delegate to fame above;  
And what with one accord they said  
Of wit in drooping age misled,  
And Warburton's officious aid:
- 5 How Virgil mourn'd the sordid fate  
To that melodious lyre assign'd,  
Beneath a tutor who so late  
With Midas and his rout combined

By spiteful clamour to confound  
That very lyre's enchanting sound,  
Though listening realms admired around:

- 6 How Horace own'd he thought the fire  
Of his friend Pope's satiric line  
Did further fuel scarce require  
From such a militant divine:  
How Milton scorn'd the sophist vain,  
Who durst approach his hallow'd strain  
With unwash'd hands and lips profane.
- 7 Then Shakspeare debonair and mild  
Brought that strange comment forth to view;  
Conceits more deep, he said and smiled,  
Than his own fools or madmen knew:  
But thank'd a generous friend above,  
Who did with free adventurous love  
Such pageants from his tomb remove.
- 8 And if to Pope, in equal need,  
The same kind office thou wouldst pay,  
Then, Edwards, all the band decreed  
That future bards with frequent lay  
Should call on thy auspicious name,  
From each absurd intruder's claim  
To keep inviolate their fame.

---

### ODE XI.

TO THE COUNTRY GENTLEMEN OF ENGLAND. 1758.

- 1 WHITHER is Europe's ancient spirit fled?  
Where are those valiant tenants of her shore,

Who from the warrior bow the strong dart sped,  
Or with firm hand the rapid pole-axe bore?  
Freeman and soldier was their common name,  
Who late with reapers to the furrow came,  
Now in the front of battle charged the foe:  
Who taught the steer the wintry plough to  
endure,

Now in full councils check'd encroaching power,  
And gave the guardian laws their majesty to know.

2 But who are ye? from Ebro's loitering sons  
To Tiber's pageants, to the sports of Seine;  
From Rhine's frail palaces to Danube's thrones  
And cities looking on the Cimbric main,  
Ye lost, ye self-deserted? whose proud lords  
Have baffled your tame hands, and given your  
swords  
To slavish ruffians, hired for their command:  
These, at some greedy monk's or harlot's nod,  
See rifled nations crouch beneath their rod:  
These are the Public Will, the Reason of the land.

3 Thou, heedless Albion, what, alas, the while  
Dost thou presume? O inexpert in arms,  
Yet vain of Freedom, how dost thou beguile,  
With dreams of hope, these near and loud  
alarms?  
Thy splendid home, thy plan of laws renown'd,  
The praise and envy of the nations round,  
What care hast thou to guard from Fortune's  
sway?  
Amid the storms of war, how soon may all  
The lofty pile from its foundations fall,  
Of ages the proud toil, the ruin of a day!

4 No: thou art rich, thy streams and fertile  
vales

Add Industry's wise gifts to Nature's store,  
And every port is crowded with thy sails,  
And every wave throws treasure on thy shore.  
What boots it? If luxurious Plenty charm  
Thy selfish heart from Glory, if thy arm  
Shrink at the frowns of Danger and of Pain,  
Those gifts, that treasure is no longer thine.  
Oh, rather far be poor! Thy gold will shine  
Tempting the eye of Force, and deck thee to thy  
bane.

5 But what hath Force or War to do with thee?  
Girt by the azure tide, and throned sublime  
Amid thy floating bulwarks, thou canst see,  
With scorn, the fury of each hostile clime  
Dash'd ere it reach thee. Sacred from the foe  
Are thy fair fields: athwart thy guardian prow  
No bold invader's foot shall tempt the strand—  
Yet say, my country, will the waves and wind  
Obey thee? Hast thou all thy hopes resign'd  
To the sky's fickle faith, the pilot's wavering hand?

6 For, oh! may neither Fear nor stronger Love  
(Love, by thy virtuous princes nobly won)  
Thee, last of many wretched nations, move,  
With mighty armies station'd round the throne  
To trust thy safety. Then, farewell the claims  
Of Freedom! Her proud records to the flames  
Then bear, an offering at Ambition's shrine;  
Whate'er thy ancient patriots dared demand  
From furious John's, or faithless Charles' hand,  
Or what great William seal'd for his adopted line.



7 But if thy sons be worthy of their name,  
If liberal laws with liberal arts they prize,  
Let them from conquest, and from servile shame,  
In War's glad school their own protectors rise.  
Ye chiefly, heirs of Albion's cultured plains,  
Ye leaders of her bold and faithful swains,  
Now not unequal to your birth be found;  
The public voice bids arm your rural state,  
Paternal hamlets for your ensigns wait,  
And grange and fold prepare to pour their youth  
around.

8 Why are ye tardy? what inglorious care  
Detains you from their head, your native post?  
Who most their country's fame and fortune share,  
'Tis theirs to share her toils, her perils most.  
Each man his task in social life sustains.  
With partial labours, with domestic gains,  
Let others dwell: to you indulgent Heaven  
By counsel and by arms the public cause  
To serve for public love and love's applause,  
The first employment far, the noblest hire, hath given.

9 Have ye not heard of Lacedemon's fame?  
Of Attic chiefs in Freedom's war divine?  
Of Rome's dread generals? the Valerian name?  
The Fabian sons? the Scipios, matchless line?  
Your lot was theirs: the farmer and the swain  
Met his loved patron's summons from the plain;  
The legions gather'd; the bright eagles flew:  
Barbarian monarchs in the triumph mourn'd;  
The conquerors to their household gods return'd,  
And fed Calabrian flocks, and steer'd the Sabine  
plough.

- 10 Shall, then, this glory of the antique age,  
This pride of men, be lost among mankind?  
Shall war's heroic arts no more engage  
The unbought hand, the unsubjected mind?  
Doth valour to the race no more belong?  
No more with scorn of violence and wrong  
Doth forming Nature now her sons inspire,  
That, like some mystery to few reveal'd,  
The skill of arms abash'd and awed they yield,  
And from their own defence with hopeless hearts  
retire?
- 11 O shame to human life, to human laws!  
The loose adventurer, hireling of a day,  
Who his fell sword without affection draws,  
Whose God, whose country, is a tyrant's pay,  
This man the lessons of the field can learn;  
Can every palm, which decks a warrior, earn,  
And every pledge of conquest: while in vain,  
To guard your altars, your paternal lands,  
Are social arms held out to your free hands:  
Too arduous is the lore: too irksome were the pain.
- 12 Meantime by Pleasure's lying tales allured,  
From the bright sun and living breeze ye stray;  
And deep in London's gloomy haunts immured,  
Brood o'er your fortune's, freedom's, health's decay.  
O blind of choice and to yourselves untrue!  
The young grove shoots, their bloom the fields  
renew,  
The mansion asks its lord, the swains their friend;  
While he doth riot's orgies haply share,  
Or tempt the gamester's dark, destroying snare,  
Or at some courtly shrine with slavish incense bend.

13 And yet full oft your anxious tongues complain  
That lawless tumult prompts the rustic throng;  
That the rude village inmates now disdain  
Those homely ties which ruled their fathers long.  
Alas, your fathers did by other arts  
Draw those kind ties around their simple hearts,  
And led in other paths their ductile will;  
By succour, faithful counsel, courteous cheer,  
Won them the ancient manners to revere,  
To prize their country's peace and heaven's due rites  
fulfil.

14 But mark the judgment of experienced Time,  
Tutor of nations. Doth light discord tear  
A state, and impotent sedition's crime?  
The powers of warlike prudence dwell not  
there;  
The powers who to command and to obey,  
Instruct the valiant. There would civil sway  
The rising race to manly concord tame?  
Oft let the marshall'd field their steps unite,  
And in glad splendour bring before their sight  
One common cause and one hereditary fame.

15 Nor yet be awed, nor yet your task disown,  
Though war's proud votaries look on severe;  
Though secrets, taught erewhile to them alone,  
They deem profaned by your intruding ear.  
Let them in vain, your martial hope to quell,  
Of new refinements, fiercer weapons tell,  
And mock the old simplicity, in vain:  
To the time's warfare, simple or refined,  
The time itself adapts the warrior's mind;  
And equal prowess still shall equal palms obtain.

16 Say then, if England's youth, in earlier days,  
On glory's field with well-train'd armies vied,  
Why shall they now renounce that generous praise?  
Why dread the foreign mercenary's pride?  
Though Valois braved young Edward's gentle hand,  
And Albert rush'd on Henry's way-worn band,  
With Europe's chosen sons in arms renown'd,  
Yet not on Vere's bold archers long they look'd,  
Nor Audley's squires, nor Mowbray's yeomen  
brook'd:

They saw their standard fall, and left their monarch  
bound.

17 Such were the laurels which your fathers won:  
Such glory's dictates in their dauntless breast;—  
Is there no voice that speaks to every son?  
No nobler, holier call to you address'd?  
Oh! by majestic Freedom, righteous Laws,  
By heavenly Truth's, by manly Reason's cause,  
Awake; attend; be indolent no more:  
By friendship, social peace, domestic love,  
Rise; arm; your country's living safety prove;  
And train her valiant youth, and watch around her  
shore.

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## ODE XII.

ON RECOVERING FROM A FIT OF SICKNESS;  
IN THE COUNTRY. 1758.

1 THY verdant scenes, O Goulder's Hill,  
Once more I seek, a languid guest:



With throbbing temples and with burden'd breast  
Once more I climb thy steep aërial way.  
O faithful cure of oft-returning ill,  
Now call thy sprightly breezes round,  
Dissolve this rigid cough profound,  
And bid the springs of life with gentler movement  
play.

2 How gladly, 'mid the dews of dawn,  
My weary lungs thy healing gale,  
The balmy west or the fresh north, inhale!  
How gladly, while my musing footsteps rove  
Round the cool orchard or the sunny lawn,  
Awaked I stop, and look to find  
What shrub perfumes the pleasant wind,  
Or what wild songster charms the Dryads of the grove!

3 Now, ere the morning walk is done,  
The distant voice of Health I hear,  
Welcome as beauty's to the lover's ear.  
'Droop not, nor doubt of my return,' she cries;  
'Here will I, 'mid the radiant calm of noon,  
Meet thee beneath yon chestnut bower,  
And lenient on thy bosom pour  
That indolence divine which lulls the earth and skies.'

4 The goddess promised not in vain.  
I found her at my favourite time.  
Nor wish'd to breathe in any softer clime,  
While (half-reclined, half-slumbering as I lay)  
She hover'd o'er me. Then, among her train  
Of Nymphs and Zephyrs, to my view  
Thy gracious form appear'd anew,  
Then first, O heavenly Muse, unseen for many a day.

- 5 In that soft pomp the tuneful maid  
Shone like the golden star of love.  
I saw her hand in careless measures move;  
I heard sweet preludes dancing on her lyre,  
While my whole frame the sacred sound obey'd.  
New sunshine o'er my fancy springs,  
New colours clothe external things,  
And the last glooms of pain and sickly plaint  
retire.
- 6 O Goulder's Hill, by thee restored  
Once more to this enliven'd hand,  
My harp, which late resounded o'er the land  
The voice of glory, solemn and severe,  
My Dorian harp shall now with mild accord  
To thee her joyful tribute pay,  
And send a less ambitious lay  
Of friendship and of love to greet thy master's ear.
- 7 For when within thy shady seat  
First from the sultry town he chose,  
And the tired senate's cares, his wish'd repose,  
Then wast thou mine; to me a happier home  
For social leisure: where my welcome feet,  
Estranged from all the entangling ways  
In which the restless vulgar strays,  
Through Nature's simple paths with ancient Faith  
might roam.
- 8 And while around his sylvan scene  
My Dyson led the white-wing'd hours,  
Oft from the Athenian Academic bowers  
Their sages came: oft heard our lingering walk  
The Mantuan music warbling o'er the green:

And oft did Tully's reverend shade,  
Though much for liberty afraid,  
With us of letter'd ease or virtuous glory talk.

9 But other guests were on their way,  
And reach'd ere long this favour'd grove;  
Even the celestial progeny of Jove,  
Bright Venus, with her all-subduing son,  
Whose golden shaft most willingly obey  
The best and wisest. As they came,  
Glad Hymen waved his genial flame,  
And sang their happy gifts, and praised their spotless  
throne.

10 I saw when through yon festive gate  
He led along his chosen maid,  
And to my friend with smiles presenting said:—  
'Receive that fairest wealth which Heaven assign'd  
To human fortune. Did thy lonely state  
One wish, one utmost hope, confess?  
Behold, she comes, to adorn and bless:  
Comes, worthy of thy heart, and equal to thy mind.'

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### ODE XIII.

TO THE AUTHOR OF MEMOIRS OF THE HOUSE OF  
BRANDENBURG. 1751.

1 THE men renown'd as chiefs of human race,  
And born to lead in counsels or in arms,  
Have seldom turn'd their feet from glory's chase  
To dwell with books, or court the Muse's charms.

Yet, to our eyes if haply time hath brought  
Some genuine transcript of their calmer thought,  
There still we own the wise, the great, or good;  
And Cæsar there and Xenophon are seen,  
As clear in spirit and sublime of mien,  
As on Pharsalian plains, or by the Assyrian flood.

2 Say thou too, Frederic, was not this thy aim?  
Thy vigils could the student's lamp engage,  
Except for this, except that future Fame  
Might read thy genius in the faithful page?  
That if hereafter Envy shall presume  
With words irreverent to inscribe thy tomb,  
And baser weeds upon thy palms to fling,  
That hence posterity may try thy reign,  
Assert thy treaties, and thy wars explain,  
And view in native lights the hero and the king.

3 O evil foresight and pernicious care!  
Wilt thou indeed abide by this appeal?  
Shall we the lessons of thy pen compare  
With private honour or with public zeal?  
Whence, then, at things divine those darts of scorn?  
Why are the woes, which virtuous men have borne  
For sacred truth, a prey to laughter given?  
What fiend, what foe of Nature urged thy arm  
The Almighty of his sceptre to disarm,  
To push this earth adrift and leave it loose from  
Heaven?

4 Ye godlike shades of legislators old,  
Ye who made Rome victorious, Athens wise,  
Ye first of mortals with the bless'd enroll'd,  
Say, did not horror in your bosoms rise,



When thus, by impious vanity impell'd,  
A magistrate, a monarch, ye beheld  
Affronting civil order's holiest bands,  
Those bands which ye so labour'd to improve,  
Those hopes and fears of justice from above,  
Which tamed the savage world to your divine commands?

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## ODE XIV.

## THE COMPLAINT.

- 1       AWAY! away!  
Tempt me no more, insidious love:  
Thy soothing sway  
Long did my youthful bosom prove:  
At length thy treason is discern'd,  
At length some dear-bought caution earn'd:  
Away! nor hope my riper age to move.
- 2       I know, I see  
Her merit. Needs it now be shown,  
Alas, to me?  
How often, to myself unknown,  
The graceful, gentle, virtuous maid  
Have I admired! How often said,  
What joy to call a heart like hers one's own!
- 3       But, flattering god,  
O squanderer of content and ease,  
In thy abode  
Will care's rude lesson learn to please?

O say, deceiver, hast thou won  
Proud Fortune to attend thy throne,  
Or placed thy friends above her stern decrees?

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## ODE XV.

ON DOMESTIC MANNERS.

(UNFINISHED.)

- 1        MEEK Honour, female shame,  
Oh! whither, sweetest offspring of the sky,  
          From Albion dost thou fly,  
Of Albion's daughters once the favourite fame?  
          O beauty's only friend,  
Who giv'st her pleasing reverence to inspire;  
          Who selfish, bold desire  
Dost to esteem and dear affection turn;  
          Alas, of thee forlorn  
What joy, what praise, what hope can life  
          pretend?
- 2        Behold, our youths in vain  
Concerning nuptial happiness inquire:  
          Our maids no more aspire  
The arts of bashful Hymen to attain;  
          But with triumphant eyes  
And cheeks impassive, as they move along,  
          Ask homage of the throng.  
The lover swears that in a harlot's arms  
          Are found the self-same charms,  
And worthless and deserted lives and dies.

3 Behold, unblest'd at home,  
The father of the cheerless household mourns :  
The night in vain returns,  
For Love and glad Content at distance roam ;  
While she, in whom his mind  
Seeks refuge from the day's dull task of cares,  
To meet him she prepares,  
Through noise and spleen and all the gamester's art,  
A listless, harass'd heart,  
Where not one tender thought can welcome find.

4 'Twas thus, along the shore  
Of Thames, Britannia's guardian Genius heard,  
From many a tongue preferr'd,  
Of strife and grief the fond invective lore :  
At which the queen divine  
Indignant, with her adamantine spear  
Like thunder sounding near,  
Smote the red cross upon her silver shield,  
And thus her wrath reveal'd ;  
(I watch'd her awful words, and made them mine.)

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## NOTES.

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### BOOK FIRST.

#### ODE XVIII. STANZA II.—2.

LYCURGUS the Lacedemonian lawgiver brought into Greece from Asia Minor the first complete copy of Homer's works. At Plataea was fought the decisive battle between the Persian army and the united militia of Greece under Pausanias and Aristides. Cimon the Athenian erected a trophy in Cyprus for two great victories gained on the same day over the Persians by sea and land. Diodorus Siculus has preserved the inscription which the Athenians affixed to the consecrated spoils, after this great success; in which it is very remarkable that the greatness of the occasion has raised the manner of expression above the usual simplicity and modesty of all other ancient inscriptions. It is this:—

ΕΞ. ΟΤ. Γ'. ΕΤΡΩΠΗΝ. ΑΣΙΑΣ. ΔΙΧΑ. ΠΟΝΤΟΣ.  
 ΕΝΕΙΜΕ.  
 ΚΑΙ. ΠΟΛΕΑΣ. ΘΝΗΤΩΝ. ΘΟΥΡΟΣ. ΑΡΗΣ.  
 ΕΠΕΧΕΙ.  
 ΟΥΔΕΝ. ΠΩ. ΤΟΙΟΥΤΟΝ. ΕΠΙΧΘΟΝΙΩΝ. ΓΕΝΕΤ'.  
 ΑΝΔΡΩΝ.  
 ΕΡΓΟΝ. ΕΝ. ΗΠΕΙΡΩΙ. ΚΑΙ. ΚΑΤΑ. ΠΟΝΤΟΝ.  
 ΑΜΑ.  
 ΟΙΔΕ. ΓΑΡ. ΕΝ. ΚΤΗΡΩΙ. ΜΗΔΟΥΣ. ΠΟΛΛΟΥΣ.  
 ΟΛΕΣΑΝΤΕΣ.  
 ΦΟΙΝΙΚΩΝ. ΕΚΑΤΟΝ. ΝΑΥΣ. ΕΛΟΝ. ΕΝ.  
 ΠΕΛΑΓΕΙ.  
 ΑΝΔΡΩΝ. ΠΛΗΘΟΥΣΑΣ. ΜΕΓΑ. Δ'. ΕΣΤΕΝΕΝ.  
 ΑΣΙΣ. ΥΠ'. ΑΤΤΩΝ.  
 ΠΛΗΓΕΙΣ'. ΑΜΦΟΤΕΡΑΙΣ. ΧΕΡΣΙ. ΚΡΑΤΕΙ.  
 ΠΟΛΕΜΟΥ.

The following translation is almost literal:—

Since first the sea from Asia's hostile coast  
 Divided Europe, and the god of war  
 Assail'd imperious cities; never yet,  
 At once among the waves and on the shore,



Hath such a labour been achieved by men  
 Who earth inhabit. They, whose arms the Medes  
 In Cyprus felt pernicious, they, the same,  
 Have won from skilful Tyre an hundred ships  
 Crowded with warriors. Asia groans, in both  
 Her hands sore smitten, by the might of war.

## STANZA II.—3.

Pindar was contemporary with Aristides and Cimon, in whom the glory of ancient Greece was at its height. When Xerxes invaded Greece, Pindar was true to the common interest of his country; though his fellow-citizens, the Thebans, had sold themselves to the Persian king. In one of his odes he expresses the great distress and anxiety of his mind, occasioned by the vast preparations of Xerxes against Greece (*Isthm.* 8). In another he celebrates the victories of Salamis, Plataea, and Himera (*Pyth.* 1). It will be necessary to add two or three other particulars of his life, real or fabulous, in order to explain what follows in the text concerning him. First, then, he was thought to be so great a favourite of Apollo, that the priests of that deity allotted him a constant share of their offerings. It was said of him, as of some other illustrious men, that at his birth a swarm of bees lighted on his lips, and fed him with their honey. It was also a tradition concerning him, that Pan was heard to recite his poetry, and seen dancing to one of his hymns on the mountains near Thebes. But a real historical fact in his life is, that the Thebans imposed a large fine upon him on account of the veneration which he expressed in his poems for that heroic spirit shown by the people of Athens in defence of the common liberty, which his own fellow-citizens had shamefully betrayed. And as the argument of this ode implies, that great poetical talents and high sentiments of liberty do reciprocally produce and assist each other, so Pindar is perhaps the most exemplary proof of this connexion which occurs in history. The Thebans were remarkable, in general, for a slavish disposition through all the fortunes of their commonwealth; at the time of its ruin by Philip; and even in its best state, under the administration of Pelopidas and Epaminondas: and every one knows they were no less remarkable for great dulness and want of all genius. That Pindar should have equally distinguished himself from the rest of his fellow-citizens in both these respects seems somewhat extraordinary, and is scarce to be accounted for but by the preceding observation.

## STANZA III.—3.

Alluding to his defence of the people of England against Salmasius. See particularly the manner in which he himself speaks of that undertaking, in the introduction to his reply to Morus.

## STANZA IV.—3.

Edward the Third; from whom descended Henry Hastings, third Earl of Huntingdon, by the daughter of the Duke of Clarence, brother to Edward the Fourth.

## STANZA V.—3.

At Whittington, a village on the edge of Scarsdale in Derbyshire, the Earls of Devonshire and Danby, with the Lord Delamere, privately concerted the plan of the Revolution. The house in which they met is at present a farmhouse, and the country people distinguish the room where they sat by the name of *the plotting parlour*.

## BOOK SECOND.

## ODE VII. STANZA II.—1.

MR LOCKE died in 1704, when Mr Hoadly was beginning to distinguish himself in the cause of civil and religious liberty: Lord Godolphin in 1712, when the doctrines of the Jacobite faction were chiefly favoured by those in power: Lord Somers in 1716, amid the practices of the nonjuring clergy against the Protestant establishment; and Lord Stanhope in 1721, during the controversy with the lower house of convocation.

## ODE X. STANZA V.

During Mr Pope's war with Theobald, Concanen, and the rest of their tribe, Mr Warburton, the present Lord Bishop of Gloucester, did with great zeal cultivate their friendship, having been introduced, forsooth, at the meetings of that respectable confederacy—a favour which he afterwards spoke of in very high terms of complacency and thankfulness. At the same time, in his intercourse with them, he treated Mr Pope in a most contemptuous manner, and as a writer without genius. Of the truth of these assertions his lordship can have no doubt, if he recollects his own correspondence with Concanen, a part of which is still in being, and will probably be remembered as long as any of this prelate's writings.

## ODE XIII.

In the year 1751 appeared a very splendid edition, in quarto, of '*Mémoires pour servir à l'Histoire de la Maison de Brandebourg, à Berlin et à la Haye,*' with a privilege, signed Frederic, the same being engraved in imitation of handwriting. In this edition, among other extraordinary passages, are the two following, to which the third stanza of this ode more particularly refers:—

'Il se fit une migration' (the author is speaking of what happened at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes), '*dont on n'avoit guère vu d'exemples dans l'histoire: un peuple entier sortit du royaume par l'esprit de parti en haine du pape, et pour recevoir sous un autre ciel la communion sous les deux espèces: quatre cens mille âmes s'expatrièrent ainsi et abandonnerent tous leur biens pour détonner dans d'autres temples les vieux pseumes de Clément Marot.*'—Page 163.

'La crainte donna le jour à la crédulité, et l'amour propre interessa bientôt le ciel au destin des hommes.'—Page 242.

## HYMN TO THE NAIADS. 1746.

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### ARGUMENT.

The Nymphs, who preside over springs and rivulets, are addressed at day-break, in honour of their several functions, and of the relations which they bear to the natural and to the moral world. Their origin is deduced from the first allegorical deities, or powers of nature, according to the doctrine of the old mythological poets, concerning the generation of the gods and the rise of things. They are then successively considered, as giving motion to the air and exciting summer breezes; as nourishing and beautifying the vegetable creation; as contributing to the fulness of navigable rivers, and consequently to the maintenance of commerce; and by that means to the maritime part of military power. Next is represented their favourable influence upon health when assisted by rural exercise, which introduces their connexion with the art of physic, and the happy effects of mineral medicinal springs. Lastly, they are celebrated for the friendship which the Muses bear them, and for the true inspiration which temperance only can receive, in opposition to the enthusiasm of the more licentious poets.

O'ER yonder eastern hill the twilight pale  
Walks forth from darkness; and the God of day,  
With bright Astræa seated by his side,  
Waits yet to leave the ocean. Tarry, Nymphs,  
Ye Nymphs, ye blue-eyed progeny of Thames,  
Who now the mazes of this rugged heath  
Trace with your fleeting steps; who all night long  
Repeat, amid the cool and tranquil air,  
Your lonely murmurs, tarry, and receive  
My offer'd lay. To pay you homage due,  
I leave the gates of sleep; nor shall my lyre

Too far into the splendid hours of morn 12  
 Engage your audience; my observant hand  
 Shall close the strain ere any sultry beam  
 Approach you. To your subterranean haunts  
 Ye then may timely steal; to pace with care  
 The humid sands; to loosen from the soil  
 The bubbling sources; to direct the rills  
 To meet in wider channels; or beneath  
 Some grotto's dripping arch, at height of noon 20  
 To slumber, shelter'd from the burning heaven.

Where shall my song begin, ye Nymphs, or end?  
 Wide is your praise and copious—first of things,  
 First of the lonely powers, ere Time arose,  
 Were Love and Chaos. Love,<sup>A</sup> the sire of Fate;<sup>B</sup>  
 Elder than Chaos.<sup>C</sup> Born of Fate was Time,<sup>D</sup>  
 Who many sons and many comely births  
 Devour'd,<sup>E</sup> relentless father; till the child  
 Of Rhea<sup>F</sup> drove him from the upper sky,<sup>G</sup>  
 And quell'd his deadly might. Then social reign'd 30  
 The kindred powers,<sup>H</sup> Tethys, and reverend Ops,  
 And spotless Vesta; while supreme of sway  
 Remain'd the Cloud-Compeller. From the couch  
 Of Tethys sprang the sedgy-crowned race,<sup>I</sup>  
 Who from a thousand urns, o'er every clime,  
 Send tribute to their parent; and from them  
 Are ye, O Naiads:<sup>K</sup> Arethusa fair,  
 And tuneful Aganippe; that sweet name,  
 Bandusia; that soft family which dwelt  
 With Syrian Daphne;<sup>L</sup> and the honour'd tribes 40  
 Beloved of Pæon.<sup>M</sup> Listen to my strain,  
 Daughters of Tethys: listen to your praise.

You, Nymphs, the winged offspring,<sup>N</sup> which of old  
 Aurora to divine Astræus bore,  
 Owns, and your aid beseecheth. When the might



Of Hyperion,<sup>o</sup> from his noontide throne, 46  
 Unbends their languid pinions, aid from you  
 They ask; Favonius and the mild South-west  
 From you relief implore. Your sallying streams<sup>p</sup>  
 Fresh vigour to their weary wings impart. 50  
 Again they fly, disporting; from the mead  
 Half-ripen'd and the tender blades of corn,  
 To sweep the noxious mildew; or dispel  
 Contagious steams, which oft the parched earth  
 Breathes on her fainting sons. From noon to eve,  
 Along the river and the pavèd brook,  
 Ascend the cheerful breezes: hail'd of bards  
 Who, fast by learned Cam, the Æolian lyre  
 Solicit; nor unwelcome to the youth  
 Who on the heights of Tibur, all inclined 60  
 O'er rushing Anio, with a pious hand  
 The reverend scene delineates, broken fanes,  
 Or tombs, or pillar'd aqueducts, the pomp  
 Of ancient Time; and haply, while he scans  
 The ruins, with a silent tear revolves  
 The fame and fortune of imperious Rome.

You too, O Nymphs, and your unenvious aid  
 The rural powers confess, and still prepare  
 For you their choicest treasures. Pan commands,  
 Oft as the Delian king<sup>q</sup> with Sirius holds 70  
 The central heavens, the father of the grove  
 Commands his Dryads over your abodes  
 To spread their deepest umbrage. Well the god  
 Remembereth how indulgent ye supplied  
 Your genial dews to nurse them in their prime.

Pales, the pasture's queen, where'er ye stray,  
 Pursues your steps, delighted; and the path  
 With living verdure clothes. Around your haunts  
 The laughing Chloris,<sup>r</sup> with profusest hand,

Throws wide her blooms, her odours. Still with you 80  
 Pomona seeks to dwell; and o'er the lawns,  
 And o'er the vale of Richmond, where with Thames  
 Ye love to wander, Amalthea<sup>s</sup> pours,  
 Well-pleased, the wealth of that Ammonian horn,  
 Her dower; unmindful of the fragrant isles  
 Nysæan or Atlantic. Nor canst thou  
 (Albeit oft, ungrateful, thou dost mock  
 The beverage of the sober Naiad's urn,  
 O Bromius, O Lenæan), nor canst thou  
 Disown the powers whose bounty, ill repaid, 90  
 With nectar feeds thy tendrils. Yet from me,  
 Yet, blameless Nymphs, from my delighted lyre,  
 Accept the rites your bounty well may claim,  
 Nor heed the scoffings of the Edonian band.<sup>t</sup>

For better praise awaits you. Thames, your sire,  
 As down the verdant slope your duteous rills  
 Descend, the tribute stately Thames receives,  
 Delighted; and your piety applauds;  
 And bids his copious tide roll on secure,  
 For faithful are his daughters; and with words 100  
 Auspicious gratulates the bark which, now  
 His banks forsaking, her adventurous wings  
 Yields to the breeze, with Albion's happy gifts  
 Extremest isles to bless. And oft at morn,  
 When Hermes,<sup>u</sup> from Olympus bent o'er earth  
 To bear the words of Jove, on yonder hill  
 Stoops lightly sailing; oft intent your springs  
 He views: and waving o'er some new-born stream  
 His bless'd pacific wand, 'And yet,' he cries,  
 'Yet,' cries the son of Maia, 'though recluse 110  
 And silent be your stores, from you, fair Nymphs,  
 Flows wealth and kind society to men.  
 By you my function and my honour'd name

Do I possess; while o'er the Bœtic vale, 114  
Or through the towers of Memphis, or the palms  
By sacred Ganges water'd, I conduct  
The English merchant; with the buxom fleece  
Of fertile Ariconium while I clothe  
Sarmatian kings; or to the household gods  
Of Syria, from the bleak Cornubian shore, 120  
Dispense the mineral treasure<sup>x</sup> which of old  
Sidonian pilots sought, when this fair land  
Was yet unconscious of those generous arts,  
Which wise Phœnicia from their native clime  
Transplanted to a more indulgent heaven.'

Such are the words of Hermes: such the praise,  
O Naiads, which from tongues celestial waits  
Your bounteous deeds. From bounty issueth power:  
And those who, sedulous in prudent works,  
Relieve the wants of nature, Jove repays 130  
With noble wealth, and his own seat on earth,  
Fit judgments to pronounce, and curb the might  
Of wicked men. Your kind unfailing urns  
Not vainly to the hospitable arts  
Of Hermes yield their store. For, O ye Nymphs,  
Hath he not won<sup>y</sup> the unconquerable queen  
Of arms to court your friendship? You she owns  
The fair associates who extend her sway  
Wide o'er the mighty deep; and grateful things  
Of you she uttereth, oft as from the shore 140  
Of Thames, or Medway's vale, or the green banks  
Of Vecta, she her thundering navy leads  
To Calpe's<sup>z</sup> foaming channel, or the rough  
Cantabrian surge; her auspices divine  
Imparting to the senate and the prince  
Of Albion, to dismay barbaric kings,  
The Iberian, or the Celt. The pride of kings

Was ever scorn'd by Pallas; and of old  
 Rejoiced the virgin, from the brazen prow  
 Of Athens o'er Ægina's gloomy surge,<sup>AA</sup>  
 To drive her clouds and storms; o'erwhelming all  
 The Persian's promised glory, when the realms  
 Of Indus and the soft Ionian clime,  
 When Libya's torrid champaign and the rocks  
 Of cold Imaüs join'd their servile bands,  
 To sweep the sons of Liberty from earth.  
 In vain; Minerva on the bounding prow  
 Of Athens stood, and with the thunder's voice  
 Denounced her terrors on their impious heads,  
 And shook her burning ægis. Xerxes saw;<sup>BB</sup>  
 From Heracléum, on the mountain's height  
 Throned in his golden car, he knew the sign  
 Celestial; felt unrighteous hope forsake  
 His faltering heart, and turn'd his face with shame.

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Hail, ye who share the stern Minerva's power;  
 Who arm the hand of Liberty for war,  
 And give to the renown'd Britannic name  
 To awe contending monarchs: yet benign,  
 Yet mild of nature, to the works of peace  
 More prone, and lenient of the many ills  
 Which wait on human life. Your gentle aid  
 Hygeia well can witness; she who saves,  
 From poisonous cates and cups of pleasing bane,  
 The wretch devoted to the entangling snares  
 Of Bacchus and of Comus. Him she leads  
 To Cynthia's lonely haunts. To spread the toils,  
 To beat the coverts, with the jovial horn  
 At dawn of day to summon the loud hounds,  
 She calls the lingering sluggard from his dreams,  
 And where his breast may drink the mountain breeze,  
 And where the fervour of the sunny vale

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May beat upon his brow, through devious paths 182  
 Beckons his rapid courser. Nor when ease,  
 Cool ease and welcome slumbers have becalm'd  
 His eager bosom, does the queen of health  
 Her pleasing care withhold. His decent board  
 She guards, presiding, and the frugal powers  
 With joy sedate leads in; and while the brown  
 Ennæan dame with Pan presents her stores,  
 While changing still, and comely in the change, 190  
 Vertumnus and the Hours before him spread  
 The garden's banquet, you to crown his feast,  
 To crown his feast, O Naiads, you the fair  
 Hygeia calls; and from your shelving seats,  
 And groves of poplar, plenteous cups ye bring,  
 To slake his veins, till soon a purer tide  
 Flows down those loaded channels, washeth off  
 The dregs of luxury, the lurking seeds  
 Of crude disease, and through the abodes of life  
 Sends vigour, sends repose. Hail, Naiads, hail! 200  
 Who give to labour, health; to stooping age,  
 The joys which youth had squander'd. Oft your urns  
 Will I invoke; and frequent in your praise,  
 Abash the frantic thyrsus<sup>cc</sup> with my song.

For not estranged from your benignant arts  
 Is he, the god, to whose mysterious shrine  
 My youth was sacred, and my votive cares  
 Belong, the learned Pæon. Oft when all  
 His cordial treasures he hath search'd in vain;  
 When herbs, and potent trees, and drops of balm 210  
 Rich with the genial influence of the sun  
 (To rouse dark fancy from her plaintive dreams,  
 To brace the nerveless arm, with food to win  
 Sick appetite, or hush the unquiet breast  
 Which pines with silent passion), he in vain

Hath proved; to your deep mansions he descends. 216  
 Your gates of humid rock, your dim arcades,  
 He entereth; where empurpled veins of ore  
 Gleam on the roof; where through the rigid mine  
 Your trickling rills insinuate. There the god 220  
 From your indulgent hands the streaming bowl  
 Wafts to his pale-eyed suppliants; wafts the seeds  
 Metallic and the elemental salts  
 Wash'd from the pregnant glebe. They drink, and soon  
 Flies pain; flies inauspicious care; and soon  
 The social haunt or unfrequented shade  
 Hears Io, Io Pæan,<sup>DD</sup> as of old,  
 When Python fell. And, O propitious Nymphs,  
 Oft as for hapless mortals I implore  
 Your sultry springs, through every urn, 230  
 Oh, shed your healing treasures! With the first  
 And finest breath, which from the genial strife  
 Of mineral fermentation springs, like light  
 O'er the fresh morning's vapours, lustrate then  
 The fountain, and inform the rising wave.

My lyre shall pay your bounty. Scorn not ye  
 That humble tribute. Though a mortal hand  
 Excite the strings to utterance, yet for themes  
 Not unregarded of celestial powers,  
 I frame their language; and the Muses deign 240  
 To guide the pious tenor of my lay.  
 The Muses (sacred by their gifts divine)  
 In early days did to my wondering sense  
 Their secrets oft reveal; oft my raised ear  
 In slumber felt their music; oft at noon,  
 Or hour of sunset, by some lonely stream,  
 In field or shady grove, they taught me words  
 Of power from death and envy to preserve  
 The good man's name. Whence yet with grateful mind,

And offerings unprofaned by ruder eye, 250  
My vows I send, my homage, to the seats  
Of rocky Cirrha,<sup>EE</sup> where with you they dwell,  
Where you their chaste companions they admit,  
Through all the hallow'd scene; where oft intent,  
And leaning o'er Castalia's mossy verge,  
They mark the cadence of your confluent urns,  
How tuneful, yielding gratefullest repose  
To their consorted measure, till again,  
With emulation all the sounding choir,  
And bright Apollo, leader of the song, 260  
Their voices through the liquid air exalt,  
And sweep their lofty strings; those powerful strings  
That charm the mind of gods,<sup>FF</sup> that fill the courts  
Of wide Olympus with oblivion sweet  
Of evils, with immortal rest from cares,  
Assuage the terrors of the throne of Jove,  
And quench the formidable thunderbolt  
Of unrelenting fire. With slacken'd wings,  
While now the solemn concert breathes around,  
Incumbent o'er the sceptre of his lord 270  
Sleeps the stern eagle, by the number'd notes,  
Possess'd, and satiate with the melting tone,  
Sovereign of birds. The furious god of war,  
His darts forgetting, and the winged wheels  
That bear him vengeful o'er the embattled plain,  
Relents, and soothes his own fierce heart to ease,  
Most welcome ease. The sire of gods and men  
In that great moment of divine delight,  
Looks down on all that live; and whatsoe'er  
He loves not, o'er the peopled earth and o'er 280  
The interminated ocean, he beholds  
Cursed with abhorrence by his doom severe,  
And troubled at the sound. Ye, Naiads, ye



With ravish'd ears the melody attend 284  
Worthy of sacred silence. But the slaves  
Of Bacchus with tempestuous clamours strive  
To drown the heavenly strains, of highest Jove  
Irreverent, and by mad presumption fired  
Their own discordant raptures to advance  
With hostile emulation. Down they rush 290  
From Nysa's vine-empurpled cliff, the dames  
Of Thrace, the Satyrs, and the unruly Fauns,  
With old Silenus, reeling through the crowd  
Which gambols round him, in convulsions wild  
Tossing their limbs, and brandishing in air  
The ivy-mantled thyrsus, or the torch  
Through black smoke flaming, to the Phrygian pipe's <sup>GG</sup>  
Shrill voice, and to the clashing cymbals, mix'd  
With shrieks and frantic uproar. May the gods  
From every unpolluted ear avert 300  
Their orgies! If within the seats of men,  
Within the walls, the gates, where Pallas holds <sup>HH</sup>  
The guardian key, if haply there be found  
Who loves to mingle with the revel-band  
And hearken to their accents, who aspires  
From such instructors to inform his breast  
With verse, let him, fit votarist, implore  
Their inspiration. He perchance the gifts  
Of young Lyæus, and the dread exploits,  
May sing in aptest numbers; he the fate 310  
Of sober Pentheus,<sup>I</sup> he the Paphian rites,  
And naked Mars with Cytherea chain'd,  
And strong Alcides in the spinster's robes,  
May celebrate, applauded. But with you,  
O Naiads, far from that unhallow'd rout,  
Must dwell the man whoe'er to praisèd themes  
Invokes the immortal Muse. The immortal Muse



To your calm habitations, to the cave 318  
Corycian<sup>KK</sup> or the Delphic mount,<sup>LL</sup> will guide  
His footsteps, and with your unsullied streams  
His lips will bathe; whether the eternal lore  
Of Themis, or the majesty of Jove,  
To mortals he reveal; or teach his lyre  
The unenvied guerdon of the patriot's toils,  
In those unfading islands of the bless'd,  
Where sacred bards abide. Hail, honour'd Nymphs;  
Thrice hail! For you the Cyrenaïc shell,<sup>MM</sup>  
Behold, I touch, revering. To my songs  
Be present ye with favourable feet,  
And all profaner audience far remove. 330

## NOTES.

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### NOTE A.

*'Love, . . . .*

*Elder than Chaos.'*—L. 25.

HESIOD in his Theogony gives a different account, and makes Chaos the eldest of beings, though he assigns to Love neither father nor superior; which circumstance is particularly mentioned by Phædrus, in Plato's Banquet, as being observable not only in Hesiod, but in all other writers both of verse and prose; and on the same occasion he cites a line from Parmenides, in which Love is expressly styled the eldest of all the gods. Yet Aristophanes, in 'The Birds,' affirms, that 'Chaos, and Night, and Erebus, and Tartarus were first; and that Love was produced from an egg, which the sable-winged Night deposited in the immense bosom of Erebus.' But it must be observed, that the Love designed by this comic poet was always distinguished from the other, from that original and self-existent being the TO ON or ΑΓΑΘΟΝ of Plato, and meant only the ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΟΣ or second person of the old Grecian Trinity; to whom is inscribed a hymn among those which pass under the name of Orpheus, where he is called Protogonos, or the first-begotten, is said to have been born of an egg, and is represented as the principal or origin of all these external appearances of nature. In the fragments of Orpheus, collected by Henry Stephens, he is named Phanes, the discoverer or discloser, who unfolded the ideas of the supreme intelligence, and exposed them to the perception of inferior beings in this visible frame of the world; as Macrobius, and Proclus, and Athenagoras, all agree to interpret the several passages of Orpheus which they have preserved.

But the Love designed in our text is the one self-existent and infinite mind; whom if the generality of ancient mythologists have not introduced or truly described in accounting for the production of the world and its appearances, yet, to a modern poet, it can be no objection that he hath ventured to differ from them in this particular, though in other respects he professeth to imitate their manner and conform to their opinions; for, in these great points of natural theology, they differ no less remarkably among themselves, and are perpetually confounding the philosophical relations of things with the traditional circumstances of mythic history; upon which very account Callimachus, in his hymn to Jupiter, declareth his dissent from them concerning even an article of the national creed, adding, that the ancient bards were by no means to be depended on. And yet in the exordium of the old Argonautic

poem, ascribed to Orpheus, it is said, that 'Love, whom mortals in later times call Phanes, was the father of the eternally-begotten Night;' who is generally represented by these mythological poets as being herself the parent of all things; and who, in the 'Indigitamenta,' or Orphic Hymns, is said to be the same with Cypris, or Love itself. Moreover, in the body of this Argonautic poem, where the personated Orpheus introduceth himself singing to his lyre in reply to Chiron, he celebrateth 'the obscure memory of Chaos, and the natures which it contained within itself in a state of perpetual vicissitude; how the heaven had its boundary determined, the generation of the earth, the depth of the ocean, and also the sapient Love, the most ancient, the self-sufficient, with all the beings which he produced when he separated one thing from another.' Which noble passage is more directly to Aristotle's purpose in the first book of his metaphysics than any of those which he has there quoted, to show that the ancient poets and mythologists agreed with Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and the other more sober philosophers, in that natural anticipation and common notion of mankind concerning the necessity of mind and reason to account for the connexion, motion, and good order of the world. For though neither this poem, nor the hymns which pass under the same name, are, it should seem, the work of the real Orpheus, yet beyond all question they are very ancient. The hymns, more particularly, are allowed to be older than the invasion of Greece by Xerxes, and were probably a set of public and solemn forms of devotion, as appears by a passage in one of them which Demosthenes hath almost literally cited in his first oration against Aristogiton, as the saying of Orpheus, the founder of their most holy mysteries. On this account, they are of higher authority than any other mythological work now extant, the Theogony of Hesiod himself not excepted. The poetry of them is often extremely noble; and the mysterious air which prevails in them, together with its delightful impression upon the mind, cannot be better expressed than in that remarkable description with which they inspired the German editor, Eschenbach, when he accidentally met with them at Leipsic:—'*Thesaurum me reperisse credidi,*' says he, '*et profecto thesaurum reperi. Incredibile dictu quo me sacro horrore afflaverint indigitamenta ista deorum: nam et tempus ad illorum lectionem eligere cogebar, quod vel solum horrorem incutere animo potest, nocturnum; cum enim totam diem consumserim in contemplando urbis splendore, et in adeundis, quibus scatet urbs illa, viris doctis; sola nox restabat, quam Orpheo consecrare potui. In abyssum quendam mysteriorum venerandæ antiquitatis descendere videbar, quotiescunque silente mundo, solis vigilantibus astris et luna, *μελανηφάτους* istos hymnos ad manus sumsi.'*

## NOTE B.

'*Love, the sire of Fate.*'—L. 25.

Fate is the universal system of natural causes; the work of the Omnipotent Mind, or of Love: so Minucius Felix:—'*Quid enim aliud est fatum, quam quod de unoquoque nostrum deus fatus est.*' So also Cicero, in the First Book on Divination:—'*Fatum autem id appello, quod Græci ΕΙΜΑΡΜΕΝΗΝ: id est, ordinem seriemque causarum, cum causa causæ nexa rem ex se gignat—ex quo intelligitur, ut fatum sit non id quod superstitiose, sed id quod physice dicitur causa æterna rerum.*' To the same purpose is the doctrine of

Hierocles, in that excellent fragment concerning Providence and Destiny. As to the three Fates, or Destinies of the poets, they represented that part of the general system of natural causes which relates to man, and to other mortal beings: for so we are told in the hymn addressed to them among the Orphic Indigitamenta, where they are called the daughters of Night (or Love), and, contrary to the vulgar notion, are distinguished by the epithets of gentle and tender-hearted. According to Hesiod, Theog. ver. 904, they were the daughters of Jupiter and Themis: but in the Orphic hymn to Venus, or Love, that goddess is directly styled the mother of Necessity, and is represented, immediately after, as governing the three Destinies, and conducting the whole system of natural causes.

## NOTE C.

*'Chaos.'*—L. 26.

The unformed, undigested mass of Moses and Plato; which Milton calls  
*'The womb of nature.'*

## NOTE D.

*'Born of Fate was Time.'*—L. 26.

Chronos, Saturn, or Time, was, according to Apollodorus, the son of Cælum and Tellus. But the author of the hymns gives it quite undisguised by mythological language, and calls him plainly the offspring of the earth and the starry heaven; that is, of Fate, as explained in the preceding note.

## NOTE E.

*'Who many sons . . . devour'd.'*—L. 27.

The known fable of Saturn devouring his children was certainly meant to imply the dissolution of natural bodies, which are produced and destroyed by Time.

## NOTE F.

*'The Child of Rhea.'*—L. 29.

Jupiter, so called by Pindar.

## NOTE G.

*'Drove him from the upper sky.'*—L. 29.

That Jupiter dethroned his father Saturn is recorded by all the mythologists. Phurnutus, or Cornutus, the author of a little Greek treatise on the nature of the gods, informs us that by Jupiter was meant the vegetable soul of the world, which restrained and prevented those uncertain alterations which Saturn, or Time, used formerly to cause in the mundane system.

## NOTE H.

*'Then social reign'd  
The kindred powers.'*—L. 31.

Our mythology here supposeth, that before the establishment of the vital, vegetative, plastic nature (represented by Jupiter), the four elements were in a variable and unsettled condition, but afterwards well-disposed, and at peace among themselves. Tethys was the wife of the Ocean; Ops, or Rhea, the



Earth; Vesta, the eldest daughter of Saturn, Fire; and the Cloud-Compeller, or Ζεὺς νεφεληγερέτης, the Air, though he also represented the plastic principle of nature, as may be seen in the Orphic hymn inscribed to him.

## NOTE I.

*'The sedgy crowned race.'*—L. 34.

The river-gods, who, according to Hesiod's Theogony, were the sons of Oceanus and Tethys.

## NOTE K.

*'From them are ye, O Naiads.'*—L. 37.

The descent of the Naiads is less certain than most points of the Greek mythology. Homer, *Odyss.* xiii. κόρυαι Διός. Virgil, in the eighth book of the *Æneid*, speaks as if the Nymphs, or Naiads, were the parents of the rivers: but in this he contradicts the testimony of Hesiod, and evidently departs from the orthodox system, which representeth several nymphs as retaining to every single river. On the other hand, Callimachus, who was very learned in all the school-divinity of those times, in his hymn to Delos, maketh Peneus, the great Thessalian river-god, the father of his nymphs: and Ovid, in the fourteenth book of his *Metamorphoses*, mentions the Naiads of Latium as the immediate daughters of the neighbouring river-gods. Accordingly, the Naiads of particular rivers are occasionally, both by Ovid and Statius, called by patronymic, from the name of the river to which they belong.

## NOTE L.

*'Syrian Daphne.'*—L. 40.

The grove of Daphne in Syria, near Antioch, was famous for its delightful fountains.

## NOTE M.

*'The tribes beloved by Pæon.'*—L. 40.

Mineral and medicinal springs. Pæon was the physician of the gods.

## NOTE N.

*'The winged offspring.'*—L. 43.

The winds; who, according to Hesiod and Apollodorus, were the sons of Astræus and Aurora.

## NOTE O.

*'Hyperion.'*—L. 46.

A son of Cælum and Tellus, and father of the Sun, who is thence called, by Pindar, Hyperionides. But Hyperion is put by Homer in the same manner as here, for the Sun himself.

## NOTE P.

*'Your sallying streams.'*—L. 49.

The state of the atmosphere with respect to rest and motion is, in several ways, affected by rivers and running streams; and that more especially in hot seasons: first, they destroy its equilibrium, by cooling those parts of it with

which they are in contact ; and secondly, they communicate their own motion : and the air which is thus moved by them, being left heated, is of consequence more elastic than other parts of the atmosphere, and therefore fitter to preserve and to propagate that motion.

## NOTE Q.

'*Delian king.*'—L. 70.

One of the epithets of Apollo, or the Sun, in the Orphic hymn inscribed to him.

## NOTE R.

'*Chloris.*'—L. 79.

The ancient Greek name for Flora.

## NOTE S.

'*Amalthea.*'—L. 83.

The mother of the first Bacchus, whose birth and education was written, as Diodorus Siculus informs us, in the old Pelasgic character, by Thymœtes, grandson to Laomedon, and contemporary with Orpheus. Thymœtes had travelled over Libya to the country which borders on the western ocean ; there he saw the island of Nysa, and learned from the inhabitants, that ' Ammon, King of Libya, was married in former ages to Rhea, sister of Saturn and the Titans : that he afterwards fell in love with a beautiful virgin whose name was Amalthea ; had by her a son, and gave her possession of a neighbouring tract of land, wonderfully fertile ; which in shape nearly resembling the horn of an ox, was thence called the Hesperian horn, and afterwards the horn of Amalthea : that fearing the jealousy of Rhea, he concealed the young Bacchus in the island of Nysa ;' the beauty of which, Diodorus describes with great dignity and pomp of style. This fable is one of the noblest in all the ancient mythology, and seems to have made a particular impression on the imagination of Milton ; the only modern poet (unless perhaps it be necessary to except Spenser) who, in these mysterious traditions of the poetic story, had a heart to feel, and words to express, the simple and solitary genius of antiquity. To raise the idea of his Paradise, he prefers it even to—

' That Nysean isle  
Girt by the river Triton, where old Cham  
(Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Libyan Jove)  
Hid Amalthea and her florid son,  
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye.'

## NOTE T.

'*Edonian band.*'—L. 94.

The priestesses and other ministers of Bacchus : so called from Edonus, a mountain of Thrace, where his rites were celebrated.

## NOTE U.

'*When Hermes.*'—L. 105.

Hermes, or Mercury, was the patron of commerce ; in which benevolent

character he is addressed by the author of the *Indigitamenta* in these beautiful lines:—

Ερμηνεῦ πάντων, κερδέμπορε, λυσιμέριμνε,  
 \*Ὅς χειρέσθιν ἔχεις εἰρήνης ὄπλον ἀμέμφες.

## NOTE X.

*'Dispense the mineral treasure.'*—L. 121.

The merchants of Sidon and Tyre made frequent voyages to the coast of Cornwall, from whence they carried home great quantities of tin.

## NOTE Y.

*'Hath he not won.'*—L. 136.

Mercury, the patron of commerce, being so greatly dependent on the good offices of the Naiads, in return obtains for them the friendship of Minerva, the goddess of war: for military power, at least the naval part of it, hath constantly followed the establishment of trade; which exemplifies the preceding observation, that 'from bounty issueth power.'

## NOTE Z.

*'Calpe . . . Cantabrian surge.'*—L. 143.

Gibraltar and the Bay of Biscay.

## NOTE AA.

*'Ægina's gloomy surge.'*—L. 150.

Near this island, the Athenians obtained the victory of Salamis, over the Persian navy.

## NOTE BB.

*'Xerxes saw.'*—L. 160.

This circumstance is recorded in that passage, perhaps the most splendid among all the remains of ancient history, where Plutarch, in his *Life of Themistocles*, describes the sea-fights of Artemisium and Salamis.

## NOTE CC.

*'Thyrsus.'*—L. 204.

A staff, or spear, wreathed round with ivy: of constant use in the bacchanalian mysteries.

## NOTE DD.

*'Io Pæan.'*—L. 227.

An exclamation of victory and triumph, derived from Apollo's encounter with Python.

## NOTE EE.

*'Rocky Cîrrha.'*—L. 252.

One of the summits of Parnassus, and sacred to Apollo. Near it were several fountains, said to be frequented by the Muses. Nysa, the other eminence of the same mountain, was dedicated to Bacchus.

## NOTE FF.

*'Charm the mind of gods.'*—L. 263.

This whole passage, concerning the effects of sacred music among the gods, is taken from Pindar's first Pythian ode.

## NOTE GG.

'Phrygian pipe.'—L. 297.

The Phrygian music was fantastic and turbulent, and fit to excite disorderly passions.

## NOTE HH.

'The gates where Pallas holds  
The guardian key.'—L. 302.

It was the office of Minerva to be the guardian of walled cities; whence she was named ΠΟΛΙΑΣ and ΠΟΛΙΟΥΧΟΣ, and had her statues placed in their gates, being supposed to keep the keys; and on that account styled ΚΑΗΔΟΥΧΟΣ.

## NOTE II.

'Fate of sober Pentheus.'—L. 311.

Pentheus was torn in pieces by the bacchanalian priests and women, for despising their mysteries.

## NOTE KK.

'The cave Corycian.'—L. 318.

Of this cave Pausanias, in his tenth book, gives the following description:—  
'Between Delphi and the eminences of Parnassus is a road to the grotto of Corycium, which has its name from the nymph Corycia, and is by far the most remarkable which I have seen. One may walk a great way into it without a torch. 'Tis of a considerable height, and hath several springs within it; and yet a much greater quantity of water distils from the shell and roof, so as to be continually dropping on the ground. The people round Parnassus hold it sacred to the Corycian nymphs and to Pan.'

## NOTE LL.

'Delphic mount.'—L. 319.

Delphi, the seat and oracle of Apollo, had a mountainous and rocky situation, on the skirts of Parnassus.

## NOTE MM.

'Cyrenaic shell.'—L. 327.

Cyrene was the native country of Callimachus, whose hymns are the most remarkable example of that mythological passion which is assumed in the preceding poem, and have always afforded particular pleasure to the author of it, by reason of the mysterious solemnity with which they affect the mind. On this account he was induced to attempt somewhat in the same manner; solely by way of exercise: the manner itself being now almost entirely abandoned in poetry. And as the mere genealogy, or the personal adventures of heathen gods, could have been but little interesting to a modern reader, it was therefore thought proper to select some convenient part of the history of nature, and to employ these ancient divinities as it is probable they were first employed; to wit, in personifying natural causes, and in representing the mutual agreement or opposition of the corporeal and moral powers of the world: which hath been accounted the very highest office of poetry.



## INSCRIPTIONS.

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### I.

#### FOR A GROTTTO.

To me, whom in their lays the shepherds call  
Actæa, daughter of the neighbouring stream,  
This cave belongs. The fig-tree and the vine,  
Which o'er the rocky entrance downward shoot,  
Were placed by Glycon. He with cowslips pale,  
Primrose, and purple lychnis, deck'd the green  
Before my threshold, and my shelving walls  
With honeysuckle cover'd. Here at noon,  
Lull'd by the murmur of my rising fount,  
I slumber; here my clustering fruits I tend;  
Or from the humid flowers, at break of day,  
Fresh garlands weave, and chase from all my bounds  
Each thing impure or noxious. Enter in,  
O stranger, undismay'd. Nor bat, nor toad  
Here lurks; and if thy breast of blameless thoughts  
Approve thee, not unwelcome shalt thou tread  
My quiet mansion; chiefly, if thy name  
Wise Pallas and the immortal Muses own.

## II.

## FOR A STATUE OF CHAUCER AT WOODSTOCK.

SUCH was old Chaucer; such the placid mien  
Of him who first with harmony inform'd  
The language of our fathers. Here he dwelt  
For many a cheerful day. These ancient walls  
Have often heard him, while his legends blithe  
He sang; of love, or knighthood, or the wiles  
Of homely life; through each estate and age,  
The fashions and the follies of the world  
With cunning hand portraying. Though perchance  
From Blenheim's towers, O stranger, thou art come  
Glowing with Churchill's trophies; yet in vain  
Dost thou applaud them if thy breast be cold  
To him, this other hero; who, in times  
Dark and untaught, began with charming verse  
To tame the rudeness of his native land.

## III.

WHOE'ER thou art whose path in summer lies  
Through yonder village, turn thee where the grove  
Of branching oaks a rural palace old  
Embosoms. There dwells Albert, generous lord  
Of all the harvest round. And onward thence  
A low plain chapel fronts the morning light  
Fast by a silent rivulet. Humbly walk,  
O stranger, o'er the consecrated ground;  
And on that verdant hillock, which thou seest  
Beset with osiers, let thy pious hand

Sprinkle fresh water from the brook, and strew  
Sweet-smelling flowers. For there doth Edmund rest,  
The learned shepherd; for each rural art  
Famed, and for songs harmonious, and the woes  
Of ill-requited love. The faithless pride  
Of fair Matilda sank him to the grave  
In manhood's prime. But soon did righteous Heaven,  
With tears, with sharp remorse, and pining care,  
Avenge her falsehood. Nor could all the gold  
And nuptial pomp, which lured her plighted faith  
From Edmund to a loftier husband's home,  
Relieve her breaking heart, or turn aside  
The strokes of death. Go, traveller; relate  
The mournful story. Haply some fair maid  
May hold it in remembrance, and be taught  
That riches cannot pay for truth or love.

## IV.

O YOUTHS and virgins: O declining eld:  
O pale misfortune's slaves: O ye who dwell  
Unknown with humble quiet; ye who wait  
In courts, or fill the golden seat of kings:  
O sons of sport and pleasure: O thou wretch  
That weep'st for jealous love, or the sore wounds  
Of conscious guilt, or death's rapacious hand  
Which left thee void of hope: O ye who roam  
In exile; ye who through the embattled field  
Seek bright renown; or who for nobler palms  
Contend, the leaders of a public cause;  
Approach: behold this marble. Know ye not  
The features? Hath not oft his faithful tongue  
Told you the fashion of your own estate,

The secrets of your bosom? Here then, round  
 His monument with reverence while ye stand,  
 Say to each other:—‘ This was Shakspeare’s form;  
 Who walk’d in every path of human life,  
 Felt every passion; and to all mankind  
 Doth now, will ever, that experience yield  
 Which his own genius only could acquire.’

## V.

GVLIELMUS III. FORTIS, PIVS, LIBERATOR, CVM INEVNTE  
 AETATE PATRIAE LABENTI ADFVISSET SALVS IPSE VNICA;  
 CVM MOX ITIDEM REIPVBlicAE BRITANNICAE VINDEK RE-  
 NVNCIATVS ESSET ATQVE STATOR; TVM DENIQVE AD ID SE  
 NATVM RECOGNOVIT ET REGEM FACTVM, VT CVRARET NE  
 DOMINO IMPOTENTI CEDERENT PAX, FIDES, FORTVNA,  
 GENERIS HUMANI. AVCTORI PVBLICAE FELICITATIS  
 P.G. A.M.A.

## VI.

## FOR A COLUMN AT RUNNYMEDE.

THOU, who the verdant plain dost traverse here,  
 While Thames among his willows from thy view  
 Retires; O stranger, stay thee, and the scene  
 Around contemplate well. This is the place  
 Where England’s ancient barons, clad in arms  
 And stern with conquest, from their tyrant king  
 (Then render’d tame) did challenge and secure  
 The charter of thy freedom. Pass not on  
 Till thou hast bless’d their memory, and paid



Those thanks which God appointed the reward  
Of public virtue. And if chance thy home  
Salute thee with a father's honour'd name,  
Go, call thy sons; instruct them what a debt  
They owe their ancestors; and make them swear  
To pay it, by transmitting down entire  
Those sacred rights to which themselves were born.

## VII.

## THE WOOD NYMPH.

APPROACH in silence. 'Tis no vulgar tale  
Which I, the Dryad of this hoary oak,  
Pronounce to mortal ears. The second age  
Now hasteneth to its period, since I rose  
On this fair lawn. The groves of yonder vale  
Are all my offspring: and each Nymph who guards  
The copses and the furrow'd fields beyond,  
Obeys me. Many changes have I seen  
In human things, and many awful deeds  
Of justice, when the ruling hand of Jove  
Against the tyrants of the land, against  
The unhallow'd sons of luxury and guile,  
Was arm'd for retribution. Thus at length  
Expert in laws divine, I know the paths  
Of wisdom, and erroneous folly's end  
Have oft presaged; and now well-pleased I wait  
Each evening till a noble youth, who loves  
My shade, a while released from public cares,  
Yon peaceful gate shall enter, and sit down  
Beneath my branches. Then his musing mind  
I prompt, unseen; and place before his view

Sincerest forms of good ; and move his heart  
With the dread bounties of the Sire Supreme  
Of gods and men, with freedom's generous deeds,  
The lofty voice of glory and the faith  
Of sacred friendship. Stranger, I have told  
My function. If within thy bosom dwell  
Aught which may challenge praise, thou wilt not leave  
Unhonour'd my abode, nor shall I hear  
A sparing benediction from thy tongue.

## VIII.

YE powers unseen, to whom, the bards of Greece  
Erected altars; ye who to the mind  
More lofty views unfold, and prompt the heart  
With more divine emotions; if erewhile  
Not quite unpleasing have my votive rites  
Of you been deem'd, when oft this lonely seat  
To you I consecrated; then vouchsafe  
Here with your instant energy to crown  
My happy solitude. It is the hour  
When most I love to invoke you, and have felt  
Most frequent your glad ministry divine.  
The air is calm: the sun's unveiled orb  
Shines in the middle heaven. The harvest round  
Stands quiet, and among the golden sheaves  
The reapers lie reclined. The neighbouring groves  
Are mute, nor even a linnet's random strain  
Echoeth amid the silence. Let me feel  
Your influence, ye kind powers. Aloft in heaven,  
Abide ye? or on those transparent clouds  
Pass ye from hill to hill? or on the shades  
Which yonder elms cast o'er the lake below

Do you converse retired? From what loved haunt  
Shall I expect you? Let me once more feel  
Your influence, O ye kind inspiring powers:  
And I will guard it well; nor shall a thought  
Rise in my mind, nor shall a passion move  
Across my bosom unobserved, unstored  
By faithful memory. And then at some  
More active moment, will I call them forth  
Anew; and join them in majestic forms,  
And give them utterance in harmonious strains;  
That all mankind shall wonder at your sway.

## IX.

ME though in life's sequester'd vale  
The Almighty Sire ordain'd to dwell,  
Remote from glory's toilsome ways,  
And the great scenes of public praise;  
Yet let me still with grateful pride  
Remember how my infant frame  
He temper'd with prophetic flame,  
And early music to my tongue supplied.

'Twas then my future fate he weigh'd,  
And, this be thy concern, he said,  
At once with Passion's keen alarms,  
And Beauty's pleasurable charms,  
And sacred Truth's eternal light,  
To move the various mind of Man;  
Till, under one unblemish'd plan,  
His Reason, Fancy, and his Heart unite.

AN EPISTLE TO CURIO.<sup>1</sup>

THRICE has the spring beheld thy faded fame,  
 And the fourth winter rises on thy shame,  
 Since I exulting grasp'd the votive shell,  
 In sounds of triumph all thy praise to tell;  
 Bless'd could my skill through ages make thee shine,  
 And proud to mix my memory with thine.  
 But now the cause that waked my song before,  
 With praise, with triumph, crowns the toil no more.  
 If to the glorious man whose faithful cares,  
 Nor quell'd by malice, nor relax'd by years, 10  
 Had awed Ambition's wild audacious hate,  
 And dragg'd at length Corruption to her fate;  
 If every tongue its large applauses owed,  
 And well-earn'd laurels every Muse bestow'd;  
 If public Justice urged the high reward,  
 And Freedom smiled on the devoted bard;  
 Say then, to him whose levity or lust  
 Laid all a people's generous hopes in dust;  
 Who taught Ambition firmer heights of power,  
 And saved Corruption at her hopeless hour; 20  
 Does not each tongue its execrations owe?  
 Shall not each Muse a wreath of shame bestow,

<sup>1</sup> Curio was a young Roman senator, of distinguished birth and parts, who, upon his first entrance into the forum, had been committed to the care of Cicero. Being profuse and extravagant, he soon dissipated a large and splendid fortune; to supply the want of which, he was driven to the necessity of abetting the designs of Cæsar against the liberties of his country, although he had before been a professed enemy to him. Cicero exerted himself with great energy to prevent his ruin, but without effect, and he became one of the first victims in the civil war. This epistle was first published in the year 1744, when a celebrated patriot, after a long and at last successful opposition to an unpopular minister, had deserted the cause of his country, and became the foremost in support and defence of the same measures he had so steadily and for such a length of time contended against.



And public Justice sanctify th' award, 23  
And Freedom's hand protect the impartial bard?

Yet long reluctant I forbore thy name,  
Long watch'd thy virtue like a dying flame,  
Hung o'er each glimmering spark with anxious eyes,  
And wish'd and hoped the light again would rise.  
But since thy guilt still more entire appears,  
Since no art hides, no supposition clears; 30  
Since vengeful Slander now too sinks her blast,  
And the first rage of party-hate is past;  
Calm as the judge of truth, at length I come  
To weigh thy merits, and pronounce thy doom:  
So may my trust from all reproach be free;  
And Earth and Time confirm the fair decree.

There are who say they view'd without amaze  
The sad reverse of all thy former praise:  
That through the pageants of a patriot's name,  
They pierced the foulness of thy secret aim; 40  
Or deem'd thy arm exalted but to throw  
The public thunder on a private foe.  
But I, whose soul consented to thy cause,  
Who felt thy genius stamp its own applause,  
Who saw the spirits of each glorious age  
Move in thy bosom, and direct thy rage;  
I scorn'd the ungenerous gloss of slavish minds,  
The owl-eyed race, whom Virtue's lustre blinds.  
Spite of the learned in the ways of vice,  
And all who prove that each man has his price, 50  
I still believed thy end was just and free;  
And yet, even yet, believe it—spite of thee.  
Even though thy mouth impure has dared disclaim,  
Urged by the wretched impotence of shame,  
Whatever filial cares thy zeal had paid  
To laws infirm, and liberty decay'd;

Has begg'd Ambition to forgive the show; 57  
Has told Corruption thou wert ne'er her foe;  
Has boasted in thy country's awful ear,  
Her gross delusion when she held thee dear;  
How tame she follow'd thy tempestuous call,  
And heard thy pompous tales, and trusted all—  
Rise from your sad abodes, ye cursed of old  
For laws subverted, and for cities sold!  
Paint all the noblest trophies of your guilt,  
The oaths you perjured, and the blood you spilt;  
Yet must you one untempted vileness own,  
One dreadful palm reserved for him alone;  
With studied arts his country's praise to spurn,  
To beg the infamy he did not earn, 70  
To challenge hate when honour was his due,  
And plead his crimes where all his virtue knew.  
Do robes of state the guarded heart enclose  
From each fair feeling human nature knows?  
Can pompous titles stun the enchanted ear  
To all that reason, all that sense would hear?  
Else couldst thou e'er desert thy sacred post,  
In such unthankful baseness to be lost?  
Else couldst thou wed the emptiness of vice,  
And yield thy glories at an idiot's price? 80

When they who, loud for liberty and laws,  
In doubtful times had fought their country's cause,  
When now of conquest and dominion sure,  
They sought alone to hold their fruits secure;  
When taught by these, Oppression hid the face,  
To leave Corruption stronger in her place,  
By silent spells to work the public fate,  
And taint the vitals of the passive state,  
Till healing Wisdom should avail no more,  
And Freedom loathe to tread the poison'd shore: 90

Then, like some guardian god that flies to save 91  
The weary pilgrim from an instant grave,  
Whom, sleeping and secure, the guileful snake  
Steals near and nearer through the peaceful brake;  
Then Curio rose to ward the public woe,  
To wake the heedless, and incite the slow,  
Against Corruption Liberty to arm,  
And quell the enchantress by a mightier charm.

Swift o'er the land the fair contagion flew,  
And with thy country's hopes thy honours grew. 100  
Thee, patriot, the patrician roof confess'd;  
Thy powerful voice the rescued merchant bless'd;  
Of thee with awe the rural hearth resounds;  
The bowl to thee the grateful sailor crowns;  
Touch'd in the sighing shade with manlier fires,  
To trace thy steps the love-sick youth aspires;  
The learn'd recluse, who oft amazed had read  
Of Grecian heroes, Roman patriots dead,  
With new amazement hears a living name  
Pretend to share in such forgotten fame; 110  
And he who, scorning courts and courtly ways,  
Left the tame track of these dejected days,  
The life of nobler ages to renew  
In virtues sacred from a monarch's view,  
Roused by thy labours from the bless'd retreat,  
Where social ease and public passions meet,  
Again ascending treads the civil scene,  
To act and be a man, as thou hadst been.

Thus by degrees thy cause superior grew,  
And the great end appear'd at last in view: 120  
We heard the people in thy hopes rejoice,  
We saw the senate bending to thy voice;  
The friends of freedom hail'd the approaching reign  
Of laws for which our fathers bled in vain;



While venal Faction, struck with new dismay, 125  
 Shrunk at their frown, and self-abandon'd lay.  
 Waked in the shock the public Genius rose,  
 Abash'd and keener from his long repose;  
 Sublime in ancient pride, he raised the spear  
 Which slaves and tyrants long were wont to fear; 130  
 The city felt his call: from man to man,  
 From street to street, the glorious horror ran;  
 Each crowded haunt was stirr'd beneath his power,  
 And, murmuring, challenged the deciding hour.

Lo! the deciding hour at last appears;  
 The hour of every freeman's hopes and fears!  
 Thou, Genius! guardian of the Roman name,  
 O ever prompt tyrannic rage to tame!  
 Instruct the mighty moments as they roll,  
 And guide each movement steady to the goal. 140  
 Ye spirits by whose providential art  
 Succeeding motives turn the changeful heart,  
 Keep, keep the best in view to Curio's mind,  
 And watch his fancy, and his passions bind!  
 Ye shades immortal, who by Freedom led,  
 Or in the field or on the scaffold bled,  
 Bend from your radiant seats a joyful eye,  
 And view the crown of all your labours nigh.  
 See Freedom mounting her eternal throne!  
 The sword submitted, and the laws her own: 150  
 See! public Power chastised beneath her stands,  
 With eyes intent, and uncorrupted hands!  
 See private Life by wisest arts reclaim'd!  
 See ardent youth to noblest manners framed!  
 See us acquire whate'er was sought by you,  
 If Curio, only Curio will be true.

'Twas then—O shame! O trust how ill repaid!  
 O Latium, oft by faithless sons betray'd!—



'Twas then—What frenzy on thy reason stole? 159  
 What spells unsinewed thy determined soul?—  
 Is this the man in Freedom's cause approved,  
 The man so great, so honour'd, so beloved,  
 This patient slave by tinsel chains allured,  
 This wretched suitor for a boon abjured,  
 This Curio, hated and despised by all,  
 Who fell himself to work his country's fall?

O lost, alike to action and repose!  
 Unknown, unpitied in the worst of woes!  
 With all that conscious, undissembled pride,  
 Sold to the insults of a foe defied! 170  
 With all that habit of familiar fame,  
 Doom'd to exhaust the dregs of life in shame!  
 The sole sad refuge of thy baffled art  
 To act a statesman's dull, exploded part,  
 Renounce the praise no longer in thy power,  
 Display thy virtue, though without a dower,  
 Contemn the giddy crowd, the vulgar wind,  
 And shut thy eyes that others may be blind.—  
 Forgive me, Romans, that I bear to smile,  
 When shameless mouths your majesty defile, 180  
 Paint you a thoughtless, frantic, headlong crew,  
 And cast their own impieties on you.

For witness, Freedom, to whose sacred power  
 My soul was vow'd from reason's earliest hour,  
 How have I stood exulting, to survey  
 My country's virtues, opening in thy ray!  
 How with the sons of every foreign shore  
 The more I match'd them, honour'd hers the more!  
 O race erect! whose native strength of soul,  
 Which kings, nor priests, nor sordid laws control, 190  
 Bursts the tame round of animal affairs,  
 And seeks a nobler centre for its cares;

Intent the laws of life to comprehend, 193  
 And fix dominion's limits by its end.  
 Who, bold and equal in their love or hate,  
 By conscious reason judging every state,  
 The man forget not, though in rags he lies,  
 And know the mortal through a crown's disguise:  
 Thence prompt alike with witty scorn to view  
 Fastidious Grandeur lift his solemn brow, 200  
 Or, all awake at pity's soft command,  
 Bend the mild ear, and stretch the gracious hand:  
 Thence large of heart, from envy far removed,  
 When public toils to virtue stand approved,  
 Not the young lover fonder to admire,  
 Not more indulgent the delighted sire;  
 Yet high and jealous of their free-born name,  
 Fierce as the flight of Jove's destroying flame,  
 Where'er Oppression works her wanton sway,  
 Proud to confront, and dreadful to repay. 210  
 But if to purchase Curio's sage applause,  
 My country must with him renounce her cause,  
 Quit with a slave the path a patriot trod,  
 Bow the meek knee, and kiss the regal rod;  
 Then still, ye powers, instruct his tongue to rail,  
 Nor let his zeal, nor let his subject fail:  
 Else, ere he change the style, bear me away  
 To where the Gracchi,<sup>1</sup> where the Bruti stay!  
 O long revered, and late resign'd to shame!  
 If this uncourtly page thy notice claim 220  
 When the loud cares of business are withdrawn,  
 Nor well-dress'd beggars round thy footsteps fawn;

<sup>1</sup> The two brothers, Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, lost their lives in attempting to introduce the only regulation that could give stability and good order to the Roman republic. L. Junius Brutus founded the commonwealth, and died in its defence.

In that still, thoughtful, solitary hour, 223  
When Truth exerts her unresisted power,  
Breaks the false optics tinged with fortune's glare,  
Unlocks the breast, and lays the passions bare ;  
Then turn thy eyes on that important scene,  
And ask thyself—if all be well within.  
Where is the heart-felt worth and weight of soul,  
Which labour could not stop, nor fear control? 230  
Where the known dignity, the stamp of awe,  
Which, half-abash'd, the proud and venal saw?  
Where the calm triumphs of an honest cause?  
Where the delightful taste of just applause?  
Where the strong reason, the commanding tongue,  
On which the senate fired or trembling hung?  
All vanish'd, all are sold—and in their room,  
Couch'd in thy bosom's deep, distracted gloom,  
See the pale form of barbarous Grandeur dwell,  
Like some grim idol in a sorcerer's cell! 240  
To her in chains thy dignity was led;  
At her polluted shrine thy honour bled;  
With blasted weeds thy awful brow she crown'd,  
Thy powerful tongue with poison'd philters bound,  
That baffled Reason straight indignant flew,  
And fair Persuasion from her seat withdrew:  
For now no longer Truth supports thy cause;  
No longer Glory prompts thee to applause;  
No longer Virtue breathing in thy breast,  
With all her conscious majesty confess'd, 250  
Still bright and brighter wakes the almighty flame,  
To rouse the feeble, and the wilful tame,  
And where she sees the catching glimpses roll,  
Spreads the strong blaze, and all involves the soul;  
But cold restraints thy conscious fancy chill,  
And formal passions mock thy struggling will;



Or, if thy Genius e'er forget his chain, 257  
And reach impatient at a nobler strain,  
Soon the sad bodings of contemptuous mirth  
Shoot through thy breast, and stab the generous birth,  
Till, blind with smart, from truth to frenzy toss'd,  
And all the tenor of thy reason lost,  
Perhaps thy anguish drains a real tear;  
While some with pity, some with laughter hear.—  
Can art, alas! or genius, guide the head,  
Where truth and freedom from the heart are fled?  
Can lesser wheels repeat their native stroke,  
When the prime function of the soul is broke?  
But come, unhappy man! thy fates impend;  
Come, quit thy friends, if yet thou hast a friend; 270  
Turn from the poor rewards of guilt like thine,  
Renounce thy titles, and thy robes resign;  
For see the hand of Destiny display'd  
To shut thee from the joys thou hast betray'd!  
See the dire fane of Infamy arise!  
Dark as the grave, and spacious as the skies;  
Where, from the first of time, thy kindred train,  
The chiefs and princes of the unjust remain.  
Eternal barriers guard the pathless road  
To warn the wanderer of the cursed abode; 280  
But prone as whirlwinds scour the passive sky,  
The heights surmounted, down the steep they fly.  
There, black with frowns, relentless Time awaits,  
And goads their footsteps to the guilty gates;  
And still he asks them of their unknown aims,  
Evolves their secrets, and their guilt proclaims;  
And still his hands despoil them on the road  
Of each vain wreath, by lying bards bestow'd,  
Break their proud marbles, crush their festal cars,  
And rend the lawless trophies of their wars. 290



At last the gates his potent voice obey; 291  
 Fierce to their dark abode he drives his prey;  
 Where, ever arm'd with adamantine chains,  
 The watchful demon o'er her vassals reigns,  
 O'er mighty names and giant-powers of lust,  
 The great, the sage, the happy, and august.<sup>1</sup>  
 No gleam of hope their baleful mansion cheers,  
 No sound of honour hails their unblest ears;  
 But dire reproaches from the friend betray'd,  
 The childless sire and violated maid; 300  
 But vengeful vows for guardian laws effaced,  
 From towns enslaved, and continents laid waste;  
 But long posterity's united groan,  
 And the sad charge of horrors not their own,  
 For ever through the trembling space resound,  
 And sink each impious forehead to the ground.

Ye mighty foes of liberty and rest,  
 Give way, do homage to a mightier guest!  
 Ye daring spirits of the Roman race,  
 See Curio's toil your proudest claims efface!— 310  
 Awed at the name, fierce Appius<sup>2</sup> rising bends,  
 And hardy Cinna from his throne attends:  
 'He comes,' they cry, 'to whom the fates assign'd  
 With surer arts to work what we design'd,  
 From year to year the stubborn herd to sway,  
 Mouth all their wrongs, and all their rage obey;  
 Till own'd their guide, and trusted with their  
 power,  
 He mock'd their hopes in one decisive hour;  
 Then, tired and yielding, led them to the chain,  
 And quench'd the spirit we provoked in vain.' 320

<sup>1</sup> Titles which have been generally ascribed to the most pernicious of men.

<sup>2</sup> Appius Claudius the Decemvir, and L. Cornelius Cinna both attempted to establish a tyrannical dominion in Rome, and both perished by the treason.

But thou, Supreme, by whose eternal hands 321  
Fair Liberty's heroic empire stands;  
Whose thunders the rebellious deep control,  
And quell the triumphs of the traitor's soul,  
Oh! turn this dreadful omen far away:  
On Freedom's foes their own attempts repay:  
Relume her sacred fire so near suppress'd,  
And fix her shrine in every Roman breast:  
Though bold Corruption boast around the land,  
' Let virtue, if she can, my baits withstand!' 330  
Though bolder now she urge the accursed claim,  
Gay with her trophies raised on Curio's shame;  
Yet some there are who scorn her impious mirth,  
Who know what conscience and a heart are worth.—  
O friend and father of the human mind,  
Whose art for noblest ends our frame design'd!  
If I, though fated to the studious shade  
Which party-strife, nor anxious power invade,  
If I aspire in public virtue's cause,  
To guide the Muses by sublimer laws, 340  
Do thou her own authority impart,  
And give my numbers entrance to the heart.  
Perhaps the verse might rouse her smother'd flame,  
And snatch the fainting patriot back to fame;  
Perhaps by worthy thoughts of human kind,  
To worthy deeds exalt the conscious mind;  
Or dash Corruption in her proud career,  
And teach her slaves that Vice was born to fear.

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## THE VIRTUOSO.

IN IMITATION OF SPENSER'S STYLE AND STANZA.

'Videmus  
Nugari solitos.'—PERSIUS.

- 1 WHILOM by silver Thames's gentle stream,  
     In London town there dwelt a subtile wight;  
 A wight of mickle wealth, and mickle fame,  
     Book-learn'd and quaint; a Virtuoso hight.  
 Uncommon things, and rare, were his delight;  
     From musings deep his brain ne'er gotten ease,  
 Nor ceasen he from study, day or night;  
     Until (advancing onward by degrees)  
 He knew whatever breeds on earth, or air, or seas.
  
- 2 He many a creature did anatomise,  
     Almost unpeopling water, air, and land;  
 Beasts, fishes, birds, snails, caterpillars, flies,  
     Were laid full low by his relentless hand,  
 That oft with gory crimson was distain'd:  
     He many a dog destroy'd, and many a cat;  
 Of fleas his bed, of frogs the marshes drain'd,  
     Could tellen if a mite were lean or fat,  
 And read a lecture o'er the entrails of a gnat.
  
- 3 He knew the various modes of ancient times,  
     Their arts and fashions of each different guise,  
 Their weddings, funerals, punishments for crimes,  
     Their strength, their learning eke, and rarities;  
 Of old habiliments, each sort and size,  
     Male, female, high and low, to him were known;  
 Each gladiator-dress, and stage disguise;

With learned, clerkly phrase he could have shown  
How the Greek tunic differ'd from the Roman gown.

4 A curious medalist, I wot, he was,  
And boasted many a course of ancient coin;  
Well as his wife's he knewen every face,  
From Julius Cæsar down to Constantine:  
For some rare sculptor he would oft ypine  
(As green-sick damosels for husbands do);  
And when obtained, with enraptured eyne,  
He'd run it o'er and o'er with greedy view,  
And look, and look again, as he would look it through.

5 His rich museum, of dimensions fair,  
With goods that spoke the owner's mind was  
fraught:  
Things ancient, curious, value-worth, and rare,  
From sea and land, from Greece and Rome were  
brought,  
Which he with mighty sums of gold had bought:  
On these all tides with joyous eyes he pored;  
And, sooth to say, himself he greater thought,  
When he beheld his cabinets thus stored,  
Than if he'd been of Albion's wealthy cities lord.

6 Here in a corner stood a rich scrutoire,  
With many a curiosity replete;  
In seemly order furnish'd every drawer,  
Products of art or nature as was meet;  
Air-pumps and prisms were placed beneath his feet,  
A Memphian mummy-king hung o'er his head;  
Here phials with live insects small and great,  
There stood a tripod of the Pythian maid;  
Above, a crocodile diffused a grateful shade.



- 7 Fast by the window did a table stand,  
Where hodiern and antique rarities,  
From Egypt, Greece, and Rome, from sea and land,  
Were thick-besprent, of every sort and size:  
Here a Bahaman-spider's carcass lies,  
There a dire serpent's golden skin doth shine;  
Here Indian feathers, fruits, and glittering flies;  
There gums and amber found beneath the line,  
The beak of Ibis here, and there an Antonine.
- 8 Close at his back, or whispering in his ear,  
There stood a sprite ycleped Phantasy;  
Which, wheresoe'er he went, was always near:  
Her look was wild, and roving was her eye;  
Her hair was clad with flowers of every dye;  
Her glistening robes were of more various hue  
Than the fair bow that paints the cloudy sky,  
Or all the spangled drops of morning dew;  
Their colour changing still at every different view.
- 9 Yet in this shape all tides she did not stay,  
Various as the chameleon that she bore;  
Now a grand monarch with a crown of hay,  
Now mendicant in silks and golden ore:  
A statesman, now equipp'd to chase the boar,  
Or cowed monk, lean, feeble, and unfed;  
A clown-like lord, or swain of courtly lore;  
Now scribbling dunce, in sacred laurel clad,  
Or papal father now, in homely weeds array'd.
- 10 The wight whose brain this phantom's power doth fill,  
On whom she doth with constant care attend,  
Will for a dreadful giant take a mill,  
Or a grand palace in a hog-sty find:

(From her dire influence me may heaven defend!)  
 All things with vitiated sight he spies;  
 Neglects his family, forgets his friend,  
 Seeks painted trifles and fantastic toys,  
 And eagerly pursues imaginary joys.

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## AMBITION AND CONTENT.

### A FABLE.

'Optat quietem.'—HOR.

WHILE yet the world was young, and men were few,  
 Nor lurking fraud, nor tyrant rapine knew,  
 In virtue rude, the gaudy arts they scorn'd,  
 Which, virtue lost, degenerate times adorn'd:  
 No sumptuous fabrics yet were seen to rise,  
 Nor gushing fountains taught to invade the skies;  
 With nature, art had not begun the strife,  
 Nor swelling marble rose to mimic life;  
 No pencil yet had learn'd to express the fair;  
 The bounteous earth was all their homely care. 10

Then did Content exert her genial sway,  
 And taught the peaceful world her power to obey—  
 Content, a female of celestial race,  
 Bright and complete in each celestial grace.  
 Serenely fair she was, as rising day,  
 And brighter than the sun's meridian ray;  
 Joy of all hearts, delight of every eye,  
 Nor grief nor pain appear'd when she was by;  
 Her presence from the wretched banish'd care,  
 Dispersed the swelling sigh, and stopp'd the falling tear.

Long did the nymph her regal state maintain, 21  
 As long mankind were bless'd beneath her reign;  
 Till dire Ambition, hellish fiend, arose  
 To plague the world, and banish man's repose,  
 A monster sprung from that rebellious crew  
 Which mighty Jove's Phlegræan thunder slew.  
 Resolved to dispossess the royal fair,  
 On all her friends he threaten'd open war;  
 Fond of the novelty, vain, fickle man  
 In crowds to his infernal standard ran; 30  
 And the weak maid, defenceless left alone,  
 To avoid his rage, was forced to quit the throne.

It chanced, as wandering through the fields she stray'd,  
 Forsook of all, and destitute of aid,  
 Upon a rising mountain's flowery side,  
 A pleasant cottage, roof'd with turf, she spied:  
 Fast by a gloomy, venerable wood  
 Of shady planes and ancient oaks it stood.  
 Around, a various prospect charm'd the sight;  
 Here waving harvests clad the field with white, 40  
 Here a rough shaggy rock the clouds did pierce,  
 From which a torrent rush'd with rapid force;  
 Here mountain-woods diffused a dusky shade;  
 Here flocks and herds in flowery valleys play'd,  
 While o'er the matted grass the liquid crystal stray'd.  
 In this sweet place there dwelt a cheerful pair,  
 Though bent beneath the weight of many a year;  
 Who, wisely flying public noise and strife,  
 In this obscure retreat had pass'd their life;  
 The husband Industry was call'd, Frugality the wife. 50  
 With tenderest friendship mutually bless'd,  
 No household jars had e'er disturbed their rest.  
 A numerous offspring graced their homely board,  
 That still with nature's simple gifts was stored.

The father rural business only knew; 55  
The sons the same delightful art pursue.  
An only daughter, as a goddess fair,  
Above the rest was the fond mother's care,  
Plenty; the brightest nymph of all the plain,  
Each heart's delight, adored by every swain. 60  
Soon as Content this charming scene espied,  
Joyful within herself the goddess cried:—  
'This happy sight my drooping heart doth raise;  
The gods, I hope, will grant me gentler days.  
When with prosperity my life was bless'd,  
In yonder house I've been a welcome guest:  
There now, perhaps, I may protection find;  
For royalty is banish'd from my mind;  
I'll thither haste: how happy should I be,  
If such a refuge were reserved for me!' 70

Thus spoke the fair; and straight she bent her way  
To the tall mountain, where the cottage lay:  
Arrived, she makes her changed condition known;  
Tells how the rebels drove her from the throne;  
What painful, dreary wilds she'd wander'd o'er;  
And shelter from the tyrant doth implore.

The faithful, aged pair at once were seized  
With joy and grief, at once were pain'd and pleased;  
Grief for their banish'd queen their hearts possess'd,  
And joy succeeded for their future guest: 80  
'And if you'll deign, bright goddess, here to dwell,  
And with your presence grace our humble cell,  
Whate'er the gods have given with bounteous hand,  
Our harvest, fields, and flocks, our all command.'

Meantime, Ambition, on his rival's flight,  
Sole lord of man, attain'd his wish's height;  
Of all dependence on his subjects eased,  
He raged without a curb, and did whate'er he pleased;



As some wild flame, driven on by furious winds, 89  
Wide spreads destruction, nor resistance finds;  
So rush'd the fiend destructive o'er the plain,  
Defaced the labours of th' industrious swain;  
Polluted every stream with human gore,  
And scatter'd plagues and death from shore to shore.

Great Jove beheld it from the Olympian towers,  
Where sate assembled all the heavenly powers;  
Then with a nod that shook the empyrean throne,  
Thus the Saturnian thunderer begun:—  
' You see, immortal inmates of the skies,  
How this vile wretch almighty power defies; 100  
His daring crimes, the blood which he has spilt,  
Demand a torment equal to his guilt.  
Then, Cyprian goddess, let thy mighty boy  
Swift to the tyrant's guilty palace fly;  
There let him choose his sharpest, hottest dart,  
And with his former rival wound his heart.  
And thou, my son (the god to Hermes said),  
Snatch up thy wand, and plume thy heels and head;  
Dart through the yielding air with all thy force,  
And down to Pluto's realms direct thy course; 110  
There rouse Oblivion from her sable cave,  
Where dull she sits by Lethe's sluggish wave;  
Command her to secure the sacred bound,  
Where lives Content retired, and all around  
Diffuse the deepest glooms of Stygian night,  
And screen the virgin from the tyrant's sight;  
That the vain purpose of his life may try  
Still to explore, what still eludes his eye.'  
He spoke; loud praises shake the bright abode,  
And all applaud the justice of the god. 120

## THE POET. A RHAPSODY.

OF all the various lots around the ball,  
Which fate to man distributes, absolute,  
Avert, ye gods! that of the Muse's son,  
Cursed with dire poverty! poor hungry wretch!  
What shall he do for life? He cannot work  
With manual labour; shall those sacred hands,  
That brought the counsels of the gods to light;  
Shall that inspirèd tongue, which every Muse  
Has touch'd divine, to charm the sons of men;  
These hallow'd organs! these! be prostitute 10  
To the vile service of some fool in power,  
All his behests submissive to perform,  
Howe'er to him ingrateful? Oh! he scorns  
The ignoble thought; with generous disdain,  
More eligible deeming it to starve,  
Like his famed ancestors renown'd in verse,  
Than poorly bend to be another's slave,—  
Than feed and fatten in obscurity.—  
These are his firm resolves, which fate, nor time,  
Nor poverty can shake. Exalted high 20  
In garret vile he lives; with remnants hung  
Of tapestry. But oh! precarious state  
Of this vain transient world! all-powerful 'Time,  
What dost thou not subdue? See what a chasm  
Gapes wide, tremendous! see where Saul, enraged,  
High on his throne, encompass'd by his guards,  
With levell'd spear, and arm extended, sits,  
Ready to pierce old Jesse's valiant son,  
Spoil'd of his nose!—around in tottering ranks,  
On shelves pulverulent, majestic stands 30  
His library; in ragged plight, and old;

Replete with many a load of criticism, 32  
 Elaborate products of the midnight toil  
 Of Belgian brains; snatch'd from the deadly hands  
 Of murderous grocer, or the careful wight,  
 Who vends the plant, that clads the happy shore  
 Of Indian Patomac; which citizens  
 In balmy fumes exhale, when, o'er a pot  
 Of sage-inspiring coffee, they dispose  
 Of kings and crowns, and settle Europe's fate. 40

Elsewhere the dome is fill'd with various heaps  
 Of old domestic lumber; that huge chair  
 Has seen six monarchs fill the British throne:  
 Here a broad massy table stands, o'erspread  
 With ink and pens, and scrolls replete with rhyme:  
 Chests, stools, old razors, fractured jars, half-full  
 Of muddy Zythum, sour and spiritless:  
 Fragments of verse, hose, sandals, utensils  
 Of various fashion, and of various use,  
 With friendly influence hide the sable floor. 50

This is the bard's museum, this the fane  
 To Phœbus sacred, and the Aonian maids:  
 But, oh! it stabs his heart, that niggard fate  
 To him in such small measure should dispense  
 Her better gifts: to him! whose generous soul  
 Could relish, with as fine an elegance,  
 The golden joys of grandeur, and of wealth;  
 He who could tyrannise o'er menial slaves,  
 Or swell beneath a coronet of state,  
 Or grace a gilded chariot with a mien, 60  
 Grand as the haughtiest Timon of them all.

But 'tis in vain to rave at destiny:  
 Here he must rest and brook the best he can,  
 To live remote from grandeur, learning, wit;  
 Immured amongst th' ignoble, vulgar herd,

Of lowest intellect; whose stupid souls 66  
But half inform their bodies; brains of lead  
And tongues of thunder; whose insensate breasts  
Ne'er felt the rapturous, soul-entrancing fire  
Of the celestial Muse; whose savage ears  
Ne'er heard the sacred rules, nor even the names  
Of the Venusian bard, or critic sage  
Full-famed of Stagyra: whose clamorous tongues  
Stun the tormented ear with colloquy,  
Vociferate, trivial, or impertinent;  
Replete with boorish scandal; yet, alas!  
This, this! he must endure, or muse alone,  
Pensive and moping o'er the stubborn rhyme,  
Or line imperfect—No! the door is free,  
And calls him to evade their deafening clang, 80  
By private ambulation;—'tis resolved:  
Off from his waist he throws the tatter'd gown,  
Beheld with indignation; and unloads  
His pericranium of the weighty cap,  
With sweat and grease discolour'd: then explores  
The spacious chest, and from its hollow womb  
Draws his best robe, yet not from tincture free  
Of age's reverend russet, scant and bare;  
Then down his meagre visage waving flows  
The shadowy peruke; crown'd with gummy hat 90  
Clean brush'd; a cane supports him. Thus equipp'd  
He sallies forth; swift traverses the streets,  
And seeks the lonely walk.—'Hail, sylvan scenes,  
Ye groves, ye valleys, ye meandering brooks,  
Admit me to your joys!' in rapturous phrase,  
Loud he exclaims; while with the inspiring Muse  
His bosom labours; and all other thoughts,  
Pleasure and wealth, and poverty itself,  
Before her influence vanish. Rapt in thought,



Fancy presents before his ravish'd eyes 100  
Distant posterity, upon his page  
With transport dwelling; while bright learning's sons  
That ages hence must tread this earthly ball,  
Indignant, seem to curse the thankless age,  
That starved such merit. Meantime swallow'd up,  
In meditation deep, he wanders on,  
Unweeting of his way.—But, ah! he starts  
With sudden fright! his glaring eyeballs roll,  
Pale turn his cheeks, and shake his loosen'd joints;  
His cogitations vanish into air, 110  
Like painted bubbles, or a morning dream.  
Behold the cause! see! through the opening glade,  
With rosy visage, and abdomen grand,  
A cit, a dun!—As in Apulia's wilds,  
Or where the Thracian Hebrus rolls his wave,  
A heedless kid, disportive, roves around,  
Unheeding, till upon the hideous cave  
Of the dire wolf she treads; half-dead she views  
His bloodshot eyeballs, and his dreadful fangs,  
And swift as Eurys from the monster flies. 120  
So fares the trembling bard; amazed he turns,  
Scarce by his legs upborne; yet fear supplies  
The place of strength; straight home he bends his course,  
Nor looks behind him till he safe regain  
His faithful citadel; there, spent, fatigued,  
He lays him down to ease his heaving lungs,  
Quaking, and of his safety scarce convinced.  
Soon as the panic leaves his panting breast,  
Down to the Muse's sacred rites he sits,  
Volumes piled round him; see! upon his brow 130  
Perplex'd anxiety, and struggling thought,  
Painful as female throes: whether the bard  
Display the deeds of heroes; or the fall

Of vice, in lay dramatic; or expand 134  
The lyric wing; or in elegiac strains  
Lament the fair; or lash the stubborn age,  
With laughing satire; or in rural scenes  
With shepherds sport; or rack his hard-bound brains  
For the unexpected turn. Arachne so,  
In dusty kitchen corner, from her bowels 140  
Spins the fine web, but spins with better fate,  
Than the poor bard: she! caitiff! spreads her snares,  
And with their aid enjoys luxurious life,  
Bloated with fat of insects, flesh'd in blood:  
He! hard, hard lot! for all his toil and care,  
And painful watchings, scarce protracts a while  
His meagre, hungry days! ungrateful world!  
If with his drama he adorn the stage,  
No worth-discerning concourse pays the charge,  
Or of the orchestra, or the enlightening torch. 150  
He who supports the luxury and pride  
Of craving Lais; he! whose carnage fills  
Dogs, eagles, lions; has not yet enough,  
Wherewith to satisfy the greedier maw  
Of that most ravenous, that devouring beast;  
Ycleped a poet. What new Halifax,  
What Somers, or what Dorset canst thou find,  
Thou hungry mortal? Break, wretch, break thy quill,  
Blot out the studied image; to the flames  
Commit the Stagyrte; leave this thankless trade; 160  
Erect some peddling stall, with trinkets stock'd,  
There earn thy daily halfpence, nor again  
Trust the false Muse; so shall the cleanly meal  
Repel intruding hunger.—Oh! 'tis vain,  
The friendly admonition's all in vain;  
The scribbling itch has seized him, he is lost  
To all advice, and starves for starving's sake.

Thus sung the sportful Muse, in mirthful mood, 168  
 Indulging gay the frolic vein of youth;  
 But, oh! ye gods, avert th' impending stroke  
 This luckless omen threatens! Hark! methinks  
 I hear my better angel cry, 'Retreat,  
 Rash youth! in time retreat; let those poor bards,  
 Who slighted all, all! for the flattering Muse,  
 Yet cursed with pining want, as landmarks stand,  
 To warn thee from the service of the ingrate.'

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## A BRITISH PHILIPPIC.

OCCASIONED BY THE INSULTS OF THE SPANIARDS,  
 AND THE PRESENT PREPARATIONS  
 FOR WAR. 1738.

WHENCE this unwonted transport in my breast?  
 Why glow my thoughts, and whither would the Muse  
 Aspire with rapid wing? Her country's cause  
 Demands her efforts: at that sacred call  
 She summons all her ardour, throws aside  
 The trembling lyre, and with the warrior's trump  
 She means to thunder in each British ear;  
 And if one spark of honour or of fame,  
 Disdain of insult, dread of infamy,  
 One thought of public virtue yet survive, 10  
 She means to wake it, rouse the generous flame,  
 With patriot zeal inspirit every breast,  
 And fire each British heart with British wrongs.

Alas, the vain attempt! what influence now  
 Can the Muse boast! or what attention now  
 Is paid to fame or virtue? Where is now  
 The British spirit, generous, warm, and brave,

So frequent wont from tyranny and woe 18  
To free the suppliant nations? Where, indeed!  
If that protection, once to strangers given,  
Be now withheld from sons? Each nobler thought,  
That warm'd our sires, is lost and buried now  
In luxury and avarice. Baneful vice!  
How it unmans a nation! yet I'll try,  
I'll aim to shake this vile degenerate sloth;  
I'll dare to rouse Britannia's dreaming sons  
To fame, to virtue, and impart around  
A generous feeling of compatriot woes.

Come, then, the various powers of forceful speech, 30  
All that can move, awaken, fire, transport!  
Come the bold ardour of the Theban bard!  
The arousing thunder of the patriot Greek!  
The soft persuasion of the Roman sage!  
Come all! and raise me to an equal height,  
A rapture worthy of my glorious cause!  
Lest my best efforts, failing, should debase  
The sacred theme; for with no common wing  
The Muse attempts to soar. Yet what need these?  
My country's fame, my free-born British heart,  
Shall be my best inspirers, raise my flight 40  
High as the Theban's pinion, and with more  
Than Greek or Roman flame exalt my soul.  
Oh! could I give the vast ideas birth  
Expressive of the thoughts that flame within,  
No more should lazy Luxury detain  
Our ardent youth; no more should Britain's sons  
Sit tamely passive by, and careless hear  
The prayers, sighs, groans, (immortal infamy!)  
Of fellow Britons, with oppression sunk,  
In bitterness of soul demanding aid, 50  
Calling on Britain, their dear native land,



The land of Liberty; so greatly famed 52  
For just redress; the land so often dyed  
With her best blood, for that arousing cause,  
The freedom of her sons; those sons that now  
Far from the manly blessings of her sway,  
Drag the vile fetters of a Spanish lord.  
And dare they, dare the vanquish'd sons of Spain  
Enslave a Briton? Have they then forgot,  
So soon forgot, the great, the immortal day, 60  
When rescued Sicily with joy beheld  
The swift-wing'd thunder of the British arm  
Disperse their navies? when their coward bands  
Fled, like the raven from the bird of Jove,  
From swift impending vengeance fled in vain?  
Are these our lords? And can Britannia see  
Her foes oft vanquish'd, thus defy her power,  
Insult her standard, and enslave her sons,  
And not arise to justice? Did our sires,  
Unawed by chains, by exile, or by death, 70  
Preserve inviolate her guardian rights,  
To Britons ever sacred, that her sons  
Might give them up to Spaniards?—Turn your eyes,  
Turn, ye degenerate, who with haughty boast  
Call yourselves Britons, to that dismal gloom,  
That dungeon dark and deep, where never thought  
Of joy or peace can enter; see the gates  
Harsh-creaking open; what a hideous void,  
Dark as the yawning grave, while still as death  
A frightful silence reigns! There on the ground 80  
Behold your brethren chain'd like beasts of prey:  
There mark your numerous glories, there behold  
The look that speaks unutterable woe;  
The mangled limb, the faint, the deathful eye,  
With famine sunk, the deep heart-bursting groan,

Suppress'd in silence; view the loathsome food,  
Refused by dogs, and oh! the stinging thought!  
View the dark Spaniard glorying in their wrongs,  
The deadly priest triumphant in their woes,  
And thundering worse damnation on their souls:  
While that pale form, in all the pangs of death,  
Too faint to speak, yet eloquent of all,  
His native British spirit yet untamed,  
Raises his head; and with indignant frown  
Of great defiance, and superior scorn,  
Looks up and dies.—Oh! I am all on fire!  
But let me spare the theme, lest future times  
Should blush to hear that either conquer'd Spain  
Durst offer Britain such outrageous wrong,  
Or Britain tamely bore it—

86

100

Descend, ye guardian heroes of the land!  
Scourges of Spain, descend! Behold your sons;  
See! how they run the same heroic race,  
How prompt, how ardent in their country's cause,  
How greatly proud to assert their British blood,  
And in their deeds reflect their fathers' fame!  
Ah! would to heaven ye did not rather see  
How dead to virtue in the public cause,  
How cold, how careless, how to glory deaf,  
They shame your laurels, and belie their birth!

110

Come, ye great spirits, Ca'ndish, Raleigh, Blake!  
And ye of latter name, your country's pride,  
Oh! come, disperse these lazy fumes of sloth,  
Teach British hearts with British fires to glow!  
In wakening whispers rouse our ardent youth,  
Blazon the triumphs of your better days,  
Paint all the glorious scenes of rightful war  
In all its splendours; to their swelling souls  
Say how ye bow'd th' insulting Spaniards' pride,

Say how ye thunder'd o'er their prostrate heads, 120  
Say how ye broke their lines and fired their ports,  
Say how not death, in all its frightful shapes,  
Could damp your souls, or shake the great resolve  
For right and Britain: then display the joys  
The patriot's soul exalting, while he views  
Transported millions hail with loud acclaim  
The guardian of their civil, sacred rights.  
How greatly welcome to the virtuous man  
Is death for others' good! the radiant thoughts  
That beam celestial on his passing soul, 130  
The unfading crowns awaiting him above,  
The exalting plaudit of the Great Supreme,  
Who in his actions with complacence views  
His own reflected splendour; then descend,  
Though to a lower, yet a nobler scene;  
Paint the just honours to his relics paid,  
Show grateful millions weeping o'er his grave;  
While his fair fame in each progressive age  
For ever brightens; and the wise and good  
Of every land in universal choir 140  
With richest incense of undying praise  
His urn encircle, to the wondering world  
His numerous triumphs blazon; while with awe,  
With filial reverence, in his steps they tread,  
And, copying every virtue, every fame,  
Transplant his glories into second life,  
And, with unsparing hand, make nations bless'd  
By his example. Vast, immense rewards!  
For all the turmoils which the virtuous mind  
Encounters here. Yet, Britons, are ye cold? 150  
Yet deaf to glory, virtue, and the call  
Of your poor injured countrymen? Ah! no:  
I see ye are not; every bosom glows

With native greatness, and in all its state 154  
 The British spirit rises: glorious change!  
 Fame, virtue, freedom, welcome! Oh, forgive  
 The Muse, that, ardent in her sacred cause,  
 Your glory question'd; she beholds with joy,  
 She owns, she triumphs in her wish'd mistake.  
 See! from her sea-beat throne in awful march 160  
 Britannia towers: upon her laurel crest  
 The plumes majestic nod; behold, she heaves  
 Her guardian shield, and terrible in arms  
 For battle shakes her adamantine spear:  
 Loud at her foot the British lion roars,  
 Frighting the nations; haughty Spain full soon  
 Shall hear and tremble. Go then, Britons, forth,  
 Your country's daring champions: tell your foes,  
 Tell them in thunders o'er their prostrate land,  
 You were not born for slaves: let all your deeds 170  
 Show that the sons of those immortal men,  
 The stars of shining story, are not slow  
 In virtue's path to emulate their sires,  
 To assert their country's rights, avenge her sons,  
 And hurl the bolts of justice on her foes.

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### HYMN TO SCIENCE.

'O vitæ Philosophia dux! O virtutis indagatrix, expultrixque vitiorum.  
 Tu urbes peperisti; tu inventrix legum, tu magistra morum et disciplinæ fuisti:  
 ad te confugimus, a te opem petimus.'—*Cic. Tusc. Quæst.*

1 SCIENCE! thou fair effusive ray  
 From the great source of mental day,



- Free, generous, and refined!  
Descend with all thy treasures fraught,  
Illumine each bewilder'd thought,  
And bless my labouring mind.
- 2 But first with thy resistless light,  
Disperse those phantoms from my sight,  
Those mimic shades of thee:  
The scholiast's learning, sophist's cant,  
The visionary bigot's rant,  
The monk's philosophy.
- 3 Oh! let thy powerful charms impart  
The patient head, the candid heart,  
Devoted to thy sway;  
Which no weak passions e'er mislead,  
Which still with dauntless steps proceed  
Where reason points the way.
- 4 Give me to learn each secret cause;  
Let Number's, Figure's, Motion's laws  
Reveal'd before me stand;  
These to great Nature's scenes apply,  
And round the globe, and through the sky,  
Disclose her working hand.
- 5 Next, to thy nobler search resign'd,  
The busy, restless, Human Mind  
Through every maze pursue;  
Detect Perception where it lies,  
Catch the Ideas as they rise,  
And all their changes view.
- 6 Say from what simple springs began  
The vast ambitious thoughts of man,

Which range beyond control,  
Which seek eternity to trace,  
Dive through the infinity of space,  
And strain to grasp the whole.

7 Her secret stores let Memory tell,  
Bid Fancy quit her fairy cell,  
In all her colours dress'd;  
While prompt her sallies to control,  
Reason, the judge, recalls the soul  
To Truth's severest test.

8 Then launch through Being's wide extent;  
Let the fair scale with just ascent  
And cautious steps be trod;  
And from the dead, corporeal mass,  
Through each progressive order pass  
To Instinct, Reason, God.

9 There, Science! veil thy daring eye;  
Nor dive too deep, nor soar too high,  
In that divine abyss;  
To Faith content thy beams to lend,  
Her hopes to assure, her steps befriend  
And light her way to bliss.

10 Then downwards take thy flight again,  
Mix with the policies of men,  
And social Nature's ties;  
The plan, the genius of each state,  
Its interest and its powers relate,  
Its fortunes and its rise.

11 Through private life pursue thy course,  
Trace every action to its source,

And means and motives weigh:  
Put tempers, passions, in the scale;  
Mark what degrees in each prevail,  
And fix the doubtful sway.

12 That last best effort of thy skill,  
To form the life, and rule the will,  
Propitious power! impart:  
Teach me to cool my passion's fires,  
Make me the judge of my desires,  
The master of my heart.

13 Raise me above the vulgar's breath,  
Pursuit of fortune, fear of death,  
And all in life that's mean:  
Still true to reason be my plan,  
Still let my actions speak the man,  
Through every various scene.

14 Hail! queen of manners, light of truth;  
Hail! charm of age, and guide of youth;  
Sweet refuge of distress:  
In business, thou! exact, polite;  
Thou giv'st retirement its delight,  
Prosperity its grace.

15 Of wealth, power, freedom, thou the cause;  
Foundress of order, cities, laws,  
Of arts inventress thou!  
Without thee, what were human-kind?  
How vast their wants, their thoughts how blind!  
Their joys how mean, how few!

16 Sun of the soul! thy beams unveil:  
Let others spread the daring sail

On Fortune's faithless sea:  
While, undeluded, happier I  
From the vain tumult timely fly,  
And sit in peace with thee.

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LOVE. AN ELEGY.

Too much my heart of Beauty's power hath known,  
Too long to Love hath reason left her throne;  
Too long my genius mourn'd his myrtle chain,  
And three rich years of youth consumed in vain.  
My wishes, lull'd with soft inglorious dreams,  
Forgot the patriot's and the sage's themes:  
Through each Elysian vale and fairy grove,  
Through all the enchanted paradise of love,  
Misled by sickly Hope's deceitful flame,  
Averse to action, and renouncing fame.

10

At last the visionary scenes decay,  
My eyes, exulting, bless the new-born day,  
Whose faithful beams detect the dangerous road  
In which my heedless feet securely trod,  
And strip the phantoms of their lying charms  
That lured my soul from Wisdom's peaceful arms.

For silver streams and banks bespread with flowers,  
For mossy couches and harmonious bowers,  
Lo! barren heaths appear, and pathless woods,  
And rocks hung dreadful o'er unfathom'd floods:  
For openness of heart, for tender smiles,  
Looks fraught with love, and wrath-disarming wiles;  
Lo! sullen Spite, and perjured Lust of Gain,  
And cruel Pride, and crueller Disdain;

20



Lo! cordial Faith to idiot airs refined, 25  
Now coolly civil, now transporting kind.  
For graceful Ease, lo! Affectation walks;  
And dull Half-sense, for Wit and Wisdom talks.  
New to each hour what low delight succeeds,  
What precious furniture of hearts and heads! 30  
By nought their prudence, but by getting, known,  
And all their courage in deceiving shown.

See next what plagues attend the lover's state,  
What frightful forms of Terror, Scorn, and Hate!  
See burning Fury heaven and earth defy!  
See dumb Despair in icy fetters lie!  
See black Suspicion bend his gloomy brow,  
The hideous image of himself to view!  
And fond Belief, with all a lover's flame,  
Sink in those arms that point his head with shame! 40  
There wan Dejection, faltering as he goes,  
In shades and silence vainly seeks repose;  
Musing through pathless wilds, consumes the day,  
Then lost in darkness weeps the hours away.  
Here the gay crowd of Luxury advance,  
Some touch the lyre, and others urge the dance;  
On every head the rosy garland glows,  
In every hand the golden goblet flows.  
The Syren views them with exulting eyes,  
And laughs at bashful Virtue as she flies. 50  
But see behind, where Scorn and Want appear,  
The grave remonstrance and the witty sneer;  
See fell Remorse in action, prompt to dart  
Her snaky poison through the conscious heart;  
And Sloth to cancel, with oblivious shame,  
The fair memorial of recording Fame.

Are these delights that one would wish to gain?  
Is this the Elysium of a sober brain?

To wait for happiness in female smiles, 59  
Bear all her scorn, be caught with all her wiles,  
With prayers, with bribes, with lies, her pity crave,  
Bless her hard bonds, and boast to be her slave;  
To feel, for trifles, a distracting train  
Of hopes and terrors equally in vain;  
This hour to tremble, and the next to glow;  
Can Pride, can Sense, can Reason, stoop so low:  
When Virtue, at an easier price, displays  
The sacred wreaths of honourable praise;  
When Wisdom utters her divine decree,  
To laugh at pompous Folly, and be free? 70  
I bid adieu, then, to these woful scenes;  
I bid adieu to all the sex of queens;  
Adieu to every suffering, simple soul,  
That lets a woman's will his ease control.  
There laugh, ye witty; and rebuke, ye grave!  
For me, I scorn to boast that I'm a slave.  
I bid the whining brotherhood be gone;  
Joy to my heart! my wishes are my own!  
Farewell the female heaven, the female hell;  
To the great God of Love a glad farewell. 80  
Is this the triumph of thy awful name?  
Are these the splendid hopes that urged thy aim,  
When first my bosom own'd thy haughty sway?  
When thus Minerva heard thee, boasting, say—  
'Go, martial maid, elsewhere thy arts employ,  
Nor hope to shelter that devoted boy.  
Go teach the solemn sons of Care and Age,  
The pensive statesman, and the midnight sage;  
The young with me must other lessons prove,  
Youth calls for Pleasure, Pleasure calls for Love. 90  
Behold, his heart thy grave advice disdains;  
Behold, I bind him in eternal chains.'—

Alas! great Love, how idle was the boast! 93

Thy chains are broken, and thy lessons lost ;

Thy wilful rage has tired my suffering heart,

And passion, reason, forced thee to depart.

But wherefore dost thou linger on thy way ?

Why vainly search for some pretence to stay,

When crowds of vassals court thy pleasing yoke,

And countless victims bow them to the stroke? 100

Lo! round thy shrine a thousand youths advance,

Warm with the gentle ardours of romance ;

Each longs to assert thy cause with feats of arms,

And make the world confess Dulcinea's charms.

Ten thousand girls with flowery chaplets crown'd,

To groves and streams thy tender triumph sound :

Each bids the stream in murmurs speak her flame,

Each calls the grove to sigh her shepherd's name.

But, if thy pride such easy honour scorn,

If nobler trophies must thy toil adorn, 110

Behold yon flowery antiquated maid

Bright in the bloom of threescore years display'd ;

Her shalt thou bind in thy delightful chains,

And thrill with gentle pangs her wither'd veins,

Her frosty cheek with crimson blushes dye,

With dreams of rapture melt her maudlin eye.

Turn then thy labours to the servile crowd,

Entice the wary, and control the proud ;

Make the sad miser his best gains forego,

The solemn statesman sigh to be a beau, 120

The bold coquette with fondest passion burn,

The Bacchanalian o'er his bottle mourn ;

And that chief glory of thy power maintain,

' To poise ambition in a female brain.'

Be these thy triumphs ; but no more presume

That my rebellious heart will yield thee room :



I know thy puny force, thy simple wiles;  
 I break triumphant through thy flimsy toils;  
 I see thy dying lamp's last languid glow,  
 Thy arrows blunted and unbraced thy bow.  
 I feel diviner fires my breast inflame,  
 To active science, and ingenuous fame;  
 Resume the paths my earliest choice began,  
 And lose, with pride, the lover in the man.

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TO CORDELIA.

JULY 1740.

- 1 FROM pompous life's dull masquerade,  
     From Pride's pursuits, and Passion's war,  
     Far, my Cordelia, very far,  
 To thee and me may Heaven assign  
     The silent pleasures of the shade,  
 The joys of peace, unenvied, though divine!
  
- 2 Safe in the calm embowering grove,  
     As thy own lovely brow serene;  
     Behold the world's fantastic scene!  
 What low pursuits employ the great,  
 What tinsel things their wishes move,  
 The forms of Fashion, and the toys of State.
  
- 3 In vain are all Contentment's charms,  
     Her placid mien, her cheerful eye,  
     For look, Cordelia, how they fly!  
 Allured by Power, Applause, or Gain,  
 They fly her kind protecting arms;  
 Ah, blind to pleasure, and in love with pain!



4 Turn, and indulge a fairer view,  
Smile on the joys which here conspire;  
O joys harmonious as my lyre!  
O prospect of enchanting things,  
As ever slumbering poet knew,  
When Love and Fancy wrapt him in their  
wings!

5 Here, no rude storm of Passion blows,  
But Sports, and Smiles, and Virtues play,  
Cheer'd by Affection's purest ray;  
The air still breathes Contentment's balm,  
And the clear stream of Pleasure flows  
For ever active, yet for ever calm.

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## SONG.

1 THE shape alone let others prize,  
The features of the fair;  
I look for spirit in her eyes,  
And meaning in her air;

2 A damask cheek, an ivory arm,  
Shall ne'er my wishes win:  
Give me an animated form,  
That speaks a mind within;

3 A face where awful honour shines,  
Where sense and sweetness move,  
And angel innocence refines  
The tenderness of love.

- 4 'These are the soul of Beauty's frame;  
Without whose vital aid,  
Unfinish'd all her features seem,  
And all her roses dead.
- 5 But, ah! where both their charms unite,  
How perfect is the view,  
With every image of delight,  
With graces ever new:
- 6 Of power to charm the greatest woe,  
The wildest rage control,  
Diffusing mildness o'er the brow,  
And rapture through the soul.
- 7 Their power but faintly to express,  
All language must despair;  
But go, behold Arpasia's face,  
And read it perfect there.

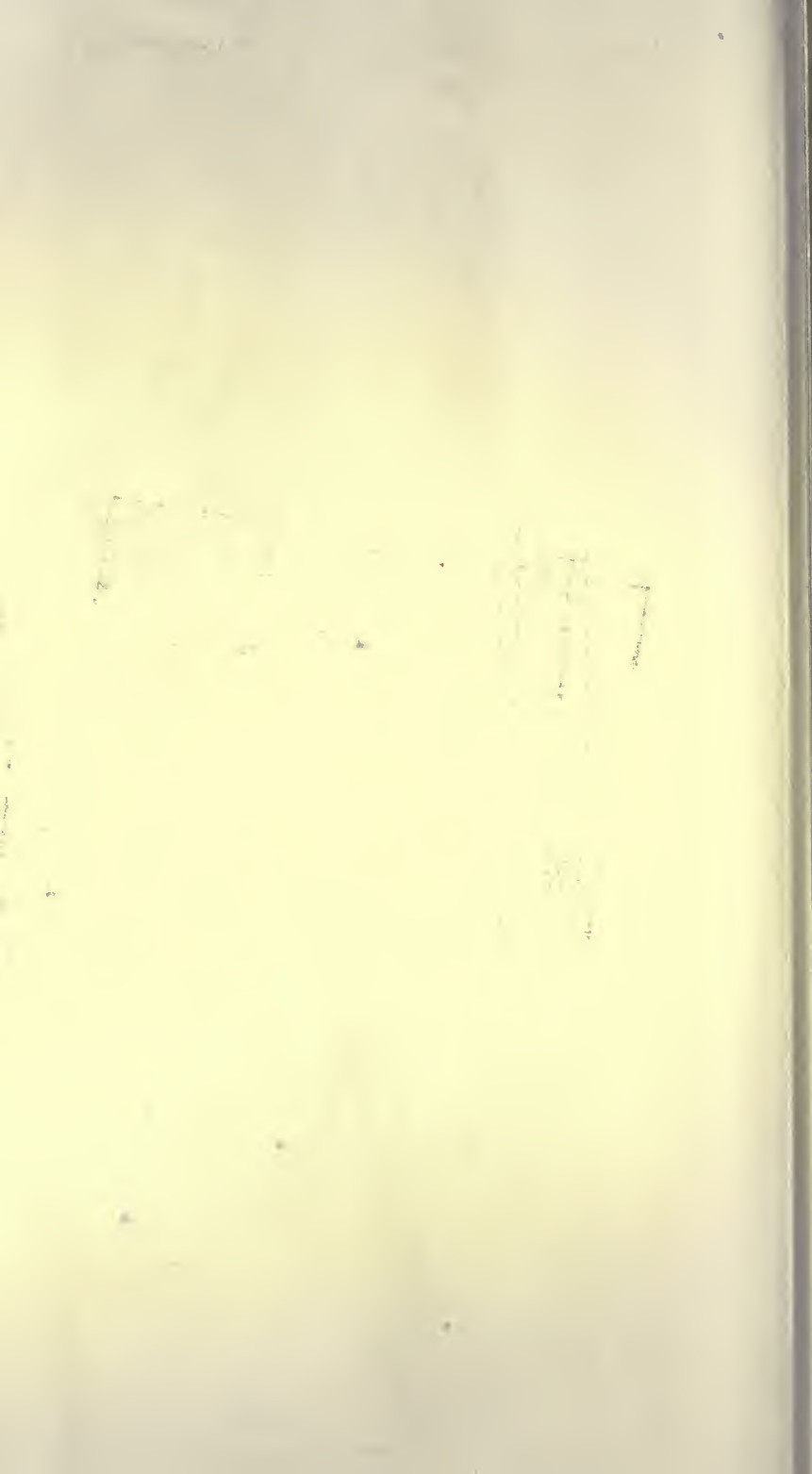
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