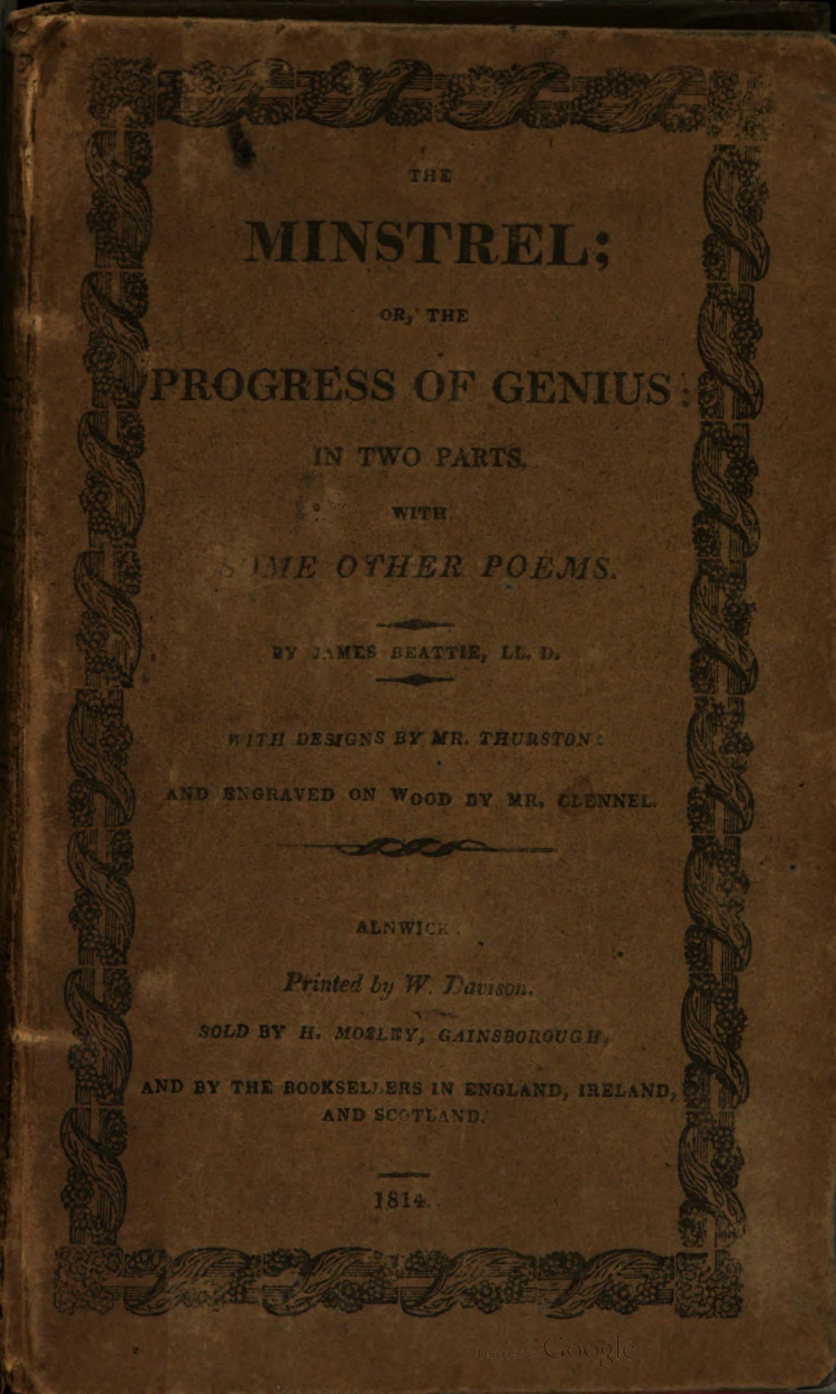

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THE
MINSTREL;
OR, THE
PROGRESS OF GENIUS:
IN TWO PARTS.
WITH
SOME OTHER POEMS.

BY JAMES BEATTIE, LL. D.

WITH DESIGNS BY MR. THURSTON:
AND ENGRAVED ON WOOD BY MR. CLENNEL.

ALNWICK.

Printed by W. Davison.

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FRONTISPIECE



*How forth the Minstrel fared in days of yore
Right glad of Heart, though homely in array
His waving Locks and beard all hoary grey .*

- E. S. -

MINSTREL

OR THE

Progress of Genius

IN TWO PARTS

with some other poems
by

JAMES BEATTIE, L.L.D.
with his Life.



E. Mitchell sc.

*Engravings on Wood by Clendell
from Designs by Thurston.*

Aberwick Printed by W. Davison.

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A

SKETCH OF THE LIFE

OF

JAMES BEATTIE, LL. D.

IT is commonly said, that the life of a good writer is best read in his works ; which can scarce fail to receive a peculiar tincture from his temper, manners, and habits : the distinguishing character of his mind, his ruling passion, at least, will there appear undisguised. But however just this observation may be, and although we might safely rest Mr. Beattie's fame, as a good man, as well as a man of genius, on this sole footing ; yet the desire which the public always shew, of being more particularly acquainted with the history of an eminent author, ought not to be disappointed ; as it proceeds not from mere curiosity, but chiefly from affection and gratitude to those by whom they have been entertained and instructed.

To give some account of a deceased friend is often a piece of justice likewise, which ought not to be re-

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fused to his memory ; and we may add, that the circumstances of an author's life will sometimes throw the best light upon his writings ; instances whereof we shall meet with in the following pages.

James Beattie was born in Lawrencekirk in Kincardineshire, in 1735. His father kept a small shop, in that place, and rented a farm in the neighbourhood ; of whom he was deprived at a very early age ; he was then only seven years old. An event of this kind is always accompanied with serious consequences, and where the circumstances of the sufferer are not sufficiently destitute to excite the commiseration of the public, and are left to their own unassisted exertions, it is that such misfortunes are most severely felt : precisely in this situation was the family of Mrs. Beattie, whose hopes, and those of her helpless offspring, were now fixed upon her eldest son David, who at that time had just seen his eighteenth year. In him they were not disappointed : actuated by those motives which confer a lustre on poverty, by his virtuous exertions, and indefatigable industry, he not only supported his mother in creditable affluence, but gave James a classical education at the parochial school of Lawrencekirk, at that time kept by the celebrated James Milne. Here it was that the natural genius of Dr. Beattie began to shine, and after various consultations it was at length

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determined that the University should give a last polish to what Mr Milne had so successfully begun.

In the year 1749 the two brothers left Lawrencetown, and directed their course to Aberdeen, at a season not the most agreeable for the undertaking, and when good roads were unknown in the North. Here Mr. Beattie pursued his studies with such diligence, as gained him the particular favour of his superiors, and he was preferred to a bursary, after public trial by the masters.

After remaining the regular course of four years at college, Mr. Beattie took his degree of Master of Arts, and returned in April 1753 to Lawrencetown, anxious for some employment that would increase his finances, without greatly interrupting the progress of his studies; fortunately about this period the neighbouring parish of Fordoun was deprived of its schoolmaster, and the very high character which Beattie bore, as a scholar and a man of genius, easily procured him the humble appointment. Its emoluments were small, and by no means suited the aspiring views of the young student. However, in this obscure retreat he applied to classical learning with unremitting assiduity. Indeed, the *Belle Lettres* had always charms for him, and by him were they cultivated with no common industry. In this situation Mr. Beattie continued for

the space of five years, admired by all who knew him for his learning, his amiable manners, and gentleness of character. At length the magistrates of Aberdeen voluntarily presented him with a vacant ushership in the grammar school of that town, with a promise of succession when the head master, who had already been upwards of half a century in that situation, should think proper to resign. An event however occurred that soon taught him higher hopes, and afforded him superior expectations; having long cultivated a taste for poetry, he applied himself about this period with unremitting assiduity to give a polish to his verses that should entitle them to meet the eye of criticism. Mr. Beattie in this respect soon realized the most sanguine wishes of his friends. The publication however of his poems was delayed for the present, in consequence of a presentation to the vacant Professorship of Moral Philosophy and Logic, in the Marischal College; this he obtained through the interest of the Earl of Erroll, and the late Duke of Argyle, who at that time had the nomination to almost every office in Scotland under patronage of the crown.

In 1761 he published a small volume of *Juvenile Poems and Translations*, several of which had been long known to the public, under different signatures, in a periodical publication called the *Scots Magazine*.

Aberdeen could at this period boast of Drs. Campbell, Gerard, Gregory, and Reid, among its professors ; and the benefits which their new associate must have derived from such company, were rendered still more invaluable, by the harmony in which they lived with each other, and the familiar manner in which they communicated their sentiments. In a kind of literary club, which met twice a month, they discussed freely all the topics of literature and philosophy which occurred to any of them ; and it was in this society that those speculations took their rise, which have since made their names so familiar to all who read for instruction.

In 1762 appeared his *Essay on Poetry and Music* ; which was delivered before the Literary Society of Aberdeen. This essay is admirably calculated to initiate youth into the general principles of criticism, and is undoubtedly one of the best treatises of the kind in the English language ; the remarks on Music are exceedingly ingenious and interesting, and discover a thorough acquaintance both with the theory and practice of that art.

In 1763, Mr. Beattie visited London ; and in 1765, published his *Judgment of Paris* ; this year also, he became acquainted with the poet Gray, and continued in close friendship with him while he lived.

In 1766 he married Miss Mary Dun, a beautiful and accomplished young woman, daughter of Dr. James Dun, master of the grammar school at Aberdeen; by her he had several children, all of whom their father unfortunately survived.

In the same year Mr. Beattie published an answer to the celebrated *David Hume*, entitled *An Essay on the Immutability of Truth*, which contained an eloquent refutation of error. It was received by the more serious part of the world in a very favourable manner, and the English Clergy in particular deemed it a masterly production. Many of its principles are supposed to have been taken from Dr. Reid of Glasgow. Be this as it may, the Essay was deservedly admired for the perspicuity of its arrangement, the elegance of its language, and the usefulness of its tendency. Indeed of infidelity Mr. Beattie speaks with a becoming indignation. To Hume and his disciples, therefore, we are to refer the following pointed lines on that subject, to be found in the Minstrel:

O Nature, how in every charm supreme?
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new!
O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due;
Blest be the day I escaped the *wrangling* crew,

From Pyrrhus' maze, and Epicurus' sty,
 And held high converse with the godlike few,
 Who to the enraptur'd heart, and ear, and eye,
 Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody.

Hence ! ye who snare and stupify the mind,
 Sophists ! of beauty, virtue, joy the bane !
 Greedy and fell though impotent and blind,
 And spread your filthy nets in Truth's fair fane,
 And ever ply your venom'd fangs amain !
 Hence to dark Error's den, whose rankling slime
 First gave you form ! hence, lest the muse should deign
 (Though loth on theme so mean to waste a rhyme)
 With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

Strong as these lines are they seem dictated by the warm feelings of the heart. Indeed the poet had closely examined the boasted system of infidelity, and discerned the slender foundations on which the structure was erected. He had also studied the tendency of infidelity, and found it to be particularly baneful, especially on the lower classes of the community. Hence his indignation was roused ; and his sympathy excited for those unhappy persons, who, robbed of their religious hopes, are left abandoned to the wretchedness of unbelief ! Contemplating its pernicious effects on every order of society, he could not view it without

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considerable emotions. "Let them know," says this eloquent writer, "that in the solitary scenes of life there is many an honest and tender heart pining with incurable anguish, pierced with the sharpest sting of disappointment, bereft of chilled friends with poverty, racked with disease, scourged by the oppressor, whom nothing but trust in Providence, and the hope of a future retribution, could preserve from the agonies of despair. And do *they* with sacrilegious hands attempt to violate this last refuge of the miserable, and to rob them of the only comfort that had survived the ravages of misfortune, malice, and tyranny! Did it ever happen that the influence of these tenets disturbed the tranquillity of virtuous retirement, deepened the gloom of human distress, or aggravated the horrors of the grave? Ye traitors to human kind, ye murderers of the human soul, how can ye answer for it to your own hearts? Surely every spark of your generosity is extinguished for ever, if *this* consideration do not awaken in you the keenest remorse."

Dr. Beattie now resumed with new vigour his favourite pursuit of cultivating the Muses, (which had in some measure been prevented by his professional duties), and gave to the world his beautiful poem of the *Minstrel, or the progress of Genius*. The object of these lines will be best gathered from his own preface. "The design was," says he, "to trace the progress of a poeti-

cal genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as a Minstrel, that is, as an itinerant poet and Muscician; a character, which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred." Few poems have been so generally read and so justly admired as the Minstrel, for no person endowed with even common taste or sensibility can peruse it with indifference; and it has enrolled the name of Beattie in the list of our most distinguished Poets. The powers of imagination that he has displayed are astonishing;—the harmony, simplicity, and variety of the composition, will bear to be compared with the greatest masters of English versification. "The measure in which it is written," observes Dr. Beattie, "from its Gothic structure and original, seems to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the Poem, and admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with." It is impossible for any thing to exceed the introductory lines, every point that imagination can conceive, constituting excellence in poetical composition, is there displayed in its fullest extent.

Ah! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar!
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime

Hath felt the influence of malignaut star,
 And wag'd with Fortune an eternal war ;
 Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
 And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
 In life's low vale remote hath pin'd alone,
 Then dropt into the grave, unpitied and unknown.

Early in the year 1773, Dr. Beattie for the second time in his life, proposed visiting London. His fame as the author of the *Minstrel*, and *Essay on Truth*, easily procured him letters of introduction to the most celebrated literary characters in the metropolis, among whom were the Earl of Mansfield, Lord Lyttleton, Drs. Johnson, Hurd, Porteus, Mr. Burke, and Mrs. Montague. From each, and particularly the latter, Mr. Beattie received the greatest civility. On the 30th of June, he had the honour of being presented to the King by Lord Dartmouth, and although the levee was particularly crowded, a conversation of some length ensued, the substance of which consisted chiefly in high commendations and compliments, strongly and elegantly expressed by his majesty on his writings, particularly the *Essay on Truth*. Such unexpected panegyric could not fail to make a lasting impression on his mind.

By the recommendation of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, a gratuity of two hundred pounds per annum

from the privy purse was settled upon him, with the compliment that he should lie on the watch, and confute every sceptical and profane opinion that should, after all he had written, dare to start up in the world. On his return to Aberdeen, Dr. Beattie was engaged in preparing for the press *An Essay on Memory and Imagination*, which had been delivered as lectures to the students under his care. This contains a vast variety of facts, collected with the greatest care; and his reasoning upon these facts, is in general unexceptionable: few essays of the same bulk contain so much good sense, or a greater fund of practical remark, suited to a variety of situations, but most peculiarly adapted for youth.

From the year 1777 to 1783, nothing remarkable occurred in the history of Dr. Beattie. His fame was firmly established, and if possible, was much higher in England than in his native country. At this latter period he published his *Dissertation on the Theory of Language*, one of the longest, most important, and original of his detached essays. If the works of Harris and Monboddo are too abstract for young students, and are rather calculated for those who have acquired some knowledge of the subject, those of Dr. Beattie are simple and comprehensive, illustrated chiefly by those

familiar topics which are best accommodated to the capacity of his readers. At the request of his friend Dr. Porteus, then Bishop of Chester, and now Bishop of London, he in the following year published his treatise on the *Evidence of Christianity*, designed with a view of fixing the attention, without fatiguing the minds of our youth, and to establish their religious principles on their first entrance into the world : in this he has completely succeeded, and perhaps no tract, if we except the Bishop's own on the same subject, ever had a greater share of popularity.

The life of Dr. Beattie had hitherto been one continued series of labour and instruction, and what with cultivating the Belles Lettres, attending to the improvement of his class in moral Philosophy, composing, preparing for, and correcting the press, but little of his time can have been devoted to the pleasures of society.

Dr. Beattie was very much tried by domestic affliction ; his wife became the victim of hereditary insanity, and his two sons, James Hay, and Montague, died successively after attaining to manhood. The situation of his wife, and the precarious state of his own health, had sunk him into a habitual depression, cast a gloom around him, and notwithstanding his singular piety, seemed to annihilate every faculty

of his soul. For several years this interesting young man was at once the companion and the friend of his father; extraordinary pains had been taken by him in his education, while his progress in classical knowledge, and his proficiency in every other department of literature, proved how well it had been bestowed. Displaying on one hand such a virtuous disposition as the fondest father might have been proud to behold; and on the other, a developement of genius and talent, which afforded an early promise of future excellence. So high indeed was the opinion entertained of his natural powers and literary acquirements, that the University of Aberdeen recommended him to his Majesty, as a proper person to be appointed assistant Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic to his father, which was accordingly done, when he was not quite nineteen. Dr. Beattie wrote a very affecting account of his son. No one who has any taste for good writing, simplicity of language, and narrative composed of a selection of the most interesting incidents, will, I am persuaded, be satisfied with perusing it only once. The Professor never completely recovered his death; and as if his sorrows had not already been sufficiently acute, he experienced in 1796 an additional weight of calamity, by the death of his younger son Montague, so named after the celebrated Mrs. Montague, who defended our immortal Shakespeare against

the misrepresentations of Voltaire. He was intended for the Church of England, and, would most probably, have proved a distinguished ornament of it, since he discovered at an early period of life, considerable shrewdness and capacity.

The effects the sudden death of his son Montague had upon him is described by Sir William Forbes, in a manner which shews how much that benevolent philanthropist felt for the afflictions of others. "The death of his only surviving child, (says he) completely unhinged the mind of Dr. Beattie; the first symptom of which, ere many days had elapsed, was a temporary, but almost total loss of memory, respecting his son. Many times he would not recollect what was become of him; and after searching in every room of the house, he would say to his niece, Mrs. Glennie, "You may think it strange, but I must ask you if I have a son, and where he is? She then felt herself under the painful necessity of bringing to his recollection his son Montague's sufferings, which always restored him to reason. And he would often, with many tears, express his thankfulness that he had no child, saying, "How could I have born to see their elegant minds mangled with madness?" When he looked for the last time on the dead body of his son, he said, "I have

now done with the world ;” and he ever after seemed to act as if he thought so : for he never after applied himself to any sort of study, and answered but few of the letters he received from the friends whom he most valued. Yet the receiving of a letter from an old friend never failed to put him in spirits for the rest of the day. Music, which had been his great delight, he could not endure, after the death of his oldest son, to hear from others ; and he disliked his own favourite violincello. A few months before Montague’s death, he had begun to play a little by way of accompaniment when Montague sung ; but after he lost him, when he was prevailed upon to touch the violincello, he was always discontented with his own performance, and at last seemed to be unhappy when he heard it. The only enjoyment he seemed to have was in books, and the society of a very few old friends. It is impossible to read the melancholy picture which he draws of his own situation about this time, without dropping a tear of pity over the sorrows and sufferings of so good a man thus severely visited by affliction.” Without dwelling longer on this melancholy narrative, suffice it to say, his spirits were never restored, and his health continued gradually to decline, till, in 1799, he was struck with a palsy, which affected his speech and memory ; and, after being reduced to a state of permanent insensibility, by repeated attacks of the same disease,

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this excellent man, all of whose labours tended to enlighten and benefit mankind, expired in June, 1803.

In his person Dr. Beattie was of the middle size, inclined to corpulency, and of a broad, square make, which seemed to indicate a more robust constitution than he really had ; during the whole course of his life he was subject to violent attacks of the head-ach, which not only interrupted his studies, but prevented him from enjoying the society of his dearest friends. His features were regular, and his complexion dark, it was in his eye that the vivacity of the poet seemed to beam, and that at all times irradiated his countenance.

In private life Dr. Beattie was an amiable character ; and as a man of general literature, especially as a poet, he must be allowed to have attained great excellence, his taste chaste, his versification elegant, and in his choice of language and imagery, will not be found inferior to the greatest of his contemporaries. Had he continued to cultivate the Muses, his classical talents, and harmonious numbers, would have ensured him still greater fame ; but there is reason to suppose he neglected the mountain of "Olympus" for the hill of "Zion," and latterly had been more anxious to obtain the reputation of a *Christian Hero*, than that of the greatest of modern Bards.

PREFACE.

TO

THE MINSTREL.

THE design was, to trace the progress of a Poetical Genius, born in a rude age, from the first dawning of fancy and reason, till that period at which he may be supposed capable of appearing in the world as A MINSTREL, that is, as an itinerant Poet and Musician ;— a character which, according to the notions of our forefathers, was not only respectable, but sacred.

I have endeavoured to imitate SPENSER in the measure of his verse, and in the harmony, simplicity, and variety of his composition. Antique expressions I have avoided ; admitting, however, some old words where they seemed to suit the subject: but I hope

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TO THE MINSTREL.  
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none will be found that are now obsolete, or in any degree not intelligible to a reader of English poetry.

To those, who may be disposed to ask, what could induce me to write in so difficult a measure, I can only answer, that it pleases my ear, and seems, from its Gothic structure and original, to bear some relation to the subject and spirit of the Poem. It admits both simplicity and magnificence of sound and of language, beyond any other stanza that I am acquainted with. It allows the sententiousness of the couplet, as well as the more complex modulation of blank verse. What some critics have remarked, of its uniformity growing at last tiresome to the ear, will be found to hold true, only when the poetry is faulty in other respects.

Book First.

THE
MINSTREL.

*Me vero primum dulces ante omnia Musæ,
Quarum sacra fero, ingenti percussus amore,
Accipiant.—* VIRGIL.

I.

AH! who can tell how hard it is to climb
The steep where Fame's proud temple shines afar!
Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Hath felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war!
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone,
Then dropt into the grave unpitied and unknown!

 THE MINSTREL.

II.

And yet, the languor of inglorious days
 Not equally oppressive is to all.
 Him, who ne'er listen'd to the voice of praise,
 The silence of neglect can ne'er appal.
 There are, who, deaf to mad ambition's call,
 Would shrink to hear th' obstreperous trump of Fame ;
 Supremely blest, if to their portion fall
 Health, competence, and peace. Nor higher aim
 Had HE, whose simple tale these artless lines proclaim.

III.

The rolls of fame I will not now explore ;
 Nor need I here describe in learned lay,
 How forth THE MINSTREL fared in days of yore,
 Right glad of heart, though homely in array :
 His waving locks and beard all hoary grey :
 While from his bending shoulder, decent hung
 His harp, the sole companion of his way,
 Which to the whistling wind responsive rung :
 And ever as he went some merry lay he sung.

 THE MINSTREL.

IV.

Fret not thyself, thou glittering child of pride,
 That a poor villager inspires my strain ;
 With thee let Pageantry and Power abide :
 The gentle Muses haunt the sylvan reign ;
 Where through wild groves at eve the lonely swain
 Enraptured roams, to gaze on Nature's charms.
 They hate the sensual, and scorn the vain,
 The parasite their influence never wants,
 Nor him whose sordid soul the love of gold attracts.

V.

Though richest hues the peacock's plumes adorn,
 Yet horror screams from his discordant throat,
 Rise, sons of harmony, and hail the morn,
 While warbling larks on russet pinions float ;
 Or seek at noon the woodland scene remote,
 Where the grey linnets carol from the hill.
 O let them ne'er, with artificial note,
 To please a tyrant, strain the little lill,
 But sing what heaven inspires, and wander where they will.

THE MINSTREL.

VI.

Liberal, not lavish, is kind Nature's hand ;
Nor was perfection made for man below.
Yet all her schemes with nicest art are plann'd,
Good counteracting ill, and gladness woe.
With gold and gems if Chilian mountains glow ;
If bleak and barren Scotia's hills arise ;
There plague and poison, lust and rapine grow ;
Here peaceful are the vales, and pure the skies,
And freedom fires the soul, and sparkles in the eyes.

VII.

Then grieve not, thou, to whom th' indulgent Muse
Vouchsafes a portion of celestial fire ;
Nor blame the partial Fates, if they refuse
Th' imperial banquet, and the rich attire.
Know thine own worth, and reverence the lyre.
Wilt thou debase the heart which God refined ?
No ; let thy heaven-taught soul to heaven aspire,
To fancy, freedom, harmony, resigned ;
Ambition's grovelling crew for ever left behind.

THE MINSTREL.

VIII.

Canst thou forego the pure ethereal soul,
In each fine sense so exquisitely keen,
On the dull couch of Luxury to loll,
Stung with disease and stupified with spleen ;
Fain to implore the aid of Flattery's screen,
Even from thyself thy loathsome heart to hide,
(The mansion then no more of joys serene)
Where fear, distrust, malevolence, abide,
And impotent desire, and disappointed pride ?

IX.

O how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields !
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields ;
All that the genial ray of Morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even,
All that the mountain's sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven,
O how canst thou renounce, and hope to be forgiv'n !

 THE MINSTREL.

X.

These charms shall work thy soul's eternal health,
 And love, and gentleness, and joy, impart.
 But these thou must renounce, if lust of wealth
 E'er win its way to thy corrupted heart ;
 For, ah ! it poisons like a scorpion's dart ;
 Prompting th' ungenerous wish, the selfish scheme,
 The stern resolve, unmoved by pity's smart,
 The troublous day, and long distressful dream.
 Return, my roving Muse, resume thy purposed theme.

XI.

There liv'd in Gothic days, as legends tell,
 A shepherd-swain, a man of low degree :
 Whose sires, perchance, in Fairyland might dwell,
 Sicilian groves, or vales of Arcady ;
 But he, I ween, was of the North Countrie ; (1)
 A nation famed for song, and beauty's charms ;
 Zealous, yet modest ; innocent, though free ;
 Patient of toil ; serene amidst alarms ;
 Inflexible in faith ; invincible in arms.

 MINSTREL.

XII.

The shepherd-swain of whom I mention made,
 On Scotia's mountains fed his little flock ;
 The sickle, scythe, or plough, he never sway'd ;
 An honest heart was almost all his stock ;
 His drink the living water from the rock :
 The milky dams supplied his board, and lent
 Their kindly fleece to baffle winter's shock ;
 And he, though oft with dust and sweat besprent,
 Did guide and guard their wanderings, wheresoe'er they
 went.

XIII.

From labour health, from health contentment springs,
 Contentment opes the source of every joy,
 He envied not, he never thought of kings ;
 Nor from those appetites sustain'd annoy,
 That chance may frustrate, or indulgence cloy :
 Nor fate his calm and humble hopes beguiled ;
 He mourned no recreant friend, nor mistress coy,
 For on his vows the blameless Phoebe smiled,
 And her alone he loved, and loved her from a child.

 THE MINSTREL.

XIV.

No jealousy their dawn of love o'ercast,
 Nor blasted were their wedded days with strife ;
 Each season look'd delightful, as it past,
 To the fond husband, and the faithful wife.
 Beyond the lowly vale of shepherd life
 They never roam'd ; secure beneath the storm
 Which in ambition's lofty land is rife,
 Where peace and love are canker'd by the worm
 Of pride, each bud of joy industrious to deform.

XV.

The wight, whose tale these artless lines unfold,
 Was all the offspring of this humble pair.
 His birth no oracle or seer foretold :
 No prodigy appear'd in earth or air,
 Nor aught that might a strange event declare.
 You guess each circumstance of EDWIN'S birth ;
 The parent's transport and the parent's care ;
 The gossip's prayer for wealth, and wit, and worth ;
 And one long summer-day of indolence and mirth.

THE MINSTREL.

XVI.

And yet poor EDWIN was no vulgar boy ;
Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye.
Dainties he heeded not, nor gaude, nor toy,
Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsy.
Silent when glad ; affectionate though shy ;
And now his look was most demurely sad,
And now he laugh'd aloud, yet none knew why.
The neighbours star'd and sigh'd, yet bless'd the lad :
Some deem'd him wond'rous wise, and some believ'd him
mad.

XVII.

But why should I his childish feats display ?
Concourse, and noise, and toil, he ever fled ;
Nor cared to mingle in the clamorous fray
Of squabbling imps, but to the forest sped,
Or roam'd at large the lonely mountain's head ;
Or, where the maze of some bewilder'd stream
To deep untrodden groves his footsteps led,
There would he wander wild, till Phœbus' beam,
Shot from the western cliff, released the weary team.

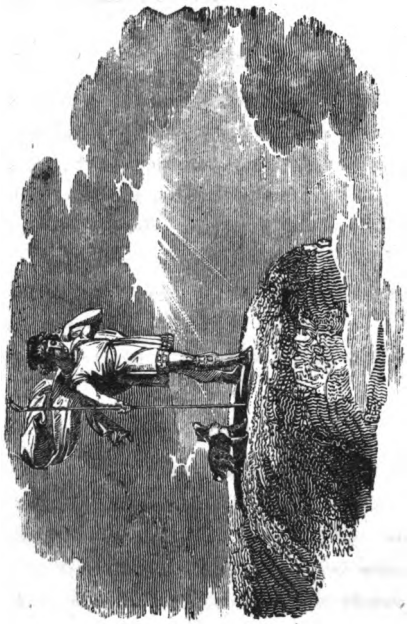
 THE MINSTREL.

XVIII.

Th' exploit of strength, dexterity, or speed,
 To him nor vanity nor joy could bring.
 His heart, from cruel sport estranged, would bleed
 To work the woe of any living thing,
 By trap, or net ; by arrow, or by sling ;
 These he detested, those he scorn'd to wield :
 He wish'd to be the guardian, not the king,
 Tyrant far less, or traitor of the field.
 And sure the sylvan reign unbloody joy might yield.

XIX.

Lo ! where the stripling, wrapt in wonder, roves,
 Beneath the precipice o'erhung with pine ;
 And sees, on high, amidst th' encircling groves,
 From cliff to cliff the foaming torrents shine :
 While waters, woods, and winds, in concert join,
 And echo swells the chorus to the skies.
 Would EAWIN this majestic scene resign
 For aught the huntsman's pany craft supplies ?
 Ah ! no: he better knows great Nature's charms to prize.



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THE MINSTREL.  
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XX.

And oft he traced the uplands, to survey,
When o'er the sky advanced the kindling dawn,
The crimson cloud, blue main, and mountain grey,
And lake, dim gleaming on the smoky lawn ;
Far to the west the long, long vale withdrawn,
Where twilight loves to linger for a while ;
And now he faintly kens the bounding fawn,
And villager abroad at early toil.—
But, lo! the sun appears! and heaven, earth, ocean, smile.

XXI.

And oft the craggy cliff he loved to climb,
When all in mist the world below was lost.
What dreadful pleasure ! there to stand sublime,
Like shipwreck'd mariner on desert coast,
And view th' enormous waste of vapour, tost
In billows, lengthening to th' horizon round,
Now scoop'd in gulfs, with mountains now emboss'd !
And hear the voice of mirth and song rebound,
Flocks, herds, and waterfalls, along the hoar profound.

D

 THE MINSTREL.

XXII.

In truth he was a strange and wayward wight,
 Fond of each gentle, and each dreadful scene.
 In darkness, and in storm, he found delight :
 Nor less, than when on ocean wave serene
 The southern sun diffused his dazzling sheen,
 Even sad vicissitude amused his soul :
 And if a sigh would sometimes intervene,
 And down his cheek a tear of pity roll,
 A sigh, a tear, so sweet, he wish'd not to control.

XXIII.

" O ye wild groves, O where is now your bloom !"
 (The Muse interprets thus his tender thought)
 " Your flowers, your verdure, and your balmy gloom,
 " Of late so grateful in the hour of drought ;
 " Why do the birds, that song and rapture brought
 " To all your bowers, their mansions now forsake ?
 " Ah ! why has fickle chance this ruin wrought ?
 " For now the storm howls mournful thro' the brake,
 " And the dead foliage flies in many a shapeless flake.

THE MINSTREL.

XXIV.

“ Where now the rill, melodious, pure, and cool,
“ And meads, with life, and mirth, and beauty crown’d!
“ Ah! see, th’ unsightly slime, and sluggish pool,
“ Have all the solitary vale imbrown’d ;
“ Fled each fair form, and mute each melting sound,
“ The raven croaks forlorn on naked spray :
“ And, hark! the river, bursting every mound,
“ Down the vale thunders ; and with wasteful sway,
“ Uproots the grove, and rolls the shatter’d rocks away.

XXV.

“ Yet such the destiny of all on earth :
“ So flourishes and fades majestic Man.
“ Fair is the bud his vernal morn brings forth,
“ And fostering gales awhile the nursling fan.
“ O smile, ye heavens, serene ; ye mildews wan,
“ Ye blighting whirlwinds, spare his balmy prime,
“ Nor lessen of his life the little span.
“ Borne on the swift, though silent, wings of Time,
“ Old age comes on apace to ravage all the clime.

 THE MINSTREL.

XXVI.

- " And be it so. Let those deplore their doom,
 " Whose hope still grovels in this dark sojourn.
 " But lofty souls, who look beyond the tomb,
 " Can smile at Fate, and wonder how they mourn.
 " Shall spring to these sad scenes no more return?
 " Is yonder wave the sun's eternal bed?
 " Soon shall the orient with new lustre burn,
 " And spring shall soon her vital influence shed,
 " Again attune the grove, again adorn the mead.

XXVII.

- " Shall I be left forgotten in the dust,
 " When Fate, relenting, lets the flower revive?
 " Shall Nature's voice, to man alone unjust,
 " Bid him, though doom'd to perish, hope to live?
 " Is it for this fair Virtue oft must strive
 " With disappointment, penury, and pain?
 " No: Heaven's immortal spring shall yet arrive;
 " And man's majestic beauty bloom again,
 " Bright thro' th' eternal year of Love's triumphant reign."

 THE MINSTREL.

XXVIII.

This truth sublime his simple sire had taught,
 In sooth, 'twas almost all the shepherd knew,
 No subtle nor superfluous lore he sought,
 Nor ever wish'd his Edwin to pursue.
 "Let man's own sphere," said he "confine his view,
 "Be man's peculiar work his sole delight."
 And much, and oft, he warn'd him to eschew
 Falsehood and guile, and aye maintain the right,
 By pleasure unseduced, unawed by lawless might.

XXIX.

"And, from the prayer of Want, and plaint of Woe,
 "O never, never turn away thine ear,
 "Forlorn in this bleak wilderness below,
 "Ah! what were man, should Heaven refuse to hear!
 "To others do (the law is not severe)
 "What to thyself thou wishest to be done.
 "Forgive thy foes; and love thy parents dear,
 "And friends, and native land; nor those alone;
 "All human weal and woe learn thou to make thine own."

THE MINSTREL.

XXX.

See in the rear of the warm sunny shower,
The visionary boy from shelter fly !
For now the storm of summer-rain is o'er,
And cool, and fresh, and fragrant, is the sky !
And, lo ! in the dark east expanded high,
The rainbow brightens to the setting sun ;
Fond fool, that deem'st the streaming glory nigh,
How vain the chase thine ardour has begun !
'Tis fled afar, ere half thy purposed race be run.

XXXI.

Yet couldst thou learn, that thus it fares with age,
When pleasure, wealth, or power, the bosom warm,
This baffled hope might tame thy manhood's rage,
And disappointment of her sting disarm.—
But why should foresight thy fond heart alarm ?
Perish the lore that deadens young desire !
Pursue, poor imp, th' imaginary charm,
Indulge gay Hope, and Fancy's pleasing fire :
Fancy and Hope too soon shall of themselves expire.

THE MINSTREL.

XXXII.

When the long-sounding curfew from afar
Loaded with loud lament the lonely gale,
Young Edwin, lighted by the evening star,
Lingering and listening, wander'd down the vale.
There would he dream of graves, and corpses pale ;
And ghosts, that to the charnel-dungeon throng,
And drag a length of clanking chain, and wail,
Till silenced by the owl's terrific song,
Or blast that shrieks by fits the shuddering aisles along.

XXXIII.

Or when the setting moon, in crimson died,
Hung o'er the dark and melancholy deep,
To haunted stream, remote from man he hied,
Where Fays of yore their revels wont to keep ;
And there let Fancy roam at large, till sleep
A vision brought to his entranced sight.
And first, a wildly-murmuring wind 'gan creep
Shrill to his ringing ear ; then tapers bright,
With instantaneous gleam, illumed the vault of Night.

 THE MINSTREL.

XXXIV.

Anon in view a portal's blazon'd arch
 Arose ; the trumpet bids the valves unfold ;
 And forth an host of little warriors march,
 Grasping the diamond lance, and targe of gold.
 Their look was gentle, their demeanour bold,
 And green their helmets, and green their silk attire ;
 And here and there, right venerably old,
 The long-rob'd minstrels wake the warbling wire,
 And some with mellow breath the martial pipe inspire.

XXXV.

With merriment, and song, and timbrels clear,
 A troop of dames from myrtle bowers advance ;
 The little warriors doff the targe and spear,
 And loud enlivening strains provoke the dance.
 They meet, they dart away, they wheel askance ;
 To right, to left, they thrud the flying maze ;
 Now bound aloft with vigorous spring, then glance
 Rapid along : with many-colour'd rays
 Of tapers, gems, and gold, the echoing forests blaze.

THE MINSTREL.

XXXVI.

The dream is fled. Proud harbinger of day,
Who scar'dst the vision with thy clarion shrill,
Fell chanticler ! who oft has reft away
My fancied good, and brought substantial ill !
O to thy cursed scream, discordant still,
Let Harmony aye shut her gentle ear :
Thy boastful mirth let jealous rivals spill,
Insult thy crest, and glossy pinions tear,
And ever in thy dreams the ruthless fox appear.

XXXVII.

Forbear, my Muse. Let Love attune thy line.
Revoke the spell. 'Thine Edwin frets not so.
For how should he at wicked chance repine,
Who feels from every change amusement flow ?
Even now his eyes with smiles of rapture glow,
As on he wanders through the scenes of morn,
Where the fresh flowers in living lustræ blow,
Where thousand pearls the dewy lawns adorn,
A thousand notes of joy in every breeze are borne.

THE MINSTREL.

XXXVIII.

But who the melodies of morn can tell ?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side ;
The lowing herd ; the sheepfold's simple bell ;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley ; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above ;
The hollow murmur of the ocean-tide ;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

XXXIX.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark ;
Crown'd with her pail the tripping milk-maid sings ;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield ; and, hark !
Down the rough slope the ponderous waggon rings ;
Through rustling corn the hare astonish'd springs ;
Slow tolls the village-clock the drowsy hour ;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings :
Deep mourns the turtle in sequester'd bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aerial tour.

THE MINSTREL.

XL.

O Nature, how in every charm supreme !
Whose votaries feast on raptures ever new !
O for the voice and fire of seraphim,
To sing thy glories with devotion due !
Blest be the day I 'scaped the wrangling crew,
From Pyrrho's maze, and Epicurus' sty ;
And held high converse with the godlike few,
Who to th' enraptur'd heart, and ear, and eye,
Teach beauty, virtue, truth, and love, and melody,

XLI.

Hence ! ye, who snare and stupify the mind,
Sophists, of beauty, virtue, joy, the bane !
Greedy and fell, though impotent and blind,
Who spread your filthy nets in Truth's fair fane,
And ever ply your venom'd fangs amain !
Hence to dark Error's den, whose rankling slime
First gave you form ! hence ! lest the Muse should deign,
(Though loth on theme so mean to waste a rhyme),
With vengeance to pursue your sacrilegious crime.

THE MINSTREL.

XLII.

But hail, ye mighty masters of the lay,
Nature's true sons, the friends of man and truth !
Whose song, sublimely sweet, serenely gay,
Amused my childhood, and inform'd my youth.
O let your spirit still my bosom soothe,
Inspire my dreams, and my wild wanderings guide !
Your voice each rugged path of life can smooth ;
For well I know, wherever ye reside,
There harmony, and peace, and innocence, abide.

XLIII.

Ah me ! neglected on the lonesome plain,
As yet poor Edwin never knew your lore,
Save when against the winter's drenching rain,
And driving snow, the cottage shut the door.
Then, as instructed by tradition hoar,
Her legend when the Beldam 'gan impart,
Or chant the old heroic ditty o'er,
Wonder and joy ran thrilling to his heart ;
Much he the tale admired, but more the tuneful art.




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THE MINSTREL.  
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XLIV.

Various and strange was the long-winded tale ;
And halls, and knights, and feats of arms, display'd ;
Or merry swains, who quaff the nut-brown ale,
And sing, enamour'd of the nut-brown maid ;
The moon-light revel of the fairy glade ;
Or hags, that suckle an infernal brood,
And ply in caves th' unutterable trade, (2)
'Midst fiends and spectres, quench the moon in blood,
Yell in the midnight storm, or ride th' infuriate flood.

XLV.

But when to horror his amazement rose,
A gentler strain the Beldam would rehearse,
A tale of rural life, a tale of woes,
The orphan-babes, and guardian uncle fierce.
O cruel ! will no pang of pity pierce
That heart by lust of lucre sear'd to stone !
For sure, if aught of virtue last, or verse,
To latest times shall tender souls bemoan
Those helpless orphan-babes by thy fell arts undone.

 THE MINSTREL.

XLVI.

Behold, with berries smear'd, with brambles torn, (3)
 The babes now famish'd lay them down to die,
 'Midst the wild howl of darksome woods forlorn,
 Folded in one another's arms they lie ;
 Nor friend, nor stranger hears their dying cry :
 " For from the town the man returns no more."
 But thou, who Heaven's just vengeance dar'st defy,
 This deed with fruitless tears shalt soon deplore,
 When death lays waste thy house, and flames consume
 thy store.

XLVII.

A stifled smile of stern vindictive joy
 Brighten'd one moment Edwin's starting tear.—
 " But why should gold man's feeble mind decoy,
 " And innocence thus die by doom severe?"
 O Edwin ! while thy heart is yet sincere,
 Th' assaults of discontent and doubt repel :
 Dark even at noontide is our mortal sphere ;
 But let us hope,——to doubt, is to rebel,——
 Let us exult in hope, that all shall yet be well.

THE MINSTREL.

XLVIII.

Nor be thy generous indignation check'd,
Nor check'd the tender tear to Misery given ;
From guilt's contagious power shall that protect,
This soften and refine the soul for Heaven.
But dreadful is their doom, whom doubt has driven
To censure Fate, and pious hope forego :
Like yonder blasted boughs by lightning riven,
Perfection, beauty, life, they never know,
But frown on all that pass, a monument of woe.

XLIX.

Shall he, whose birth, maturity, and age,
Scarce fill the circle of one summer day,
Shall the poor gnat with discontent and rage
Exclaim, that Nature hastens to decay,
If but a cloud obstruct the solar ray,
If but a momentary shower descend !
Or shall frail man Heaven's dread decree gainsay,
Which bade the series of events extend
Wide through unnumber'd worlds, and ages without end.

E

 THE MINSTREL.

I.

One part, one little part, we dimly scan
 Through the dark medium of life's feverish dream ;
 Yet dare arraign the whole stupendous plan,
 If but that little part incongruous seem.
 Nor is that part perhaps what mortals deem ;
 Oft from apparent ill our blessings arise.
 O then renounce that inapious self-esteem,
 That aims to trace the secrets of the skies :
 For thou art but of dust ; be humble, and be wise.

II.

Thus Heaven enlarged his soul in riper years.
 For Nature gave him strength and fire, to soar
 On Fancy's wing above this vale of tears ;
 Where dark cold-hearted sceptics, creeping, pore
 Through microscope of metaphysic lore :
 And much they grope for truth, but never hit.
 For why ? their powers, inadequate before,
 This idle art makes more and more unfit ;
 Yet deem they darkness light, and their vain blunders wit.

THE MINSTREL.

LII.

Nor was this ancient dame a foe to mirth.
Her ballad, jest, and riddle's quaint device
Oft cheer'd the shepherds round their social hearth ;
Whom levity or spleen could ne'er entice
To purchase 'chat or laughter, at the price
Of decency. ° Nor let it faith exceed,
That Nature forms a rustic taste so nice.
Ah! had they been of court or city breed,
Such delicacy were right marvellous indeed.

LIII.

Oft when the winter storm had ceased to rave,
He roam'd the snowy waste at even, to view
The cloud stupendous, from th' Atlantic wave
High-towering, sail along the horizon blue :
Where 'midst the changeful scenery ever new
Fancy a thousand wondrous forms descries
More wildly great than ever pencil drew,
Rocks, torrents, gulfs, and shapes of giant size,
And glittering cliffs on cliffs, and fiery ramparts rise.

THE MINSTREL.

LIV.

Thence musing onward to the sounding shore,
The lone enthusiast oft would take his way,
Listening with pleasing dread to the deep roar
Of the wide-weltering waves. In black array
When sulphurous clouds roll'd on the vernal day,
Even then he hastened from the haunt of man,
Along the trembling wilderness to stray,
What time the lightning's fierce career began,
And o'er Heaven's rending arch the rattling thunder ran.

LV.

Responsive to the sprightly pipe when all
In sprightly dance the village youth were join'd,
Edwin, of melody aye held in thrall,
From the rude gambol far remote reclined,
Sooth'd with the soft notes warbling in the wind.
Ah then, all jollity seem'd noise and folly,
To the pure soul by Fancy's fire refined,
Ah, what is mirth but turbulence unholy,
When with the charm compared of heavenly melancholy!

THE MINSTREL.

LVI.

Is there a heart that music cannot melt ?
Alas ! how is that rugged heart forlorn !
Is there, who ne'er those mystic transports felt
Of solitude and melancholy born ?
He needs not woo the Muse ; he is her scorn.
The sophist's rope of cobweb he shall twine ;
Mope o'er the schoolman's peevish page ; or mourn,
And delve for life in Mammon's dirty mine ;
Sneak with the scoundrel fox, or grunt with glutton swine.

LVII.

For Edwin, Fate a nobler doom had plann'd ;
Song was his favourite and first pursuit.
The wild harp rang to his adventurous hand,
And languish'd to his breath the plaintive flute.
His infant muse, though artless, was not mute :
Of elegance as yet he took no care ;
For this of time and culture is the fruit ;
And Edwin gain'd at last this fruit so rare ;
As in some future verse I purpose to declare.

 THE MINSTREL.

LVIII.

Meanwhile, whate'er of beautiful, or new,
 Sublime, or dreadful, in earth, sea, or sky,
 By chance, or search, was offer'd to his view,
 He scann'd with curious and romantic eye.
 Whate'er of love tradition could supply
 From Gothic tale, or song, or fable old,
 Roused him, still keen to listen and to pry.
 At last, though long by penury control'd,
 And solitude, his soul her graces 'gan unfold.

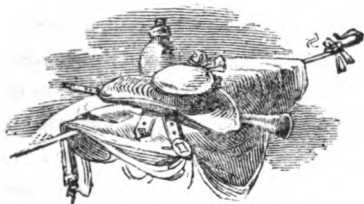
LIX.

Thus on the chill Lapponian's dreary land,
 For many a long month lost in snow profound,
 When Sol from Cancer sends the season bland,
 And in their northern cave the storms are bound;
 From silent mountains, straight, with startling sound,
 Torrents are hurl'd; green hills emerge; and lo,
 The trees with foliage, cliffs with flowers are crown'd;
 Pure rills through vales of verdure warbling go;
 And wonder, love, and joy, the peasant's hearts overflow. (4)

THE MINSTREL.

LX.

Here pause, my Gothic lyre, a little while.
The leisure hour is all that thou canst claim.
But on this verse if Montague should smile,
New strains ere long shall animate thy frame.
And her applause to me is more than fame ;
For still with truth accords her taste refined.
At lucre or renown let others aim,
I only wish to please the gentle mind,
Whom Nature's charms inspire, and love of human kind.



Book Second.

THE
MINSTREL.

*Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus pectora roborant.* HORACE.

I.

OF chance or change O let not man complain,
Else shall he never never cease to wail,
For, from th' imperial dome, to where the swain
Rears the lone cottage in the silent dale,
All feel th' assault of fortune's fickle gale ;
Art, empire, earth itself, to change are doom'd:
Earthquakes have rais'd to heaven the humble vale,
And gulphs the mountain's mighty mass entomb'd,
And where the Atlantic rolls, wide continents have
bloom'd. (1)

THE MINSTREL.

II.

But sure to foreign climes we need not range,
Nor search the ancient records of our race,
To learn the dire effects of time and change,
Which in ourselves, alas ! we daily trace.
Yet at the darken'd eye, the wither'd face,
Or hoary hair, I never will repine :
But spare, O Time, whate'er of mental grace,
Of candour, love, or sympathy divine,
Whate'er of fancy's ray, or friendship's flame is mine.

III.

So I obsequious to Truth's dread command,
Shall here without reluctance change my lay,
And smite the Gothic lyre with harsher hand ;
Now when I leave that flowery path for aye,
Of childhood, where I sported many a day,
Warbling and sauntering carelessly along ;
Where every face was innocent and gay,
Each vale romantic, tuneful every tongue,
Sweet, wild, and artless all, as Edwin's infant song.

THE MINSTREL.

IV.

“ Perish the lore that deadens young desire,”
Is the soft tenour of my song no more.
Edwin, though loved of Heaven, must not aspire
To bliss, which mortals never knew before.
On trembling wings let youthful fancy soar.
Nor always haunt the sunny realms of joy ;
But now and then the shades of life explore ;
Though may a sound and sight of woe annoy,
And many a qualm of care his rising hopes destroy.

V.

Vigour from toil, from trouble patience grows.
The weakly blossom, warm in summer bower,
Some tints of transient beauty may disclose ;
But soon it withers in the chilling hour.
Mark yonder oaks ! Superior to the power
Of all the warring winds of heaven they rise,
And from the stormy promontory tower,
And toss their giant arms amid the skies,
While each assailing blast increase of strength supplies.

THE MINSTREL.

VI.

And now the downy cheek and deepen'd voice
Gave dignity to Edwin's blooming prime ;
And walks of wider circuit were his choice,
And vales more wild, and mountains more sublime.
One evening, as he framed the careless rhyme,
It was his chance to wander far abroad,
And o'er a lonely eminence to climb,
Which heretofore his foot had never trod ;
A vale appear'd below, a deep retir'd abode.

VII.

Thither he hied, enamour'd of the scene :
For rocks on rocks piled, as by magic spell,
Here scorch'd with lightning, there with ivy green,
Fenced from the north and east this savage dell ;
Southward a mountain rose with easy swell,
Whose long long groves eternal murmur made ;
And toward the western sun a streamlet fell,
Where, through the cliffs, the eye, remote, survey'd
Blue hills, and glittering waves, and skies in gold array'd.

THE MINSTREL.

VIII.

Along this narrow valley you might see
The wild deer sporting on the meadow ground,
And here, and there, a solitary tree,
Or mossy stone, or rock with woodbine crown'd.
Oft did the cliffs reverberate the sound
Of parted fragments tumbling from on high ;
And from the summit of that craggy mound
The parching eagle oft was heard to cry,
Or on resounding wings to shoot athwart the sky.

IX.

One cultivated spot there was, that spread
Its flowery bosom to the noonday beam,
Where many a rose-bud rears its blushing head,
And herbs for food with future plenty teem.
Sooth'd by the lulling sound of grove and stream,
Romantic visions swarm on Edwin's soul :
He minded not the sun's last trembling gleam,
Nor heard from far the twilight curfew toll ;—
When slowly on his ear these moving accents stole :

 THE MINSTREL.

X.

- " Hail, awful scenes, that calm the troubled breast,
 " And woo the weary to profound repose ;
 " Can Passion's wildest uproar lay to rest,
 " And whisper comfort to the man of woes !
 " Here innocence may wander, safe from foes,
 " And contemplation soar on seraph wings.
 " O Solitude, the man who thee forgoes,
 " When lucre lures him, or ambition stings,
 " Shall never know the source whence real grandeur springs.

XI.

- " Vain man, is grandeur given to gay attire ?
 " Then let the butterfly thy pride upbraid :—
 " To friends, attendants, armies, bought with hire ?
 " It is thy weakness that requires their aid :—
 " To palaces, with gold and gems inlaid ?
 " They fear the thief, and tremble in the storm :—
 " To hosts, through carnage who to conquest wade ?
 " Behold the victor vanquish'd by the worm !
 " Behold, what deeds of woe the locust can perform !

 THE MINSTREL.

XII.

" True dignity is his, whose tranquil mind
 " Virtue has raised above the things below ;
 " Who, every hope and fear to Heaven resign'd,
 " Shrinks not, though Fortune aim her deadliest blow."
 —This strain from 'midst the rocks was heard to flow
 In solemn sounds. Now beam'd the evening star ;
 And from embattled clouds emerging slow,
 Cynthia came riding on her silver car ;
 And hoary mountain-cliffs shone faintly from afar.

XIII.

Soon did the solemn voice its theme renew ;
 (While Edwin wrapt in wonder listening stood)
 " Ye tools and toys of tyranny, adieu,
 " Scorn'd by the wise, and hated by the good !
 " Ye only can engage the servile brood
 " Of Levity and Lust, who, all their days,
 " Asham'd of truth and liberty, have woo'd,
 " And hugg'd the chain, that glittering on their gaze
 " Seems to outshine the pomp of Heaven's empyreal blaze.

F

THE MINSTREL.

XIV.

“ Like them, abandon’d to Ambition’s sway,
“ I sought for glory in the paths of guile ;
“ And fawn’d and smil’d, to plunder and betray,
“ Myself betray’d and plunder’d all the while ;
“ So gnaw’d the viper the corroding file ;
“ But now with pangs of keen remorse I rue
“ Those years of trouble and debasement vile.—
“ Yet why should I this cruel theme pursue !
“ Fly, fly, detested thoughts, for ever from my view.

XV.

“ The gusts of appetite, the clouds of care,
“ And storms of disappointment, all o’erpast,
“ Henceforth no earthly hope with Heaven shall share
“ This heart, where peace serenely shines at last.
“ And if for me no treasure be amass’d,
“ And if no future age shall hear my name,
“ I lurk the more secure from fortune’s blast,
“ And with more leisure feed this pious flame,
Whose rapture far transcends the fairest hopes of fame.

THE MINSTREL.

XVI.

- “ The end and the reward of toil is rest.
“ Be all my prayer for virtue and for peace.
“ Of wealth and fame, of pomp and power possess’d,
“ Who ever felt his weight of woe decrease !
“ Ah ! what avails the lore of Rome and Greece,
“ The lay heaven-prompted, and harmonious string,
“ The dust of Ophir, or the Tyrian fleece,
“ All that art, fortune, enterprise, can bring,
“ If envy, scorn, remorse, or pride, the bosom wring !

XVII.

- “ Let Vanity adorn the marble tomb
“ With trophies, rhymes, and scutcheons, of renown,
“ In the deep dungeon of some Gothic dome,
“ Where night and desolation ever frown.
“ Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down ;
“ Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
“ With here and there a violet bestrown,
“ Fast by a brook, or fountain’s murmuring wave ;
“ And many an evening sun shine sweetly on my grave.

THE MINSTREL.

XVIII.

- “ And thither let the village swain repair ;
“ And, light of heart, the village maiden gay,
“ To deck with flowers her half-dishvell'd hair,
“ And celebrate the merry morn of May.
“ There let the shepherd's pipe the live-long day,
“ Fill all the grove with love's bewitching woe ;
“ And when mild Evening comes in mantle grey,
“ Let not the blooming band make haste to go,
“ No ghost, nor spell, my long and last abode shall know.

XIX.

- “ For though I fly to 'scape from Fortune's rage,
“ And bear the scars of envy, spite, and scorn,
“ Yet with mankind no horrid war I wage,
“ Yet with no impious spleen my breast is torn ;
“ For virtue lost, and ruin'd man, I mourn.
“ O Man, creation's pride, heaven's darling child,
“ Whom nature's best, divinest gifts adorn,
“ Why from thy home are truth and joy exil'd,
“ And all thy favourite haunts with blood and tears defil'd !

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THE MINSTREL.  
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XX.

“ Along yon glittering sky what glory streams !
“ What majesty attends Night’s lovely queen ;
“ Fair laughs our vallies in the vernal beams ;
“ And mountains rise, and oceans roll between,
“ And all conspire to beautify the scene.
“ But in the mental world, what chaos drear !
“ What forms of mournful, loathsome, furious mien !
“ O when shall that eternal Morn appear,
“ These dreadful forms to chase, this chaos dark to clear !

XXI.

“ O thou, at whose creative smile, yon heaven,
“ In all the pomp of beauty, life, and light,
“ Rose from th’ abyss ; when dark Confusion, driven
“ Down, down the bottomless profound of night,
“ Fled, where he ever flies thy piercing sight !
“ O glance on these sad shades one pitying ray,
“ To blast the fury of oppressive might,
“ Melt the hard heart to love and mercy’s sway,
“ And cheer the wandering soul, and light him on the way.”

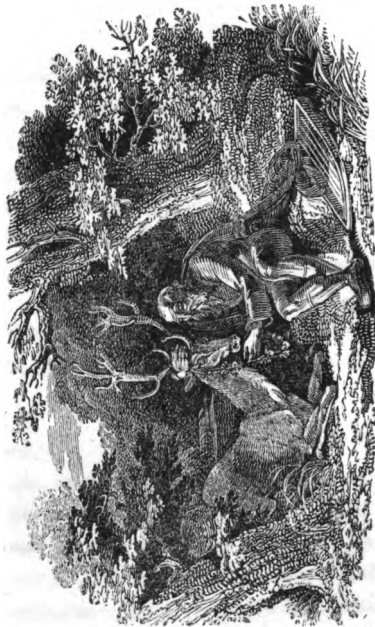
THE MINSTREL.

XXII.

Silence ensued : and Edwin raised his eyes
In tears, for grief lay heavy at his heart.
“ And is it thus in courtly life” (he cries)
“ That man to man acts a betrayer’s part !
“ And dares he thus the gifts of Heaven pervert,
“ Each social instinct, and sublime desire !—
“ Hail Poverty ! if honour, wealth, and art,
“ If what the great pursue, and learn’d admire,
“ Thus dissipate and quench the soul’s ethereal fire !”

XXIII.

He said, and turn’d away ; nor did the Sage
O’erhear, in silent orisons employ’d.
The Youth, his rising sorrow to assuage,
Home as he hied, the evening scene enjoy’d :
For now no cloud obscures the starry void ;
The yellow moonlight sleeps on all the hills ;
Nor is the mind with startling sounds annoy’d,
A soothing murmur the lone region fills
Of groves, and dying gales, and melancholy rills.



.....
THE MINSTREL.
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XXIV.

But he from day to day more anxious grew.
The voice still seem'd to vibrate on his ear,
Nor durst he hope the Hermit's tale untrue ;
For man he seem'd to love, and Heaven to fear ;
And none speaks false, where there is none to hear.
" Yet, can man's gentle heart become so fell !
" No more in vain conjecture let me wear
" My hours away, but seek the Hermit's cell ;
" 'Tis he my doubt can clear, perhaps my care dispel."

XXV.

At early dawn the youth his journey took,
And many a mountain pass'd, and valley wide,
Then reach'd the wild ; where in a flowery nook,
And seated on a mossy stone, he spied
An ancient man : his harp lay him beside.
A stag sprang from the pasture at his call,
And kneeling, lick'd the wither'd hand that tied
A wreath of woodbine round his antlers tall,
And hung his lofty neck with many a flow'ret small.

THE MINSTREL.

XXVI.

And now the hoary Sage arose, and saw
The wanderer approaching : innocence
Smiled on his glowing cheek, but modest awe
Depress'd his eye, that fear'd to give offence.
" Who art thou, courteous stranger? and from whence?
" Why roam thy steps to this sequester'd dale?"
" A shepherd-boy (the Youth replied) far hence
" My habitation ; hear my artless tale ;
" Nor levity nor falsehood shall thine ear assail.

XXVII.

" Late as I roam'd, intent on Nature's charms,
" I reach'd at eve this wilderness profound ;
" And, leaning where yon oak expands her arms,
" Heard these rude cliffs thine awful voice rebound,
" (For in thy speech I recognise the sound.)
" You mourn'd for ruin'd man, and virtue lost,
" And seem'd to feel of keen remorse the wound,
" Pondering on former days, by guilt engross'd,
" Or in the giddy storm of dissipation toss'd.



THE MINSTREL.

XXVIII.

- “ But say, in courtly life can craft be learn’d,
“ Where knowledge opens, and exalts the soul ?
“ Where Fortune lavishes her gifts unearn’d,
“ Can selfishness the liberal heart controul ?
“ Is glory there achiev’d by arts, as foul
“ As those that felons, fiends, and furies plan ?
“ Spiders ensnare, snakes poison, tigers prowl ;
“ Love is the godlike attribute of man.
“ O teach a simple Youth this mystery to scan.

XXIX.

- “ Or else the lamentable strain disclaim,
“ And give me back the calm, contented mind ;
“ Which, late, exulting, view’d in Nature’s frame,
“ Goodness untainted, wisdom unconfin’d,
“ Grace, grandeur, and utility combin’d.
“ Restore those tranquil days, that saw me still
“ Well pleased with all, but most with human-kind ;
“ When fancy roam’d through Nature’s works at will,
“ Uncheck’d by cold distrust, and uninform’d of ill.”

 THE MINSTREL.

XXX.

" Wouldst thou (the Sage replied) in peace return
 " To the gay dreams of fond romantic youth,
 " Leave me to hide, in this remote sojourn,
 " From every gentle ear the dreadful truth :
 " For if my desultory strain with ruth
 " And indignation make thine eyes o'erflow,
 " Alas ! what comfort could thy anguish sooth,
 " Shouldst thou th' extent of human folly know.
 " Be ignorance thy choice, where knowledge leads to woe.

XXXI.

" But let untender thoughts afar be driven ;
 " Nor venture to arraign the dread decree ;
 " For know, to man, as candidate for Heaven,
 " The voice of the Eternal said, Be free ;
 " And this divine prerogative to thee
 " Does virtue, happiness, and Heaven convey ;
 " For virtue is the child of liberty,
 " And happiness of virtue ; nor can they
 " Be free to keep the path who are not free to stray.

THE MINSTREL.

XXXII.

“ Yet leave me not. I would allay that grief,
“ Which else might thy young virtue overpower ;
“ And in thy converse I shall find relief,
“ When the dark shades of melancholy lower ;
“ For solitude has many a dreary hour,
“ Even when exempt from grief, remorse, and pain :
“ Come often then ; for haply, in my bower,
“ Amusement, knowledge, wisdom thou may’st gain.
“ If I one soul improve, I have not liv’d in vain.”

XXXIII.

And now, at length, to Edwin’s ardent gaze,
The Muse of history unrols her page,
But few, alas ! the scenes her art displays
To charm his fancy, or his heart engage.
Here Chiefs their thirst of power in blood assuage,
And straight their flames with tenfold fierceness burn,
Here smiling Virtue prompts the patriot’s rage,
But lo, ere long, is left alone to mourn,
And languish in the dust, and clasp th’ abandon’d urn.

 THE MINSTREL.

XXXIV.

" Ah, what avails (he said) to trace the springs,
 " That whirl of empire the stupendous wheel!
 " Ah, what have I to do with conquering kings,
 " Hands drench'd in blood, and breasts begirt with steel!
 " To those, whom Nature taught to think and feel,
 " Heroes, alas! are things of small concern.
 " Could History man's secret heart reveal,
 " And what imports a Heaven-born mind to learn,
 " Her transcripts to explore what bosom would not yearn!

XXXV.

" This praise, O Cheronean Sage, (2) is thine!
 " (Why should this praise to thee alone belong?)
 " All else from Nature's moral path decline,
 " Lur'd by the toys that captivate the throng;
 " To herd in cabinets and camps, among
 " Spoil, carnage, and the cruel pomp of pride;
 " Or chaunt of heraldry the drowsy song,
 " How tyrant blood, o'er many a region wide,
 " Rolls to a thousand thrones its execrable tide.

 THE MINSTREL.

XXXVI.

" O who of man the story will unfold,
 " Ere victory and empire wrought annoy,
 " In that elysian age (misnamed of gold)
 " The age of love, and innocence, and joy,
 " When all were great and free ! man's sole employ
 " To deck the bosom of his parent earth ;
 " Or toward his bower the murmuring stream decoy,
 " To aid the flow'ret's long-expected birth,
 " And lull the bed of peace, and crown the board of mirth,

XXXVII.

" Sweet were your shades, O ye primeval groves,
 " Whose boughs to man his food and shelter lent,
 " Pure in his pleasures, happy in his loves,
 " His eyes still smiling and his heart content.
 " Then, hand in hand, Health, Sport, and Labour went,
 " Nature supply'd the wish she taught to crave.
 " None prow'd for prey, none watch'd to circumvent.
 " To all an equal lot heaven's bounty gave :
 " No vassal fear'd his lord, no tyrant fear'd his slave.

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THE MINSTREL.

XXXVIII.

“ But ah ! th’ historic Muse has never dared
“ To pierce those hallow’d bowers : ’tis Fancy’s beam
“ Pour’d on the vision of th’ enraptur’d Bard,
“ That paints the charms of that delicious theme.
“ Then hail sweet Fancy’s ray ! and hail the dream
“ That weans the weary soul from guilt and woe !
“ Careless what others of my choice may deem,
“ I long where Love and Fancy lead, to go,
“ And meditate on Heaven ; enough of earth I know.”

XXXIX.

“ I cannot blame thy choice (the Sage replied)
“ For soft and smooth are Fancy’s flowery ways.
“ And yet, even there, if left without a guide,
“ The young adventurer unsafely plays.
“ Eyes dazzl’d long by Fiction’s gaudy rays
“ In modest Truth no light nor beauty find.
“ And who, my child, would trust the meteor-blaze,
“ That soon must fail, and leave the wanderer blind,
“ More dark and helpless far, than if it ne’er had shined.”

THE MINSTREL.

XL.

“ Fancy enervates, while it soothes, the heart,
“ And, while it dazzles, wounds the mental sight ;
“ To joy each heightening charm it can impart,
“ But wraps the hour of woe in tenfold night,
“ And often, where no real ills affright,
“ Its visionary fiends, and endless train,
“ Assail with equal or superior might,
“ And through the throbbing heart, and dizzy brain,
“ And shivering nerves, shoot stings of more than mortal
“ pain.

XLI.

“ And yet, alas! the real ills of life
“ Claim the full vigour of a mind prepared,
“ Prepared for patient, long, laborious strife,
“ Its guide Experience, and Truth its guard.
“ We fare on earth as other men have fared :
“ Were they successful? Let not us despair,
“ Was disappointment oft their sole reward?
“ Yet shall their tale instruct, if it declare,
“ How they have borne the load ourselves are doom'd to bear.

 THE MINSTREL.

XLII.

" What charms th' Historic Muse adorn, from spoils,
 " And blood, and tyrants, when she wings her flight,
 " To hail the patriot Prince, whose pious toils
 " Sacred to science ; liberty, and right,
 " And peace, through every age divinely bright
 " Shall shine the boast and wonder of mankind !
 " Sees yonder Sun, from his meridian height,
 " A lovelier scene, that Virtue thus enshrined
 " In power, and man with man for mutual aid combined ?

XLIII.

" Hail sacred Polity, by Freedom rear'd !
 " Hail sacred Freedom, when by Law restrain'd !
 " Without you what were man ? A groveling herd
 " In darkness, wretchedness, and want enchain'd
 " Sublimed by you, the Greek and Roman reign'd
 " In arts unrivall'd : O, to latest days,
 " In Albion may your influence unprofaned
 " To godlike worth the generous bosom raise,
 " And prompt the Sage's lore, and fire the Poet's lays !

 THE MINSTREL.

XLIV.

- " But now let other themes our care engage.
 " For lo, with modest yet majestic grace,
 " To curb Imagination's lawless rage,
 " And from within the cherish'd heart to brace,
 " Philosophy appears! The gloomy race
 " By indolence and moping Fancy bred,
 " Fear, Discontent, Solitude give place,
 " And hope and courage brighten in their stead,
 " While on the kindling soul her vital beams are shed.

XLV.

- " Then waken from long lethargy to life (3)
 " The seeds of happiness, and powers of thought ;
 " Then jarring appetites forego their strife,
 " A strife by ignorance to madness wrought.
 " Pleasure by savage man is dearly bought
 " With fell revenge, lust that defies controul,
 " With gluttony and death. The mind untaught
 " Is a dark waste, where fiends and tempests howl ;
 " As Phœbus to the world, is Science to the soul.

THE MINSTREL.

XVLI.

“ And Reason now through number, time, and space
“ Darts the keen lustre of her serious eye,
“ And learns from facts compared, the laws to trace,
“ Whose long progression leads to Deity.
“ Can mortal strength presume to soar so high !
“ Can mortal sight, so oft bedimm'd with tears,
“ Such glory bear !—for lo, the shadows fly
“ From Nature's face ; confusion disappears,
“ And order charms the eye and harmony the ears.

XLVII.

“ In the deep windings of the grove, no more
“ The hag obscene, and grisly phantom dwell ;
“ Nor in the fall of mountain-stream, or roar
“ Of winds, is heard the angry spirit's yell ;
“ No wizard mutters the tremendous spell,
“ Nor sinks convulsive in prophetic swoon ;
“ Nor bids the noise of drums and trumpets swell,
“ To ease of fancied pangs the labouring Moon,
“ Or chase the shade that blots the blazing orb of noon.

THE MINSTREL.

XLVIII.

“ Many a long-lingering year, in lonely isle,
“ Stum’d with th’ eternal turbulence of waves,
“ Lo, with dim eyes, that never learn’d to smile,
“ And trembling hands, the famish’d native craves
“ Of Heaven his wretched fare ; shivering in caves,
“ Or scorch’d on rocks, he pines from day to day ;
“ But Science gives the word ; and lo, he braves
“ The surge and tempest, lighted by her ray,
“ And to a happier land wafts merrily away,

XLIX.

“ And even where Nature loads the teeming plain
“ With the full pomp of vegetable store,
“ Her bounty, unimproved, is deadly bane ;
“ Dark woods and rankling wilds, from shore to shore
“ Stretch their enormous gloom ; which to explore
“ Even Fancy trembles, in her sprightliest mood ;
“ For there each eye-ball gleams with lust of gore,
“ Nestles each murderous and each monstrous brood,
“ Plague lurks in every shade, and steams from every flood.

 THE MINSTREL.

L.

- " 'Twas from Philosophy man learn'd to tame
 " The soil by plenty to intemperance fed.
 " Lo, from the echoing ax, and thundering flame,
 " Poison and plague and yelling rage are fled !
 " The waters, bursting from their slimy bed,
 " Bring health and melody to every vale :
 " And from the breezy main, and mountain's head,
 " Ceres and Flora, to the sunny dale,
 " To fan their glowing charms, invite the fluttering gale.

LI.

- " What dire necessities on every hand
 " Our art, our strength, our fortitude require !
 " Of foes intestine what a numerous band
 " Against this little throb of life conspire !
 " Yet Science can elude their fatal ire
 " Awhile and turn aside Death's level'd dart,
 " Sooth the sharp pang, allay the fever's fire,
 " And brace the nerves once more, and cheer the heart,
 " And yet a few soft nights and balmy days impart.

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THE MINSTREL.  
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LII.

- “ Nor less to regulate man’s moral frame
“ Science exerts her all-composing sway.
“ Flutters thy breast with fear, or pants for fame,
“ Or pines to Indolence and Spleen a prey,
“ Or Avarice, a fiend more fierce than they ?
“ Flee to the shade of Academus’ grove ;
“ Where cares molest not, discord melts away
“ In harmony, and the pure passions prove
“ How sweet the words of truth breath’d from the lips of
“ Love.

LIII.

- “ What cannot Art and Industry perform,
“ When Science plans the progress of their toil !
“ They smile at penury, disease, and storm ;
“ And oceans from their mighty mounds recoil.
“ When tyrants scourge, or demagogues embroil
“ A land, or when the rabble’s headlong rage
“ Order transforms to anarchy and spoil,
“ Deep-vers’d in man the philosophic Sage
“ Prepares with lenient hand their phrenzy to assuage.

 THE MINSTREL.

LIV.

" 'Tis he alone, whose comprehensive mind,
 " From situation, temper, soil, and clime
 " Explor'd, a nation's various powers can bind,
 " And various orders, in one form sublime
 " Of policy, that, midst the wrecks of time,
 " Secure shall lift its head on high, nor fear
 " Th' assault of foreign or domestic crime,
 " While public faith, and public love sincere,
 " And Industry and Law maintain their sway severe."

LV.

Enraptur'd by the Hermit's strain, the Youth
 Proceeds the path of Science to explore.
 And now, expanding to the beams of Truth,
 New energies, and charms unknown before,
 His mind discloses: Fancy now no more
 Wantons on fickle pinion through the skies ;
 But fix'd in aim, and conscious of her power,
 Aloft from cause to cause exults to rise,
 Creation's blended stores arranging as she flies.

THE MINSTREL.

LVI.

Nor love of novelty alone inspires,
Their laws and nice dependencies to scan ;
For, mindful of the aids that life requires,
And of the services man owes to man,
He meditates new arts on Nature's plan ;
The cold desponding breast of Sloth to warm,
The flame of Industry and Genius fan,
And Emulation's noble rage alarm,
And the long hours of Toil and Solitude to charm.

LVII.

But she, who set on fire his infant heart,
And all his dreams, and all his wanderings shared
And bless'd, the Muse, and her celestial art,
Still claim th' Enthusiast's fond and first regard.
From Nature's beauties variously compared
And variously combined, he learns to frame
Those forms of bright (4) perfection, which the Bard,
While boundless hopes and boundless views inflame,
Enamour'd consecrates to never-dying fame.



 THE MINSTREL.

LVIII.

Of late, with cumbersome, though pompous show,
 Edwin would oft his flowery rhyme deface,
 Through ardour to adorn ; but Nature now
 To his experienced eye a modest grace
 Presents, where Ornament the second place
 Holds, to intrinsic worth and just design
 Subservient still. Simplicity apace
 Tempers his rage ; he owns her charm divine,
 And clearsth' ambiguous phrase, and lepth' unwieldy line.

LIX.

Fain would I sing (much yet. unsung remains)
 What sweet delirium o'er his bosom stole,
 When the great Shepherd of the Mantuan plains (5)
 His deep majestic melody 'gan roll ;
 Fain would I sing, what transport storm'd his soul,
 How the red current throbb'd his veins along,
 When, like Pelides, bold beyond controul,
 Without art graceful, without effort strong,
 Homer raised high to heaven the loud, th' impetuous song.

 THE MINSTREL.

LX.

And how his lyre, though rude her first essays,
 Now skill'd to sooth, to triumph, to complain,
 Warbling at will through each harmonious maze,
 Was taught to modulate the artful strain,
 I fain would sing :—but ah ! I strive in vain.—
 Sighs from a breaking heart my voice confound.—
 With trembling steps, to join yon weeping train,
 I haste, where gleams funereal glare around,
 And, mix'd with shrieks of woe, the knells of death resound.

LXI.

Adieu, ye lays, that Fancy's flowers adorn,
 The soft amusement of the vacant mind !
 He sleeps in dust, and all the Muses mourn,
 He, whom each Virtue fired ; each Grace refined,
 Friend, teacher, pattern, darling of mankind ! (6)—
 He sleeps in dust.—Ah, how shall I pursue
 My theme !—To heart-consuming grief resign'd,
 Here on his recent grave I fix my view,
 And pour my bitter tears.—Ye flowery lays, adieu !

THE MINSTREL.

LXII.

Art thou, my GREGORY, for ever fled!
And am I left to unavailing woe!
When fortune's storms assail this weary head,
Where cares long since have shed untimely snow!
Ah, now for comfort whither shall I go!
No more thy soothing voice my anguish cheers:
Thy placid eyes with smiles no longer glow,
My hopes to cherish, and allay my fears.—
'Tis meet that I should mourn:—flow forth afresh my tears.



POEMS
ON
SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

POEMS.

RETIREMENT.



WHEN in the crimson cloud of even,
The lingering light decays,
And Hesper on the front of Heaven,
His glittering gem displays !
Deep in the silent vale, unseen,
Beside a lulling stream,
A pensive Youth, of placid mien,
Indulg'd this tender theme.

Ye cliffs, in hoary grandeur pil'd
High o'er the glimmering dale ;
Ye woods, along whose windings wild
Murmurs the solemn gale ;

H

RETIREMENT.

Where Melancholy strays forlorn,
And Woe retires to weep,
What time the wan Moon's yellow horn
Gleams on the western deep.

To you, ye wastes, whose artless charms
Ne'er drew Ambition's eye,
Scap'd a tumultuous world's alarms,
To your retreats I fly.
Deep in your most sequester'd bower
Let me at last recline,
Where Solitude, mild, modest Power,
Leans on her ivy'd shrine.

How shall I woo thee, matchless Fair!
Thy heavenly smile how win!
Thy smile, that smoothes the brow of Care,
And stills the storm within.
O wilt thou to thy favourite grove
Thine ardent votary bring,
And bless his hours, and bid them move
Serene, on silent wing.



RETIREMENT.

Oft let remembrance sooth his mind
With dreams of former days,
When in the lap of Peace reclin'd
He fram'd his infant lays ;
When Fancy rov'd at large, nor Care
Nor cold Distrust alarm'd,
Nor Envy with malignant glare
His simple youth had harm'd.

'Twas then, O Solitude ! to thee
His early vows were paid,
From heart sincere, and warm and free ;
Devoted to the shade.
Ah why did Fate his steps decoy
In stormy paths to roam,
Remote from all congenial joy !—
O take the wanderer home.

Thy shades, thy silence, now be mine,
Thy charms my only theme ;
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine
Waves o'er the gloomy stream,

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RETIREMENT.  
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Whence the scar'd owl on pinions grey
Breaks from the rustling boughs,
And down the lone vale sails away
To more profound repose.

O, while to thee the woodland pours
Its wildly warbling song,
And balmy from the bank of flowers
The Zephyr breathes along ;
Let no rude sound invade from far,
No vagrant foot be nigh,
No ray from Grandeur's gilded car,
Flash on the startled eye.

But if some pilgrim through the glade
Thy hallow'd bowers explore,
O guard from harm his hoary head,
And listen to his lore ;
For he of joys divine shall tell
That wean from earthly woe,
And triumph o'er the mighty spell
That chains his heart below.

RETIREMENT.

For me, no more the path invites
Ambition loves to tread ;
No more I climb those toilsome heights
By guileful Hope misled ;
Leaps my fond flutt'ring heart no more
To mirth's enliv'ning strain ;
For present pleasure soon is o'er,
And all the past is vain.



ELEGY.

STILL shall unthinking man substantial deem
The forms that fleet through life's deceitful dream ?
On clouds, where Fancy's beam amusive plays,
Shall heedless Hope the towering fabric raise ?
Till at Death's touch the fairy visions fly,
And real scenes rush dismal on the eye ;
And from Elysium's balmy slumber torn
The startled soul awakes, to think, and mourn.

O ye, whose hours in jocund train advance,
Whose spirits to the song of gladness dance,
Who flowery plains in endless pomp survey
Glittering in beams of visionary day ;
O, yet while Fate delays th' impending woe,
Be rous'd to thought, anticipate the blow ;
Lest, like the lightning's glance, the sudden ill
Flash to confound, and penetrate to kill ;
Lest, thus encompass'd with funereal gloom,
Like me, ye bend o'er some untimely tomb,

 ELEGY.

Pour your wild ravings in Night's frightened ear,
 And half pronounce Heaven's sacred doom severe.

Wise, beauteous, good ! O every grace combin'd,
 That charms the eye, or captivates the mind !
 Fresh as the floweret opening on the morn,
 Whose leaves bright drops of liquid pearl adorn !
 Sweet, as the downy-pinion'd gale, that roves
 To gather fragrance in Arabian groves !
 Mild, as the strains, that, at the close of day,
 Warbling remote, along the vales decay !——
 Yet, why with these compared ? What tints so fine,
 What sweetness, mildness, can be match'd with thine ?
 Why roam abroad ? Since still, to Fancy's eyes,
 I see, I see thy lovely form arise.
 Still let me gaze, and every care beguile,
 Gaze on that cheek, where all the Graces smile ;
 That soul-expressing eye benignly bright,
 Where meekness beams ineffable delight ;
 That brow, where Wisdom sits enthron'd serene,
 Each feature forms, and dignifies the mien :
 Still let me listen, while her words impart
 The sweet effusions of the blameless heart,

 ELEGY.

Till all my soul, each tumult charm'd away,
 Yields, gently led, to Virtue's easy sway.

By thee inspired, O Virtue, age is young,
 And music warbles from the faltering tongue :
 Thy ray creative cheers the clouded brow,
 And decks the faded cheek with rosy glow,
 Brightens the joyless aspect, and supplies
 Pure heavenly lustre to the languid eyes ;
 But when Youth's living bloom reflects thy beams,
 Resistless on the view the glory streams,
 Love, Wonder, Joy, alternately alarm,
 And Beauty dazzles with angelic charm.

Ah whither fled !——ye dear illusions stay—
 Lo, pale and silent lies the lovely clay.—
 How are the roses on that cheek decay'd,
 Which late the purple light of youth display'd !
 Health on her form each sprightly grace bestow'd ;
 With life and thought each speaking feature glow'd—
 Fair was the blossom, and soft the vernal sky ;
 Elate with hope, we deem'd no tempest nigh ;
 When lo, a whirlwind's instantaneous gust
 Left all its beauties withering in the dust.

 ELEGY.

All cold the hand, that sooth'd Woe's weary head !
 And quench'd the eye, the pitying tear that shed !
 And mute the voice, whose pleasing accents stole,
 Infusing balm into the rankled soul !
 O Death, why arm with cruelty thy power,
 And spare the idle weed, yet lop the flower !
 Why fly thy shafts in lawless error driven !
 Is Virtue then no more the care of Heaven !——
 But peace, bold thought ! be still my bursting heart !
 We, not ELIZA, felt the fatal dart.

Scap'd the dark dungeon does the slave complain,
 Nor bless the hand that broke the galling chain ?
 Say, pines not Virtue for the lingering morn,
 On this dark wild condemn'd to roam forlorn ?
 Where Reason's meteor-rays, with sickly glow,
 O'er the dun gloom a dreadful glimmering throw ?
 Disclosing dubious to th' affrighted eye
 O'erwhelming mountains tottering from on high,
 Black billowy seas in storms perpetual toss'd,
 And weary ways in wildering labyrinths lost.
 O happy stroke that bursts the bonds of clay,
 Darts through the rending gloom the blaze of day,

ELEGY.

And wings the soul with boundless flight to soar,
Where dangers threat, and fears alarm no more.

Transporting thought ! here let me wipe away
The tear of grief, and wake a bolder lay.
But ah ! the swimming eye o'erflows anew,
Nor check the sacred drops to pity due ;
Lo, where in speechless, hopeless anguish, bend
O'er her lov'd dust, the Parent, Brother, Friend !
How vain the hope of man !—But cease thy strain,
Nor Sorrow's dread solemnity profane ;
Mix'd with yon drooping Mourners, on her bier
In silence shed the sympathetic tear.



ODE TO HOPE.



I. 1.

O THOU, who glad'st the pensive soul,
More than Aurora's smile the swain forlorn,
Left all night long to mourn
Where desolation frowns, and tempests howl ;
And shrieks of woe, as intermits the storm,
Far o'er the monstrous wilderness resound,
And cross the gloom darts many a shapeless form,
And many a fire-eyed visage glares around.
O come, and be once more my guest :
Come, for thou oft thy suppliant's vow hast heard,
And oft with smiles indulgent cheer'd
And sooth'd him into rest.

I. 2.

Smit by thy rapture-beaming eye
Deep flashing through the midnight of their mind,
The sable bands combin'd,
Where Fear's black banner bloats the troubled sky,

 ODE TO HOPE.

Appall'd retire. Suspicion hides her head,
 Nor dares th' obliquely gleaming eyeball raise :
 Despair, with gorgon-figured veil o'erspread,
 Speeds to dark Phlegeth on's detested maze.
 Lo, startled at the heavenly ray,
 With speed unwonted Indolence upsprings,
 And, heaving, lifts her leaden wings,
 And sullen glides away :

I. 3.

Ten thousand forms, by pining Fancy view'd,
 Dissolve.—Above the sparkling flood
 When Phœbus rears his awful brow,
 From lengthening lawn and valley low
 The troops of fen-born mists retire,
 Along the plain
 The joyous swain
 Eyes the gay villages again,
 And gold-illumin'd spire ;
 While on the billowy ether borne
 Floats the loose lay's jovial measure !
 And light along the fairy Pleasure,
 Her green robes glittering to the morn,

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ODE TO HOPE.  
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Wantons on silken wing. And goblins all
To the damp dungeon shrink, or hoary hall,
Or westward, with impetuous flight,
Shoot to the desert realms of their congenial Night.

II. 1.

When first on Childhood's eager gaze
Life's varied landscape, stretch'd immense around,
Starts out of night profound,
Thy voice incites to tempt th' untrodden maze.
Fond he surveys thy mild maternal face,
His bashful eye still kindling as he views,
And, while thy lenient arm supports his pace,
With beating heart the upland path pursues :
The path that leads, where, hung sublime,
And seen afar, youth's gallant trophies, bright
In Fancy's rainbow ray, invite
His wingy nerves to climb.

II. 2.

Pursue thy pleasurable way,
Safe in the guidance of thy heavenly guard,

ODE TO HOPE.

While melting airs are heard,
And soft-eyed cherub forms around thee play ;
Simplicity, in careless flowers array'd,
Prattling amusive in his accent meek ;
And modesty, half turning as afraid,
The smile just dimpling on his glowing cheek !
Content and Leisure, hand in hand
With Innocence and Peace, advance, and sing ;
And Mirth, in many a mazy ring,
Frisks o'er the flowery land.

II. 3.

Frail man, how various is thy lot below !
To-day tho' gales propitious blow,
And Peace soft gliding down the sky
Lead Love along and Harmony,
To-morrow the gay scene deforms :
Then all around
The thunder's sound
Rolls rattling on through Heaven's profound,
And down rush all the storms.
Ye days, that balmy influence shed,

ODE TO HOPE.

When sweet childhood, ever sprightly,
In paths of pleasure sported lightly,
Whither, ah whither are ye fled !
Ye cherub train, that brought him on his way,
O leave him not midst tumult and dismay ;
For now youth's eminence he gains :
But what a weary length of lingering toil remains !

III. 1.

They shrink, they vanish into air,
Now slander taints with pestilence the gale ;
And mingling cries assail,
The wail of Woe, and groan of grim Despair.
Lo, wizard Envy from his serpent eye
Darts quick destruction in each baleful glance ;
Pride smiling stern, and yellow Jealousy,
Frowning Disdain, and haggard Hate advance ;
Behold, amidst the dire array,
Pale wither'd care his giant-stature rears,
And lo, his iron hand prepares
To grasp its feeble prey.

I

ODE TO HOPE.

III. 2.

Who now will guard bewilder'd youth
Safe from the fierce assault of hostile rage ?
Such war can Virtue wage,
Virtue, that bears the sacred shield of Truth ;
Alas ! full oft on Guilt's victorious car
The spoils of Virtue are in triumph borne ;
While the fair captive, mark'd with many a scar,
In long obscurity, oppress'd forlorn,
Resigns to tears her angel form.
Ill-fated youth, then whither wilt thou fly ?
No friend, no shelter now is nigh.
And onward rolls the storm.

III. 3.

But whence the sudden beam that shoots along ;
Why shrink aghast the hostile throng ?
Lo, from amidst Affliction's night,
Hope bursts all radiant on the sight :
Her words the troubled bosom sooth.

ODE TO HOPE.

“ Why thus dismay’d ?
“ Though foes invade,
“ Hope ne’er is wanting to their aid,
“ Who tread the Path of truth.
“ ’Tis I, who smooth the rugged way,
“ I, who close the eyes of Sorrow,
“ And with glad visions of to-morrow
“ Repair the weary soul’s decay.
“ When Death’s cold touch thrills to the freezing heart,
“ Dreams of heaven’s opening glories I impart,
“ Till the freed spirit springs on high
“ In rapture too severe for weak Mortality.”



PYGMÆO-GERANO-MACHIA :

THE BATTLE OF

THE PIGMIES AND CRANES.

FROM THE LATIN OF ADDISON.

1762.

THE pigmy-people, and the feather'd train,
Mingling in mortal combat on the plain,
I sing. Ye Muses, favour my designs,
Lead on my squadrons, and arrange the lines ;
The flashing swords and fluttering wings display,
And long bills nibbling in the bloody fray ;
Cranes darting with disdain on tiny foes,
Conflicting birds and men, and war's unnumber'd woes.

The wars and woes of heroes six feet long
Have oft resounded in Pierian song.

PIGMIES AND CRANES.

Who has not heard of Colchos' golden fleece,
And Argo mann'd with all the flower of Greece?
Of Thebes' fell brethren, Theseus stern of face,
And Peleus' son unrivall'd in the race,
Eneas. founder of the Roman line,
And William glorious on the banks of Boyne?
Who has not learn'd to weep at Pompey's woes,
And over Blackmore's epic page to dose?
'Tis I, who dare attempt unusual strains,
Of hosts unsung, and unfrequented plains;
The small shrill trump, and chiefs of little size,
And armies rushing down the darken'd skies.

Where India reddens to the early dawn,
Winds a deep vale from vulgar eye withdrawn:
Bosom'd in groves the lowly region lies,
And rocky mountains round the border rise.
Here, till the doom of Fate its fall decreed,
The empire flourish'd of the pigmy-breed;
Here Industry perform'd, and Genius plann'd,
And busy multitudes o'erspread the land.
But now to these lone bounds if pilgrim stray,
· Tempting through craggy cliffs the desperate way,

 THE BATTLE OF THE

He finds the puny mansion fallen to earth,
 Its godlings mouldering on th' abandon'd hearth ;
 And starts, where small white bones are spread around,
 " Or little footsteps lightly print the ground ;"
 While the proud crane her nest securely builds,
 Chattering amid the desolated fields.

But different fates befel her hostile rage,
 While reign'd, invincible through many an age,
 The dreaded Pigmy : rous'd by war's alarms
 Forth rush'd the madding Manikin to arms.
 Fierce to the field of death the hero flies ;
 The faint crane fluttering flaps the ground, and dies ;
 And by the victor borne (o'erwhelming load !)
 With bloody bill loose-dangling marks the road,
 And oft the wily dwarf in ambush lay,
 And often made the callow young his prey ;
 With slaughter'd victims heap'd his board, and smil'd
 To avenge the parent's trespass on the child.
 Oft, where his feather'd foe had rear'd her nest,
 And laid her eggs and household gods to rest,
 Burning for blood, in terrible array,
 The eighteen-inch militia burst their way ;

PIGMIES AND CRANES.

All went to wreck ; the infant foeman fell,
When scarce his chirping bill had broke the shell.

Loud uproar hence, and rage of arms arose,
And the fell rancour of encountering foes ;
Hence dwarfs and cranes one general havoc whelms,
And Death's grim visage scares the pigmy-realms.
Not half so furious blaz'd the warlike fire
Of Mice, high theme of the Meonian lyre ;
When bold to battle march'd th' accouter'd frogs,
And the deep tumult thunder'd through the boga.
Pierc'd by the javelin bulrush on the shore
Here agonizing roll'd the mouse in gore ;
And there the frog (a scene full sad to see !)
Shorn of one leg, slow sprawl'd along on three :
He vaults no more with vigorous hops on high,
But mourns in hoarsest croaks his destiny.

And now the day of woe drew on apace,
A day of woe to all the pigmy race,
When dwarfs were doom'd (but penitence was vain)
To rue each broken egg, and chicken slain.
For rous'd to vengeance by repeated wrong,
From distant climes the long-bill'd legions throng :

 THE BATTLE OF THE

From Strymon's lake, Cayster's plashy meads,
 And fens of Scythia green with rustling reeds ;
 From where the Danube winds through many a land,
 And Marcotis laves th' Egyptian strand,
 To rendezvous they waft on eager wing,
 And wait assembled the returning spring.
 Meanwhile they trim their plumes for length of flight,
 Whet their keen beaks, and twisting claws, for fight ;
 Each crave the pigmy power in thought o'erturns,
 And every bosom for the battle burns.

When genial gales the frozen air unbind,
 The screaming legions wheel, and mount the wind.
 Far in the sky they form their long array,
 And land and ocean stretch'd immense survey
 Deep deep beneath ; and, triumphing in pride,
 With clouds and winds commix'd, innumerable ride ;
 'Tis wild obstreperous clangour all, and heaven
 Whirls in tempestuous undulation driven.

Nor less th' alarm that shook the world below,
 Where march'd in pomp of war th' embattled foe ;
 Where manikins with haughty step advance,
 And grasp the shield, and couch the quivering lance ;

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PIGMIES AND CRANES.  
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To right and left the lengthening lines they form,
And rank'd in deep array await the storm.

High in the midst the chieftain-dwarf was seen,
Of giant stature, and imperial mien :
Full twenty inches tall, he strode along,
And view'd with lofty eye the wondering throng ;
And while with many a scar his visage frown'd,
Bar'd his broad bosom, rough with many a wound
Of beaks and claws, disclosing to their sight
The glorious meed of high heroic might.
For with insatiate vengeance, he pursu'd,
And never-ending hate, the feathery brood,
Unhappy they, confiding in the length
Of horny beak, or talon's crooked strength,
Who durst abide his rage ; the blade descends,
And from the panting trunk the pinion rends.
Laid low in dust the pinion waves no more,
The trunk disfigur'd stiffens in its gore.
What hosts of heroes fell beneath his force !
What heaps of chicken carnage mark'd his course !
How oft, O Strymon, thy lone banks along,
Did wailing echo waft the funeral song !

THE BATTLE OF THE

And now from far the mingling clamours rise,
Loud and more loud rebounding through the skies.
From skirt to skirt of heaven, with stormy sway,
A cloud rolls on and darkens all the day.
Near and more near descends the dreadful shade,
And now in battailous array display'd,
On sounding wings, and screaming in their ire,
The cranes rush onward, and the fight require.

The pigmy warriors eye with fearless glare
The host thick swarming o'er the burthen'd air ;
Thick swarming now, but to their native land
Doom'd to return a scanty stragglng band.—
When sudden, darting down the depth of heaven,
Fierce on th' expecting foe the cranes are driven.
The kindling phrensy every bosom warms,
The region echoes to the crash of arms :
Loose feathers from the encountering armies fly,
And in careering whirlwinds mount the sky.
To breathe from toil up springs the panting crane,
Then with fresh vigour downward darts again.
Success in equal balance hovering hangs.
Here, on the sharp spear, mad with mortal pangs,

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PIGMIES AND CRANES.  
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The bird transfix'd in bloody vortex whirls,
Yet fierce in death the threatening talon curls ;
There, while the life-blood bubbles from his wound,
With little feet the pigmy beats the ground ;
Deep from his breast the short short sob he draws
And dying curses the keen-pointed claws.
Trembles the thundering field, thick cover'd o'er
With falchions, mangled wings, and streaming gore,
And pigmy arms, and beaks of ample size,
And here a claw, and there a finger lies.

 Encompass'd round with heaps of slaughter'd foes.
All grim in blood the pigmy champion glows.
And on th' assailing host impetuous springs,
Careless of nibbling bills, and flapping wings ;
And midst the tumult wheresoe'er he turns,
The battle with redoubled fury burns ;
From every side th' avenging cranes amain
Throng, to o'erwhelm this terror of the plain.
When suddenly (for such the will of Jove)
A fowl enormous, sousing from above,
The gallant chieftain clutch'd, and, soaring high,
(Sad chance of battle !) bore him up the sky.

 THE BATTLE OF THE

The cranes pursue, and clustering in a ring,
 Chatter triumphant round the captive king.
 But ah ! what pangs each pigmy bosom wrung,
 When, now to cranes a prey, on talons hung,
 High in the clouds they saw their helpless lord,
 His wriggling form still lessening as he soar'd.

Lo ! yet again, with unabated rage,
 In mortal strife the mingling hosts engage.
 The crane with darted bill assaults the foe,
 Hovering ; then wheels aloft to scape the blow ;
 The dwarf in anguish aims the vengeful wound ;
 But whirls in empty air the falchion round.

Such was the scene, when midst the loud alarms
 Sublime th' eternal Thunderer rose in arms.
 When Briareus, by mad ambition driven,
 Heav'd Pelion huge, and hurl'd it high at heaven.
 Jove roll'd redoubling thunders from on high,
 Mountains and bolts encounter'd in the sky ;
 Till one stupendous ruin whelm'd the crew,
 Their vast limbs weltering wide in brimstone blue.

But now at length the pigmy legions yield,
 And wing'd with terror fly the fatal field.

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PIGMIES AND CRANES.  
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They raise a weak and melancholy wail,
All in distraction scattering o'er the vale,
Prone on their routed rear the cranes descend ;
Their bills bite furious, and their talons rend :
With unrelenting ire they urge the chase,
Sworn to exterminate the hated race.

'Twas thus the Pigmy Name, once great in war,
For spoils of conquer'd cranes renown'd afar,
Perish'd. For, by the dread decree of heaven,
Short is the date to earthly grandeur given,
And vain are all attempts to roam beyond
Where Fate has fix'd the everlasting bound.
Fallen are the trophies of Assyrian power,
And Persia's proud dominion is no more ;
Yea, though to both superior far in fame,
Thine empire, Latium, is an empty name.

And now with lofty chiefs of ancient time,
The pigmy heroes roam th' Elysian clime.
Or, if belief to matron-tales be due,
Full oft, in the belated shepherd's view,
Their frisking forms. in gentle green array'd,
Gambol secure amid the moonlight glade.

THE BATTLE, &c.

Secure, for no alarming cranes molest,
And all their woes in long oblivion rest :
Down the deep vale, and narrow winding way,
They foot it featly, rang'd in ringlets gay :
'Tis joy and frolic all, where'er they rove,
And Fairy-people is the name they love.



THE HARES,

A FABLE.



YES, yes, I grant the sons of earth
Are doom'd to trouble from their birth.
We all of sorrow have our share ;
But say, is yours without compare ?
Look round the world ; perhaps you'll find
Each individual of our kind
Press'd with an equal load of ill,
Equal at least. Look further still,
And own your lamentable case
Is little short of happiness.
In yonder hut that stands alone
Attend to Famine's feeble moan ?
Or view the couch where Sickness lies,
Mark his pale cheek, and languid eyes,
His frame by strong convulsion torn,
His struggling sighs, and looks forlorn.

 THE HARES, A FABLE.

Or see, transfix'd with keener pangs,
 Where o'er his hoard the miser hangs ;
 Whistles the wind ; he starts, he stares,
 Nor Slumber's balmy blessing shares,
 Despair, Remorse and Terror roll
 Their tempests on his harass'd soul.

But here perhaps it may avail
 T' enforce our reasoning with a tale.

Mild was the morn, the sky serene,
 The jolly hunting band convene,
 The beagle's breast with ardour burns,
 The bounding steed the champaign spurs,
 And Fancy oft the game descries
 Through the hound's nose, and huntsman's eyes.

Just then, a council of the hares
 Had met, on national affairs.
 The chiefs were set ; while o'er their head
 The furze its frizzled covering spread.
 Long lists of grievances were heard,
 And general discontent appear'd.
 " Our harmless race shall every savage
 " Both quadruped and biped ravage ?

THE HARES, A FABLE.

“ Shall horses, hounds, and hunters still
“ Unite their wits to work us ill ?
“ The youth, his parent’s sole delight,
“ Whose tooth the dewy lawns invite,
“ Whose pulse in every vein beats strong,
“ Whose limbs leap light the vales along,
“ May yet ere noontide meet his death,
“ And lie dismember’d on the heath.
“ For youth, alas, nor cautious age,
“ Nor strength, nor speed, eludes their rage.
“ In every field we meet the foe,
“ Each gale comes fraught with sounds of woe ;
“ The morning but awakes our fears,
“ The evening sees us bath’d in tears,
“ But must we ever idly grieve,
“ Nor strive our fortunes to relieve ?
“ Small is each individual’s force :
“ To stratagem be our recourse ;
“ And then, from all our tribes combin’d,
“ The murderer to his cost may find
“ No foes are weak, whom Justice arms,
“ Whom Concord leads, and Hatred warms.

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THE HARES, A FABLE.

“ Be rous’d ; or liberty acquire,
“ Or in the great attempt expire.”
He said no more, for in his breast
Conflicting thoughts the voice suppress’d ;
The fire of vengeance seem’d to stream
From his swoln eyeball’s yellow gleam.

And now the tumults of the war,
Mingling confusedly from afar,
Swell in the wind. Now louder cries
Distinct of hounds and men arise.
Forth from the brake, with beating heart,
Th’ assembled hares tumultuous start,
And, every straining nerve on wing,
Away precipitately spring.
The hunting band, a signal given,
Thick thundering o’er the plain are driven ;
O’er cliff abrupt, and shrubby mound,
And river broad, impetuous bound ;
Now plunge amid the forest shades,
Glance through the openings of the glades ;
Now o’er the level valley sweep,
Now with short steps strain up the steep ;

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THE HARES, A FABLE.
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While backward from the hunter's eyes
The landscape like a torrent flies.
At last an ancient wood they gain'd,
By pruner's ax yet unprofan'd,
High o'er the rest, by Nature rear'd,
The oak's majestic boughs appear'd ;
Beneath, a copse of various hue
In barbarous luxuriance grew.
No knife had curb'd the rambling sprays,
No hand had wove th' implicit maze.
The flowering thorn, self-taught to wind,
The hazle's stubborn stem intwin'd,
And bramble twigs were wreath'd around,
And rough furze crept along the ground.
Here sheltering, from the sons of murder,
The hares drag their tired limbs no further.

But lo, the western wind ere long
Was loud, and roar'd the woods among ;
From rustling leaves and crashing boughs,
The sound of woe and war arose.
The hares distracted scour the grove,
As terror and amazement drove ;

 THE HARES, A FABLE.

But danger, wheresoe'er they fled,
 Still seem'd impending o'er their head,
 Now crowded in a grotto's gloom,
 All hope extinct, they wait their doom,
 Dire was the silence, till, at length,
 Even from despair deriving strength
 With bloody eye, and furious look,
 A daring youth arose and spoke.

" O wretched race, the scorn of Fate,
 " Whom ills of every sort await !
 " O, curs'd with keenest sense to feel
 " The sharpest sting of every ill !
 " Say ye, who, fraught with mighty scheme,
 " Of liberty and vengeance dream,
 " What now remains ? To what recess
 " Shall we our weary steps address,
 " Since fate is evermore pursuing
 " All ways, and means to work our ruin ?
 " Are we alone, of all beneath,
 " Condemn'd to misery worse than death ?
 " Must we, with fruitless labour, strive
 " In misery worse than death to live ?

THE HARES, A FABLE.

No. Be the smaller ill our choice :
“ So dictates Nature’s powerful voice.
“ Death’s pang will in a moment cease ;
“ And then, All hail, eternal peace !”
Thus while he spoke, his words impart
The dire resolve to every heart.

A distant lake in prospect lay,
That glittering in the solar ray,
Gleam’d through the dusky trees, and shot
A trembling light along the grot.
Thither with one consent they bend,
Their sorrows with their lives to end,
While each, in thought, already hears
The water hissing in his ears.

Fast by the margin of the lake,
Conceal’d within a thorny brake.
A Linnet sate, whose careless lay
Amused the solitary day,
Careless he sung, for on his breast
Sorrow no lasting trace impress’d ;
When suddenly he heard a sound
Of swift feet traversing the ground.

THE HARES, A FABLE.

Quick to the neighbouring tree he flies,
Thence trembling cast around his eyes ;
No foe appear'd, his fears were vain ;
Pleas'd he renews the sprightly strain.

The hares, whose noise had caus'd his fright,
Saw with surprise the linnet's flight.
" Is there on earth a wretch," they said,
" Whom our approach can strike with dread ?"
An instantaneous change of thought
To tumult every bosom wrought.
So fares the system-building sage,
Who, plodding on from youth to age,
At last on some foundation-dream
Has rear'd aloft his goodly scheme,
And prov'd his predecessors fools,
And bound all nature by his rules ;
So fares he in that dreadful hour,
When injur'd Truth exerts her power,
Some new phenomenon to raise ;
Which, bursting on his frighted gaze,
From its proud summit to the ground
Proves the whole edifice unsound.

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THE HARES, A FABLE.  
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“ Children,” thus spoke a hare sedate,
Who oft had known th’ extremes of fate,
“ In slight events the docile mind
“ May hints of good instruction find.
“ That our condition is the worst,
“ And we with such misfortunes curs’d
“ As all comparison defy,
“ Was late the universal cry ;
“ When lo, an accident so slight
“ As yonder little linnet’s flight,
“ Has made your stubborn heart confess
“ (So your amazement bids me guess)
“ That all our load of woes and fears
“ Is but a part of what he bears.
“ Where can he rest secure from harms,
“ Whom even a helpless hare alarms ?
“ Yet he repines not at his lot,
“ When past, the danger is forgot ;
“ On yonder bough he trims his wings,
“ And with unusual rapture sings ;
“ While we, less wretched, sink beneath
“ Our lighter ills, and rush to death.

THE HARES, A FABLE.

- “ No more of this unmeaning rage,
“ But hear, my friends, the words of age.
“ When by the winds of autumn driven
“ The scatter’d clouds fly cross the heaven,
“ Oft have we, from some mountain’s head,
“ Beheld the alternate light and shade
“ Sweep the long vale. Here hovering lowers
“ The shadowy cloud ; there downwards pours,
“ Streaming direct, a flood of day,
“ Which from the view flies swift away ;
“ It flies, while other shades advance,
“ And other streaks of sunshine glance.
“ Thus chequer’d is the life below
“ With gleams of joy, and clouds of woe.
“ Then hope not while we journey on,
“ Still to be basking in the sun :
“ Nor fear, though now in shades ye mourn,
“ That sunshine will no more return.
“ If, by your terrors overcome,
“ Ye fly before th’ approaching gloom,
“ The rapid clouds your flight pursue,
“ And darkness still o’ercasts your view.

THE HARES, A FABLE.

“ Who longs to reach the radiant plain
“ Must onward urge his course amain ;
“ For doubly swift the shadow flies,
“ When 'gainst the gale the pilgrim plies.
“ At least be firm, and undismay'd
“ Maintain your ground ! the fleeting shade
“ Ere long spontaneous glides away,
“ And gives you back th' enlivening ray.
“ Lo, while I speak, our danger past !
“ No more the shrill horn's angry blast
“ Howls in our ear ; the savage roar
“ Of war and murder is no more.
“ Then snatch the moment fate allows,
“ Nor think of past or future woes.”
He spoke ; and hope revives ; the lake
That instant one and all forsake,
In sweet amusement to employ
The present sprightly hour of joy.

Now from the western mountain's brow
Compass'd with clouds of various glow,
The Sun a broader orb displays,
And shoots aslope his ruddy rays.

THE HARES, A FABLE.

The lawn assumes a fresher green,
And dew-drops spangle all the scene.
The balmy zephyr breathes along,
The shepherd sings his tender song,
With all their lays the groves resound,
And falling waters murmur round,
Discord and care were put to flight,
And all was peace, and calm delight.



THE

JUDGMENT OF PARIS.



FAR in the depth of Ida's inmost grove,
A scene for love and solitude design'd ;
Where flowery woodbines wild by Nature wove
Form'd the lone bower, the royal swain reclin'd.

All up the craggy cliffs, that tower'd to Heaven,
Green wav'd the murmuring pines on every side ;
Save where, fair opening to the beam of even,
A dale slop'd gradual to the valley wide.

Echoed the vale with many a cheerful note ;
The lowing of the herds resounding long,
The shrilling pipe, and mellow horn remote,
And social clamours of the festive throng.

For now, low hovering o'er the western main,
Where amber clouds begirt his dazzling throne,

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

The Sun, with ruddier verdure deck'd the plain :
And lakes, and streams, and spires triumphal shone.

And many a band of ardent youths were seen ;
Some into rapture fir'd by glory's charms,
Or hurl'd the thundering car along the green,
Or march'd embattled on in glittering arms.

Others more mild, in happy leisure gay,
The darkening forest's lonely gloom explore,
Or by Scamander's flowery margin stray,
Or the blue Hellespont's resounding shore.

But chief the eye to Ilion's glories turn'd,
That gleam'd along th' extended champaign far,
And bulwarks, in terrific pomp adorn'd,
Where Peace sat smiling at the frowns of War.

Rich in the spoils of many a subject-clime,
In pride luxurious blaz'd th' imperial dome ;
Tower'd mid th' encircling grove the fane sublime ;
And dread memorials mark'd the hero's tomb.

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THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.  
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Who from the black and bloody cavern led
The savage stern, and sooth'd his boisterous breast ;
Who spoke, and Science rear'd her radiant head,
And brighten'd o'er the long benighted waste ;

Or, greatly daring in his country's cause,
Whose heaven-taught soul the awful plan design'd,
Whence Power stood trembling at the voice of laws ;
Whence soar'd on Freedom's wing th' ethereal mind.

But not the pomp that royalty displays,
Nor all th' imperial pride of lofty Troy,
Nor Virtue's triumph of immortal praise
Could rouse the languor of the lingering boy.

Abandon'd all to soft Enone's charms,
He to oblivion doom'd the listless day ;
Inglorious lull'd in Love's dissolving arms,
While flutes lascivious breath'd th' enfeebling lay.

To trim the ringlets of his scented hair :
To aim, insidious, Love's bewitching glance ;

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Or cull fresh garlands for the gaudy fair,
Or wanton loose in the voluptuous dance :

These were his arts ; these won Enone's love,
Nor sought his fetter'd soul a nobler aim.
Ah why should beauty's smile those arts approve,
Which taint with infamy the lover's flame.

Now laid at large beside a murmuring spring,
Melting he listen'd to the vernal song,
And Echo listening wav'd her airy wing,
While the deep winding dales the lays prolong.

When slowly floating down the azure skies
A crimson cloud flash'd on his startled sight ;
Whose skirts gay-sparkling with unnumber'd dyes
Lanch'd the long billowy trails of flick'ry light.

That instant, hush'd was all the vocal grove,
Hush'd was the gale, and every ruder sound,
And strains aerial, warbling far above,
Rung in the ear a magic peal profound.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Near, and more near, the swimming radiance roll'd ;
Along the mountains stream the lingering fires,
Sublime the groves of Ida blaze with gold,
And all the Heaven resounds with louder lyres.

The trumpet breathed a note : and all in air,
The glories vanish'd from the dazzled eye ;
And three ethereal forms, divinely fair,
Down the steep glade were seen advancing nigh.

The flowering glade fell level where they mov'd ;
O'er-arching high the clustering roses hung,
And gales from Heaven on balmy pinion rov'd,
And hill and dale with gratulation rung.

The **FIRST** with slow and stately step drew near,
Fix'd was her lofty eye, erect her mien :
Sublime in grace, in majesty severe,
She look'd and mov'd a goddess and a queen.

Her robe along the gale profusely stream'd,
Light lean'd the sceptre on her bending arm ;

 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

And round her brow a starry circlet gleam'd,
 Heightening the pride of each commanding charm.

Milder the NEXT came on with artless grace,
 And on a javelin's quivering length reclin'd :
 T' exalt her mein she bade no splendour blaze,
 Nor pomp of vesture fluctuate on the wind.

Serene, though awful, on her brow the light
 Of heavenly wisdom shone : nor rov'd her eyes,
 Save to the shadowy cliff's majestic height,
 Or the blue concave of th' involving skies.

Keen were her eyes to search the inmost soul :
 Yet Virtue triumph'd in their beams benign,
 And impious Pride oft felt their dread controul,
 When in fierce lightning flash'd the wrath divine. (6)

With awe and wonder gaz'd th' adoring swain ;
 His kindling cheeks great Virtue's power confess'd ;
 But soon 'twas o'er, for Virtue prompts in vain,
 When Pleasure's influence numbs the nerveless breast.

.....
 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

And now advanc'd the QUEEN OF MELTING JOY,
 Smiling supreme in unresisted charms,
 Ah then, what transports fir'd the trembling boy !
 How throbb'd his sickening frame with fierce alarms !

Her eyes in liquid light luxurious swim,
 And languish with unutterable love.
 Heaven's warm bloom glows along each bright'ning limb,
 Where fluttering bland the veil's thin mantlings rove.

Quick, blushing as abash'd, she half withdrew :
 One hand a bough of flow'ring myrtle wav'd,
 One graceful spread, where, scarce conceal'd from view,
 Soft through the parting robe her bosom heav'd.

“ Offspring of Jove supreme ! belov'd of Heav'n !
 Attend,” Thus spoke the empress of the skies.

“ For know, to thee, high-fated prince, 'tis given
 Through the bright realms of Fame sublime to rise.

“ Beyond man's boldest hope ; if nor the wiles
 Of Pallas triumph o'er th' ennobling thought ;

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THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Nor pleasure lure with artificial smiles
To quaff the poison of her luscious draught.

“ When Juno’s charms the prize of beauty claim
Shall ought on Earth, shall ought in Heav’n contend?
Whom Juno calls to high triumphant fame,
Shall he to meaner sway inglorious bend?

“ Yet lingering comfortless in lonesome wild,
Where Echo sleeps mid cavern’d vales profound,
The pride of Troy, Dominion’s darling child,
Pines while the slow hour stalks its sullen round.

“ Hear thou, of Heav’n unconscious ! From the blaze
Of glory, stream’d from Jove’s eternal throne,
Thy soul, O mortal, caught th’ inspiring rays
That to a god exalt Earth’s raptur’d son.

“ Hence the bold wish, on boundless pinion borne,
That fires, alarms, impels the maddening soul ;
The hero’s eye, hence, kindling into scorn,
Blasts the proud menace, and defies controul.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

- “ But, unimprov'd, Heav'n's noblest boons are vain,
No sun with plenty crowns th' uncultur'd vale:
Where green lakes languish on the silent plain,
Death rides the billows of the western gale.
- “ Deep in yon mountain's womb, where the dark cave
Howls to the torrent's everlasting roar,
Does the rich gem its flashy radiance wave?
Or flames with steady ray th' imperial ore?
- “ Toil deck'd with glittering domes yon champaign wide,
And wakes yon grove-embosom'd lawns to joy,
And rends the rough-ore from the mountain's side,
Spangling with starry pomp the thrones of Troy.
- “ Fly these soft scenes. Even now, with playful art,
Love wreathes the flowery ways with fatal snare.
And nurse th' ethereal fire that warms thy heart,
That fire ethereal lives but by thy care.
- “ Lo, hovering near on dark and dampy wing,
Sloth with stern patience waits the hour assign'd,

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

From her chill plume the deadly dews to fling,
That quench Heav'n's beam, and freeze the cheerless
mind.

“ Vain, then, th' enliv'ning sound of Fame's alarms,
For Hope's exulting impulse prompts no more :
Vain ev'n the joys that lure to Pleasure's arms,
The throb of transport is for ever o'er.

“ O who shall then to Fancy's darkening eyes
Recall th' Elysian dreams of joy and light ?
Dim through the gloom the formless visions rise,
Snatch'd instantaneous down the gulf of night.

“ Thou, who securely lull'd in youth's warm ray
Mark'st not the desolations wrought by Time,
Be rous'd or perish. Ardent for its prey
Speeds the fell hour that ravages thy prime.

“ And, midst the horrors shrin'd of midnight storm,
The fiend Oblivion eyes thee from afar,

.....
THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.
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Black with intolerable frowns her form,
Beckoning th' embattled whirlwinds into war.

“ Fanes, bulwarks, mountains, worlds, their tempest
whelms :

Yet glory braves unmov'd th' impetuous sweep.
Fly then, ere, hurl'd from life's delightful realms,
Thou sink t' Oblivion's dark and boundless deep.

“ Fly then, where Glory points the path sublime,
See her crown dazzling with eternal light !
'Tis Juno prompts thy daring steps to climb,
And girds thy bounding heart with matchless might.

“ Warm in the raptures of divine desire,
Burst the soft chain that curbs th' aspiring mind :
And fly, where Vict'ry, borne on wings of fire,
Waves her red banner to the rattling wind.

“ Ascend the car. Indulge the pride of arms,
Where elarions roll their kindling strains on high,
Where the eye maddens to the dread alarms,
And the long shout tumultuous rends the sky.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

“ Plung’d in the uproar of the thundering field
I see thy lofty arm the tempest guide :
Fate scatters lightning from thy meteor-shield,
And Ruin spreads around the sanguine tide.

“ Go, urge the terrors of thy headlong car,
On prostrate Pride, and Grandeur’s spoils o’erthrown,
While all amaz’d ev’n heroes shrink afar,
And hosts embattled vanish at thy frown.

“ When glory crowns thy godlike toils, and all
The triumph’s length’ning pomp exalts thy soul,
When lowly at thy feet the mighty fall,
The tyrants tremble at thy stern controul :

“ When conquering millions hail thy sov’reign might,
And tribes unknown dread acclamation join :
How wilt thou spurn the forms of low delight !
For all the ecstacies of Heav’n are thine :

“ For thine the joys, that fear no length of days,
Whose wide effulgence scorns all mortal bound :

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 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.  
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Fame's trump in thunder shall announce thy praise,
 Nor bursting worlds her clarion's blast confound."

The goddess ceas'd, not dubious of the prize :
 Elate she mark'd his wild and rolling eye,
 Mark'd his lip quiver, and his bosom rise,
 And his warm cheek suffus'd with crimson die.

But Pallas now drew near. Sublime, serene
 In conscious dignity, she view'd the svain :
 Then, love and pity softening all her mien,
 Thus breath'd with accents mild the solemn strain.

" Let those, whose arts to fatal paths betray,
 The soul with passion's gloom tempestuous blind,
 And snatch from Reason's ken th' auspicious ray
 Truth darts from Heaven to guide th' exploring mind.

" But wisdom loves the calm and serious hour,
 When Heaven's pure emanation beams confess'd :
 Rage, ecstasy, alike disclaim her power,
 She woos each gentler impulse of the breast.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

- “ Sincere th’ unalter’d bliss her charms impart,
Sedate th’ enlivening ardours they inspire :
She bids no transient rapture thrill the heart,
She wakes no feverish gust of fierce desire.
- “ Unwise, who, tossing on the watery way,
All to the storm th’ unfetter’d sail devolve :
Man more unwise resigns the mental sway,
Borne headlong on by passion’s keen resolve.
- “ While storms remote but murmur on thine ear,
Nor waves in ruinous uproar round thee roll,
Yet, yet a moment check thy prone career,
And curb the keen resolve that prompts thy soul.
- “ Explore thy heart, that, rous’d by Glory’s name,
Pants all enraptur’d with the mighty charm—
And, does Ambition quench each milder flame ?
And is it conquest that alone can warm ?
- “ T’ indulge fell Rapine’s desolating lust,
To drench the balmy lawn in streaming gore,

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

To spurn the hero's cold and silent dust—

Are these thy joys? Nor throbs thy heart for more?

“ Pleas'd canst thou listen to the patriot's groan,

And the wild wail of Innocence forlorn?

And hear th' abandon'd maid's last frantic moan,

Her love for ever from her bosom torn?

“ Nor wilt thou shrink, when Virtue's fainting breath

Pours the dread curse of vengeance on thy head?

Nor when the pale ghost bursts the cave of death,

To glare distraction on thy midnight bed?

“ Was it for this, though born to regal pow'r,

Kind Heav'n to thee did nobler gifts consign,

Bade Fancy's influence gild thy natal hour,

And bade Philanthropy's applause be thine?

“ Theirs be the dreadful glory to destroy,

And theirs the pride of pomp, and praise suborn'd,

Whose eye ne'er lighten'd at the smile of Joy,

Whose cheek the tear of Pity ne'er adorn'd:

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

“ Whose soul, each finer sense instinctive quell'd,
The lyre's mellifluous ravishment defies :
Nor marks where Beauty roves the flow'ry field,
Or Grandeur's pinion sweeps th' unbounded skies.

“ Hail to sweet Fancy's unexpressive charm !
Hail to the pure delights of social love !
Hail, pleasures mild, that fire not while ye warm,
Nor rack th' exulting frame, but gently move.

“ But Fancy soothes no more, if stern Remorse
With iron grasp the tortur'd bosom wring.
Ah then, ev'n Fancy speeds the venom's course,
Ev'n Fancy points with rage the madd'ning sting.

“ Her wrath a thousand gnashing fiends attend,
And roll the snakes, and toss the brands of Hell :
The beam of Beauty blasts : dark Heavens impend
Tott'ring : and Music thrills with startling yell.

“ What then avails, that with exhaustless store
Obsequious Luxury loads thy glitt'ring shrine :

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

What then avails, that prostrate slaves adore,
And Fame proclaims thee matchless and divine?

“ What tho’ bland flatt’ry all her arts apply?—
Will these avail to calm th’ infuriate brain?
Or will the roaring surge, when heav’d on high,
Headlong hang, hush’d, to hear the piping swain?

“ In health how fair, how ghastly in decay
Man’s lofty form! how heav’nly fair the mind
Sublim’d by Virtue’s sweet enliv’ning sway!
But ah! to guilt’s outrageous rule resign’d,

“ How hideous and forlorn! when ruthless Care
With cank’ring tooth corrodes the seeds of life,
And deaf with passion’s storms when pines Despair,
And howling furies rouse th’ eternal strife.

“ O, by thy hopes of joy that restless glow,
Pledges of Heav’n! be taught by Wisdom’s lore:
With anxious haste each doubtful path forego,
And life’s wild ways with cautious fear explore.

 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

“ Straight be thy course : nor tempt the maze that leads
 Where fell Remorse his shapeless strength conceals,
 And oft Ambition’s dizzy cliff he treads,
 And slumbress oft in Pleasure’s flow’ry vales.

“ Nor linger unresolv’d : Heav’n prompts the choice ;
 Save when Presumption shuts the ear of Pride :
 With grateful awe attend to Nature’s voice,
 The voice of Nature Heav’n ordain’d thy guide.

“ Warn’d by her voice, the arduous path pursue,
 That leads to Virtue’s fane a hardy band,
 What, though no gaudy scenes decoy their view,
 Nor clouds of fragrance roll along the land ?

“ What, though rude mountains beave the flinty way,
 Yet there the soul drinks light and life divine,
 And pure aerial gales of gladness play,
 Brace every nerve, and every sense refine.

“ Go, prince, be virtuous, and be blest, The throne
 Rears not its state to swell the couch of Lust :

 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Nor dignify Corruption's daring son,
 T' o'erwhelm his humbler brethren of the dust.

" But yield an ampler scene to Bounty's eye,
 An ampler range to Mercy's ear expand :
 And, midst admiring nations, set on high
 Virtue's fair model, form'd by Wisdom's hand.

" Go then : the moan of Woe demands thine aid :
 Pride's licens'd outrage claims thy slumbering ire :
 Pale Genius roams the bleak neglected shade,
 And batt'ning Av'rice mocks his tuneless lyre.

" Ev'n Nature pines by vilest chains oppress'd :
 Th' astonish'd kingdoms crouch to Fashion's nod.
 O ye pure inmates of the gentle breast,
 Truth, Freedom, Love, O where is your abode ?

" O yet once more shall Peace from Heaven return,
 And young Simplicity with mortals dwell !
 Nor Innocence th' august pavilion scorn,
 Nor meek Contentment fly the humble cell!

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

“ Wilt thou, my prince, the beauteous train implore,
Midst Earth's forsaken scenes once more to bide?
Then shall the shepherd sing in every bow'r,
And Love with garlands wreath the domes of Pride.

“ The bright tear starting in th' impassion'd eyes
Of silent gratitude; the smiling gaze
Of gratulation, faltering while he tries
With voice of transport to proclaim thy praise;

“ Th' ethereal glow that stimulates thy frame,
When all th' according pow'rs harmonious move,
And wake to energy each social aim,
Attun'd spontaneous to the will of Jove;

“ Be these, O man, the triumphs of thy soul;
And all the conqueror's dazzling glories slight,
That meteor-like, o'er trembling nations roll,
To sink at once in deep and dreadful night.

“ Like thine, yon orb's stupendous glories burn
With genial beam; nor, at th' approach of even,

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THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.  
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In shades of horror leave the world to mourn,
But gild with ling'ring light th' impurpled Heav'n."

Thus while she spoke, her eye, sedately meek,
Look'd the pure fervour of maternal love.
No rival zeal intemperate flush'd her cheek—
Can Beauty's boast the soul of Wisdom move?

Worth's noble pride, can Envy's leer appal,
Or staring Folly's vain applauses soothe?
Can jealous Fear Truth's dauntless heart intral?
Suspicion lurks not in the heart of Truth.

And now the shepherd rais'd his pensive head :
Yet unresolv'd and fearful rov'd his eyes,
Scar'd at the glances of the awful maid ;
For young unpractis'd Guilt distrusts the guise

Of shameless Arrogance—His wav'ring breast,
Though warm'd by wisdom, own'd no constant fire ;
While lawless Fancy roam'd afar, unblest
Save in the oblivious lap of soft Desire.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

When thus the queen of soul-dissolving smiles :

“ Let gentler fate my darling prince attend,
Joyless and cruel are the warrior's spoils,
Dreary the path stern Virtue's sons ascend.

“ Of human joy full short is the career,
And the dread verge still gains upon your sight :
While idly gazing, far beyond your sphere,
Ye scan the dream of unapproach'd delight :

“ Till every sprightly hour, and blooming scene,
Of life's gay morn unheeded glides away,
And clouds of tempests mount the blue serene,
And storms and ruin close the troublous day.

“ Then still exult to hail the present joy,
Thine be the boon that comes unearn'd by toil ;
No froward vain desire thy bliss annoy,
No flatt'ring hope thy longing hours beguile.

“ Ah ! why should Man pursue the charms of Fame,
For ever luring, yet for ever coy ?

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 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.  
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Light as the gaudy rainbow's pillar'd gleam,
 That melts illusive from the wondering boy !

“ What though her throne irradiate many a shrine,
 If hung loose-tottering o'er th' unfathom'd tomb ?
 What though her mighty clarion, rear'd sublime,
 Display th' imperial wreath, and glittering plume ?

“ Can glittering plume, or can th' imperial wreath
 Redeem from unremitting fate the brave ?
 What note of triumph can her clarion breathe,
 T' alarm th' eternal midnight of the grave ?

“ That night draws on : nor will the vacant hour
 Of expectation linger as it flies :
 Nor Fate one moment unenjoy'd restore :
 Each moment's flight how precious to the wise !

“ O shun th' annoyance of the bustling throng,
 That haunt with zealous turbulence the great,
 There coward Office boasts th' unpunish'd wrong,
 And sneaks secure in insouciance of state.

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THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.  
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“ O'er fancy'd injury Suspicion pines,
And in grim silence gnaws the festering wound ;
Deceit the rage-embitter'd smile refines,
And Censure spreads the viperous hiss around.

“ Hope not, fond prince, though Wisdom guard thy
throne,
Tho' Truth and Bounty prompt each generous aim,
Tho' thine the palm of peace, the victor's crown,
The Muse's rapture, and the patriot's flame :

“ Hope not, tho' all that captivates the wise,
All that endears the good exalt thy praise :
Hope not to taste repose : for Envy's eyes
At fairest worth still point their deadly rays.

“ Envy, stern tyrant of the flinty heart,
Can aught of Virtue, Truth, or Beauty charm ?
Can soft compassion thrill with pleasing smart,
Repentance melt, or Gratitude disarm.

“ Ah no. Where Winter Scythia's waste enchains,
And monstrous shapes roar to the ruthless storm,

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Not Phœbus' smile can cheer the dreadful plains,
Or soil accurs'd with balmy life inform.

“ Then Envy, then is thy triumphant hour,
When mourns Benevolence his baffled scheme :
When insult mocks the clemency of Pow'r,
And loud Dissension's livid firebrands gleam :

“ When squint-ey'd Slander plies th' unhallow'd tongue,
From poison'd maw when Treason weaves his line,
And Muse apostate (infamy to song!)
Grovels, low-muttering, at Seditiōn's shrine.

“ Let not my prince forego the peaceful shade,
The whispering grove, the fountain and the plain,
Power, with th' oppressive weight of pomp array'd,
Pants for simplicity and ease in vain.

“ The yell of frantic Mirth may stun his ear,
But frantic Mirth soon leaves the heart forlorn :
And pleasure flies that high tempestuous sphere,
Far different scenes her lucid paths adorn.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

“ She loves to wander on th’ untrodden lawn,
Or the green bosom of reclining hill,
Sooth’d by the careless warbler of the dawn,
Or the lone plaint of ever murmuring rill.

“ Or from the mountain-glades aerial brow,
While to her song a thousand echoes call,
Marks the wild woodland wave remote below,
Where shepherds pipe unseen, and waters fall.

“ Her influence oft the festive hamlet proves,
Where the high carol cheers th’ exulting ring;
And oft she roams the maze of wildering groves,
Listening th’ unnumber’d melodies of Spring.

“ Or to the long and lonely shore retires;
What time, loose-glimmering to the lunar beam,
Faint heaves the slumberous wave, and starry fires
Gild the blue deep with many a lengthening gleam.

“ Then to the balmy bower of Rapture born,
While strings self-warbling breathe elysian rest,

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 THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.  
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Melts in delicious vision, till the morn
 Spangle with twinkling dew the flowery waste.

“ The frolic Moments, purple-pinion'd, dance
 Around, and scatter roses as they play :
 And the blithe Graces, hand in hand, advances,
 Where, with her lov'd compeers, she deigas to stray

“ Mild Solitude, in veil of rustic die,
 Her sylvan spear with moss-grown ivy bound :
 And Indolence, with sweetly-languid eye,
 And zoneless robe that trails along the ground.

“ But chiefly love—O thou, whose gentle mind,
 Each soft indulgence Nature fram'd to share,
 Pomp, wealth, renown, dominion, all resign'd,
 O haste to Pleasure's bower, for Love is there.

“ Love, the desire of gods ! the feast of Heaven !
 Yet to Earth's favour'd offspring not denied !
 Ah, let not thankless man the blessing given
 Enslave to Fame, or sacrifice to Pride.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

- “ Nor I from Virtue’s call decoy thine ear ;
 Friendly to Pleasure are her sacred laws,
Let Temperance’s smile the cup of gladness cheer,
 That cup is death, if he withhold applause.
- “ Far from thy haunt be Envy’s baneful sway,
 And Hate, that works the harass’d soul to storm,
But woo Content to breathe her soothing lay,
 And charm from Fancy’s view each angry form.
- “ No savage joy th’ harmonious hours profane !
 Whom Love refines, can barbarous tumults please ?
Shall rage of blood pollute the sylvan reign ?
 Shall Leisure wanton in the spoils of Peace ?
- “ Free let the feathery race indulge the song,
 Inhale the liberal beam, and melt in love :
Free let the fleet hind bound her hills along,
 And in pure streams the watery nations rove.
- “ To joy in Nature’s universal smile
 Well suits, O man, thy pleasurable sphere ;

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THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.  
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But why should Virtue doom thy years to toil ?

Ah, why should Virtue's law be deem'd severe ?

“ What meed, Beneficence, thy care repays ?

What, Sympathy, thy still returning pang ?

And why his generous arm should Justice raise,

To dare the vengeance of a tyrant's fang !

“ From thankless spite no bounty can secure ;

Or froward wish of discontent fulfil,

That knows not to regret thy bounded power,

But blames with keen reproach thy partial will.

“ To check th' impetuous all-involving tide

Of human woes, how impotent thy strife !

High o'er thy mounds devouring surges ride,

Nor reek thy baffled toils, or lavish'd life,

“ The bower of bliss, the smile of love be thine,

Unlabour'd ease, and leisure's careless dream.

Such be their joys, who bend at VENUS' shrine,

And own her charms beyond compare supreme.”

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

Warm'd as the spoke, all panting with delight,
 Her kindling beauties breath'd triumphant bloom ;
 And Cupids flutter'd round in circlets bright,
 And Flora pour'd from all her stores perfume.

"Thine be the prize," exclaim'd th' enraptur'd youth,
 "Queen of unrivall'd charms, and matchless joy."—
 O blind to fate, felicity and truth!—
 But such are they, whom Pleasure's snares decay.

The Sun was sunk ; the vision was no more ;
 Night downward rush'd tempestuous, at the frown
 Of Jove's awaken'd wrath : deep thunders roar,
 And forests howl afar and mountains groan.

And sanguine meteora glare athwart the plain ;
 With horror's scream the Ilian towers resound,
 Raves the hoarse storm along the bellowing main,
 And the strong earthquake rends the shuddering ground.

EPITAPH :

BEING PART OF AN INSCRIPTION FOR A MONUMENT
TO BE ERECTED BY A GENTLEMAN TO
THE MEMORY OF HIS LADY.

FAREWELL, my best-belov'd ; whose heavenly mind
Genius with virtue, strength with softness join'd ;
Devotion, undebas'd by pride or art,
With meek simplicity, and joy of heart ;
Though sprightly, gentle ; though polite, sincere ;
And only of thyself a judge severe ;
Unblam'd, unequal'd in each sphere of life,
The tenderest Daughter, Sister, Parent, Wife.
In thee their Patroness th' afflicted lost ;
Thy friends, their pattern, ornament, and boast ;
And I—but ah, can words my loss declare,
Or paint th' extremes of transport and despair !
O Thou, beyond what verse or speech can tell,
My guide, my friend, by best-belov'd, farewell !

ODE

ON LORD H**'S BIRTH-DAY.

A MUSE, unskill'd in vental praise,
Unstain'd with flattery's art ;
Who loves simplicity of lays
Breath'd ardent from the heart ;
While gratitude and joy inspire,
Resumes the long-unpractis'd lyre,
To hail, O H**, thy Natal Morn :
No gaudy wreath of flow'rs she weaves,
But twines with oak the laurel leaves,
Thy cradle to adorn.

For not on beds of gaudy flow'rs
Thine ancestors reclin'd,
Where Sloth dissolves, and Spleen devours
All energy of mind.
To hurl the dart, to ride the car,
To stem the deluges of war,
And snatch from fate a sinking land ;
Trample th' Invader's lofty crest,

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ODE ON LORD H\*\*'S BIRTH-DAY.  
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And from his grasp the dagger wrest,
And desolating brand :

'Twas this, that rais'd th' illustrious Line
To match the first in Fame !
A thousand years have seen it shine
With unabated flame.
Have seen thy mighty Sires appear
Foremost in Glory's high career,
The pride and pattern of the Brave,
Yet, pure from lust of blood their sire,
And from ambition's wild desire,
They triumph'd but to save.

The Muse with joy attends their way
The vale of Peace along ;
There to its Lord the village gay
Renews the grateful song.
Yon castle's glitt'ring towers contain
No pit of woe, nor clanking chain,
Nor to the suppliant's wail resound ;
The open doors the needy bless,

 ODE ON LORD H^W'S BIRTH-DAY.

Th' unfriended hail their calm recess,
 And gladness smiles around.

There to the sympathetic heart
 Life's best delights belong,
 To mitigate the mourner's smart,
 To guard the weak from wrong
 Ye sons of Luxury, be wise :
 Know, happiness for ever flies
 The cold and solitary breast ;
 Then let the social instinct glow,
 And learn to feel another's woe,
 And in his joy be bless'd.

O yet ere Pleasure plant her snare
 For unsuspecting youth ;
 Ere flattery her song prepare
 To check the voice of Truth ;
 O may his country's guardian Power
 Attend the slumbering Infant's bower,
 And bright, inspiring dreams impart :
 To rouse the hereditary fire,
 To kindle each sublime desire,

ODE ON LORD H**'S BIRTH-DAY.

Exalt, and warm the heart.
Swift to reward a Parent's fears,
A Parent's hopes to crown,
Roll on in peace, ye blooming years,
That rear him to renown;
When in his finish'd form and face
Admiring multitudes shall trace
Each patrimonial charm combin'd,
The courteous yet majestic mien,
The liberal smile, the look serene,
The great and gentle mind.

Yet, though thou draw a nation's eyes,
And win a nation's love,
Let not thy towering mind despise
The village and the grove.
No slander there shall wound thy fame,
No ruffian take his deadly aim,
No rival weave the secret snare:
For Innocence with angel smile,
Simplicity that knows no guile,
And Love and Peace are there.

ODE ON LORD H^o's BIRTH-DAY.

When winds the mountain oak assail,
And lay its glories waste,
Content may slumber in the vale,
Unconscious of the blast.
Through scenes of tumult while we 1660,
The heart, alas! is ne'er at home,
It hopes in time to roam no more ;
The mariner, not vainly brave,
Combats the storm, and rides the wave,
To rest at last on shore.

Ye proud, ye selfish, ye severe,
How vain your mask of state !
The good alone have joy sincere,
The good alone are great :
Great, when, amid the vale of peace,
They bid the plaint of sorrow cease,
And hear the voice of artless praise ;
As when along the trophy'd plain
Sublime they lead the victor train,
While shouting nations gaze.

TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LADY CHARLOTTE GORDON,

DRESSED IN A TARTAN SCOTCH BONNET WITH PLUMBS,

&c.



WHY, Lady, wilt thou bind thy lovely brow
With the dread semblance of that warlike helm,
That nodding plume, and wreath of various glow,
That grac'd the chiefs of Scotia's ancient realm?

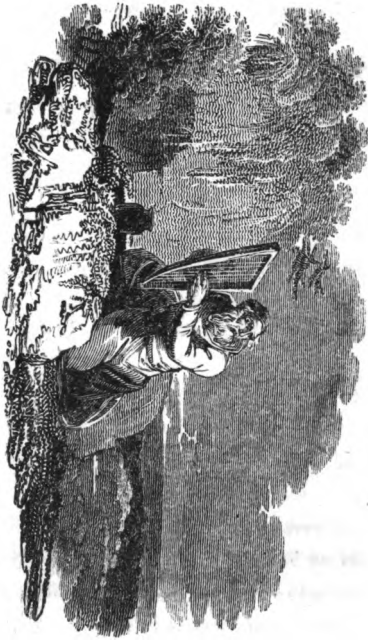
Thou knowest that virtue is of power the source,
And all her magic to thy eyes is given ;
We own their empire, while we feel their force,
Beaming with the benignity of heaven.

The plummy helmet, and the martial mien,
Might dignify Minerva's awful charms ;
But more resistless far th' Idalian queen—
Smiles, graces, gentleness, her only arms.

THE HERMIT.

AT the close of the day, when the hamlet is still,
And mortals the sweets of forgetfulness prove,
When nought but the torrent is heard on the hill,
And nought but the nightingale's song in the grove :
'Twas thus, by the cave of the mountain afar,
While his harp rung symphōnious, a Hermit began ;
No more with himself or with nature at war,
He thought as a Sage, though he felt as a Man.

“ Ah why, all abandon'd to darkness and woe,
“ Why, lone Philomela, that languishing fall?
“ For Spring shall return, and a lover bestow,
“ And Sorrow no longer thy besoin intral.
“ But, if pity inspire thee, renew the sad lay,
“ Mourn, sweetest complainer, man calls thee to mourn.
“ O soothe him, whose pleasures like thine pass away ;
“ Full quickly they pass—but they never return.
“ Now gliding remote, on the verge of the sky,
“ The moon half extinguish'd her crescent displays :
“ But lately I mark'd, when majestic on high,
“ She shone, and the planets were lost in her blaze.



N

 THE HERMIT.

- " Roll on, thou fair orb, and with gladness pursue
 " The path that conducts thee to splendour again.
 " But Man's faded glory what change shall renew !
 " Ah fool ! to exult in a glory so vain !
- " 'Tis night, and the landscape is lovely no more ;
 " I mourn, but, ye woodlands, I mourn not for you ;
 " For morn is approaching, your charms to restore,
 " Perfum'd with fresh fragrance, and glitt'ring with dew,
 " Nor yet for the ravage of winter I mourn ;
 " Kind Nature th' embryo blossom will save.
 " But when shall Spring visit the mouldering urn !
 " O when shall it dawn on the night of the grave !"
- " 'Twas thus, by the glare of false Science betray'd,
 " That leads, to bewilder ; and dazzles, to blind ;
 " My thoughts wont to roam, from shade onward to
 shade,
 " Destruction before me, and sorrow behind.
 " O pity, great Father of light," then I cry'd,
 " Thy creature who fain would not wander from Thee !
 " Lo, humbled in dust, I relinquish my pride :
 " From doubt and from darkness thou only canst free."

THE HERMIT.

- “ And darkness and doubt are now flying away,
“ No longer I roam in conjecture forlorn,
“ So breaks on the traveller, faint, and astray,
“ The bright and the balmy effulgence of morn.
“ See, Truth, Love, and Mercy, in triumph descending,
“ And Nature all glowing in Eden’s first bloom !
“ On the cold cheek of Death smiles and roses are blending,
“ And beauty Immortal awakes from the tomb.”



ELEGY.



TIR'D with the busy crowds, that all the day
Impatient throng where Folly's altars flame;
My languid powers dissolve with quick decay,
Till genial Sleep repair the sinking frame.

Hail, kind reviver! that canst lull the cares,
And every weary sense compose to rest,
Lighten th' oppressive load which anguish bears,
And warm with hope the cold desponding breast.

Touch'd by thy rod, from Power's majestic brow
Drops the gay plume; he pines a lowly clown;
And on the cold earth stretch'd the son of Woe
Quaffs Pleasure's draught, and wears a fancied crown,

When rous'd by thee, on boundless pinions borne
Fancy to fairy scenes exults to rove,
Now scales the cliff gay-gleaming on the morn,
Now sad and silent treads the deepening grove;

ELEGY.

Or skims the main, and listens to the storms,
Marks the long waves roll far remote away ;
Or mingling with ten thousand glittering forms,
Floats on the gale, and basks in purest day.

Haply, ere long, pierc'd by the howling blast
Through dark and pathless deserts I shall roam,
Plunge down th' unfathom'd deep, or shrink aghast
Where bursts the shrieking spectre from the tomb :

Perhaps loose Luxury's enchanting smile
Shall lure my steps to some romantic dale,
Where Mirth's light freaks th' unheeded hours beguile,
And airs of rapture warble in the gale.

Instructive emblem of this mortal state !
Where scenes as various every hour arise
In swift succession, which the hand of Fate
Presents, then snatches from our wondering eyes.

Be taught, vain man, how fleeting all thy joys,
Thy boasted grandeur, and thy glittering store ;

ELEGY.

Death comes, and all thy fancied bliss destroys,
Quick as a dream it fades, and is no more.

And, sons of Sorrow ! though the threatening storm
Of angry Fortune overhang awhile,
Let not her frowns your inward peace deform ;
Soon happier days in happier climes shall smile.

Through Earth's throng'd visions while we toss forlorn,
'Tis tumult all, and rage, and restless strife ;
But these shall vanish like the dreams of morn,
When Death awakes us to immortal life,



SONG,

IN IMITATION OF SHAKESPEARE'S

Blow, blow, thou winter wind, &c.

BLOW, blow, thou vernal gale !
Thy balm will not avail
To ease my aching breast ;
Though thou the billows smooth,
Thy murmurs cannot sooth,
My weary soul to rest.

Flow, flow, thou tuneful stream !
Infuse the easy dream
Into the peaceful soul ;
But thou canst not compose
The tumult of my woes,
Though soft thy waters roll.

SONG.

Blush, blush, ye fairest flowers !
Beauties surpassing yours
My Rosalind adorn ;
Nor is the Winter's blast,
That lays your glories waste,
So killing as her scorn.

Breathe, breathe, ye tender lays,
That linger down the maze
Of yonder winding grove ;
O let your soft controul
Bend her relenting soul
To pity and to love.

Fade, fade, ye flowrets fair !
Gales, fan no more the air !
Ye streams forget to glide !
Be hush'd, each vernal strain ;
Since nought can sooth my pain,
Nor mitigate her pride.

EPITAPH.

ESCAP'D the gloom of mortal life, a soul
Here leaves its mouldering tenement of clay
Safe, where no cares their whelming billows roll,
No doubts bewilder, and no hopes betray.

Like thee, I once have stemm'd the sea of life ;
Like thee, have languish'd after empty joys ;
Like thee, have labour'd in the stormy strife ;
Been griev'd for trifles, and amus'd with toys.

Yet for a while 'gainst Passion's threatful blast
Let steady Reason urge the struggling oar ;
Shot through the dreary gloom the morn at last
Gives to thy longing eye the blissful shore.

Forget my frailties, thou art also frail ;
Forgive my lapses, for thyself may'st fall ;
Nor read unmov'd my artless tender tale,
I was a friend, O man, to thee, to all.

NOTES

TO THE MINSTREL.

BOOK FIRST.

NOTE 1, P. 34.

There is hardly an ancient Ballad, or Romance, wherein a Minstrel or Harper appears, but he is characterized, by way of eminence, to have been "*Of the North Country.*" It is probable, that under this appellation were formerly comprehended all the provinces to the north of the Trent.

See Percy's Essays on the English Minstrels.

NOTE 2, P. 55.

Allusion to *Shakespeare.*

Macbeth. How now, ye secret black, and midnight hags,
What is't you do?

Witches. A deed *without a name.*

Macbeth, Act IV. Scene I.

TO BOOK FIRST.

NOTE 3, P. 56.

See the fine old ballad, called, *The children in the Wood*.

NOTE 4, P. 62.

Spring and Autumn are hardly known to the Laplanders. About the time the sun enters Cancer, their fields, which a week before were covered with snow, appear on a sudden full of grass and flowers.

Scheffer's History of Lapland, p. 16.



NOTES

TO THE MINSTREL.

BOOK SECOND.

NOTE 1, P. 67.

See *Plato's Timeus*.

NOTE 2, P. 88.

Plutarch.

NOTE 3, P. 93.

The influence of the Philosophic Spirit, in humanizing the mind, and preparing it for intellectual exertion and delicate pleasure ;—in exploring, by the help of geometry the system of the universe ;—in banishing superstition ;—in promoting navigation, agriculture, medicine, and moral and political science :—from Stanza XLV. to Stanza LV.

NOTE 4, P. 99.

General ideas of excellence, the immediate archetypes of sublime imitation, both in painting and in poetry. See Aristotle's *Poetics*, and the *Discourses* of Sir Joshua Reynolds.



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 TO BOOK SECOND.  
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NOTE 5, P. 100.

Virgil.

NOTE 6, P. 101.

This excellent person died suddenly on the 10th of February, 1773. The conclusion of the poem was written a few days after.

THE JUDGMENT OF PARIS.

NOTE 7, P. 152.

This is agreeable to the theology of Homer, who often represents Pallas as the executioner of divine vengeance.

THE END.

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