

The works of Mark Akenside, M.D. in verse and prose : with his life, a fac simile of his hand-writing, and an essay on the first poem. / by Mrs. Barbauld.

Contributors

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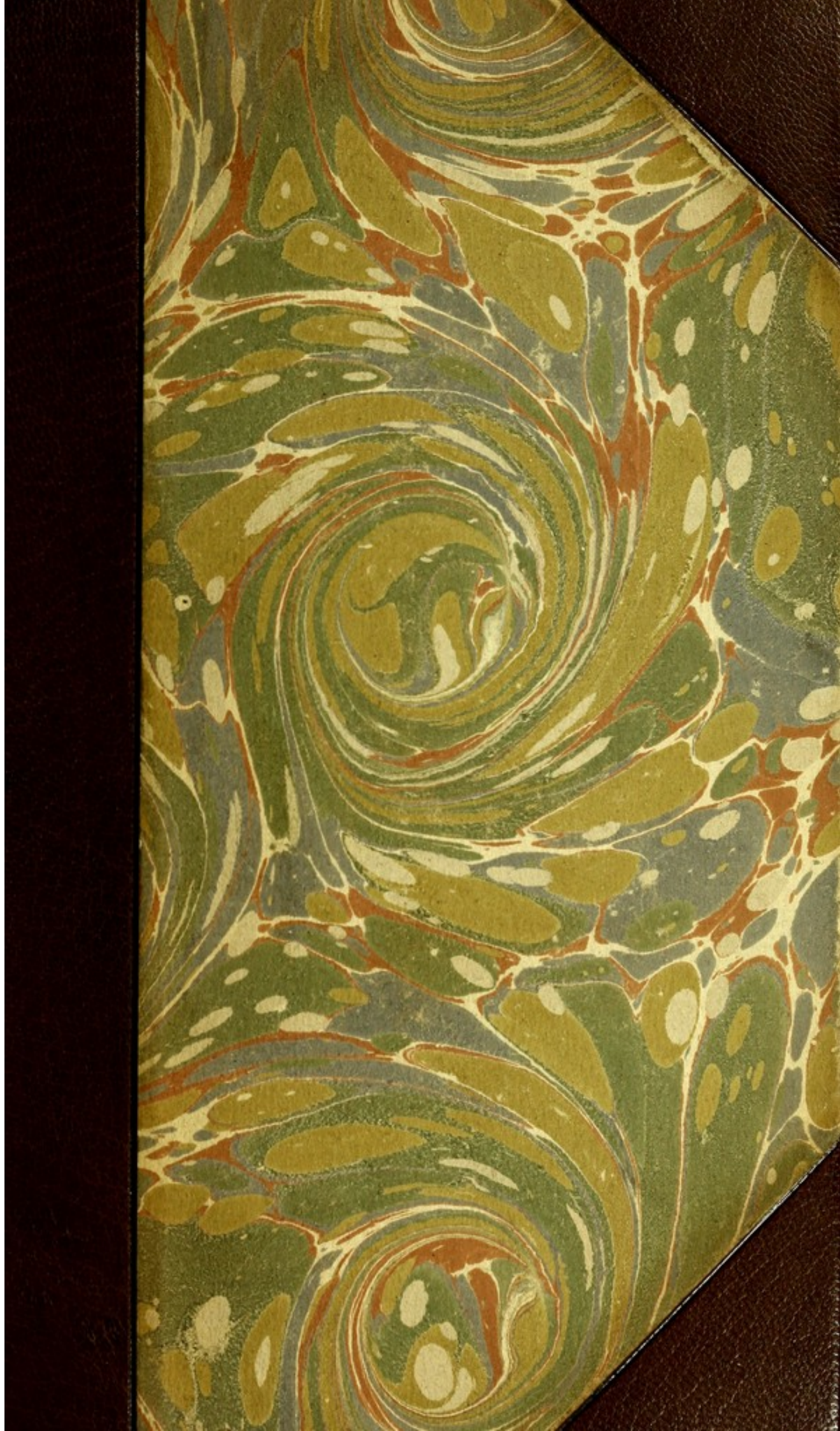
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THE
WORKS
OF
MARK AKINSIDE, M.D.
IN
VERSE AND PROSE;

WITH
HIS LIFE, A FAC SIMILE OF HIS HAND-WRITING,
AND
AN ESSAY ON THE FIRST POEM,
BY MRS. BARBAULD.

VOLUME I.

*"May no foul discord here invade,
"Nor let thy strings one accent move,
"Except what Earth's untroubled ear,
"Mid all her social tribes may hear,
"And Heaven's unerring Throne approve."*

Book I, Ode XIII.

241
NEW-BRUNSWICK, NEW-JERSEY,

Printed by William Elliot,
FOR JOHN GARNETT.

SOLD IN NEW-YORK, BY T. AND J. SWORDS; IN PHILADELPHIA, BY
SAMUEL F. BRADFORD: AND IN BOSTON, BY THOMAS AND ANDREWS.

1808.

ADVERTISEMENT.

the intire first and second books, of which a few copies had been printed for the use only of the Author and certain friends: also a very considerable part of the third book, which had been transcribed in order to its being printed in the same manner: and to these is added the Introduction to a subsequent book, which in the manuscript is called the fourth, and which appears to have been composed at the time when the Author intended to comprise the whole in four books; but which, as he had afterwards determined to distribute the Poem into more books, might perhaps more properly be called the last book. And this is all that is executed of the new work, which although it appeared to the Editor too valuable, even in its imperfect state, to be withholden from the public, yet (he conceives) takes in by much too small a part of the original Poem to supply its place, and to supercede the re-publication of it. For which reason both the Poems are inserted in this collection.

Of the Odes the Author had designed to make up two Books, consisting of twenty Odes each, including the several Odes which he had before published at different times.

The Hymn to the Naiads is reprinted from the sixth volume of Dodsley's Miscellanies, with a few corrections and the addition of some notes.

To the inscriptions taken from the same volume three new Inscriptions are added; the last of which is the only instance wherein a liberty has been taken of inserting any thing in this Collection, which did not appear to have been intended by the Author for publication; among whose papers no copy of this was found, but it is printed from a copy which he had many years since given to Mr. Dyson.

The pieces now first added, in this edition, with a fac simile of his hand-writing, besides being highly interesting, are known to be genuine, and are certainly no discredit to the author.

ERRATA.

Page 27, line 528, for summetry read *symmetry*

Page 112, line 715, for elected read *erected*.

[Faint, illegible handwriting in the left column]

[Faint, illegible handwriting in the right column]

Fac Simile of Dr. Akinside's
Hand-writing.

Northampton, May 21st 1745.

Dear Sir.

When I look on the date of your letter I am very glad that I have any excuse, however disagreeable, for not answering it long ere this. About a month ago, when I ^{was} thinking ~~it~~ very post to write to you, I was thrown from my horse with a very great hazard of my life, & confin'd a good while afterwards from either writing or reading. But, thank heaven, for these ten days I have been perfectly well.

You are very good-natur'd about the verses. If they gave you any pleasure, I shall conclude my principal end in publishing them to be fairly answer'd. And that you look upon your reading them in manuscript & this way of

of seeing them in print, as an instance of real friendship, gives me great satisfaction. As for public influence if they have any, I hope it will be good one. But my expectations of that kind are not near so sanguine as they once were. Indeed human nature in its genuine habit & constitution is adapted to very powerful impressions from this sort of entertainment. But in the present state of manners & opinions, it is almost solely on the retired & studious of nature, that this effect can be look'd for; for hardly any besides these, have been able to preserve the genuine habit of the mind in any tolerable degree.

I am, dear Sir, your most obed^t &c
To Mr. White Jan. 1745
Akinside

THE LIFE OF AKINSIDE.

MARK AKINSIDE, "the British Lucretius," was born at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Nov. 9, 1721. His father, Mark Akinside, was a substantial butcher in that town. His mother, Mary Lumsden, was probably of Scottish extraction. Both parents were Dissenters.

Mr. Brand the present vicar of Newcastle, in his "Observations on popular Antiquities," alleges, that a halt which he had in his gait was occasioned by the falling of a cleaver from his father's stall upon him, when he was a boy.

He received the first part of his education at the free-school of Newcastle, and was afterwards placed under the care of Mr. Wilson, a dissenting minister, who kept an academy in that town, where he first began to write verses. *The Virtuoso* and *The Poet, a Rhapsody*, written at the age of 16; *Love, an Elegy*; *a British Phillipic*; and *a Hymn to Science*, at 17, omitted in the publication of his works by Mr. Dyson, are to be found in volumes 7 and 8 of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, dated from Newcastle, and signed *Marcus*. They bear evident marks of early genius.

At the age of eighteen he was sent to the University of Edinburgh, that he might qualify himself for the office of a dissenting minister, and received some assistance from the fund which the dissenters employ in educating young men of scanty fortune. He prosecuted his studies for one winter, upon this plan: but a wider view of the world, prompting other hopes, he determined to study physic; and repaid, afterwards, that contribution which, being received for a different purpose, he justly thought it dishonourable to retain.

It is said that his greatest work, *The Pleasures of Imagination*, was written at Morpeth, on the banks of the Wensbeck, which he has celebrated in his verses, while he was on a visit to his relations, before he went to the University of Edinburgh.

At Edinburgh, he distinguished himself likewise by his poetical compositions. His *Ode on the Winter Solstice*, which is dated 1740, was certainly composed at that place.

His taste for poetry facilitated his introduction to the most respectable literary associations among his fellow students, by whom his genius and learning were highly respected; and his philosophical knowledge easily procured him admission into the "Medical Society," an institution coeval with the establishment of a regular school of physic in the University, of which he was elected a member, December 30, 1740.

In 1741, after staying three years at Edinburgh, he removed to Leyden, in pursuit of medical knowledge, where he contracted an intimate friendship with *Jeremiah Dyson, Esq.* who was prosecuting the study of the civil law in that University. After residing three years at Leyden, he took his degree of Doctor in Physic, May 16, 1744, and published an inaugural dissertation, according to the custom of the Dutch Universities, *De ortu et incremento fatus humani*,

in which he displayed his medical sagacity, by attacking some opinions of Leuwenhoek, and other writers, at that time very generally received, and by proposing an hypothesis, which has been since adopted by the best physicians and philosophers.

He now returned to England with his friend Mr. Dyson, and the same year published *The Pleasures of Imagination*, which was in general received with great applause.

When the copy was offered to Dodsley, by whom it was published, the price demanded for it, which was 120 *l.* being such as he was not inclined to give precipitately, he carried the work to Pope, who, having looked into it, advised him not to make a niggardly offer, for "this was no every-day poet."

Warburton being dissatisfied with a note in the third book, in which he adopts Shaftesbury's assertion of the efficacy of ridicule for the discovery of truth, thought proper, in a preface to one of his publications, to make some severe strictures upon him; in which, however, he was attacked as a philosopher, not as a poet.

He was defended by his friend Mr. Dyson, in an anonymous "Epistle to Mr. Warburton, occasioned by his treatment of the Author of the Pleasures of Imagination," in which there are several sensible observations; but the style is uncouth and unpleasant.

Warburton's strictures on Akinside, were afterwards reprinted in the postscript to the dedication to the "Free-thinker," prefixed to the first volume of the "Divine Legation," without, however, any notice being taken of what had been written in his defence.

Being now to live by his profession, he first commenced Physician at Northampton, where Dr. Stonehouse then practised, with such reputation and success, that a stranger was not likely to gain ground upon him.

Dr. Kippis, who then resided at Northampton for education, relates, that Dr. Doddridge and Akinside carried on an amicable debate concerning the opinions of the ancients, with regard to a future state of rewards and punishments, in which Akinside supported the firm belief of Cicero in particular, in this great article of natural religion.

On his quitting Northampton, he would perhaps have been reduced to great exigencies in making his way as a physician; but that Mr. Dyson, with an ardour of friendship that has no examples, supported him while he was endeavouring to make himself known.

Mr. Dyson had studied the law, and been called to the bar; but in a short time, having purchased of Mr. Hardinge his place of clerk of the House of Commons, he quitted Westminster Hall, and for the purpose of introducing Akinside to acquaintance in an opulent neighbourhood near the town, bought a house at North-End, Hampstead, where they dwelt together during the summer season, frequenting the long-room, and all clubs and assemblies of the inhabitants.

At these meetings, Sir John Hawkins relates, that Akinside was for displaying those talents which had acquired him the reputation he enjoyed in other companies; "but here," he observes, "they were of little use to him; on the contrary, they tended to engage

him in disputes that betrayed him into a contempt of those that differed in opinion from him."

It was found out that he was a man of low birth, and a dependent on Mr. Dyson; circumstances that furnished those whom he offended with a ground of reproach that reduced him to the necessity of asserting that he was a gentleman.

Little could be done at Hampstead after matters had proceeded to this extremity. Mr. Dyson parted with his villa at North-End, and settled his friend in a small house in Bloomsbury Square, assigning him, with unexampled liberality, 300*l.* a year, which enabled him to keep a chariot, and make a proper appearance in the world.

"If our princes and nobles," says Mr. Hayley, "have not equalled those of other kingdoms in liberality to the great poets of their country, England may yet boast the name of a private gentleman, who discovered, in this respect, a most princely spirit. No nation, either ancient or modern, can produce an example of munificence more truly noble than the annual gratuity which Akinside received from Mr. Dyson; a tribute of generous and affectionate admiration, endeared to its worthy possessor by every consideration which could make it honourable both to himself and to his patron."

At London he was known as a poet by *The Pleasures of Imagination*, and the *Epistle to Curio*, which were followed in 1745, by *Odes on several Subjects*, written, as he tells us, "at very different intervals, and with a view to very different manners of expression and versification."

These performances appeared before he was 24 years of age; but he was afterwards more slow in his publications. His *Ode to the Earl of Huntingdon* came out in 1748, and in 1758 he attempted to rouse the national spirit by an *Ode to the Country Gentlemen of England*.

His poetical reputation was now completely established. He advanced gradually in medical reputation, but never attained any great extent of practice or eminence of popularity.

Akinside appears to have used every endeavour to become popular; "but defeated them all," says Sir John Hawkins, "by the high opinion he every where manifested of himself, and the little condescension he showed to men of inferior endowments."

He seems, however, to have possessed more discretion than Sir John Hawkins allows him; for besides his eagerness in forcing himself into notice, by an ambitious ostentation of elegance and literature, he placed himself in view by all the common methods; and arrived at most of the honours incident to his profession. He became a Fellow of the Royal Society, was admitted by mandamus to the degree of Doctor in Physic in the University of Cambridge, became Physician to St. Thomas's Hospital, was elected Fellow of the College of Physicians, chosen Reader of the Gulstonian and Cronian Lectures, and, on the establishment of the Queen's household, appointed one of the Physicians to her Majesty.

He contributed to the "*Philosophical Transactions*," 1757, *Observations on the Origin and Use of the Lymphatic Vessels in Animals*, being an extract from the Gulstonian Lectures, read

in the theatre of the College of Physicians, in June 1755. Dr. Monro at Edinburgh having taken notice of some inaccuracies in this paper, in his "Observations, Anatomical Physiological," &c. he published a small pamphlet in his vindication, 1758. To the "Philosophical Transactions," 1763, he contributed *An Account of a Blow on the Heart, and its Effects. Oratio Anniversaria ex Instituto Harveii, &c.* Anno 1759, 4to. 1760, to the first volume of the "Medical Transactions," he contributed *Observations on Cancers; of the Use of Ipecacuhana in Asthmas, and a Method of treating White Swellings of the Joints.* He read at the College, some observations made in St. Thomas's Hospital, on the *putrid Erysipelas*, which he intended for the second volume of the "Medical Transactions," but it was not returned at the time of his death. He began to give for the Cronian Lecture, *A History of the Revival of Learning*, from which he soon desisted, as it was supposed, in disgust, some one of the College having objected that he had chosen a subject foreign to the institution.

In 1761, the celebrated Thomas Hollis, Esq. purchased a bed which once belonged to Milton, and in which he died. This bed he sent as a present to Akinside, with the following card:—"An English gentleman is desirous of having the honour to present a bed, which once belonged to John Milton, and on which he died; and if the Doctor's genius, believing himself obliged, and having slept on that bed, should prompt him to write an ode to the memory of John Milton, and the assertor of British Liberty, that gentleman would think himself abundantly recompensed."—Akinside, it is said, seemed wonderfully delighted with this bed, and had it put up in his house; but it does not appear that he took any other notice of Mr. Hollis's benefaction and request.

In the appendix to the "Memoirs of Mr. Hollis," are two letters extracted from the "Public Advertiser," relative to his *Ode to Thomas Edwards, Esq.* and to his supposed *Reflections on the Clergy*, in a passage in *The Pleasures of Imagination*. Among Dr. Birch's papers in the British Museum, are several letters written to him by Akinside.

After he came into considerable reputation and practice, he wrote little poetry, but published, from time to time, medical essays and observations, in the "Transactions" of the Royal Society, and of the College of Physicians.

Sir John Hawkins, in his "Life of Dr. Johnson," has drawn Akinside's character somewhat at large; and it is, with a few exceptions, highly to his advantage.

"Akinside was a man of religion and strict virtue, a philosopher, a scholar, and a fine poet. His conversation was of the most delightful kind, learned, instructive, and without any affectation of wit, cheerful, and entertaining. One of the pleasantest days of my life, I passed with him, Mr. Dyson, and another friend at Putney bowling-green-house, where a neat and elegant dinner, the enlivening sunshine of a summer day, and the view of an unclouded sky, were the least of our gratifications. In perfect good humour with himself and all around

him, he seemed to feel a joy that he lived; and poured out his gratulations to the great Disposer of all felicity, in expressions that Plato himself might have uttered on such an occasion. In conversation with select friends, and those whose course of study had been nearly the same with his own, it was an usual thing with him, in libations to the memory of eminent men among the ancients, to bring their characters into view, and thereby give occasion to expatiate on those particulars of their lives that had rendered them famous. His method was to arrange them into three classes, philosophers, poets, and legislators."

AKINSIDE was very much devoted to the study of ancient literature, and was a great admirer of the best philosophers of antiquity, particularly of Plato and Cicero. His philosophical knowledge and classical taste are conspicuous in his poems, and in the notes and illustrations which he has annexed to them. Of the modern philosophers, Shaftesbury and Hutcheson were his greatest favourites. His high veneration for the Supreme Being, his noble sentiments of the wisdom and benevolence of the Divine Providence, and his zeal for the cause of virtue, are apparent in all his poems. His *Ode to William Hall, Esq.* with the works of Chaulieu, condemns the licentiousness of that poet. His regard to the Christian revelation, and his solicitude to have it preserved in its native purity, are displayed in the *Ode to the Bishop of Winchester*. The *Ode to the Author of the Memoirs of the House of Brandenburg*, seems to have been written on purpose to expose the irreligious tenets of the royal historian. He was warmly attached to the cause of civil and religious liberty. His zeal for freedom is a distinguished feature, and peculiar excellence in the character of his poetry. His productions uniformly glow with the sacred fire of liberty, insomuch that he well deserves to be stiled, "the Poet of the Community." Two of his principal odes are directly consecrated to it, the *Ode to the Earl of Huntingdon*, and that to the *Bishop of Winchester*.

His *Dissertatio de Dysenteria*, published in 1764, which has been twice translated into English, was considered as a very conspicuous specimen of Latinity, that entitled him to the same height of place among the scholars as he possessed before among the wits; and he might have risen to a greater elevation of character, but that his studies were ended with his life, by a putrid fever, June 23, 1770, in the 49th year of his age. He was buried in the parish church of St. James's, Westminster. His effects, and particularly his books and prints, which last he was fond of collecting, became the property of his great and intimate friend, Mr. Dyson.

AKINSIDE, considered as a didactic and lyric poet, ranks with the most eminent writers of didactic and lyric poetry, in ancient or modern times. In his *Pleasures of Imagination*, he has attempted the most rich and poetical form of didactic

writing; and though, in the execution of the whole, he is not equal, he has, in several parts, succeeded happily, and displayed much genius. "For my own part, I am of opinion, says *Cooper*, in his "Letters on Taste," "that there is now living, a poet of as genuine a genius as this kingdom ever produced, Shakespeare alone excepted. The gentleman I mean is Dr. Akinside, the worthy author of *The Pleasures of Imagination*, the most beautiful didactic poem that ever adorned the English language." On the other hand, Gray, writing to Dr. Wharton, says: "I will tell you, though I have rather turned over than read the poem of your young friend (Dr. Akinside), that it seems to me above the middling, and now and then, for a little while, rises even to the best, particularly in description. It is often obscure, and often unintelligible, and too much infected with the Hutchesonian jargon. In short, its great fault is, that it was published at least nine years too early." This opinion hastily delivered in a private letter, before the poem had been maturely examined, must be considered as too severe. The obscurity of *The Pleasures of Imagination*, when read with attention, will chiefly be found in the allegory of the second book. It might likewise have been better if the peculiar language of Hutcheson, or rather of Shaftesbury, had sometimes been omitted. But though it is perhaps defective in some respects, and redundant in others, yet it is a noble and beautiful poem, exhibiting many bright displays of genius and fancy, and holding out sublime views of nature, providence, and morality. Akinside himself was convinced that it was published too early. "That it wanted revision and correction," says his friend and editor, Mr. Dyson, "he was sufficiently sensible; but so quick was the demand for several successive republications, that, in any of the intervals, to have completed the whole of his corrections was utterly impossible. He chose therefore to continue for some time reprinting it without any alteration, and to forbear publishing any alterations or improvements, till he should be able at once to give the whole to the public complete. And, with this view, he went on for several years to review and correct his poem at his leisure, till at length he found the task grow so much upon his hands, that, despairing of ever being able to execute it sufficiently to his own satisfaction, he abandoned the purpose of correcting, and resolved to write the poem over anew, upon somewhat a different and enlarged plan."

His *Inscriptions* are for the most part, simple, energetic, and sufficiently poetical. His *Hymn to the Naiads* is justly esteemed a classical performance. *Lloyd*, speaking of Homer's hymns, which he had some thoughts of translating, says: "They who would form the justest idea of this sort of composition among the ancients, may be better informed by perusing Dr. Akinside's most classical *Hymn to the Naiads*, than from any translation of Homer or Callimachus." The

same writer concludes his "Ode to Genius," with the following apostrophe to Akinside.

And thou, blest bard! around whose sacred brow
Great *Pindars's* delegated wreath is hung;
Arise and snatch the majesty of song
From dulness' servile tribe, and art's unhallow'd throng.

Cooper, the "English Aristippus," with great propriety, addressed his "Call of Aristippus" to Akinside, by the designation of "two-fold disciple of Apollo;" in which he tells him, that, in Elysium, Plato and Virgil shall weave him a never-fading crown; while *Lucretius*, *Pindar*, and *Horace*, should yield him precedence with pleasure."

Mr. Murphy, in his "Poetical Epistle to *Dr. Johnson*," has joined Akinside with *Gray* among the examples which he enumerates of "wealthy genius pining amidst its store."

Even *Gray* unwilling strikes his living lyre,
And wishes, not content, for *Pindar's* fire:
And that *sweet bard*, who to our fancy brings,
"The gayest, happiest attitudes of things."
His raptured verse can throw neglected by,
And to *Lucretius* lift a reverend eye.

Dr. Wharton, in his excellent "Essay on Pope," calls Akinside a didactic poet, who has happily indulged himself in bolder flights of enthusiasm, supported by a more figurative style than was used by *Pope*; and, after producing a passage from *The Pleasures of Imagination*, adds: "We have here a striking example of that poetic spirit, that harmonious and varied versification, and that strength of imagery which conspire to excite our admiration of this beautiful poem."

The character of Akinside, as given by *Dr. Johnson*, although he acknowledges, that in the fabrication of his lines he is superior to any other writer of blank verse, is so unjust and degrading, that he must either have been blinded by prejudice, or possibly have never read him with the attention he merits;—as a proof of the latter, I need only copy the following passage from his Life by *Johnson*; wherein he adopts a remark made by *Walker* in his "Exercises for Improvement in Elocution."—Speaking of Akinside. "His picture of man "is grand and beautiful, but unfinished. The *immortality of* "the soul, which is the natural consequence of the appetites "and powers she is invested with, is scarcely once hinted "throughout the poem. This deficiency is amply supplied by "the masterly pencil of *Dr. Young*; who, like a good philosopher, has invincibly proved the immortality of man, from the "grandeur of his conceptions, and the **meanness and misery* of "his state; for this reason, a few passages are selected from

* See the translated motto from *Epictetus*, page 1.

"the "Night Thoughts," which, with those from Akinside, "seem to form a complete view of the powers, situation, and "end of man."—But there is scarcely a page of Akinside that does not contradict this remark; refer only to the first poem, book i. lines 202, (with its note) and 436; book ii. lines 343 and 456: also in the enlarged work, book i. line 238, and book ii. line 142, which last includes that sublime passage

"Thence he deems of his own lot," &c.

—and it will appear unaaccountable how *Johnson* could have repeated so unfounded an aspersion.

Dr. *Darwin* (as Miss Seward relates) ever maintained a preference of Akinside's blank verse to Milton's; declaring it was of higher polish, more classical purity, and more dignified construction.

Dr. *Aikin*, in his "Letters on English Poetry," speaking of "The Pleasures of Imagination," says, "A more splendid poem, replete with rich and lofty imagery, will not easily be found within the range of English composition, but that it cannot be fully comprehended without a close and attentive perusal, and therefore not calculated to become a favourite with *cursory readers*. The versification is perhaps the most perfect specimen of blank verse that the language affords. If it has not the compass of melody sometimes attained by Milton, it is free from his inequalities. Not a line is harsh nor defective, and the pauses are continually varied with the skill of a master. His sentiments are all of the elevated and generous kind; his morality is pure and liberal; his theology simple and sublime. He was the perpetual foe of Tyranny and Superstition, and stands prominent in the rank of the friends of light and liberty. His *Hymn to the Naiads* is reputed to be one of the most classical poems in the English language."

We cannot close these testimonies of the Author's excellence better than by the same words that Dr. *Johnson* finishes the Life of *Thompson*.

"The *highest* praise which he has received ought not to be suppressed. It is said by Lord *Lyttleton*, in the Prologue to *Thompson's* posthumous play, that *his* works contained

"No line which, dying, he could wish to blot."

This can with *more justice* be said of AKINSIDE.*

* We have taken this mode of spelling his name from his own hand writing, as well as the first editions of his Poems.

ESSAY ON THE PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

OF all the subjects which have engaged the attention of Didactic Poets, there is not perhaps a happier than that made choice of by AKINSIDE, *The Pleasures of Imagination*; in which every step of the disquisition calls up objects of the most attractive kind, and Fancy is made as it were to hold a mirror to her own charms. Imagination is the very source and well-head of Poetry, and nothing forced or foreign to the Muse could easily flow from such a subject. Accordingly we see that the author has kept close to his system, and has admitted neither episode nor digression: the allegory in the second book, which is introduced for the purpose of illustrating his theory, being all that can properly be called ornament in this whole Poem. It must be acknowledged, however, that engaging as his subject is to minds prepared to examine it, to the generality of readers it must appear dry and abstruse. It is a work which offers us entertainment, but not of that easy kind amidst which the mind remains passive, and has nothing to do but to receive impressions. Those who have studied the metaphysics of mind, and who are accustomed to investigate abstract ideas, will read it with a lively pleasure; but those who seek mere amusement in a Poem, will find many far inferior ones better suited to their purpose. The judicious admirer of AKINSIDE will not call people from the fields and the highways to partake of his feast; he will wish none to read that are not capable of understanding him.

The ground-work of *The Pleasures of Imagination* is to be found in ADDISON'S Essays on the same subject, published in the Spectator. Except in the book which treats on Ridicule, and even of that the hint is there given, our author follows nearly the same track; and he is indebted to them not only for the leading thoughts and grand division of his subject, but for much of the colouring also: for the papers of ADDISON are wrought up with so much elegance of language, and adorned with so many beautiful illustrations, that they are equal to the most finished Poem. Perhaps the obligations of the Poet to the Essay-writer are not sufficiently adverted to, the latter being only slightly mentioned in the preface to the Poem. It is not meant, however, to insinuate that AKINSIDE had not various other sources of his ideas. He sat down to this work, which was published at the early age of three and twenty, warm from the schools of ancient philosophy, whose spirit he had deeply imbibed, and full of enthusiasm for the treasures of Greek and Roman literature. The works of no author have a more classic air than those of our Poet. His hymn to the Naiads shows the most intimate acquaintance with their mythology. Their laws, their arts, their liberty, were equally objects of his warm admiration, and are frequently referred to in various parts of his Poems. He was fond of the Platonic philosophy, and mingled with the splendid visions of the Ac-

ademic school, ideas of the fair and beautiful, in morals and in taste, gathered from the writings of SHAFTESBURY, HUTCHINSON, and others of that stamp, who then very much engaged the notice of the public. Educated in the university of Edinburgh, he joined to his classic literature the keen discriminating spirit of metaphysic inquiry, and the taste for moral beauty which has so much distinguished our Northern seminaries, and which the celebrity of their professors, and the genius of the place, has never failed of communicating to their disciples. Thus prepared, by nature with genius, and by education with the previous studies and habits of thinking, he was peculiarly fitted for writing a philosophical Poem.

The first lines contain the definition of his subject, which he has judiciously varied from his master, ADDISON, who expressly confines the pleasures of imagination to "such as arise from visible objects only;" and divides them into "the primary pleasures of the imagination, which intirely proceed from such objects as are before our eyes, and those secondary pleasures of the imagination which flow from the ideas of visible objects, when the objects are not actually before the eye, but are called up into our memories, or formed into agreeable visions of things that are either absent or fictitious." This definition seems to exclude a blind man from any share whatever of those pleasures; and yet who would deny that the elegant mind of BLACKLOCK was capable of receiving, and even of imparting them, in no small degree. Our author, therefore, includes every source, by which, through any of our senses or perceptions, we receive notices of the world around us; as well as the reflex pleasures derived from the imitative arts.

With what attractive charms this goodly frame, &c.

After this clear and concise definition, and a lively and appropriate invocation to the powers of Fancy, guided by Truth and Liberty, the author begins by unfolding the Platonic idea that the universe, with all its forms of material beauty, was called into being from its prototype, existing from all eternity in the Divine Mind. The different propensities that human beings are born with to various pursuits, are enumerated in some very beautiful lines, and *those* are declared to be the most noble which lead a chosen few to the love and contemplation of the Supreme Beauty, by the love and contemplation of his works. The Poet thus immediately, and at the very outset, dignifies his theme, by connecting it with the sublimest feelings the human mind is capable of entertaining, feelings without which the various scenes of this beautiful universe degenerate into gaudy shows, fit to catch the eye of children, but uninteresting to the heart and affections; and those laws and properties about which Philosophy busies herself, into a bewildering mass of unconnected experiments and independent facts. The lines afford

more than one example of climax, graceful repetition, and richness of poetic language. The subject is then branched out into the three grand divisions marked by ADDISON, the *Sublime*, the *Wonderful*, and the *Beautiful*. Each is exemplified with equal judgment and taste, but the sublime is perhaps expressed with most energy, as it certainly was most congenial to the mind of our author. The passage of which the thought is borrowed from LONGINUS, *Say why was man so eminently raised*, is almost unequalled in grandeur of thought and loftiness of expression, yet it has not the appearance, as some other parts of the Poem have, of being laboured into excellence, but rather of being thrown off at once amidst the swell and fervency of a kindled imagination. The final cause of each of these propensities is happily insinuated; of the sense of the sublime, to lead us to the contemplation of the Supreme Being; of that of novelty to awaken us to constant activity; of beauty to mark out to us the objects most perfect in their kind. Thus does he make Philosophy and Poetry to go hand and hand. The exemplification of the love of novelty in the audience of the *village matron*, who tells of *witching rhymes and evil spirits*, is highly wrought. The author, however, had doubtless in his mind not only the Essays of ADDISON, which were immediately under his eye, but that passage in another paper where he represents the circle at his land-lady's closing their ranks, and crowding round the fire at the conclusion of every story of ghosts: *Around the beldam all arrect they hang; Congealed with shivering sighs*, very happily expresses the effects of that kind of terror, which makes a man shrink into himself, and feel afraid, as it were, to draw a full inspiration. It may be doubted, however, whether the attraction which is felt towards these kind of sensations when they rise to terror, can be fairly referred to the love of novelty. It seems rather to depend on that charm, afterwards touched upon, which is attached to every thing that strongly stirs and agitates the mind. In his description of Beauty, which is adorned with all the graces of the chaster VENUS, the author takes occasion to aim a palpable stroke at the "Night Thoughts" of Dr. YOUNG, which are here characterized by "the ghostly gloom of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloistered cells, by walking with spectres through the midnight shade, and attuning the dreadful workings of his heart to the accursed song of the screaming owl. The same allusion is repeated in one of his Odes,

"She flies from ruins and from tombs."—

This antipathy is not surprising; for never were two Poets more contrasted. Our author had more of taste and judgment, YOUNG more of originality. AKINSIDE maintains throughout an uniform dignity, YOUNG has been characteristically described in a late Poem as one in whom

Still gleams and still expires the cloudy day
Of genuine Poetry.

The genius of the one was clouded over with the deepest glooms of Calvinism, to which system, however, he owed some of his most striking beauties. The religion of the other, all at least that appears of it, and all indeed that could with propriety appear in such a Poem, is the purest Theism : liberal, cheerful, and sublime ; or, if admitting any mixture, he seems inclined to tincture it with the mysticism of PLATO, and the gay fables of ancient mythology. The one declaims against infidels, the other against monks ; the one resembles the Gothic, the other the Grecian architecture ; the one has been read with deep interest by many who, when they have abandoned the tenets of orthodoxy can scarcely bear to re-peruse him ; the other dealing more in general truths, will always be read with pleasure, though he will never make so deep an impression.

The Poem goes on to trace the connection of Beauty with Truth, by showing that all the Beauty we admire in vegetable or animal life results from the fitness of the object to the use for which it is intended, and serves as a kind of stamp, set by the Creator to point out the health, soundness, and perfection of the form in which it resides. This leads him on to speak of moral Beauty, and tracing the regular gradations of Beauty through colour, shape, symmetry, and grace, to its highest character in the expression of moral feelings, he breaks out into an animated apostrophe,

Mind, mind alone—the living fountain in itself contains
Of beauteous and sublime.

The Poem continues in a high strain of noble enthusiasm to the end of the book, and concludes with an invocation to the genius of ancient Greece, with whose philosophy and high sense of liberty he was equally enamoured. It is easy for the reader who is conversant in the writings of SHAFTESBURY and HUTCHINSON to perceive how much their elegant and fascinating system is adapted to ennoble our author's subject, and how much *The Pleasures of Imagination* are raised in value and importance by building the throne of Virtue so near the bower of Beauty. The book is complete in itself ; and if we may be allowed to hazard a conjecture, contains nearly the whole of what the author on the first view might think necessary to his subject.

The second book opens with a complaint founded, perhaps, rather in a partiality for the ancients than attention to fact, of the disunion in modern times of Philosophy and Poetry. To the same classic prejudice (to which a good scholar is very prone) may be attributed the mention of the courtly compliments which debased the verse of TASSO : and the superstitious legends which employed the pencil of RAPHAEL in contradistinction to the works of the ancients, as if, in sober truth, any one was prepared to assert that there was less flattery in the Augustine age, and less superstition in the idle mythology of HOMER and OVID. Such prejudices ought to

be laid aside with the gradus of the school-boy. The Poet proceeds to consider the accession to the Pleasures of Imagination from adventitious circumstances, of which he gives various instances: that of the Newtonian theory of the rainbow seems too abstruse even for a philosophical Poem; it may be doubted whether, if understood, it is of a nature to mix well with the pleasure of colours; it certainly does not accord well with that of verse. The influence of Passion is next considered, and the mysterious pleasure which is * mixed with the energies and emotions of those passions that are in their own nature painful. To solve this problem, which has been one in all ages, a long allegory is introduced, which though wrought up with a good deal of the decoration of Poetry, is nearly as difficult to comprehend as the problem itself. It begins with presenting a scene of desolation, *where the parched adder dies*; this vanishes, and another is presented. What we hoped to have heard from the Poet, we are directed to learn from old HARMODIUS. HARMODIUS is only introduced to refer us to the Genius, and the Genius shifts his scenes like the pictures of a magic lantern, before he explains to us the scope and purport of the visions. The figures of Pleasure and Virtue are in a good measure copied from the choice of HERCULES, only that, as EUPHROSYNE is the Goddess of innocent pleasure, every thing voluptuous is left out of the picture. The description of the son of NEMESIS is wrought up with much strength of colouring. The story is in fact the introduction of evil, accounted for by the necessity of training the pupil of Providence to the love of virtue, the supreme good, by withdrawing from him for a while the allurements of pleasure; but why his very suffering should be attended with pleasure, which was the phenomenon to be accounted for, is not so clearly made out. We are told indeed that the youth is willing to bear the frowns of the son of NEMESIS in all their horrors, provided EUPHROSYNE will bless him with her smiles, that is to say, he is willing to be miserable provided he may be happy at the same time. Upon this EUPHROSYNE appears, and declares that she will always be present for the future, whenever, supported by Virtue, he sustains a combat with Pain. So far indeed we may gather from this representation, that pleasure is always annexed to the exercise of our moral feelings, which is probably the true account of the matter; but this truth is rather darkened than illustrated by the fable, which does not satisfactorily explain *how* the connection is produced. The allegory is not very consistent in another place, where we are told that Virtue† had left the youth, while at the same time *sweetest innocence illumined his bashful eyes*. He had already fallen, and yet he had not lost his innocence; the storm of wrath which falls upon him is therefore unaccounted for. Upon the whole, though

* "Which Virtue mixes" See p. 55, l. 679 to 683, and p. 134, l. 604 to 614.

† The Stoical virtue Fortitude only had left him in adversity. Edit.

this allegory is in many parts ingenious, and is laboured into splendid poetry, we fear it has the effect upon most readers which it seems it had upon the author himself, who tells us that

Awhile he stood

Perplex'd and giddy.

It may be doubted whether this discussion is strictly within the bounds of the subject, *the Pleasures of Imagination*? since the instances given are not confined to scenic representations, but refer to the primary feelings of the passions. What has * imagination to do with

The bitter shower

Which sorrow sheds upon a brother's grave?

The book concludes with an animated and pathetic exemplification of the gratification felt in the indulgence of mournful sympathy, or generous indignation; the latter pointed against the two things the author most hated, superstition and tyranny.

The third book touches upon a difficult and ungrateful subject for the poetic art, *the Pleasures of Ridicule*. It involves the question, much agitated at that time, whether ridicule be the test of truth. Our author follows the system of SHAFTESBURY, which drew upon him an attack from Bishop WARBURTON, and he was defended by his friend and patron JEREMIAH DYSON. To say truth, it is easier to defend the Philosopher than the Poet. There is much acuteness in the theory, and much art exhibited in giving a poetical dress to the various illustrations he makes use of: but after all, the subject is so barren in itself, and so unsuitable to the solemn manner of AKINSIDE, that we admire without pleasure, and acquiesce without interest. He promises indeed to

Unbend his serious measure——

But he has not kept his promise: neither indeed could he, for besides that no one was ever less capable than our author of *unbending*, the object of his disquisition is not to make us laugh, but to tell us why we laugh: a very different problem, and very remote from any ideas of pleasantry. Nor could he, without violating uniformity, change the measure of his Poem, otherwise this part of his subject not affording any play for the higher beauties and bolder sweep of blank verse, would have been better treated of in the neat and terse couplet, after the manner of POPE's Ethical Epistles, or YOUNG's Satires. He begins, agreeably to the system he had embraced, with deducing all deviations from rectitude or propriety, from false opinions, imbibed in early youth, which attract the imagination by fallacious shows of good. Of these false opinions the more serious lead to vice, while those which refer to the less important particulars of our conduct betray to ridicule, the source of which is *incongruity*, and its final cause the assisting the tardy deductions of reason by the quick impulse of an instinctive sense.

The theory is beautiful and well supported. Illustrations of every different species of the ridiculous are given in the Poem, the notes are judicious, and tend still more to illucidate the subject. Still it must be confessed the theme is not a poetical one; and it may be even questioned how far it is connected with the subject; for the sense of ridicule is of a very peculiar nature, and is hardly included, in common language, among the Pleasures of the Imagination. If however the reader is inclined to be dissatisfied with this part of his entertainment, let him recollect, that if it affords him less pleasure, it probably cost the author more pains than any other portion of his Poem. It is asserted that under the appellation of *MOMION*, the writer has thrown out a sarcasm, not undeserved, against the celebrated author of the *Dunciad*; for surely no man of a just moral taste can reflect, without regret, that a capital work of one of our best Poets, composed in the height of his reputation, and during the perfection of all his powers, should have no other end than to gratify the spleen of an offended author, and to record the petty warfare of rival wits. It is an observation of the excellent *HARTLEY*, that those studies which confine the mind within the exercise of its own powers, as criticism, poetry, and most philological pursuits, are apt to generate a supercilious deportment and an anxious and selfish regard to reputation: whereas the pursuit of truth, carrying the mind *out* of itself to large views of nature and providence, fills it with sublime and generous feelings. The remark must undoubtedly be taken with great latitude, but it seems to be not entirely unfounded.

Having dismissed the account of Ridicule, so little susceptible of being adorned by his efforts, the Poet rises into a higher strain, and investigates that wonderful phenomenon from whence the Pleasures of Imagination chiefly seem to arise, the mysterious connection of moral ideas with visible objects. Why, he asks, does the deep shade of a thick wood strike us with religious awe? Why does the light-someness and variety of a more airy landscape suggest to us the idea of gaiety and social mirth? Is there really any resemblance, or is it owing to early and frequent associations? He decides for the latter, and beautifully illustrates that great law on which the power of memory entirely depends. This leads him to consider the powers of imagination as residing in the human mind, when after being stored by means of memory, with ideas of all that is great and beautiful in nature, the child of fancy combines and varies them in a new creation of its own, from whence the origin of Music, Painting, Poetry, and all those arts which give rise to the secondary or reflex pleasures, referred to in the latter part of his definition. This is accompanied by a glowing and animated description of the process of composition, written evidently with the pleasure a person of genius must have felt, when re-

flecting with conscious triumph that he is exercising the powers he so well describes. He had probably likewise in his eye the well known lines of SHAKESPEARE,

The Poet's eye in a fine frenzy rolling. &c.

The simile of the Parhelion is new and beautiful. The harp of MEMNON struck by the rays of the sun supplies him with another, and the sympathetic needles of STRADA with a third, which are the only ones in the Poem.

The Cause is next considered of the pleasure which we receive from all that strikes us with the sensation of Beauty in the material world. Concerning this there exist two opinions. One, that those objects we call beautiful are so really, and in their own nature, and must appear so to any being possessed of faculties capable of appreciating them. The other, that Beauty is a mere arbitrary thing, a sort of pleasing enchantment spread over the face of nature, a delusion, under which we see charms that do not at all result from the real properties of things, and which other intelligent beings it is probable do not perceive. This latter opinion our author has embraced as the most philosophical. It is not, we presume, the most pleasing, nor the most favourable to the dignity and importance of the Pleasures of Imagination; for their boasted connection with *truth* vanishes, except indeed in this sense that Beauty as an arbitrary mark is used with precision, and is constantly found to denote the health and soundness of the object in which it appears to reside, and consequently is made subservient to utility; but the beautiful climax is destroyed by which the inferior kinds are connected with moral Beauty; for how can what is real be connected with what is imaginary? unless indeed, what would be a very dangerous doctrine, the sense of *moral Beauty* itself were supposed to be dependent on our peculiar formation, and adapted only to our present state of existence. The Poet has here closely copied from ADDISON, both in opening the thought, and in the simile with which he illustrates it. He loses sight however of this unpoetical philosophy towards the conclusion, where having observed that *taste* results from the natural quickness of all the perceptions he has enumerated, strengthened by adequate culture, he observes, that culture will not however destroy the peculiar bias which is impressed upon different minds towards the great, or the soft and beautiful. This he exemplifies in WALLER and SHAKESPEARE. He then winds up the whole by that noble and animated eulogium on the taste for the beauties of nature,

O blest of heaven, whom &c.

And having led the lover of the fair and beautiful through all the different gradations of excellence, he leaves the mind where alone it should rest, in the contemplation of the Supreme Excellence, and closes with the sublime idea, that in admiring the works of nature, we form our taste upon the conceptions of the Deity himself.

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION:
A POEM,
IN THREE BOOKS.

MDCCXLIV.

Ἄσεβες μὲν ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος τὰς παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ χάριτας ἀτιμάζων.

EPICT. apud Arrian. II, 23.

God's bounties are reviled by the impious.

THE DESIGN.

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

and sculpture, directly copy the external appearances which were admired in nature; others, as music and poetry, bring them back to remembrance by signs universally established and understood.

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

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

In executing this general plan, it was necessary, first of all, to distinguish the Imagination from our other faculties; and, in the next place, to characterise those original forms or properties of being, about which it is conversant, and which are by nature adapted to it, as light is to the eyes, or truth to the understanding. These properties *Mr. Addison* had reduced to the three general classes of GREATNESS, NOVELTY, and BEAUTY; and

into these we may analyse every object, however complex, which, properly speaking, is delightful to the imagination. But such an object may also include many other sources of pleasure; and its beauty, or novelty, or grandeur, will make a stronger impression by reason of this concurrence. Besides which, the imitative arts, especially poetry, owe much of their effect to a *similar* exhibition of properties quite *foreign* to the imagination, inasmuch, that in every line of the most applauded poems, we meet with either ideas drawn from the external senses, or truths discovered to the understanding, or illustrations of contrivance and final causes, or, above all the rest, with circumstances proper *to awaken and engage the passions*. It was therefore necessary to enumerate and exemplify these different species of pleasure; especially *that from the passions*, which, as it is supreme in the noblest works of human genius, so being in some particulars not a little surprising, gave an opportunity to enliven the didactic turn of the poem, by introducing an ALLEGORY to account for the appearance.

After these parts of the subject which hold chiefly of *admiration*, or naturally warm and interest the mind; a pleasure of a very different nature, that which arises from *ridicule*, came next to be considered. As this is the foundation of the comic manner in all the arts, and has been but very imperfectly treated by moral writers, it was thought proper to give it a particular illustration, and to distinguish the general sources from which the ridicule of characters is derived. Here too a change of style became necessary; such a one as might yet be consistent, if possible, with the general taste of compo-

sition in the serious parts of the subject : nor is it an easy task to give any tolerable force to images of this kind, without running either into the gigantic expressions of the mock heroic, or the familiar and poetical raillery of professed satire ; neither of which would have been proper here.

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

Concerning the manner or turn of composition which prevails in this piece, little can be said with propriety by the author. He had two models ; that ancient and simple one of the first *Grecian* poets, as it is refined by *Virgil* in the *Georgics*, and the familiar epistolary way of *Horace*. This latter has several advantages. It ad-

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

ARGUMENT

OF

THE FIRST BOOK.

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

N. B. *The figures at the bottom of the page, in both the Poems, refer to the similar passages in each, for the convenience of those who may wish to compare them.*

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.

BOOK THE FIRST.

WITH what attractive charms this goodly frame
Of nature touches the consenting hearts
Of mortal men; and what the pleasing stores
Which beauteous imitation thence derives,
To deck the poet's or the painter's toil; 5
My verse unfolds. Attend, ye gentle powers
Of musical delight! and while I sing
Your gifts, your honours, dance around my strain.
Thou,* smiling queen of every tuneful breast,
Indulgent Fancy! from the fruitful banks 10
Of Avon, whence thy rosy fingers cull
Fresh flow'rs and dew to sprinkle on the turf
Where Shakespeare lies, be present: and with thee
Let Fiction come, upon her vagrant wings
Wafting ten thousand colours through the air: 15
Which, by the glances of her magic eye,
She blends and shifts at will, through countless forms,
Her wild creation. Goddess† of the lyre,
Which rules the accents of the moving sphere,

* *Vide Book I, line 27.*

† *Book I, line 35.*

Wilt * thou, eternal Harmony ! descend 20
 And join this festive train ? for with thee comes
 The guide, the guardian of their lovely sports,
 Majestic Truth ; and where Truth deigns to come,
 Her sister Liberty will not be far.

Be present all ye Genii, who conduct 25
 The wandering footsteps of the youthful bard,
 New to your springs and shades : who touch his ear
 With finer sounds : who heighten to his eye
 The bloom of nature, and before him turn
 The gayest, happiest attitude of things. 30

Oft have the laws of each poetic strain
 The critic-verse employ'd ; yet still unsung
 Lay this prime subject, though importing most
 A poet's name : for fruitless is the attempt,
 By dull obedience and by creeping toil, 35
 Obscure to conquer the severe ascent
 Of high Parnassus. Nature's kindling breath
 Must fire the chosen genius ; nature's hand
 Must string his nerves, and imp his eagle-wings,
 Impatient of the painful steep, to soar 40
 High as the summit ; there to breathe at large
 Æthereal air : with bards and sages old,
 Immortal sons of praise. These flattering scenes,
 To this neglected labour court my song ;
 Yet not unconscious what a doubtful task 45
 To paint the finest features of the mind,
 And to most subtile and mysterious things
 Give colour, strength, and motion. But the love
 Of nature and the muses bids explore,
 Through secret paths erewhile untrud by man, 50

The fair poetic region, to detect
 Untasted springs, to drink inspiring draughts,
 And shade my temples with unfading flowers
 Cull'd from the laureate vale's profound recess,
 Where never poet gain'd a wreath before. 55

From * heaven my strains begin; from heaven de-
 scends

The flame of genius to the human breast,
 And love and beauty, and poetic joy
 And inspiration. Ere the radiant sun
 Sprang from the east, or 'mid the vault of night 60
 The moon suspended her serener lamp;
 Ere mountains, woods, or streams adorn'd the globe,
 Or wisdom taught the sons of men her lore;
 Then liv'd the almighty One: then, deep-retir'd
 In his unfathom'd essence, view'd the forms, 65
 The forms eternal of created things;
 The radiant sun, the moon's nocturnal lamp,
 The mountains, woods and streams, the rolling globe,
 And wisdom's mien celestial: From the first
 Of days, on them his love divine he fix'd, 70
 His admiration: till in time compleat,
 What he admir'd and lov'd, his vital smile
 Unfolded into being. Hence the breath
 Of life informing each organic frame;
 Hence the green earth, and wild resounding waves; 75
 Hence light and shade alternate; warmth and cold;
 And clear autumnal skies and vernal showers,
 And all the fair variety of things.

But † not alike to every mortal eye
 Is this great scene unveil'd. For since the claims 80

* Book I, line 98.

† Book I, line 121.

Of social life, to different labours urge
 The active powers of man; with wise intent
 The hand of nature on peculiar minds
 Imprints a different biass, and to each
 Decrees its province in the common toil. 85
 To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,
 The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,
 The golden zones of heaven: to some she gave
 To weigh the moment of eternal things,
 Of time, and space, and fate's unbroken chain, 90
 And will's quick impulse: others by the hand
 She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
 What healing virtue swells the tender veins
 Of herbs and flowers; or what the beams of morn
 Draw forth, distilling from the clefted rind 95
 In balmy tears. But some, to higher hopes
 Were destin'd; some within a finer mould
 She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame:
 To these the SIRE OMNIPOTENT unfolds
 The world's harmonious volume; there to read 100
 The transcript of himself. On every part
 They trace the bright impressions of his hand:
 In earth or air, the meadow's purple stores,
 The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's form
 Blooming with rosy smiles; they see portray'd 105
 That uncreated beauty, which delights
 The mind supreme; they also feel her charms,
 Enamour'd; they partake the eternal joy.
 For * as old Memnon's image, long renown'd
 By fabling Nilus, to the quivering touch 110
 Of Titan's ray, with each repulsive string

* Book I, line 150.

Consenting, sounded through the warbling air
 Unbidden strains ; even so did nature's hand,
 To certain species of external things
 Attune the finer organs of the mind : 115
 So the glad impulse of congenial powers,
 Or of sweet sound, or fair proportion'd form,
 The grace of motion, or the bloom of light,
 Thrills through imagination's tender frame,
 From nerve to nerve : all naked and alive 120
 They catch the spreading rays : till now the soul
 At length discloses every tuneful spring,
 To that harmonious movement from without
 Responsive. Then the inexpressive strain
 Diffuses its enchantment : Fancy * dreams 125
 Of sacred fountains and Elysian groves,
 And vales of bliss : the intellectual power
 Bends from his awful throne a wondering ear,
 And smiles : the passions gently sooth'd away,
 Sink to divine repose, and love and joy 130
 Alone are waking ; love and joy, serene
 As airs that fan the summer. O ! attend,
 Whoe'er thou art, whom these delights can touch,
 Whose candid bosom the refining love
 Of nature warms, O ! listen to my song ; 135
 And I will guide thee to her favourite walks,
 And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
 And point her loveliest features to thy view.
 Know † then, whate'er of nature's pregnant stores,
 Whate'er of mimic art's reflected forms 140
 With love and admiration thus inflame
 The powers of fancy, her delighted sons

* *Book I, line 162.*† *Book I, line 180.*

To three illustrious orders have referr'd ;
 Three sister-graces, whom the painter's hand,
 The poet's tongue confesses ; the SUBLIME, 145
 The WONDERFUL, the FAIR. I see them dawn !
 I see the radiant visions, where they rise,
 More lovely than when Lucifer displays
 His beaming forehead through the gates of morn,
 To lead the train of Phœbus and the spring. 150
 Say, * why was man so eminently rais'd
 Amid the vast creation ; why ordain'd
 Through life and death to dart his piercing eye,
 With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame ;
 But that the Omnipotent might send him forth 155
 In sight of mortal and immortal powers,
 As on a boundless theatre, to run
 The great career of justice ; to exalt
 His generous aim to all diviner deeds ;
 To chase each partial purpose from his breast ; 160

* Book I, line 194.

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

And through the mist of passion and of sense,
 And through the tossing tide of chance and pain,
 To hold his course unfaltering, while the voice
 Of Truth and Virtue, up the steep ascent
 Of Nature, calls him to his high reward, 165
 The applauding smile of heaven? * Else wherefore burns
 In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope,
 That breathes from day to day sublimer things,
 And mocks possession? wherefore darts the mind,
 With such resistless ardour to embrace 170
 Majestic forms; impatient to be free,
 Spurning the gross control of wilful might;
 Proud † of the strong contention of her toils;
 Proud to be daring? Who but rather turns
 To heaven's broad fire his unconstrained view, 175
 Than to the glimmering of a waxen flame?
 Who that, from Alpine heights, his labouring eye
 Shoots round the wide horizon, to survey
 Nilus or Ganges rolling his bright wave
 Through mountains, plains, through empires black with
 shade 180
 And continents of sand; will turn his gaze
 To mark the windings of a scanty rill
 That murmurs at his feet? The HIGH-BORN SOUL
 Disdains to rest her heaven-aspiring wing
 Beneath its native quarry. Tired of earth 185
 And this diurnal scene, she springs aloft
 Through fields of air; pursues the flying storm;
 Rides on the vollied lightning through the heavens;
 Or, yoked with whirlwinds and the northern blast,
 Sweeps the long tract of day. ‡ Then high she soars 190

* Book I, line 210. † Book I, line 223. ‡ Book I, line 245.

The blue profound, and hovering round the sun,
 Beholds him pouring the redundant stream
 Of light ; beholds his unrelenting sway
 Bend the reluctant planets, to absolve
 The fated rounds of time. Thence far effused . 195
 She darts her swiftness up the long career
 Of devious comets ; through its burning signs,
 Exulting measures the perennial wheel
 Of Nature, and looks back on all the stars,
 Whose blended light, as with a milky zone, 200
 Invests the orient. Now amazed she views
 The empyreal waste,* where happy spirits hold,
 Beyond this concave heaven, their calm abode ;
 And fields of radiance, † whose unfading light
 Has travell'd the profound six thousand years, 205
 Nor yet arrives in sight of mortal things.
 Even on the barriers of the world, untired,
 She meditates the eternal depth below ;
 Till half recoiling, down the headlong steep
 She plunges ; soon o'erwhelm'd and swallow'd up 210
 In that immense of being. ‡ There her hopes
 Rest at the fated goal. For from the birth

* V. 202. *The empyreal waste.*] *Ne se peut-il point qu'il y a un grand espace au dela de la region des etoiles ? Que ce soit le ciel empyrée, ou non, toujours cet espace immense qui environne toute cette region, pourra etre rempli de bonheur & de gloire. Il pourra etre conçu comme l'ocean, où se rendent les fleuves de toutes les creatures bienheureuses, quand elles seront venues à leur perfection dans le systeme des etoiles.* Leibnitz dans la Theodicée, part. i. § 19.

† V. 204. *Whose unfading light, &c.*] It was a notion of the great Mr. *Huygens*, that there may be fixed stars at such a distance from our solar system, as that their light should not have had time to reach us, even from the creation of the world to this day. Mr. *Herschell* supposes that the light of some stars, discoverable by his telescopes, has probably taken some millions of years to reach us !! See book II, line 234 to 242. Ed.

‡ Book I, line 269.

Of mortal man, the SOVRAN MAKER said,
 That not in humble nor in brief delight,
 Not in the fading echoes of Renown, 215
 Power's purple robes, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
 The soul should find enjoyment : but from these
 Turning disdainful to an equal good,
 Through all the ascent of things enlarge her view,
 Till every bound at length should disappear, 220
 And infinite perfection close the scene.

Call now to mind what high capacious powers
 Lie folded up in man ; how far beyond
 The praise of mortals, may the eternal growth
 Of nature, to perfection half divine, 225
 Expand the blooming soul ? What pity then
 Should Sloth's unkindly fogs depress to earth
 Her tender blossom ; choak the streams of life,
 And blast her spring ! Far otherwise design'd
 Almighty Wisdom ; Nature's happy cares 230
 The obedient heart far otherwise incline.
 Witness the sprightly joy, when aught unknown
 Strikes the quick sense, and wakes each active power
 To brisker measures ; * witness the neglect

* V. 234. ——— the neglect

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

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

Of all familiar prospects, though beheld 235
 With transport once; the fond attentive gaze
 Of *young astonishment*; the sober zeal
 Of *Age*, commenting on prodigious things.
 For such the bounteous Providence of heaven,
 In every breast implanting this desire 240
 Of * objects *new* and *strange*, to urge us on
 With unremitted labour to pursue
 Those sacred stores, that wait the ripening soul,

and consequently increases in proportion to the frequency of that determination.

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

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

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

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

* V. 240. ———— *this desire*

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

In TRUTH's exhaustless bosom. What need words
 To paint its power? For this the *daring youth* 245
 Breaks from his weeping mother's anxious arms,
 In foreign climes to rove: the *pensive sage*,
 Heedless of sleep, or midnight's harmful damp,
 Hangs o'er the sickly taper; and untired
 The *virgin* follows, with enchanted step, 250
 The mazes of some wild and wondrous tale,
 From morn to eve; unmindful of her form,
 Unmindful of the happy dress that stole
 The wishes of the youth, when every maid
 With envy pined. Hence, finally, by night 255
 The *village-matron*, round the blazing hearth,
 Suspends the infant-audience with her tales,
 Breathing astonishment! of witching rhimes,
 And evil spirits; of the death-bed call
 Of him who robb'd the widow, and devour'd 260
 The orphan's portion; of unquiet souls
 Risen from the grave, to ease the heavy guilt
 Of deeds in life conceal'd; of shapes that walk
 At dead of night, and clank their chains, and wave
 The torch of hell around the murderer's bed. 265
 At every solemn pause the crowd recoil,
 Gazing each other speechless, and congeal'd
 With shivering sighs: till eager for the event,
 Around the beldam all arrect they hang,
 Each trembling heart with grateful terrors quell'd. 270
 But * lo! disclos'd in all her smiling pomp,
 Where BEAUTY onward moving, claims the verse
 Her charms inspire: the freely-flowing verse
 In thy immortal praise, O form divine!

* Book I, line 280.

Smooths her mellifluent stream. Thee, BEAUTY, thee 275
The regal dome, and thy enlivening ray
The mossy roofs adore : thou, better Sun !
For ever beamest on the enchanted heart
Love, and harmonious wonder, and delight
Poetic. Brightest progeny of heaven ! 280
How shall I trace thy features ? where select
The roseate hues to emulate thy bloom ?
Haste then my song, through Nature's wide expanse,
Haste then, and gather all her comeliest wealth,
Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains, 285
Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air,
To deck thy lovely labour. * Wilt thou fly
With laughing Autumn to the Atlantic isles,
And range with him the Hesperian field ; and see
Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove, 290
The branches shoot with gold ; where'er his step
Marks the glad soil, the tender clusters grow
With purple ripeness, and invest each hill
As with the blushes of an evening sky ?
Or wilt thou rather stoop thy vagrant plume, 295
Where gliding through his daughter's honour'd shades,
The smooth Penéus from his glassy flood
Reflects purpureal Tempe's pleasant scene ?
Fair Tempe ! haunt belov'd of Sylvan powers,
Of Nymphs and Fauns ; where in the Golden Age 300
They play'd in secret on the shady brink
With ancient Pan : while round their choral steps
Young Hours and genial gales with constant hand
Shower'd blossoms, odours, shower'd ambrosial dews,
And Spring's Elysian bloom. Her flowery store 305

* Book I, line 303.

To thee nor Tempe shall refuse ; nor watch
Of winged Hydra, guard Hesperian fruits
From thy free spoil. O bear then, unprov'd,
Thy smiling treasures to the green recess
Where young Dione stays. With sweetest airs 310
Entice her forth to lend her angel-form
For Beauty's honour'd image.* Hither turn
Thy graceful footsteps ; hither gentle maid !
Incline thy polish'd forehead : let thy eyes
Effuse the mildness of their azure dawn ; 315
And may the fanning breezes waft aside
Thy radiant locks : disclosing, as it bends
With airy softness from the marble neck,
The cheek fair-blooming and the rosy lip,
Where winning smiles and pleasures sweet as love, 320
With sanctity and wisdom, tempering blend
Their soft allurements. Then the pleasing force
Of Nature, and her kind parental care
Worthier I'd sing : then all the enamour'd youth,
With each admiring virgin, to my lyre 325
Should throng attentive, while I point on high,
Where BEAUTY's living image, like the morn
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May,
Moves onward ; or as Venus, when she stood
Effulgent on the pearly car, and smiled, 330
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
To see the Tritons tune their vocal shells,
And each cœrulean sister of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves,
To seek the Idalian bow'r. Ye smiling band 335
Of youths and virgins, who through all the maze

*Book I, line 341.

Of young desire, with rival-steps pursue
 This charm of BEAUTY; if the pleasing toil
 Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
 Your favourable ear, and trust my words; 340
 I* do not mean to wake the gloomy form
 Of Superstition dress'd in Wisdom's garb,
 To damp your tender hopes; I do not mean
 To bid the jealous Thunderer fire the heavens,
 Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth 345
 To fright you from your joys; my cheerful song
 With better omens calls you to the field,
 Pleas'd with your generous ardour in the chace,
 And warm like you. Then tell me, for ye know,
 Does BEAUTY ever deign to dwell where HEALTH 350
 And active USE are strangers? Is her charm
 Confess'd in aught, whose most peculiar ends
 Are lame and fruitless? Or did Nature mean
 This pleasing call the herald of a lie;
 To hide the shame of discord and disease, 355
 And catch with fair hypocrisy the heart
 Of† idle faith? O no! with better cares
 The indulgent mother, conscious how infirm
 Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
 By this illustrious image, in each kind 360
 Still most illustrious where the object holds
 Its native powers most perfect; she by this
 Illumes the headstrong impulse of Desire,
 And sanctifies his choice. The generous glebe
 Whose bosom smiles with verdure, the clear tract 365
 Of streams delicious to the thirsty soul,
 The bloom of nectar'd fruitage ripe to sense,

* Book I, line 394.

† Book I, line 410.

And every charm of animated things,
 Are only pledges of a state sincere,
 The integrity and order of their frame, 370
 When *all is well within*, and every end
 Accomplish'd. † Thus was BEAUTY sent from heaven,
 The lovely ministress of TRUTH and GOOD
 In this dark world: for TRUTH and GOOD are one, ‡

† *Book I, line 432.*

‡ *V. 374. Truth and good are one,
 And beauty dwells in them, &c.] Do you imagine, says
 Socrates to Aristippus, that what is good is not beautiful? Have you
 not observed that these appearances always coincide? Virtue, for in-
 stance, in the same respect as to which we call it good, is ever acknow-
 ledged to be beautiful also. In the characters of men we always *
 join the two denominations together. The beauty of human bodies
 corresponds, in like manner, with that economy of parts which consti-
 tutes them good; and in every circumstance of life, the same object is
 constantly accounted both beautiful and good, inasmuch as it answers
 the purposes for which it was designed. Xenophon. Memorab. Socrat.
 l. iii. c. 8.*

This excellent observation has been illustrated and extended by
 the noble restorer of ancient philosophy; see the *Characteristicks*,
 vol. ii. p. 339 and 422, and vol. iii. p. 181. And another ingenious
 author has particularly shewn, that it holds in the general laws of
 nature, in the works of art, and the conduct of the sciences. *In-
 quiry into the original of our ideas of beauty and virtue*, Treat. i. § 8.
 As to the connection between *beauty* and *truth*, there are two opin-
 ions concerning it. Some philosophers assert an independent and
 invariable law in nature, in consequence of which *all rational beings*
must alike perceive beauty in some certain proportions, and deformity
in the contrary. And this necessity being supposed the same with
 that which commands the assent or dissent of the understanding,
 it follows of course that *beauty* is founded on the universal and un-
 changeable law of *truth*.

But others there are, who believe *beauty* to be merely a relative
 and arbitrary thing; that indeed it was a benevolent provision in na-
 ture to annex so delightful a sensation to those objects which are
best and most perfect in themselves, that so we might be engaged to
 the choice of them at once and without staying to infer their use-
 fulness from their structure and effects; but that it is not impossible,
 in a physical sense, that two beings, of equal capacities for *truth*,

* This the *Athenians* did in a peculiar manner, by the word καλοκαγαθός,
 καλοκαγαθία.

And BEAUTY dwells in them, and they in her, 375
 With like participation : wherefore then,
 O sons of earth ! would ye dissolve the tie ?
 O wherefore ! with a rash impetuous aim,
 Seek ye those flowery joys with which the hand
 Of lavish Fancy paints each flattering scene, 380
 Where Beauty *seems* to dwell, nor once inquire
 Where is the sanction of eternal Truth,
 Or where the seal of undeceitful Good,
 To save your search from folly ! Wanting these,
 Lo ! Beauty withers in your void embrace, 385
 And with the glittering of an idiot's toy
 Did Fancy mock your vows. Nor let the gleam
 Of youthful hope, that shines upon your hearts,
 Be chill'd or clouded at this awful task,
 To learn the lore of undeceitful Good, 390
 And Truth eternal.* Though the poisonous charms
 Of baleful Superstition, guide the feet
 Of servile numbers through a dreary way
 To their abode ; through desarts, thorns and mire,
 And leave the wretched pilgrim all forlorn, 395
 To muse at last, amid the ghostly gloom

should perceive, one of them *beauty*, and the other *deformity*, in the same proportions. And upon this supposition, by that *truth* which is always connected with *beauty*, nothing more can be meant than the conformity of any object to those proportions upon which, after careful examination, the beauty of that species is found to depend. *Polycletus*, for instance, a famous ancient sculptor, from an accurate mensuration of the several parts of the most perfect human bodies, deduced a canon or system of proportions, which was the rule of all succeeding artists. Suppose a statue modelled according this: a man of mere natural taste, upon looking at it, without entering into its proportions, confesses and admires its *beauty*; whereas a professor of the art applies his measures to the head, the neck, or the hand, and, without attending to its beauty, pronounces the workmanship to be *just* and *true*.

* Book I, line 456.

Of graves, and hoary vaults, and cloister'd cells;
To walk with spectres through the midnight shade,
And to the screaming owl's accursed song
Attune the dreadful workings of his heart; 400
Yet be not ye dismay'd;* a gentler star
Your lovely search illumines. From the grove
Where Wisdom talk'd with her Athenian sons,
Could my ambitious hand intwine a wreath
Of Plato's olive with the Mantuan bay, 405
Then should my powerful verse at once dispel
Those monkish horrors: then in light divine
Disclose the Elysian prospect, where the steps
Of those whom Nature charms, thro' blooming walks,
Through fragrant mountains and poetic streams, 410
Amid the train of sages, heroes, bards,
Led by their winged Genius and the choir
Of laurell'd Science and harmonious Art,
Proceed exulting to the eternal shrine,
Where TRUTH conspicuous with her sister-twins, 415
The undivided partners of her sway,
With GOOD and BEAUTY reigns.† O let not us,
Lull'd by luxurious Pleasure's languid strain,
Or crouching to the frowns of bigot-rage,
O let us not a moment pause to join 420
That godlike band. And if the gracious power,
† Who first awaken'd my untutored song,
Will to my invocation breathe anew
The tuneful spirit; then through all our paths,
Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre 425
Be wanting; whether on the rosy mead,
When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart

*Book I, line 472.

† Book I, line 495.

Of Luxury's allurements; whether firm
Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
To * urge bold Virtue's unremitted nerve, 430
And wake the strong divinity of soul
That conquers Chance and Fate; or whether struck
For sounds of triumph, to proclaim her toils
Upon the lofty summit; round her brow
To twine the wreath of incorruptive praise; 435
To trace her hallow'd light through future worlds,
And bless heaven's image in the heart of man.

Thus * with a faithful aim have we presum'd,
Adventurous, to delineate Nature's form;
Whether in vast majestic pomp array'd, 440
Or drest for pleasing Wonder, or serene
In Beauty's rosy smile. It now remains,
Through various Being's fair-proportion'd scale,
To trace the rising lustre of her charms,
From their first twilight, shining forth at length, 445
To full meridian splendor. Of degree
The least and lowliest, in the effusive warmth
Of Colours mingling with a random blaze,
Doth Beauty dwell. Then higher in the line
And variation of determin'd shape, 450
Where Truth's eternal measures mark the bound
Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent
Unites this varied symmetry of parts
With Colour's bland allurements; as the pearl
Shines in the concave of its azure bed, 455
And painted shells indent their speckled wreath.
Then more attractive rise the blooming forms,
Through which the breath of Nature has infused

Her genial power, to draw with pregnant veins
 Nutritious moisture from the bounteous earth, 460
 In fruit and seed prolific : thus the flowers
 Their purple honours with the Spring resume ;
 And such the stately tree which Autumn bends
 With blushing treasures.* But more lovely still
 Is Nature's charm, where to the full consent 465
 Of complicated members, to the bloom
 Of colour, and the vital change of growth,
 Life's holy flame and piercing sense are given,
 And active motion speaks the temper'd soul :
 So moves the bird of Juno ; so the steed 470
 With rival ardour beats the dusty plain,
 And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
 Salute their fellows. † Thus doth BEAUTY dwell
 There most conspicuous, even in outward shape,
 Where dawns the high expression of a mind : 475
 By steps conducting our inraptured search
 To that ETERNAL ORIGIN whose power,
 Through all the unbounded symmetry of things,
 Like rays effulging from the parent sun,
 This endless mixture of her charms diffused. 480
 MIND, ‡ MIND alone, bear witness, earth and heaven !
 The living fountains in itself contains
 Of BEAUTEOUS and SUBLIME : here hand in hand,
 Sit paramount the Graces ; here enthroned,
 Cœlestial VENUS, with divinest airs, 485
 Invites the soul to never-fading joy.
 Look then abroad through Nature, to the range
 Of || planets, suns, and adamantine spheres

* Book I, line 538. † Book I, line 553. ‡ Book I, line 563.

|| Book II, line 361.

Wheeling unshaken through the void immense ;
 And speak, O man ! does this capacious scene 490
 With half that kindling majesty dilate
 Thy strong conception, as when BRUTUS rose *
 Refulgent from the stroke of CESAR's fate,
 Amid the croud of patriots ; and his arm
 Aloft extending, like eternal Jove 495
 When Guilt brings down the thunder, called aloud
 On TULLY's name, and shook his crimson steel,
 And bade the father of his country hail !
 For lo ! the Tyrant prostrate on the dust,
 And Rome again is free ? † Is aught so fair 500
 In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,
 In the bright eye of Hesper or the morn,
 In Nature's fairest forms, is ought so fair
 As virtuous Friendship ? as the candid blush
 Of him who strives with fortune to be just ? 505
 The graceful tear that streams for others' woes ?
 Or the mild majesty of private life,
 Where peace with ever-blooming olive crowns
 The gate ; where Honour's liberal hands effuse
 Unenvied treasures, and the snowy wings 510
 Of Innocence and Love protect the scene ?
 Once more search, undismay'd, the dark profound
 Where Nature works in secret ; view the beds
 Of mineral treasure, and the eternal vault
 That bounds the hoary ocean ; trace the forms 515
 Of atoms moving with incessant change

* *As when Brutus rose, &c.*] Cicero himself describes this fact—*Cæsare interfecto—statim cruentum altè extollens M. Brutus pugionem, Ciceronem nominatim exclamavit, atque ei recuperatam libertatem est gratulatus.* Cic. Philipp. ii. 12

† *Book II, line 336.*

Their elemental round ; behold the seeds
Of being, and the energy of life
Kindling the mass with ever-active flame :
Then to the secrets of the working mind 520
Attentive turn ; from dim Oblivion call
Her fleet, ideal band ; and bid them go !
Break through Time's barrier, and o'ertake the hour
That saw the heavens created : then declare
If aught were found in those external scenes 525
To move thy wonder now.* For what are all
The forms, which brute, unconscious MATTER wears,
Greatness of bulk, or symmetry of parts ?
Not reaching to the heart, soon feeble grows
The superficial impulse ; dull their charms, 530
And satiate soon, and pall the languid eye.
Not † so the MORAL species, nor the powers
Of GENIUS and DESIGN ; the ambitious mind
There sees herself : by these congenial forms
Touch'd and awaken'd, with intenser act 535
She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleased
Her features in the mirror. For of all
The inhabitants of earth, to man alone
Creative WISDOM gave to lift his eye
To TRUTH's eternal measures ; thence to frame 540
The sacred laws of Action and of Will,
Discerning justice from unequal deeds,
And temperance from folly. But beyond
This energy of TRUTH, whose dictates bind
Assenting Reason, the benignant SIRE, 545
To deck the honoured paths of JUST and GOOD,
Has added bright IMAGINATION's rays :

* *Book II, line 12.*† *Book II, line 20.*

Where * VIRTUE rising from the awful depth
 Of truth's mysterious bosom, doth forsake
 The unadorned condition of her birth ; 550
 And dressed by Fancy in ten thousand hues,
 Assumes a various feature, to attract,
 With charms responsive to each gazer's eye,
 The hearts of men. Amid his rural walk,
 The ingenuous youth, whom Solitude inspires 555
 With purest wishes, from the pensive shade
 Beholds HER moving, like a virgin-muse
 That wakes her lyre to some indulgent theme
 Of harmony and wonder : while among
 The herd of servile minds, HER strenuous form 560
 Indignant flashes on the patriot's eye,
 And through the rolls of Memory appeals
 To ancient Honour, or in act serene,
 Yet watchful, raises the majestic sword
 Of public Power, from dark Ambition's reach 565
 To guard the sacred volume of the laws.

GENIUS OF ANCIENT GREECE ! whose faithful steps †
 Well-pleas'd I follow through the sacred paths
 Of Nature and of Science ; nurse divine
 Of all heroic deeds and fair desires ! 570
 O ! let the breath of thy extended praise
 Inspire my kindling bosom to the height
 Of this untemper'd theme. Nor be my thoughts
 Presumptuous counted, if, amid the calm
 That soothes this vernal evening into smiles, 575

* V. 548. *Where virtue rising from the awful depth
 Of Truth's mysterious bosom, &c.* According to the opinion of those who assert *moral obligation* to be founded on an immutable and universal law, and that pathetic feeling, which is usually called the *moral sense*, to be determined by the peculiar temper of the imagination and the earliest associations of ideas.

† Book I, line 690.

I steal impatient from the sordid haunts
 Of strife and low ambition, to attend
 Thy sacred presence in the sylvan shade,
 By their malignant footsteps ne'er profaned.
 Descend, propitious! to my favour'd eye; 580
 Such in thy mien, thy warm, exalted air,
 As when the Persian tyrant, foil'd and stung
 With shame and desperation, gnash'd his teeth
 To see thee rend the pageants of his throne;
 And at the lightning of thy lifted spear 585
 Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial SPOILS
 Thy PALMS, thy LAURELS, thy triumphal SONGS,
 Thy smiling band of ARTS, thy godlike SIREs
 Of civil wisdom, thy heroic YOUTH
 Warm from the schools of glory. * Guide my way 590
 Through fair Lycéum's † walk, the green retreats
 Of Academus, ‡ and the thymy vale,
 Where oft enchanted with Socratic sounds,
 Ilissus § pure devolv'd his tuneful stream
 In gentler murmurs. From the blooming store 595
 Of these auspicious fields, may I unblamed,
 Transplant some living blossoms to adorn
 My native clime: while far above the flight
 Of fancy's plume aspiring, I unlock
 The springs of ancient wisdom; while I join 600
 Thy name, thrice honour'd! with the immortal praise
 Of Nature; while to my compatriot youth
 I point the high example of thy sons,
 And tune to Attic themes the British lyre.

* Book I, line 280. † V. 591. *Lyce'um*. The school of *Aristotle*.

‡ V. 592. *Academus*.] The school of *Plato*.

§ V. 594 *Ilissus*.] One of the rivers on which *Athens* was situated. *Plato*, in some of his finest dialogues, lays the scene of the conversation with *Socrates* on its banks.

ARGUMENT

OF

THE SECOND BOOK.

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

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.
BOOK THE SECOND.

WHEN shall the laurel and the vocal string
Resume their honours? When shall we behold
The tuneful tongue, the Promethéan hand
Aspire to ancient praise? Alas! how faint,
How slow the dawn of BEAUTY and of TRUTH 5
Breaks the reluctant shades of Gothic night
Which yet involve the nations! Long they groan'd
Beneath the furies of rapacious Force;
Oft as the gloomy North, with iron-swarms
Tempestuous pouring from her frozen caves, 10
Blasted the Italian shore, and swept the works
Of Liberty and Wisdom down the gulph
Of all-devouring night. As long immured
In noon-tide darkness by the glimmering lamp,
Each MUSE and each fair SCIENCE pined away 15
The sordid hours: while foul, barbarian hands
Their mysteries profaned, unstrung the lyre,
And chain'd the soaring pinion down to earth.

At * last, the muses rose and spurned their bonds,
 And, wildly warbling, scatter'd, as they flew, 20
 Their blooming wreaths from fair Valclusa's bowers †
 To Arno's myrtle border and the shore ‡
 Of soft Parthenope. But still the rage §
 Of ¶ dire ambition and gigantic power,
 From public aims and from the busy walk 25
 Of civil commerce, drove the bolder train
 Of penetrating science, to the cells,
 Where studious ease consumes the silent hour
 In shadowy searches and unfruitful care.
 Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts || 30

* V. 19. *At last the muses rose, &c.*] About the age of *Hugh Capet*, founder of the third race of *French* kings, the poets of *Provence* were in high reputation; a sort of strolling bards or rhapsodists, who went about the courts of princes and noblemen, entertaining them at festivals with music and poetry. They attempted both the epic, ode, and satire; and abounded in a wild and fantastic vein of fable, partly allegorical, and partly founded on traditionary legends of the *Saracen* wars. These were the rudiments of *Italian* poetry. But their taste and composition must have been extremely barbarous, as we may judge by those who followed the turn of their fable in much politer times; such as *Boiardo*, *Bernardo Tasso*, *Ariosto*, &c.

† V. 21. *Valclusa.*] The famous retreat of *Francisco Petrarca*, the father of *Italian* poetry, and his mistress *Laura*, a lady of *Avignon*.

‡ V. 22. *Arno.*] The river which runs by *Florence*, the birth place of *Dante* and *Boccaccio*.

§ V. 23. *Parthenope.*] Or *Naples*, the birth place of *Sannazaro*. The great *Torquato Tasso* was born at *Sorrento* in the kingdom of *Naples*.
 Ibid. ———— the rage

¶ V. 24. *Of dire ambition &c.*] This relates to the cruel wars among the republics of *Italy*, and abominable politics of its little princes, about the fifteenth century. These at last, in conjunction with the papal power, entirely extinguished the spirit of liberty in that country, and established that abuse of the fine arts which has been since propagated over all *Europe*.

|| V. 30. *Thus from their guardians torn, the tender arts, &c.*] Nor were they only losers by the separation. For philosophy itself, to use the words of a noble philosopher, *being thus severed from the sprightly arts and sciences, must consequently grow dromish, insipid, pedantic, useless, and directly opposite to the real knowledge and practice of the world*. Insomuch that a gentleman, says another excellent writer, *cannot easily bring himself to like so austere and ungainly a form*: 30

Of mimic fancy and harmonious joy,
 To priestly domination and the lust
 Of lawless courts, their amiable toil
 For three inglorious ages have resign'd;
 In vain reluctant: and Torquato's tongue 35
 Was tuned for slavish pæans at the throne
 Of tinsel pomp: and Raphael's magic hand
 Effused its fair creation to enchant
 The fond adoring herd in Latian fanes
 To blind belief; while on their prostrate necks 40
 The sable tyrant plants his heel secure.
 But now, behold! the radiant æra dawns,
 When Freedom's ample fabric, fix'd at length
 For endless years on Albion's happy shore
 In full proportion, once more shall extend 45
 To all the kindred powers of social bliss
 A common mansion, a parental roof.
 There shall the Virtues, there shall Wisdom's train,
 Their long-lost friends rejoining, as of old,
 Embrace the smiling family of Arts, 50
 The Muses and the Graces. Then no more
 Shall vice, distracting their delicious gifts

greatly is it changed from what was once the delight of the finest gentlemen of antiquity, and their recreation after the hurry of public affairs! From this condition it cannot be recovered but by uniting it once more with the works of imagination; and we have had the pleasure of observing a very great progress made towards their union in *England* within these few years. It is hardly possible to conceive them at a greater distance from each other than at the Revolution, when *Locke* stood at the head of one party, and *Dryden* of the other. But the general spirit of liberty, which has ever since been growing, naturally invited our men of wit and genius to improve that influence, which the arts of persuasion gave them with the people, by applying them to subjects of importance to society. Thus poetry and eloquence became considerable; and philosophy is now of course obliged to borrow of their embellishments, in order even to gain audience with the public:

To aims abhorr'd, with high distaste and scorn
Turn from their charms the philosophic eye,
The patriot-bosom; then no more the paths 55
Of public care or intellectual toil,
Alone by footsteps haughty and severe,
In gloomy state be trod: the harmonious Muse
And her persuasive sisters then shall plant
Their sheltering laurels o'er the bleak ascent, 60
And scatter flowers along the rugged way.
Arm'd with the lyre, already have we dared
To pierce divine Philosophy's retreats,
And teach the Muse her lore; already strove
Their long-divided honours to unite, 65
While tempering this deep argument we sang
Of TRUTH and BEAUTY. Now the same glad task
Impends; now urging our ambitious toil,
We hasten to recount the various springs
Of adventitious pleasure, which adjoin 70
Their grateful influence to the prime effect
Of objects GRAND or BEAUTEOUS, and inlarge
The complicated joy. The sweets of sense,
Do they not oft with kind accession flow,
To raise harmonious Fancy's native charm? 75
So while we taste the fragrance of the Rose,
Glow not her blush the fairer? While we view
Amid the noontide walk a limpid rill
Gush through the trickling herbage, to the thirst
Of summer, yielding the delicious draught 80
Of cool refreshment; o'er the mossy brink
Shines not the surface clearer, and the waves
With sweeter music murmur as they flow?
Nor this alone; the various lot of life

Oft from external circumstance, assumes 85
A moment's disposition to rejoice
In those delights, which at a different hour
Would pass unheeded. Fair the face of Spring,
When rural songs and odours wake the morn,
To every eye; but how much more to his 90
Round whom the bed of sickness long diffused
Its melancholy gloom! how doubly fair,
When first with fresh-born vigour *he* inhales
The balmy breeze, and feels the blessed sun
Warm at his bosom, from the springs of life 95
Chasing oppressive damps and languid pain!

Or shall I mention, where cœlestial TRUTH
Her awful light discloses, to bestow
A more majestic pomp on BEAUTY's frame?
For man loves knowledge, and the beams of truth 100
More welcome touch his understanding's eye,
Than all the blandishments of sound his ear,
Than all of taste his tongue. Nor ever yet
The melting rainbow's vernal-tinctured hues
To me have shone so pleasing, as when first 105
The hand of science pointed out the path
In which the sun-beams, gleaming from the West,
Fall on the watery cloud, whose darksome veil
Involves the orient; and that trickling shower
Piercing through every crystalline convex 110
Of clustering dew-drops to their flight opposed,
Recoil at length where concave all behind,
The internal surface of each glassy orb
Repels their forward passage into air;
That thence direct they seek the radiant goal, 115
From which their course began, and, as they strike

In different lines the gazer's obvious eye,
 Assume a different lustre, through the brede
 Of colours changing from the splendid rose
 To the pale violet's dejected hue. 120

Or shall we touch that kind access of joy,
 That springs to each fair object, while we trace
 Through all its fabric, Wisdom's artful aim
 Disposing every part, and gaining still
 By means proportioned, her benignant End? 125
 Speak, ye, the pure delight whose favoured steps
 The lamp of science through the jealous maze
 Of Nature guides, when haply you reveal
 Her secret honours : whether in the sky,
 The beauteous laws of light, the central powers 130
 That wheel the pensile planets round the year ;
 Whether in wonders of the rolling deep,
 Or the rich fruits of all-sustaining earth,
 Or fine-adjusted springs of life and sense,
 Ye scan the counsels of their AUTHOR's hand. 135

What, when to raise the meditated scene,
 The flame of PASSION, through the struggling soul
 Deep-kindled, shows across that sudden blaze
 The OBJECT of its rapture, vast of size,
 With fiercer colours and a night of shade? 140
 What? like a storm from their capacious bed
 The sounding seas o'erwhelming, when the might
 Of these eruptions, working from the depth
 Of man's strong apprehension, shakes his frame
 Even to the base ; from every naked sense 145
 Of pain or pleasure dissipating all
 Opinion's feeble coverings, and the veil
 Spun from the cobweb fashion of the times

To hide the feeling heart? Then Nature speaks
 Her genuine language, and the words of men, 150
 Big with the very motion of their souls,
 Declare with what accumulated force,
 The impetuous nerve of PASSION urges on
 The native weight and energy of things.

Yet more: her honours where nor Beauty claims, 155
 Nor shews of good the thirsty sense allure,
 From * passion's power alone our nature holds
 Essential pleasure. Passion's fierce illapse
 Rouses the mind's whole fabric; with supplies
 Of daily impulse keeps the elastic powers 160
 Intensely poized, and polishes anew
 By that collision all the fine machine:
 Else rust would rise, and foulness by degrees
 Incumbering, choak at last what Heaven design'd
 For ceaseless motion, and a round of toil. 165
 —But say, does every passion thus to man
 Administer delight? That name indeed
 Becomes the rosy breath of *love*; becomes

*. V 157. *From Passion's power alone, &c.*] This very mysterious kind of pleasure, which is often found in the exercise of passions generally counted painful, has been taken notice of by several authors. *Lucretius* resolves it into self-love:

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

As if a man was never pleased in being moved at the distress of a tragedy, without a cool reflection that though these fictitious personages were so unhappy, yet he himself was perfectly at ease and in safety. The ingenious author of the *Reflexions critiques sur la Poesie & sur la Peinture*, accounts for it by the general delight which the mind takes in its own activity, and the abhorrence it feels of an indolent and inattentive state: and this, joined with the moral approbation of its own temper, which attends these emotions when natural and just, is certainly the true foundation of the pleasure, which, as it is the origin and basis of tragedy and epic, deserved a very particular consideration in this poem.

The radiant smiles of *joy*, the applauding hand
 Of *admiration*; but the bitter shower 170
 That *sorrow* sheds upon a brother's grave,
 But the dumb palsy of nocturnal *fear*,
 Or those consuming fires that gnaw the heart
 Of panting *indignation*, find we there
 To move delight? Then listen, while my tongue 175
 The unalter'd will of Heaven with faithful awe
 Reveals; what old HARMODIUS wont to teach
 My early age; HARMODIUS, who had weigh'd
 Within his learned mind whate'er the schools
 Of wisdom, or thy lonely-whispering voice, 180
 O faithful Nature! dictate of the laws
 Which govern and support this mighty frame
 Of universal being. Oft the hours,
 From morn to eve, have stolen unmark'd away,
 While mute attention hung upon his lips, 185
 As thus the sage his awful tale began.

'Twas in the windings of an ancient wood,
 When spotless youth with solitude, resigns
 To sweet philosophy the studious day,
 What time pale Autumn shades the silent eve, 190
 Musing I roved. Of GOOD and EVIL much,
 And much of mortal MAN my thought revolved;
 When started full on Fancy's gushing eye,
 The mournful image of PARTHENIA's fate:
 That hour, O long beloved and long deplored! 195
 When blooming Youth, nor gentlest Wisdom's arts,
 Nor Hymen's honours gathered for thy brow,
 Nor all thy Lover's, all thy Father's tears
 Availed to snatch thee from the cruel grave:
 Thy agonizing looks, thy last farewell 200

Struck to the inmost feeling of my soul,
 As with the hand of death. At once the shade
 More horrid nodded o'er me, and the winds
 With hoarser murmuring shook the branches. Dark
 As midnight storms, the scene of human things 205
 Appear'd before me; desarts, burning sands,
 Where the parch'd adder dies; the frozen South,
 And Desolation blasting all the West
 With rapine and with murder: tyrant Power
 Here sits enthroned with blood; the baleful charms 210
 Of Superstition *there* infect the skies,
 And turn the sun to horror. Gracious Heaven!
 What is the life of man? Or cannot these,
 Not these portents thy awful will suffice?
 That, propagated thus beyond their scope, 215
 They rise to act their cruelties anew
 In my afflicted bosom; thus decreed
 The universal sensitive of Pain,
 The wretched heir of evils, not its own!
 Thus I impatient; when, at once effused, 220
 A flashing torrent of cœlestial day
 Burst through the shadowy void. With slow descent
 A purple cloud came floating through the sky,
 And poised at length within the circling trees,
 Hung obvious to my view; till opening wide 225
 Its lucid orb, a more than human form
 Emerging, lean'd majestic o'er my head,
 And instant thunder shook the conscious grove.
 Then melted into air the liquid cloud,
 And all the shining vision stood reveal'd. 230
 A wreath of palm his ample forehead bound,
 And o'er his shoulder, mantling to his knee,

Flow'd the transparent robe, around his waist
 Collected with a radiant zone of gold
 Æthereal: there in mystic signs ingraved 235
 I read his office high and sacred name,
 GENIUS OF HUMAN KIND. Appall'd I gazed
 The godlike presence; for athwart his brow
 Displeasure, temper'd with a mild concern,
 Look'd down reluctant on me, and his words. 240
 Like distant thunders broke the murmuring air.
 Vain are thy thoughts, O child of mortal birth!
 And impotent thy tongue. Is thy short span
 Capacious of this universal frame?
 Thy wisdom all-sufficient? Thou, alas! 245
 Dost thou aspire to judge between the Lord
 Of Nature and his works? to lift thy voice
 Against the sovran order he decreed,
 All GOOD and LOVELY? to blaspheme the bands
 Of tenderness innate and social love, 250
 Holiest of things! by which the general orb
 Of being, as by adamantine links,
 Was drawn to perfect union and sustain'd
 From everlasting? Hast thou felt the pangs
 Of softening sorrow, of indignant zeal 255
 So grievous to the soul, as thence to wish
 The ties of Nature broken from thy frame;
 That so thy selfish, unrelenting heart
 Might cease to mourn its lot, no longer then
 The wretched heir of evils not its own? 260
 O fair benevolence of generous minds!
 O man by Nature form'd for all mankind!
 He spoke; abash'd and silent I remain'd,
 As conscious of my tongue's offence, and awed

Before his presence, though my secret soul 265
 Disdain'd the imputation. On the ground
 I fix'd my eyes; till from his airy couch
 He stoop'd sublime, and touching with his hand
 My dazzled forehead, Raise thy sight, he cried,
 And let thy sense convince thy erring tongue. 270
 I looked, and lo! the former scene was changed;
 For verdant alleys and surrounding trees,
 A solitary prospect, wide and wild,
 Rush'd on my senses. 'Twas a horrid pile
 Of hills with many a shaggy forest mix'd, 275
 With many a sable cliff and glittering stream.
 Aloft recumbent o'er the hanging ridge,
 The brown woods waved; while ever-trickling springs,
 Wash'd from the naked roots of oak and pine,
 The crumbling soil; and still at every fall 280
 Down the steep windings of the channel'd rock,
 Remurmuring rush'd the congregated floods
 With hearser inundation; till at last
 They reach'd a grassy plain, which from the skirts
 Of that high desert spread her verdant lap, 285
 And drank the gushing moisture, where confined
 In one smooth current, o'er the lilled vale
 Clearer than glass it flow'd. Autumnal spoils
 Luxuriant spreading to the rays of morn,
 Blush'd o'er the cliffs, whose half-incircling mound 290
 As in a sylvan theatre inclosed
 That flowery level. On the river's brink
 I spied a fair pavilion, which diffused
 Its floating umbrage 'mid the silver shade
 Of osiers. Now the western sun reveal'd 295
 Between two parting cliffs his golden orb,

And pour'd across the shadow of the hills,
 On rocks and floods, a yellow stream of light
 That cheer'd the solemn scene. My list'ning powers
 Were awed, and every thought in silence hung, 300
 And wondering expectation. Then the voice
 Of that cœlestial power, the mystic show
 Declaring, thus my deep attention call'd.

Inhabitant of earth, * to whom is given

* V. 304. *Inhabitant of earth, &c.*] The account of the œconomy of providence here introduced, as the most proper to calm and satisfy the mind when under the compunction of private evils, seems to have come originally from the *Pythagorean* school: but of the ancient philosophers, *Plato* has most largely insisted upon it, has established it with all the strength of his capacious understanding, and ennobled it with all the magnificence of his divine imagination. He has one passage so full and clear on this head, that I am persuaded the reader will be pleased to see it here, though somewhat long. Addressing himself to such as are not satisfied concerning divine providence: *The Being who presides over the whole*, says he, *has disposed and complicated all things for the happiness and virtue of the whole, every part of which, according to the extent of its influence, does and suffers what is fit and proper. One of these parts is yours, O unhappy man, which though in itself most inconsiderable and minute, yet being connected with the universe, ever seeks to co-operate with that supreme order. You in the mean time are ignorant of the very end for which all particular natures are brought into existence, that the all-comprehending nature of the whole may be perfect and happy; existing, as it does, not for your sake, but the cause and reason of your existence, which, as in the symmetry of every artificial work, must of necessity concur with the general design of the artist, and be subservient to the whole of which it is a part. Your complaint therefore is ignorant and groundless; since, according to the various energy of creation, and the common laws of nature, there is a constant provision of that which is best at the same time for you and for the whole.—For the governing Intelligence clearly beholding all the actions of animated and self-moving creature, and that mixture of good and evil which diversifies them, considered first of all by what disposition of things, and by what situation of each individual in the general system, vice might be depressed and subdued, and virtue made secure of victory and happiness with the greatest facility and in the highest degree possible: In this manner he ordered through the entire circle of being, the internal constitution of every mind, where should be its station in the universal fabric, and through what variety of circumstances it should proceed in the whole tenor of its existence. He goes on in his sublime manner to assert a future state of retribution, as well for those who, by the*

The gracious ways of Providence to learn, 305
 Receive my sayings with a steadfast ear—
 Know then, the SOVRAN SPIRIT of the world,
 Though self-collected from eternal time,
 Within his own deep essence he beheld
 The bounds of true Felicity complete; 310
 Yet by immense benignity inclined
 To spread around him that primæval joy
 Which fill'd himself, he raised his plastic arm,
 And sounded, through the hollow depth of space,
 The strong, creative mandate. Strait arose 315
 These heavenly orbs, the glad abodes of life,
 Effusive kindled by his breath divine
 Through endless forms of being. Each inhaled
 From him its portion of the vital flame,
 In measure such, that, from the wide complex 320
 Of co-existent orders * one might rise,
 One order, all-involving and entire.
 He too beholding, in the sacred light
 Of his essential reason, all the shapes
 Of swift contingency, all successive ties 325
 Of action propagated through the sum

exercise of good dispositions being harmonized and assimilated to the divine virtue, are consequently removed to a place of unblemished sanctity and happiness; as of those who by the most flagitious arts have risen from contemptible beginnings to the greatest affluence and power, and whom you therefore look upon as unanswerable instances of negligence in the gods, because you are ignorant of the purposes to which they are subservient, and in what manner they contribute to that supreme intention of good to the whole. Plato de Leg. x. 16.

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

* V. 321.

—— one might rise,

One order, &c.] See the Meditations of Antoninus and the Characteristics of Lord Shaftsbury, passim.

Of possible existence, he at once,
 Down the long series of eventful time,
 So * fix'd the dates of being, so disposed,
 To every living soul of every kind, 330
 The field of motion and the hour of rest,
 That all conspired to his supreme design,
 To universal good : with full accord
 Answering the mighty model he had chosen,
 The best and fairest † of unnumbered worlds 335
 That lay from everlasting in the store
 Of his divine conceptions. Nor content,
 By one exertion of creative power
 His goodness to reveal ; through every age,
 Through every moment up the tract of time 340
 His parent-hand with ever-new increase
 Of happiness and virtue has adorn'd
 The vast harmonious frame : his ‡ parent-hand,
 From the mute shell-fish gasping on the shore,
 To men, to angels, to cœlestial minds, 345
 For ever leads the generations on
 To higher scenes of being ; while supplied
 From day to day with his enlivening breath,
 Inferior orders in succession rise

* Book II, line 247.

† V. 335. *The best and fairest, &c.*] This opinion is so old, that *Timæus* Locrus calls the supreme being δημιουργός τῷ βελτίονι, *the artificer of that which is best* ; and represents him as resolving in the beginning to produce the most excellent work, and as copying the world most exactly from his own intelligible and essential idea ; so that it yet remains, as it was at first, perfect in beauty, and will never stand in need of any correction or improvement. There can be no room for a caution here, to understand the expressions, not of any particular circumstances of human life separately considered, but of the sum or universal system of life and being. See also the vision at the end of the *Theodicæe* of Leibnitz.

‡ Book II, line 257.

To fill the void below. As * flame ascends, 350
 As bodies to their proper centre move,
 As the poised ocean to the attracting moon
 Obedient swells, and every headlong stream
 Devolves its winding waters to the main ;
 So all things which have life aspire to God, 355
 The sun of being, boundless, unimpair'd
 Centre of souls ! Nor does the faithful voice
 Of Nature cease to prompt their eager steps
 Aright ; nor is the care of Heaven withheld
 From granting to the task proportion'd aid ; 360
 That in their stations all may persevere
 To climb the ascent of being, and approach
 For ever nearer to the life divine.

That rocky pile thou see'st, that verdant lawn
 Fresh-water'd from the mountains. Let the scene 365
 Paint in thy fancy the primæval seat
 Of man, and where the will supreme ordain'd
 His mansion, that pavilion fair-diffused
 Along the shady brink ; in this recess
 To wear the appointed season of his youth, 370
 Till riper hours should open to his toil
 The high communion of superior minds,
 Of consecrated heroes and of gods.
 Nor did the SIRE OMNIPOTENT forget
 His tender bloom to cherish ; nor withheld 375
 Cœlestial footsteps from his green abode.
 Oft from the radiant honours of his throne,
 He sent whom most he loved, the SOVRAN FAIR

* V. 350. *As flame ascends, &c.*] This opinion, though not held by *Plato* nor any of the ancients, is yet a very natural consequence of his principles. But the disquisition is too complex and extensive to be entered upon here.

The EFFLUENCE of his GLORY whom he placed
Before his eyes for ever to behold ; 380
The goddess from whose inspiration flows
The toil of patriots, the delight of friends ;
Without whose work divine, in heaven or earth,
Nought lovely, nought propitious comes to pass,
Nor hope, nor praise, nor honour. HER, the SIRE 385
Gave it in charge to rear the blooming mind,
The folded powers to open, to direct
The growth luxuriant of his young desires,
And from the laws of this majestic world
To teach him what was good. As thus the nymph 390
Her daily care attended, by her side
With constant steps her gay companion stay'd,
The fair EUPHROSYNE', the gentle queen
Of smiles, and graceful gladness, and delights
That cheer alike the hearts of mortal men 395
And powers immortal. See the shining pair !
Behold, where from his dwelling now disclosed
They quit their youthful charge and seek the skies.
I looked, and on the flowery turf there stood
Between two radiant forms a smiling youth 400
Whose tender cheeks display'd the vernal flower
Of Beauty ; sweetest innocence illumed
His bashful eyes, and on his polish'd brow
Sate young Simplicity. With fond regard
He view'd the associates, as their steps they moved ; 405
The younger chief his ardent eyes detain'd,
With mild regret invoking her return.
Bright as the star of evening she appear'd
Amid the dusky scene. Eternal youth
O'er all her form its glowing honours breathed ; 410

And smiles eternal from her candid eyes
Flow'd, like the dewy lustre of the morn
Effusive trembling on the placid waves.
The spring of heaven had shed its blushing spoils
To bind her sable tresses: full diffused 415
Her yellow mantle floated in the breeze;
And in her hand she waved a living branch
Rich with immortal fruits, of power to calm
The wrathful heart, and from the brightening eyes,
To chase the cloud of sadness. More sublime 420
The heavenly partner moved. The prime of age
Composed her steps. The presence of a god,
High on the circle of her brow enthroned,
From each majestic motion darted awe,
Devoted awe! till, cherish'd by her looks 425
Benevolent and meek, confiding love
To filial rapture soften'd all the soul.
Free in her graceful hand she poised the sword
Of chaste dominion. An heroic crown
Display'd the old simplicity of pomp 430
Around her honour'd head. A matron's robe,
White as the sunshine streams through vernal clouds,
Her stately form invested. Hand in hand
The immortal pair forsook the enamell'd green,
Ascending slowly. Rays of limpid light 435
Gleam'd round their path; cœlestial sounds were heard,
And through the fragrant air æthereal dews
Distill'd around them; till at once the clouds
Disparting wide in midway sky, withdrew
Their airy veil, and left a bright expanse 440
Of empyréan flame, where spent and drown'd,
Afflicted vision plunged in vain to scan

What object it involved. My feeble eyes
Indured not. Bending down to earth I stood,
With dumb attention. Soon a female voice, 445
As watery murmurs sweet, or warbling shades,
With sacred invocation thus began.

FATHER of gods and mortals ! whose right arm
With reins eternal guides the moving heavens,
Bend thy propitious ear. Behold well-pleased 450
I seek to finish thy divine decree.
With frequent steps I visit yonder seat
Of man, thy offspring ; from the tender seeds
Of justice and of wisdom, to evolve
The latent honours of his generous frame ; 455
Till thy conducting hand shall raise his lot
From earth's dim scene to these æthereal walks,
The temple of thy glory. But not me,
Not my directing voice he oft requires,
Or hears delighted : this enchanting maid, 460
The associate thou hast given me, her alone
He loves, O FATHER ! absent, her he craves ;
And but for her glad presence ever join'd,
Rejoices not in mine : that all my hopes
This thy benignant purpose to fulfil, 465
I deem uncertain ; and my daily cares
Unfruitful all and vain, unless by thee
Still farther aided in the work divine.

She ceased ; a voice more awful thus replied.
O thou ! in whom for ever I delight, 470
Fairer than all the inhabitants of heaven,
Best image of thy Author ! 'far from thee
Be disappointment, or distaste, or blame ;
Who soon or late shall every work fulfil,

And no resistance find. If man refuse 475

To hearken to thy dictates; or, allured

By meaner joys, to any other power

Transfer the honours due to thee alone;

That joy which he pursues he ne'er shall taste,

That power in whom delighteth ne'er behold. 480

Go then once more, and happy be thy toil;

Go then! but let not this thy smiling friend

Partake thy footsteps. In her stead, behold!

With thee the son of * Nemesis I send;

The fiend abhorr'd, whose vengeance takes account 485

Of sacred Order's violated laws.

See where he calls thee, burning to be gone,

Fierce to exhaust the tempest of his wrath

On yon devoted head. But thou, my child,

Control his cruel phrenzy, and protect 490

Thy tender charge; that when despair shall grasp

His agonizing bosom, he may learn,

Then he may learn to love thy gracious hand;

Alone sufficient in the hour of ill,

To save his feeble spirit; then confess 495

Thy genuine honours, O excelling fair!

When all the plagues that wait the deadly will

Of this avenging dæmon, all the storms

Of night infernal, serve but to display

The energy of thy superior charms; 500

With mildest awe triumphant o'er his rage,

And shining clearer in the horrid gloom.

Here ceased that awful voice, and soon I felt

The cloudy curtain of refreshing eve

* V. 484. *Nemesis the Fiend abhorr'd &c.*] was supposed to be one of the Fates. The son of Nemesis here means *adversity*. ED.

Was closed once more, from that immortal fire 505
Sheltering my eye-lids. Looking up, I view'd
A vast gigantic spectre striding on
Through murmuring thunders and a waste of clouds,
With dreadful action. Black as night, his brow
Relentless frowns involved. His savage limbs 510
With sharp impatience violent he writh'd,
As through convulsive anguish ; and his hand,
Arm'd with a scorpion-lash, full oft he raised
In madness to his bosom ; while his eyes
Rain'd bitter tears, and bellowing loud he shook 515
The void with horror. Silent by his side
The virgin came. No discomposure stirr'd
Her features. From the glooms which hung around
No stain of darkness mingled with the beam
Of her divine effulgence. Now they stoop 520
Upon the river-bank ; and now to hail
His wonted guests, with eager steps advanced
The unsuspecting inmate of the shade.

As when a famish'd wolf, that all night long
Had ranged the Alpine snows, by chance at morn 525
Sees from a cliff incumbent o'er the smoke
Of some lone village, a neglected kid
That strays along the wild for herb or spring ;
Down from the winding ridge he sweeps amain,
And thinks he tears him : so with tenfold rage, 530
The monster sprung remorseless on his prey.
Amazed the stripling stood : with panting breast
Feebly he pour'd the lamentable wail
Of helpless consternation, struck at once,
And rooted to the ground. The queen beheld 535
His terror, and with looks of tenderest care

Advanced to save him. Soon the tyrant felt
 Her awful power. His keen, tempestuous arm
 Hung nerveless, nor descended where his rage
 Had aim'd the deadly blow : then dumb retired 540
 With sullen rancour. Lo ! the SOVRAN MAID
 Folds with a mother's arms the fainting boy,
 Till life rekindles in his rosy cheek ;

Then grasps his hand and cheers him with her tongue.

O wake thee, rouse thy spirit ! Shall the spite 545
 Of yon tormentor thus appal thy heart,
 While I, thy friend and guardian, am at hand
 To rescue and to heal ? O let thy soul
 Remember, what the will of Heaven ordains
 Is ever good for all ; and if for ALL, 550

Then good for THEE. Nor only by the warmth
 And soothing sunshine of delightful things,
 Do minds grow up and flourish : oft misled
 By that bland light, the young unpractised viéws
 Of reason wander through a fatal road, 555
 Far from their native aim : as if to lie

Inglorious in the fragrant shade, and wait
 The soft access of ever-circling joys,
 Were all the END OF BEING Ask thyself,
 This pleasing error, did it never lull 560

Thy wishes ? Has thy constant heart refused
 The silken fetters of delicious ease ?

Or when divine EUPHROSYNE' appear'd
 Within this dwelling, did not thy desires
 Hang far below the measure of thy fate, 565
 Which I reveal'd before thee ? and thy eyes,

Impatient of my counsels, turn away
 To drink the soft effusion of her smiles ?

Know then, for THIS the everlasting SIRE
Deprives thee of her presence, and instead, 570
O wise and still benevolent ! ordains
This horrid visage hither to pursue
My steps ; that so thy nature may discern
Its real good, and what alone can save
Thy feeble spirit in this hour of ill 575
From folly and despair. O yet beloved !
Let not this headlong terror quite o'erwhelm
Thy scatter'd powers ; nor fatal deem the rage
Of this tormentor, nor his proud assault,
While I am here to vindicate thy toil, 580
Above the generous question of thy arm.
Brave by *thy* fears and in *thy* weakness strong,
This hour *he* triumphs : but confront his might,
And dare him to the combat, then with ease
Disarm'd and quell'd, his fierceness he resigns 585
To bondage and to scorn : while thus inured
By watchful danger, by unceasing toil,
The IMMORTAL MIND, superior to his fate,
Amid the outrage of external things,
Firm as the solid base of this great world, 590
Rests on his own foundations. Blow, ye winds !
Ye waves ! ye thunders ! roll your tempest on ;
Shake, ye old pillars of the marble sky !
Till all its orbs and all its worlds of fire
Be loosen'd from their seats ; yet still serene, 595
The unconquer'd mind looks down upon the wreck ;
And ever stronger as the storms advance,
Firm through the closing ruin holds his way,
Where Nature calls him to the destin'd goal.
So spake the goddess ; while through all her frame 600

Cœlestial raptures flow'd, in every word,
 In every motion kindling warmth divine
 To seize who listen'd. Vehement and swift
 As lightening fires the aromatic shade
 In Æthiopian fields, the stripling felt 605
 Her inspiration catch his fervid soul,
 And starting from his languor thus exclaim'd.
 Then let the trial come ! and witness thou,
 If terror be upon me ; if I shrink
 To meet the storm, or falter in my strength 610
 When hardest it besets me. Do not think
 That I am fearful and infirm of soul,
 As late thy eyes beheld : for thou hast changed
 My nature ; thy commanding voice has waked
 My languid powers to bear me boldly on, 615
 Where'er the WILL DIVINE my path ordains
 Through toil or peril : only do not THOU
 Forsake me ; O be thou for ever near,
 That I may listen to thy sacred voice,
 And guide by thy decrees my constant feet. 620
 But say, forever are my eyes bereft——
 Say, shall the fair EUPHROSYNE' not once
 Appear again to charm me ? Thou, in heaven !
 O thou ETERNAL ARBITER of things !
 Be thy great bidding done : for who am I, 625
 To question thy appointment ? Let the frowns
 Of this avenger every morn o'ercast
 The cheerful dawn, and every evening damp
 With double night my dwelling ; I will learn
 To hail them both, and unrepining bear 630
 His hateful presence ; but permit my tongue
 One glad request, and if my deeds may find

Thy awful eye propitious, O restore
The rosy-featured maid; again to cheer
This lonely seat, and bless me with her smiles. 635
He spoke; when instant through the sable glooms
With which that furious presence had involved
The ambient air, a flood of radiance came
Swift as the lightning flash; the melting clouds
Flew diverse, and amid the blue serene 640
EUPHROSYNE' appeared. With sprightly step
The nymph alighted on the irriguous lawn,
And to her wondering audience thus began.

Lo! I am here to answer to your vows,
And be the meeting fortunate! I come 645
With joyful tidings; WE SHALL PART NO MORE—
Hark! how the gentle echo from her cell
Talks through the cliffs, and murmuring o'er the stream
Repeats the accents; we shall part no more.
O my delightful friends! well-pleased on high 650
The father has beheld you, while the might
Of that stern foe with bitter trial proved
Your equal doings; then for ever spake
The HIGH DECREE: that thou, cœlestial maid!
Howe'er that grisly phantom on thy steps 655
May sometimes dare intrude, yet never more
Shalt thou, descending to the abode of man,
Alone endure the rancour of his arm,
Or leave thy loved EUPHROSYNE' behind.

She ended; and the whole romantic scene 660
Immediate vanish'd; rocks, and woods, and rills,
The mantling tent, and each mysterious form
Flew like the pictures of a morning dream,
When sun-shine fills the bed. A while I stood

Perplex'd and giddy ; till the radiant Power 665
 Who bade the visionary landscape rise,
 As up to him I turn'd, with gentlest looks
 Preventing my enquiry, thus began.

There let thy soul acknowledge its complaint
 How blind, how impious ! There behold the ways 670
 Of Heaven's eternal destiny to man,
 For ever just, benevolent and wise :
 That VIRTUE's awful steps, howe'er pursued
 By vexing FORTUNE and intrusive PAIN
 Should never be divided from her chaste, 675
 Her fair attendant, PLEASURE. Need I urge
 Thy tardy thought through all the various round
 Of this existence, that thy softening soul
 At length may learn what energy the hand
 Of virtue mingles in the bitter tide 680
 Of passion swelling with distress and pain,
 To mitigate the sharp with gracious drops
 Of cordial pleasure ? Ask † the faithful youth,
 Why the cold urn of her whom long he loved,
 So often fills his arms ; so often draws 685
 His lonely footsteps at the silent hour,
 To pay the mournful tribute of his tears ?
 O ! he will tell thee, that the wealth of worlds
 Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego
 That sacred hour, when stealing from the noise 690
 Of care and envy, sweet remembrance sooths
 With virtue's kindest looks his aking breast,
 And turns his tears to rapture.— Ask ‡ the crowd
 Which flies impatient from the village-walk
 To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below 695

† Book II, line 614. ‡ Book II, line 624.

The cruel winds have hurl'd upon the coast
 Some helpless bark : while sacred Pity melts
 The general eye, or Terror's icy hand
 Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair ;
 While every mother closer to her breast 700
 Catches her child, and pointing where the waves
 Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud
 As one poor wretch who spreads his piteous arms
 For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge ;
 As now another, dash'd against the rock, 705
 Drops lifeless down. * O ! deemest thou indeed
 No kind endearment here by Nature given
 To mutual terror and Compassion's tears ?
 No sweetly-melting softness which attracts,
 O'er all that edge of pain the social powers, 710
 To this their proper action and their end ?
 —Ask † thy own heart ; when at the midnight hour,
 Slow through that studious gloom thy pausing eye
 Led by the glimmering taper moves around
 The sacred volumes of the dead, the songs 715
 Of Grecian bards, and records writ by fame
 For Grecian heroes, where the PRESENT POWER
 Of heaven and earth surveys the immortal page
 Even as a FATHER ; blessing while he reads
 The praises of his son. If then thy soul, 720
 Spurning the yoke of these inglorious days,
 Mix in their deeds and kindle with their flame ;
 Say, when the prospect blackens on thy view,
 When rooted from the base, heroic states
 Mourn in the dust and tremble at the frown 725
 Of curst ambition ; when the pious ‡ band

* *Book II, line 637.* † *Book II, line 643.*

‡ V. 726. The sacred battalion of Thebes at the battle of *Chæronéa*.

Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires,
 Lie side by side in gore ; when ruffian pride
 Usurps the throne of justice, turns the pomp
 Of public power, the majesty of rule, 730
 The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
 To slavish empty pageants, to adorn
 A tyrant's walk, and glitter in the eyes
 Of such as bow the knee ; when * honour'd urns
 Of patriots and of chiefs, the awful bust 735
 And storied arch, to glut the coward-rage
 Of regal envy, strew the public way
 With hallow'd ruins ; when the Muse's haunt,
 The marble porch where wisdom wont to talk
 With SOCRATES or TULLY, hears no more, 740
 Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks,
 Or female superstition's midnight prayer ;
 When ruthless rapine from the hand of Time
 Tears the destroying scythe, with surer blow
 To sweep the works of glory from their base ; 745
 Till desolation o'er the grass-grown street
 Expands his raven-wings, and up the wall,
 Where † senates once the price of monarchs doom'd,
 Hisses the gliding snake through hoary weeds
 That clasp the mouldering column ; thus defaced, 750
 Thus widely mournful, when the prospect thrills
 Thy beating bosom, when the patriot's tear
 Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
 In fancy hurls the thunderbolt of JOVE
 To fire the impious wreath on ‡ PHILIP's brow, 755

* *Book II, line 667.* † *Book II, line 682.*

‡ *V. 755. Philip.] The Macedonian.*

Or dash OCTAVIUS from the trophied car ;
Say, does* thy secret soul repine to taste
The big distress ? Or would'st thou then exchange
Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd 760
Of mute barbarians bending to his nod,
And bears aloft his gold-invested front
And says within himself, " I am a king,
" And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe
" Intrude upon mine ear ?—" The baleful dregs 765
Of these late ages, this inglorious draught
Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
Blest be the ETERNAL RULER of the world !
Defiled to such a depth of sordid shame
The native honours of the human soul, 770
Nor so effaced the image of its SIRE.

* *Book II, line 691.*

THE END OF BOOK THE SECOND.

THE
PLEASURES
OF
IMAGINATION.
BOOK THE THIRD.

ARGUMENT.

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

WHAT wonder therefore, since the endearing ties
Of passion link the universal kind
Of man so close, what wonder if to search
This common nature through the various change
Of sex, and age, and fortune, and the frame 5
Of each peculiar, draw the busy mind
With unresisted charms? The spacious west,
And all the teeming regions of the south
Hold not a quarry, to the curious flight

Of knowledge, half so tempting or so fair, 10
 As man to man. Nor only where the smiles
 Of love invite; nor only where the applause
 Of cordial honour turns the attentive eye
 On virtue's graceful deeds. For since the course
 Of things external acts in different ways 15
 On human apprehensions, as the hand
 Of Nature temper'd to a different frame
 Peculiar minds; so haply where * the powers

* V. 18.

— where the powers

Of fancy, &c.] The influence of the imagination on the conduct of life, is one of the most important points in moral philosophy. It were easy by an induction of facts to prove that the imagination directs almost all the passions, and mixes with almost every circumstance of action or pleasure. Let any man, even of the coldest head and soberest industry, analyse the idea of what he calls his interest; he will find that it consists chiefly of certain degrees of decency, beauty, and order, variously combined into one system, the idol which he seeks to enjoy by labour, hazard, and self-denial. It is on this account of the last consequence to regulate these images by the standard of nature and the general good; otherwise the imagination, by heightening some objects beyond their real excellence and beauty, or by representing others in a more odious or terrible shape than they deserve, may of course engage us in pursuits utterly inconsistent with the moral order of things.

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

Of fancy neither lessen nor enlarge
 The images of things, but paint in all 20
 Their genuine hues, the features which they wore
 In Nature ; there opinion will be true,
 And action right ; for * action treads the path
 In which Opinion says he follows good,
 Or flies from evil ; and Opinion gives 25
 Report of good or evil, as the scene
 Was drawn by Fancy, lovely or deform'd :
 Thus her report can never there be true
 Where Fancy cheats the intellectual eye,
 With glaring colours and distorted lines. 30
 Is there a man, who at the sound of death,
 Sees ghastly shapes of terror conjured up,
 And black before him ; nought but death-bed groans,
 And fearful prayers, and plunging from the brink
 Of light and being, down the gloomy air, 35
 An unknown depth ? Alas ! in such a mind,
 If no bright forms of excellence attend
 The image of his country ; nor the pomp
 Of sacred senates, nor the guardian voice

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

* *Book II, line 418.*

Of Justice on her throne, nor aught that wakes 40
 The conscious bosom with a patriot's flame;
 Will not Opinion tell him, that to die,
 Or stand the * hazard, is a greater ill
 Than to betray his country? And in act
 Will he not chuse to be a wretch and live? 45
 Here vice begins then. From the enchanting cup
 Which Fancy holds to all, the unwary thirst
 Of youth oft swallows a Circæan draught,
 That sheds a baleful tincture o'er the eye
 Of Reason, till no longer he discerns, 50
 And only guides to err. Then † revel forth
 A furious band that spurn him from the throne;
 And all is uproar. Thus Ambition grasps
 The empire of the soul: thus pale Revenge
 Unsheaths her murderous dagger; and the hands 55
 Of Lust and Rapine, with unholy arts,
 Watch to o'erturn the barrier of the laws
 That keeps them from their prey: thus all the plagues
 The wicked bear, or o'er the trembling scene
 The tragic muse discloses, under shapes 60
 Of honour, safety, pleasure, ease or pomp,
 Stole first into the mind. Yet not by all
 Those lying forms which Fancy in the brain
 Engenders, are the kindling passions driven,
 To guilty deeds; nor Reason bound in chains, 65
 That Vice alone may lord it; ‡ oft adorn'd
 With solemn pageants, Folly mounts his throne,
 And plays her idiot-antics, like a queen.
 A thousand garbs she wears; a thousand ways
 She wheels her giddy empire.—Lo! thus far 70

* Book II, line 437. † Book II, line 470. ‡ Book II, line 487.

With bold adventure, to the Mantuan lyre
 I sing of Nature's charms, and touch well-pleased
 A stricter note : now haply must my song
 Unbend her serious measure, and reveal
 In lighter strains, how * Folly's awkward arts 75
 Excite impetuous laughter's gay rebuke ;
 The sportive province of the comic Muse.

See ! in what crouds the uncouth forms advance ;
 Each would outstrip the other, each prevent
 Our careful search, and offer to your gaze, 80
 Unasked, his motley features. Wait awhile,
 My curious friends ! and let us first arrange
 In proper orders your promiscuous throng.

Behold † the foremost band ; of slender thought,
 And easy faith ; whom flattering Fancy soothes 85
 With lying spectres, in themselves to view
 Illustrious forms of EXCELLENCE and GOOD,
 That scorn the mansion. With exulting hearts
 They spread their spurious treasures to the sun,
 And bid the world admire ! but chief the glance 90
 Of wishful envy draws their joy-bright eyes,
 And lifts with self-applause each lordly brow.
 In number boundless as the blooms of spring,

* V. 75. —*how folly's awkward arts, &c.*] Notwithstanding the general influence of *ridicule* on private and civil life, as well as on learning and the sciences, it has been almost constantly neglected or misrepresented, by divines especially. The manner of treating these subjects in the science of human nature, should be precisely the same as in natural philosophy ; from particular facts to investigate the stated order in which they appear, and then apply the general law, thus discovered, to the explication of other appearances and the improvement of useful arts.

† V. 84. *Behold the foremost band, &c.*] The first and most general source of *ridicule* in the characters of men, is *vanity*, or self-applause for some desirable quality or possession which evidently does not belong to those who assume it.

Behold their glaring idols, empty shades
 By Fancy gilded o'er, and then set up 95
 For adoration. Some in learning's garb,
 With formal band, and sable-cinctur'd gown,
 And rags of mouldy volumes. Some elate
 With martial splendor, steely pikes, and swords
 Of costly frame, and gay Phœnician robes 100
 Inwrought with flowery gold, assume the port
 Of stately valour : listening by his side
 There stands a female form ; to her, with looks
 Of earnest import, pregnant with amaze,
 He talks of deadly deeds, of breaches, storms, 105
 And sulphurous mines, and ambush : then at once
 Breaks off, and smiles to see her look so pale,
 And asks some wondering question of her fears.
 Others of graver mien ; behold, adorn'd
 With holy ensigns, how sublime they move, 110
 And bending oft their sanctimonious eyes
 Take homage of the simple-minded throng ;
 Ambassadors of heaven ! Nor much unlike
 Is he whose visage, in the lazy mist
 That mantles every feature, hides a brood 115
 Of politic conceits ; of whispers, nods,
 And hints deep omen'd with unwieldly schemes,
 And dark portents of state. Ten thousand more,
 Prodigious habits and tumultuous tongues,
 Pour dauntless in and swell the boastful band. 120
 Then * comes the second order ; all who seek

* V. 121. *Then comes the second order, &c.*] Ridicule from the same vanity, where, though the possession be real, yet no merit can arise from it, because of some particular circumstances, which, though obvious to the spectator, are yet overlooked by the ridiculous character.

The debt of praise, where watchful unbelief
 Darts through the thin pretence her squinting eye
 On some retired appearance which belies
 The boasted virtue, or annuls the applause 125
 That justice else would pay. Here side by side
 I see two leaders of the solemn train,
 Approaching ; one a female, old and grey,
 With eyes demure and wrinkle-furrow'd brow,
 Pale as the cheeks of death ; yet still she stuns 130
 The sickening audience with a nauseous tale ;
 How many youths her myrtle-chains have worn,
 How many virgins at her triumphs pined !
 Yet how resolved she guards her cautious heart ;
 Such is her terror at the risks of love, 135
 And man's seducing tongue ! The other seems
 A bearded sage, ungentle in his mien,
 And sordid all his habit ; peevish want
 Grins at his heels, while down the gazing throng
 He stalks, resounding in magnific phrase 140
 The vanity of riches, the contempt
 Of pomp and power. Be prudent in your zeal,
 Ye grave associates ! let the silent grace
 Of her who blushes at the fond regard
 Her charms inspire, more eloquent unfold 145
 The praise of spotless honour : let the man
 Whose eye regards not his illustrious pomp
 And ample store, but as indulgent streams
 To cheer the barren soil, and spread the fruits
 Of joy ; let him by juster measures fix 150
 The price of riches and the end of power.

Another * tribe succeeds; deluded long
 By Fancy's dazzling optics, these behold
 The images of some peculiar things
 With brighter hues resplendent, and portray'd 155
 With features nobler far than e'er adorn'd
 Their genuine objects. Hence the fever'd heart
 Pants with delirious hope for tinsel charms;
 Hence oft obtrusive on the eye of scorn,
 Untimely zeal her witless pride betrays; 160
 And serious manhood from the towering aim
 Of wisdom, stoops to emulate the boast
 Of childish toil. Behold yon mystic form,
 Bedeck'd with feathers, insects, weeds and shells!
 Not with intenser view the Samian sage 165
 Bent his fixt eye on heaven's eternal fires,
 When first the order of that radiant scene
 Swell'd his exulting thought; than this surveys
 A muckworm's entrails or a spider's fang.
 Next him a youth, with flowers and myrtles crown'd, 170
 Attends that virgin form, and blushing kneels,
 With fondest gesture and a suppliant's tongue,
 To win her coy regard: adieu, for him,
 The dull engagements of the bustling world!
 Adieu the sick impertinence of praise! 175
 And hope, and action! for with her alone,
 By streams and shades, to steal the sighing hours,
 Is all he asks, and all that fate can give!
 Thee too, facetious Momion, wandering here,
 Thee dreaded censor! oft have I beheld 180

* V. 152. *Another tribe succeeds, &c.*] Ridicule from a notion of excellence in particular objects disproportioned to their intrinsic value, and inconsistent with the order of nature.

Bewilder'd unawares : alas ! too long
 Flush'd with thy comic triumphs and the spoils
 Of sly derision ! till on every side
 Hurling thy random bolts, offended truth
 Assign'd thee here thy station with the slaves 185
 Of FOLLY. Thy once formidable name
 Shall grace HER humble records, and be heard
 In scoffs and mockery bandied from the lips
 Of all the vengeful brotherhood around,
 So oft the patient victims of thy scorn. 190

But * now, ye gay ! to whom indulgent Fate,
 Of all the muse's empire hath assign'd
 The fields of Folly, hither each advance
 Your sickles ; here the teeming soul affords
 Its richest growth. A favourite brood appears ; 195
 In whom the dæmon, with a mother's joy,
 Views all her charms reflected, all her cares
 At full repay'd. Ye most illustrious band !
 Who, scorning Reason's tame, pedantic rules,
 And Order's vulgar bondage, never meant 200
 For souls sublime as yours, with generous zeal
 Pay Vice the reverence Virtue long usurp'd,
 And yield Deformity the fond applause
 Which Beauty wont to claim ; forgive my song,
 That for the blushing diffidence of youth, 205
 It shuns the unequal province of your praise.

Thus † far triumphant in the pleasing guile
 Of bland imagination, Folly's train

* V. 191. *But now, yet gay, &c.*] Ridicule from a notion of excellence, when the object is absolutely odious or contemptible. This is the highest degree of the ridiculous ; as in the affectation of diseases or vices.

† V. 207. *Thus far triumphant, &c.*] Ridicule from false shame or groundless fear.

Have dared our search : but now a dastard-kind
 Advance reluctant, and with faltering feet 210
 Shrink from the gazer's eye : enfeebled hearts
 Whom Fancy chills with visionary fears,
 Or bends to servile tameness with conceits
 Of shame, of evil, or of base defect
 Fantastic and delusive. Here the slave 115
 Who droops abash'd when sullen pomp surveys
 His humbler habit ; here the trembling wretch
 Unnerved and struck with terror's icy bolts ;
 Spent in weak wailings, drown'd in shameful tears,
 At every dream of danger : here subdued 220
 By frontless laughter and the hardy scorn
 Of old, unfeeling vice, the abject soul,
 Who blushing half resigns the candid praise
 Of temperance and honour ; half disowns
 A freeman's hatred of tyrannic pride ; 225
 And hears with sickly smiles the venal mouth
 With foulest licence mock the patriot's name.

Last * of the motley bands, on whom the power
 Of gay derision bends her hostile aim,
 Is that, where shameful Ignorance presides. 230
 Beneath her sordid banners, lo ! they march,
 Like blind and lame. Whate'er their doubtful hands
 Attempt, confusion straight appears behind,
 And troubles all the work. Through many a maze,
 Perplex'd they struggle, changing every path, 235
 O'erturning every purpose ; then at last
 Sit down dismay'd, and leave the entangled scene
 For scorn to sport with. Such then is the abode

* V. 228. *Last of the, &c.*] Ridicule from the ignorance of such things as our circumstaunces require us to know.

Of Folly in the mind; and such the shapes
In which she governs her obsequious train. 240

Through* every scene of Ridicule in things
To lead the tenor of my devious lay;
Through every swift occasion, which the hand
Of Laughter points at, when the mirthful sting
Distends her sallying nerves and choaks her tongue; 245
What were it but to count each crystal drop
Which Morning's dewy fingers on the blooms
Of May distil? † Suffice it to have said,

* *Book II, line 503.*

† V. 248. — *Suffice it to have said, &c.*] By comparing these general sources of ridicule with each other, and examining the ridiculous in other objects, we may obtain a general definition of it, equally applicable to every species. The most important circumstance of this definition is laid down in the lines referred to; but others more minute we shall subjoin here. *Aristotle's* account of the matter seems both imperfect and false; τὸ γὰρ γελοῖον, says he, ἐστὶν ἀμάχητόν τι καὶ αἰσχρὸν, ἀνώδυνον καὶ ἐφθαλμικόν: the ridiculous is some certain fault or turpitude without pain, and not destructive to its subject. (*Poët. c. 5.*) For allowing it to be true, as it is not, that the ridiculous is never accompanied with pain, yet we might produce many instances of such a fault or turpitude which cannot with any tolerable propriety be called ridiculous. So that the definition does not distinguish the thing designed. Nay farther; even when we perceive the turpitude tending to the destruction of its subject, we may still be sensible of a ridiculous appearance, till the ruin become imminent, and the keener sensations of pity or terror banish the ludicrous apprehension from our minds. For the sensation of ridicule is not a bare perception of the agreement or disagreement of ideas; but a passion or emotion of the mind consequential to that perception. So that the mind may perceive the agreement or disagreement, and yet not feel the ridiculous, because it is engrossed by a more violent emotion. Thus it happens that some men think those objects ridiculous, to which others cannot endure to apply the name; because in them they excite a much intenser and more important feeling. And this difference, among other causes, has brought a good deal of confusion into this question.

That which makes objects ridiculous, is some ground of admiration or esteem connected with other more general circumstances comparatively worthless or deformed; or it is some circumstance of turpitude or deformity connected with what is general excellent or beautiful; the

Where'er the power of RIDICULE displays
 Her quaint-eyed visage, some incongruous form, 250
 Some stubborn dissonance of things combined,
 Strikes on the quick observer : whether pomp,
 Or praise, or beauty, mix their partial claim
 Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
 Where foul deformity are wont to dwell ; 255

inconsistent properties existing either in the objects themselves, or in the apprehension of the person to whom they relate ; belonging always to the same order or class of being ; implying sentiment or design ; and exciting no acute or vehement emotion of the heart.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Or whether these with violation loath'd,
 Invade resplendent pomp's imperious mien,
 The charms of beauty or the boast of praise.

Ask * we for what fair end, the ALMIGHTY SIRE

* *Book II, line 523.*

* 259. *Ask we for what fair end, &c.*] Since it is beyond all contradiction evident that we have a *natural* sense or feeling of the ridiculous, and since so good a reason may be assigned to justify the Supreme Being for bestowing it; one cannot without astonishment reflect on the conduct of those men who imagine it is for the service of true religion to vilify and blacken it without distinction, and endeavour to persuade us that it is never applied but in a bad cause. Ridicule is not concerned with mere speculative truth or falsehood. It is not in abstract propositions or theorems, but in actions and passions, good and evil, beauty and deformity, that we find materials for it; and all these terms are *relative*, implying approbation or blame. To ask then whether *ridicule be a test of truth*, is, in other words, to ask whether that which is ridiculous can be *morally true*, can be just and becoming; or whether that which is just and becoming can be ridiculous. A question that does not deserve a serious answer. For it is most evident, that, as in a metaphysical proposition offered to the understanding for its assent, the faculty of reason examines the terms of the proposition, and finding one idea, which was supposed equal to another, to be in fact unequal, of consequence rejects the proposition as a falsehood; so, in objects offered to the mind for its esteem or applause, the faculty of ridicule, finding an incongruity in the claim, urges the mind to reject it with laughter and contempt. When therefore we observe such a claim obtruded upon mankind, and the inconsistent circumstances carefully concealed from the eye of the public, it is our business, if the matter be of importance to society, to drag out those latent circumstances, and, by setting them in full view, to convince the world how ridiculous the claim is: and thus a double advantage is gained; for we both detect the *moral falsehood* sooner than in the way of speculative inquiry, and impress the minds of men with a stronger sense of the vanity and error of its authors. And this and no more is meant by the application of ridicule.

But it is said, the practice is dangerous, and may be inconsistent with the regard we owe to objects of real dignity and excellence. I answer, the practice fairly managed can never be dangerous; men may be dishonest in obtruding circumstances foreign to the object, and we may be inadvertent in allowing those circumstances to impose upon us: but the sense of ridicule always judges right. The *Socrates* of *Aristophanes* is as truly ridiculous a character as ever was drawn:—True; but it is not the character of *Socrates*, the divine moralist and father of ancient wisdom. What then? did the ridicule of the poet hinder the philosopher from detecting and disclaiming those foreign circumstances which he had falsely introduced int

In mortal bosoms wakes this gay contempt, 260
 These grateful stings of laughter, from disgust
 Educing pleasure? * Wherefore, but to aid
 The tardy steps of reason, and at once
 By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
 The giddy aims of Folly? Though the light 265
 Of truth slow-dawning on the inquiring mind,
 At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,
 How these uncouth disorders end at last
 In public evil! yet benignant Heaven,
 Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears 270
 To thousands; conscious what a scanty pause
 From labours and from care, the wider lot
 Of humble life affords for studious thought
 To scan the maze of Nature; therefore stamp'd
 The glaring scenes with characters of scorn, 275
 As broad, as obvious, to the passing clown,
 As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

Such are the various aspects of the mind—
 Some heavenly genius, whose unclouded thoughts
 Attain that secret harmony which blends 280
 The æthereal spirit with its mould of clay;
 O! teach me to reveal the grateful charm
 That searchless Nature o'er the sense of man

his character, and thus rendering the satirist doubly ridiculous in his turn? No; but it nevertheless had an ill influence on the minds of the people. And so has the reasoning of *Spinoza* made many atheists: he founded it indeed on suppositions utterly false; but allow him these, and his conclusions are unavoidably true. And if we must reject the use of ridicule, because, by the imposition of false circumstances, things may be made to seem ridiculous, which are not so in themselves; why we ought not in the same manner to reject the use of reason, because, by proceeding on false principles, conclusions will appear true which are impossible in nature, let the vehement and obstinate declaimers against ridicule determine.

* *Book II, line 526.*

Diffuses, to behold, in lifeless things,
 The * inexpressive semblance of himself, 285
 Of thought and passion. Mark the sable woods
 That shade sublime yon mountain's nodding brow ;
 With what religious awe the solemn scene
 Commands your steps ! as if the reverend form
 Of MINOS or of NUMA should forsake 290
 The Elysian seats, and down the embowering glade,
 Move to your pausing eye ! behold the expanse
 Of yon gay landscape, where the silver clouds
 Flit o'er the heavens before the sprightly breeze ;
 Now their grey cincture skirts the doubtful sun ; 295
 Now streams of splendor, through their opening veil
 Effulgent, sweep from off the gilded lawn
 The aërial shadows ; on the the curling brook,
 And on the shady margin's quivering leaves
 With quickest lustre glancing : while you view 300
 The prospect, say, within your cheerful breast
 Plays not the lively sense of winning mirth
 With clouds and sun-shine chequer'd, while the round
 Of social converse, to the inspiring tongue
 Of some gay nymph amid her subject train, 305
 Moves all obsequious ? Whence is this effect,
 This kindred power of such discordant things ?
 Or flows their semblance from that mystic tone
 To which the new-born mind's harmonious powers
 At first were strung ? Or rather from the links 310
 Which artful custom twines around her frame ?
 For when the different images of things,
 By chance combined, have struck the attentive soul

* V. 285. *The inexpressive semblance, &c.*] This similitude is the foundation of almost all the ornaments of poetic diction.

With deeper impulse, or connected long,
 Have drawn her frequent eye ; howe'er distinct 315
 The external scenes, yet oft the ideas gain
 From that conjunction an eternal tie,
 And sympathy unbroken. Let the mind
 Recal one partner of the various league,
 Immediate, lo ! the firm confederates rise, 320
 And each his former station straight resumes :
 One movement governs the consenting throng,
 And all at once with rosy pleasure shine,
 Or all are sadden'd with the glooms of care.
 'Twas thus, if ancient fame the truth unfold, 325
 Two * faithful needles, from the informing touch
 Of the same parent-stone, together drew
 Its mystic virtue, and at first conspired
 With fatal impulse quivering to the pole : 329
 Then, tho' disjointed by kingdoms, tho' the main
 Roll'd its broad surge betwixt, and different stars
 Beheld their wakeful motions, yet preserved
 The former friendship, and remember'd still
 The alliance of their birth : whate'er the line
 Which one possess'd, nor pause, nor quiet knew 335
 The sure associate, ere with trembling speed
 He found its path and fix'd unerring there.
 Such is the secret union, when we feel
 A song, a flower, a name, at once restore 339
 Those long-connected scenes where first they moved
 The attention : backward through her mazy walks
 Guiding the wanton fancy to her scope,

* V. 326. *Two faithful needles, &c.*] See the elegant poem recited by Cardinal Bembo in the character of *Lucretius* ; *Strada Prolus.* vi. *Academ.* 2. c. v.

To temples, courts or fields ; with all the band
Of painted forms, of passions and designs
Attendant : whence, if pleasing in itself, 345
The prospect from that sweet accession gains
Redoubled influence o'er the listening mind.

By * these mysterious ties the busy power
Of memory her ideal train preserves
Entire ; or, when they would elude her watch, 350
Reclaims their fleeting footsteps from the waste
Of dark oblivion ; thus collecting all
The various forms of being, to present,
Before the curious aim of mimic art,
Their largest choice : like spring's unfolded blooms
Exhaling sweetness, that the skilful bee 356
May taste at will, from their selected spoils
To work her dulcet food. For not the expanse
Of living lakes in summer's noontide calm,
Reflects the bordering shade, and sun-bright heavens
With fairer semblance ; not the sculptured gold 361
More faithful keeps the graver's lively trace,
Than he whose birth the sister powers of art
Propitious view'd, and from his genial star
Shed influence to the seeds of fancy kind ; 365
Than his attempered bosom must preserve
The seal of Nature. There alone unchanged
Her form remains. The balmy walks of May
There breathe perennial sweets : the trembling chord
Resounds forever in the abstracted ear, 370
Melodious : and the virgin's radiant eye,
Superior to disease, to grief, and time,

* V. 348. *By these mysterious ties &c.*] The act of remembering seems almost wholly to depend on the association of ideas.

Shines with unbating lustre. Thus at length
Endow'd with all that Nature can bestow,
The child of Fancy oft in silence bends 375
O'er these mixt treasures of his pregnant breast
With conscious pride. From them he oft resolves
To frame he knows not what excelling things;
And win he knows not what sublime reward
Of praise and wonder. By degrees, the mind 380
Feels her young nerves dilate : the plastic powers
Labour for action : blind emotions heave
His bosom ; and with loveliest frenzy caught,
From earth to heaven he rolls his daring eye,
From heaven to earth. Anon ten thousand shapes, 385
Like spectres trooping to the wizard's call,
Flit swift before him. From the womb of earth,
From ocean's bed they come : the eternal heavens
Disclose their splendors, and the dark abyss
Pours out her births unknown. With fixed gaze 390
He marks the rising phantoms ; now compares
Their different forms ; now blends them, now divides,
Enlarges and extenuates by turns ;
Opposes, ranges in fantastic bands,
And infinitely varies. Hither now, 395
Now thither fluctuates his inconstant aim,
With endless choice perplex'd. At length his plan
Begins to open : LUCID ORDER DAWNS ;
And as from Chaos old the jarring seeds
Of Nature at the voice divine repair'd 400
Each to its place, till rosy earth unveil'd
Her fragrant bosom, and the joyful sun
Sprung up the blue serene ; by swift degrees
Thus disentangled, his entire design

Emerges. Colours mingle, features join, 405
 And lines converge : the fainter parts retire ;
 The fairer, eminent in light advance ;
 And every image on its neighbour smiles.
 A while he stands, and with a father's joy
 Contemplates ;—then with Promethéan art, 410
 Into its proper vehicle he breathes
 The fair conception ; which, embodied thus,
 And permanent, becomes to eyes or ears
 An object ascertain'd : while thus inform'd,
 The various organs of his mimic skill, 415
 The consonance of sounds, the featured rock,
 The shadowy picture and impassion'd verse,
 Beyond their proper powers attract the soul
 By that expressive semblance, while in sight
 Of Nature's great original we scan 420
 The lively child of Art ; while line by line,
 And feature after feature we refer
 To that sublime exemplar whence it stole
 Those animating charms. Thus Beauty's palm
 Betwixt them wavering hangs : applauding Love 425
 Doubts where to chuse ; and mortal man aspires
 To tempt creative praise. As when a cloud
 Of gathering hail with limpid crusts of ice
 Inclosed and obvious to the beaming sun,
 Collects his large effulgence ; straight the heavens 430
 With equal flames present on either hand
 The radiant visage : Persia stands at gaze,
 Appall'd ; and on the brink of Ganges doubts

* V. 411. *Into its proper vehicle, &c.*] This relates to the different sorts of corporeal mediums, by which the ideas of the artists are rendered palpable to the senses ; as by sounds, in music ; by lines and shadows, in painting ; by diction, in poetry, &c.

The snowy-vested seer, in MITHRA'S name,
 To which the fragrance of the south shall burn, 435
 To which his warbled orisons ascend.

Such various bliss the well-tuned heart enjoys,
 Favour'd of Heaven! while plunged in sordid cares,
 The unfeeling vulgar mock the boon divine :
 And harsh Austerity, from whose rebuke 440
 Young Love and smiling Wonder shrink away
 Abash'd and chill of heart, with sager frowns
 Condemns the fair enchantment. On my strain,
 Perhaps even now, some cold, fastidious judge
 Casts a disdainful eye ; and calls my toil, 445
 And calls the Love and Beauty which I sing,
 The dream of Folly. Thou, grave censor ! say,
 Is Beauty then a dream, because the glooms
 Of dulness hang too heavy on thy sense,
 To let her shine upon thee ? So the man 450
 Whose eye ne'er open'd on the light of heaven,
 Might smile with scorn while raptur'd vision tells
 Of the gay-colour'd radiance flushing bright
 O'er all creation. From the wise be far
 Such gross unhallow'd pride ; nor needs my song 455
 Descend so low ; but rather now unfold,
 If human thought can reach, or words unfold,
 By what mysterious fabric of the mind,
 The deep-felt joys and harmony of sound,
 Result from airy motion ; and from shape 460
 The lovely phantoms of sublime and fair.
 By what fine ties hath God connected things
 When present in the mind, which in themselves
 Have no connection ? Sure the rising sun
 O'er the cærulean convex of the sea, 465

With equal brightness and with equal warmth
 Might roll his fiery orb ; nor yet the soul
 Thus feel her frame expanded, and her powers
 Exulting in the splendor she beholds ; 469
 Like a young conqueror moving through the pomp
 Of some triumphal day. When join'd at eve,
 Soft murmuring streams and gales of gentlest breath
 Melodious Philomela's wakeful strain
 Attemper ;—could not man's discerning ear
 Through all its tones the sympathy pursue, 475
 Nor yet this breath divine of nameless joy
 Steal through his veins and fan the awaken'd heart,
 Mild as the breeze, yet rapturous as the song ?

But were not Nature still endow'd at large
 With all that LIFE requires, though unadorn'd 480
 With such enchantment ? Wherefore then her form
 So exquisitely fair ? her breath perfumed
 With such æthereal sweetness ? whence her voice
 Inform'd at will to raise or to depress
 The impassion'd soul ? and whence the robes of light
 Which thus invest her with more lovely pomp 486
 Than fancy can describe ? Whence but from thee,
 O SOURCE DIVINE of ever-flowing love !
 And thy unmeasured goodness ? Not content
 With every food of life to nourish man ; 490
 By kind illusions of the wondering sense
 Thou makest all Nature beauty to his eye,
 Or music to his ear : well-pleased he scans
 The goodly prospect, and with inward smiles,
 Treads the gay verdure of the painted plain ; 495
 Beholds the azure canopy of heaven,
 And living lamps, that over-arch his head

With more than regal splendor ; bends his ears
To the full choir of water, air, and earth ;
Nor heeds the pleasing error of his thought, 500
Nor doubts the painted green or azure arch,
Nor questions more the music's mingling sounds
Than space, or motion, or eternal time ;
So sweet he feels their influence to attract
The fixed soul ; to brighten the dull glooms 505
Of care, and make the destin'd road of life
Delightful to his feet. So fables tell,
The adventurous hero, bound on hard exploits,
Beholds with glad surprise, by secret spells
Of some kind sage, the patron of his toils, 510
A visionary paradise disclosed
Amid the dubious wild : with streams and shades,
And airy songs, the enchanted landscape smiles,
Cheers his long labours and renews his frame.

What then is TASTE, but these internal powers 515
Active, and strong, and feelingly alive
To each fine impulse ? a discerning sense
Of decent and sublime, with quick disgust
From things deformed, or disarrang'd, or gross
In species ? This, nor gems, nor stores of gold, 520
Nor purple state, nor culture can bestow ;
But GOD alone, when first his active hand
Imprints the secret bias of the soul.
He, mighty parent ! wise and just in all,
Free as the vital breeze or light of heaven, 525
Reveals the charms of Nature. Ask the swain
Who journeys homeward from a summer-day's
Long labour, why, forgetful of his toils
And due repose, he loiters to behold

The sunshine gleaming as through amber clouds, 530
 O'er all the western sky ; full soon, I ween,
 His rude expression and untutor'd airs,
 Beyond the power of language, will unfold
 The form of Beauty smiling at his heart,
 How lovely ! how commanding ! But though heaven
 In every breast hath sown these early seeds 536
 Of love and admiration, yet in vain,
 Without fair culture's kind parental aid,
 Without enlivening suns, and genial showers,
 And shelter from the blast, in vain we hope 540
 The tender plant should rear its blooming head,
 Or yield the harvest promised in its spring.
 Nor yet will every soil with equal stores
 Repay the tiller's labour ; or attend
 His will, obsequious, whether to produce 545
 The olive or the laurel. Different minds
 Incline to different objects : * *one* pursues
 The vast alone, the wonderful, the wild ;
Another sighs for harmony, and grace, 549
 And gentlest beauty. Hence when lightning fires
 The arch of heaven, and thunders rock the ground,
 When furious whirlwinds rend the howling air,
 And ocean, groaning from his lowest bed,
 Heaves his tempestuous billows to the sky ;
 Amid the mighty uproar, while below 555
 The nations tremble, SHAKESPEARE looks abroad
 From some high cliff, superior, and enjoys

V. 547. ———— *One pursues*

The vast alone, &c.] See the note to verse 18 of this book.

The elemental war ; but * WALLER longs,
 All on the margin of some flowery stream,
 To spread his careless limbs, amid the cool 560
 Of plantane shades, and to the listening deer
 The tale of slighted vows, and love's disdain
 Resound soft-warbling all the live-long day :
 Consenting Zephyr sighs, the weeping rill
 Joins in his plaint, melodious ; mute the groves ; 565
 And hill and dale with all their echoes mourn.
 Such and so various are the tastes of men !

OH BLEST OF HEAVEN ! whom not the languid songs
 Of Luxury, the Siren ; not the bribes
 Of sordid Wealth, nor all the gaudy spoils 570
 Of pageant Honour, can seduce to leave
 Those ever-blooming sweets, which from the store
 Of Nature fair Imagination culls
 To charm the enliven'd soul ! What though not all
 Of mortal offspring can attain the heights 575
 Of envied life ; though only few possess
 Patrician treasures or imperial state ;
 Yet Nature's care, to all her children just,
 With *richer* treasures and an *ampler* state,
 Endows at large whatever happy man 580
 Will deign to use them. His the city's pomp,
 The rural honours HIS : whate'er adorns

* V. 558. *Waller longs, &c.]*

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

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

And again,

*While in the park I sing, the listening deer
 Attend my passion, and forget to fear, &c.*

At Pens-hurst.

The princely dome, the column and the arch,
 The breathing marbles and the sculptured gold,
 Beyond the proud possessor's narrow claim 585
 His tuneful breast enjoys. For him the Spring
 Distils her dews, and from the silken gem
 Its lucid leaves unfolds : for him, the hand
 Of Autumn tinges every fertile branch
 With blooming gold and blushes like the Morn : 590
 Each passing Hour sheds tribute from her wings ;
 And still new beauties meet his lonely walk,
 And loves unfelt attract him. Not a breeze *
 Flies o'er the meadow, not a cloud imbibes
 The setting sun's effulgence, not a strain 595
 From all the tenants of the warbling shade
 Ascends, but whence his bosom can partake
 Fresh pleasure unreprieved : nor thence partakes
 Fresh pleasure only ; for the attentive mind
 By this harmonious action on her powers 600
 Becomes herself harmonious : wont so oft
 In outward things to meditate the charm
 Of sacred Order, soon she seeks at home

V. 593.———*Not a breeze, &c*] That this account may not appear rather poetically extravagant than just in philosophy, it may be proper to produce the sentiment of one of the greatest, wisest, and best of men on this head ; one so little to be suspected of partiality in the case, that he reckons it among those favours for which he was especially thankful to the gods, that they had not suffered him to make any great proficiency in the arts of eloquence and poetry, lest by that means he should have been diverted from pursuits of more importance to his high station. Speaking of the beauty of universal Nature, he observes, that *there is a pleasing and graceful aspect in every object we perceive*, when once we consider its connection with that general order. He instances in many things which at first sight would be thought rather deformities, and then adds, *that a man who enjoys a sensibility of temper, with a just comprehension of the universal order—will discern many amiable things, not credible to every mind, but to those alone who have entered into an honourable familiarity with Nature and her works.* M. Antonin. iii. 2.

To find a kindred Order, to exert
 Within herself this elegance of love, 605
 This fair-inspired delight : her temper'd powers
 Refine at length, and every passion wears
 A chaster, milder, more attractive, mien.
 But if to ampler prospects, if to gaze
 On Nature's form, where, negligent of all 610
 These lesser graces, she assumes the port
 Of that ETERNAL MAJESTY that weigh'd
 The world's foundations ; if to these the mind
 Exalts her daring eye ;—then mightier far
 Will be the change, and nobler. Would the forms 615
 Of servile custom cramp her generous powers ?
 Would sordid policies, the barbarous growth
 Of Ignorance and Rapine, bow her down
 To tame pursuits, to indolence and fear ?
 Lo ! she appeals to Nature, to the winds 620
 And rolling waves, the sun's unwearied course,
 The elements and seasons : all declare
 For what the ETERNAL MAKER has ordain'd
 The powers of man : we feel within ourselves
 His energy divine : he tells the heart 625
 He meant, he made us to behold and love,
 What HE beholds and loves, the general orb
 Of life and being ; to be great like him,
 Beneficent and active. Thus the men 629
 Whom Nature's works can charm with God himself
 Hold converse ; grow familiar day by day
 With HIS conceptions, act upon HIS plan,
 And form to HIS, the relish of their souls. 633

THE
PLEASURES
OF THE
IMAGINATION:
A POEM.
ENLARGED.

*" The child of FANCY oft in silence bends
" O'er these mix'd treasures of his pregnant breast
" With conscious pride."*

THE GENERAL ARGUMENT.

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

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

With the above-mentioned causes of pleasure, which are universal in the course of human life and appertain to our higher faculties, many others do generally concur,

THE GENERAL ARGUMENT.

more limited in their operation, or of an inferior origin: such are the novelty of objects, the association of ideas, affections of the bodily senses, influences of education, national habits, and the like. To illustrate these, and from the whole to determine the character of a perfect taste, is the argument of the Fourth Book.

Hitherto the pleasures of the imagination belong to the human species in general. But there are certain particular men whose imagination is endowed with powers, and susceptible of pleasures, which the generality of mankind never participate: these are the men of genius, destined by nature to excel in one or other of the arts already mentioned. It is proposed therefore, in the last place, to delineate that genius which in some degree appears common to them all; yet with a more peculiar consideration of poetry: inasmuch as poetry is the most extensive of those arts, the most philosophical, and the most useful.

N. B. The figures at the bottom of the page in both the poems, refer to the similar passages in each, for the convenience of those who may wish to compare them.

ARGUMENT

OF

THE FIRST BOOK.

THE subject proposed. Dedication. The ideas of the supreme being, the exemplars of all things. The variety of constitution in the minds of men; with its final cause. The general character of a fine imagination. All the immediate pleasures of the human imagination proceed either from greatness or beauty in external objects. The pleasure from greatness; with its final cause. The natural connection of beauty with * truth and good. The different orders of beauty in different objects. The infinite and all-comprehending form of beauty, which belongs to the divine mind. The partial and artificial forms of beauty, which belong to inferior intellectual beings. The origin and general conduct of beauty in man. The subordination of local beauties to the beauty of the universe. Conclusion.

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

THE
PLEASURES
OF THE
IMAGINATION:
BOOK THE FIRST.

MDCCLVII.

WITH what enchantment Nature's goodly scene
Attracts the sense of mortals ; how the mind
For its own eye doth objects nobler still
Prepare ; how men by various lessons learn
To judge of BEAUTY's praise ; what raptures fill 5
The breast with Fancy's native arts endow'd
And what true culture guides it to renown ;
My verse unfolds. Ye GODS, or GODLIKE POWERS,
Ye guardians of the sacred task, attend
Propitious. Hand in hand around your bard 10
Move in majestic measures, leading on
His doubtful step through many a solemn path,
Conscious of secrets which to human sight
Ye only can reveal. Be great in him :

And let your favour make him wise to speak 15
 Of all your wondrous empire ; with a voice
 So temper'd to his theme, that those, who hear,
 May yield perpetual homage to yourselves.
 Thou chief, O DAUGHTER OF ETERNAL LOVE !
 Whate'er thy name ; or MUSE, or GRACE, adored 20
 By Grecian prophets ; to the sons of heaven
 Known, while with deep amazement thou dost there
 The perfect counsels read, the ideas old,
 Of thine OMNISCIENT FATHER ; known on earth
 By the STILL HORROR and the BLISSFUL TEAR 25
 With which thou seizest on the soul of man ;
 Thou * chief, POETIC SPIRIT, from the banks
 Of Avon, whence thy holy fingers cull
 Fresh flowers and dews to sprinkle on the turf
 Where SHAKESPEAR lies, be present ; and with thee 30
 Let FICTION come, on her aërial wings
 Wafting ten thousand colours ; which in sport,
 By the light glances of her magic eye,
 She blends and shifts at will through countless forms,
 Her wild creation. Goddess † of the lyre, 35
 Whose awful tones control the moving sphere,
 Wilt ‡ thou, eternal HARMONY, descend,
 And join this happy train ? for with thee comes
 The guide, the guardian of their mystic rites,
 Wise ORDER : and, where ORDER deigns to come, 40
 Her sister, LIBERTY, will not be far.
 Be present all ye GENII, who conduct
 Of youthful bards the lonely-wandering step
 New to your springs and shades ; who touch their ear
 With finer sounds, and heighten to their eye 45

* Book I, line 9. † Book I, line 18. ‡ Book I, line 20.

The pomp of Nature, and before them place
The fairest, loftiest countenance of things.

Nor thou, my Dyson, to the lay refuse
Thy wonted partial audience. What, though first
In years unseason'd, haply ere the sports 50
Of childhood yet were o'er, the adventurous lay
With many splendid prospects, many charms,
Allured my heart, nor conscious whence they sprung,
Nor heedful of their end? yet serious truth
Her empire o'er the calm, sequester'd theme 55
Asserted soon; while falsehood's evil brood,
Vice and deceitful pleasure, she at once
Excluded, and my fancy's careless toil
Drew to the *better cause*. Maturer aid
Thy friendship added, in the paths of life, 60
The busy paths, my unaccustom'd feet
Preserving: nor to TRUTH'S RECESS DIVINE,
Through this wide argument's unbeaten space,
Withholding surer guidance; while by turns
We traced the sages old, or while the queen 65
Of Sciences (whom manners and the mind
Acknowledge) to my true companion's voice
Not unattentive, o'er the wintery lamp
Inclined her sceptre, favouring. Now the Fates
Have other tasks imposed. To thee, my friend, 70
The ministry of freedom, and the faith
Of popular decrees, in early youth,
Not vainly they committed. Me they sent
To wait on pain; and silent arts to urge,
Inglorious: not ignoble; if my cares, 75
To such as languish on a grievous bed,

Ease and the sweet forgetfulness of ill
 Conciliate : nor delightless ; if the Muse,
 Her shades to visit and to taste her springs,
 If some distinguish'd hours the bounteous Muse 80
 Impart, and grant (what she, and she alone
 Can grant to mortals) that my hand those wreaths
 Of fame and honest favour, which the bless'd
 Wear in Elysium, and which never felt
 The breath of envy or malignant tongues, 85
 That these my hand for thee and for myself
 May gather. Meanwhile, O my faithful friend,
 O early chosen, ever found the same,
 And trusted and beloved ! once more the verse
 Long destin'd, always obvious to thine ear, 90
 Attend, indulgent. So in latest years,
 When time thy head with honours shall have cloth'd
 Sacred to even virtue, may thy mind,
 Amid the calm review of seasons past,
 Fair offices of friendship, or kind peace, 95
 Or public zeal ;—may then thy mind well pleased
 Recal these happy studies of our prime.

From * heaven my strains begin. From heaven de-
 The flame of genius to the chosen breast, [scends
 And beauty with poetic wonder join'd, 100
 And inspiration. Ere the rising sun
 Shone o'er the deep, or 'mid the vault of night
 The moon her silver lamp suspended : ere
 The vales with springs were water'd, or with groves
 Of oak or pine the ancient hills were crown'd ; 105
 Then the GREAT SPIRIT, whom his works adore,
 Within his own deep essence view'd the forms,

* Book I, line 56.

The forms eternal of created things ;
The radiant sun ; the moon's nocturnal lamp ;
The mountains and the streams ; the ample stores 110
Of earth, of heaven, of nature. From the first,
On that full scene his love divine he fix'd,
His admiration. Till, in time complete,
What he admired and loved, his vital power
Unfolded into being. Hence the breath 115
Of life informing each organic frame :
Hence the green earth, and wild-resounding waves :
Hence light, and shade alternate ; warmth and cold ;
And bright autumnal skies, and vernal showers,
And all the fair variety of things. 120

But † not alike to every mortal eye,
Is this great scene unveil'd. For, while the claims
Of social life to different labours urge
The active powers of man, with wisest care
Hath Nature on the multitude of minds 125
Impress'd a various bias ; and to each
Decreed its province in the common toil.
To some she taught the fabric of the sphere,
The changeful moon, the circuit of the stars,
The golden zones of heaven. To some she gave 130
To search the story of eternal thought ;
Of space, and time ; of fate's unbroken chain,
And WILL's quick movement :—others by the hand
She led o'er vales and mountains, to explore
What healing virtue dwells in every vein 135
Of herbs or trees. But some to nobler hopes
Were destined : some within a finer mould
She wrought, and temper'd with a purer flame.

† *Book I, line 79.*

To these the SIRE OMNIPOTENT unfolds,
 In fuller aspects and with fairer lights, 140
 This PICTURE OF THE WORLD :—through every part
 They trace the lofty sketches of his hand :
 In earth, or air, the meadow's flowery store,
 The moon's mild radiance, or the virgin's mien
 Dress'd in attractive smiles, they see portray'd 145
 (As far as mortal eyes the portrait scan)
 Those lineaments of beauty which delight
 The mind supreme ;—they also feel their force,
 Enamour'd : they partake the ETERNAL JOY.

For * as old MEMNON'S IMAGE, long renown'd 150
 Through fabling Egypt, at the genial touch
 Of morning, from its inmost frame sent forth
 Spontaneous music ; so doth Nature's hand,
 To certain attributes which matter claims,
 Adapt the finer organs of the mind : 155
 So the glad impulse of those kindred powers
 (Of form, of colour's cheerful pomp, of sound
 Melodious, or of motion aptly sped)
 Detains the enliven'd sense ; till soon the soul
 Feels the deep concord, and assents through all 160
 Her functions. Then the charm by Fate prepared
 Diffuseth its enchantment : Fancy † dreams,
 Rapt into high discourse with prophets old,
 And wandering through Elysium, Fancy dreams
 Of sacred fountains, of o'ershadowing groves, 165
 Whose walks with godlike harmony resound :
 Fountains, which HOMER visits ; happy groves,
 Where MILTON dwells. The INTELLECTUAL POWER,
 On the mind's throne, suspends his graver cares,

* Book I, line 109.

† Book I, line 125.

And smiles. The passions, to divine repose, 170
 Persuaded yield : and LOVE and JOY alone
 Are waking : LOVE and JOY, such as await
 An angel's meditation. O ! attend,
 Whoe'er thou art whom these delights can touch ;
 Whom NATURE's aspect, NATURE's simple garb, 175
 Can thus command : O ! listen to my song,
 And I will guide thee to her blissful walks,
 And teach thy solitude her voice to hear,
 And point her gracious features to thy view.

Know * then, whate'er of the world's ancient store,
 Whate'er of mimic art's reflected scenes, 181
 With love and admiration thus inspire
 Attentive Fancy ;—her delighted sons
 In *two* illustrious orders comprehend,
 Self-taught. From him, whose rustic toil the lark 185
 Cheers warbling, to the bard, whose daring thoughts
 Range the full orb of being, still the form,
 Which Fancy worships, or SUBLIME or FAIR
 Her votaries proclaim. I see them dawn :
 I see the radiant visions, where they rise 190
 More lovely, than when Lucifer displays
 His glittering forehead through the gates of morn,
 To lead the train of Phœbus and the Spring.

Say, † why was MAN so eminently raised
 Amid the vast creation ; why impower'd 195
 Through life and death to dart his watchful eye,
 With thoughts beyond the limit of his frame ;
 But that the OMNIPOTENT might *send him forth*,
 In sight of angels and immortal minds,
 As on an ample theatre, to join 200

* Book I, line 139. † Book I, line 151.

In contest with his equals, who shall best
 The task atchieve, the course of noble toils,
 By WISDOM and by MERCY preordain'd ?
 Might *send him forth* the SOVRAN GOOD to learn ;
 To chace each meaner purpose from his breast ; 205
 And through the mists of passion and of sense,
 And through the pelting storms of chance and pain,
 To hold straight on with constant heart and eye
 Still fix'd upon his everlasting palm,
The approving smile of Heaven ? * Else, wherefore burns
 In mortal bosoms this unquenched hope, 211
 That seeks from day to day sublimer ends ;
 Happy, though restless ? Why departs the soul
 Wide from the track and journey of her times,
 To grasp the good she knows not ? in the field 215
 Of things which MAY BE, in the spacious field
 Of science, potent arts, or dreadful arms ;
 To raise up scenes, in which her own desires
 Contented may repose ; when things, which ARE,
 Pall on her temper, like a twice-told tale ; 220
 Her temper still demanding to be free ;
 Spurning the rude control of wilful Might ;
Proud † of her dangers braved, her griefs endured,
Her strength severely proved ? To these HIGH aims,
 Which reason and affection prompt in man, 225
 Not adverse nor unapt hath Nature framed
 His bold imagination. For, amid
 The various forms which this full world presents
 Like rivals to his choice, what human breast
 E'er doubts, before the TRANSIENT and MINUTE, 230
 To prize the VAST, the STABLE, the SUBLIME ?

* Book I, line 166

† Book I, line 173.

Who, that from heights ærial sends his eye
 Around a wild horizon, and surveys
 Indus or Ganges rolling his broad wave 234
 Thro' mountains, plains, thro' spacious cities old,
 And regions dark with woods; will turn away
 To mark the path of some penurious rill
 Which murmureth at his feet? Where does the soul
 Consent her soaring fancy to restrain,
 Which bears her up, as on an eagle's wings, 240
 Destin'd for highest heaven; or which of Fate's
 Tremendous barriers shall confine her flight
 To any humbler quarry? The rich earth
 Cannot detain her; nor the ambient air
 With all its changes:—† for a while, with joy 245
 She hovers o'er the sun, and views the small
 Attendant orbs, beneath his sacred beam,
 Emerging from the deep, like cluster'd isles,
 Whose rocky shores to the glad sailor's eye
 Reflect the gleams of morning:—for a while, 250
 With pride she sees his firm paternal sway
 Bend the reluctant planets, to move each
 Round its perpetual year: but soon she quits
 That prospect: meditating loftier views,
 She darts adventurous up the long career 255
 Of comets; through the constellations holds
 Her course, and now looks back on all the stars,
 Whose blended flames as with a milky stream
 Part the blue region:—empyréan * tracts,
 Where happy souls beyond this concave heaven 260
 Abide, she then explores; whence purer light
 For countless ages travels through the abyss,

† *Book I, line 190.** *Book I, line 202.*

Nor hath in sight of mortals yet arrived :
 Upon the wide creation's utmost shore
 At length she stands, and the dread space beyond 265
 Contemplates, half recoiling ; nathless, down
 The gloomy void, astonished, yet unquell'd,
 She plungeth ;—down the unfathomable gulf
 Where God alone hath being : *there* * her hopes
 Rest at the fated goal : for from the birth 270
 Of human kind, the SOVRAN MAKER said,
 That not in humble, nor in brief delight,
 Not in the fleeting echoes of Renown,
 Power's purple robe, nor Pleasure's flowery lap,
 The soul should find contentment ; but from these 275
 Turning disdainful to an equal good,
 Through Nature's opening walks enlarge her aim,
 Till every bound at length should disappear,
 And INFINITE PERFECTION fill the scene. 279

But † lo ! where BEAUTY, dress'd in gentler pomp,
 With comely steps advancing, claims the verse
 Her charms inspire. O BEAUTY ! source of praise,
 Of honour, e'en to mute and lifeless things ;
 O thou, that kindest in each human heart
 Love, and the wish of poets, when their tongue 285
 Would teach to other bosoms what so charms
 Their own ! O child of Nature and the soul,
 In happiest hour brought forth ; the doubtful garb
 Of words, of earthly language, all too mean,
 Too lowly I account, in which to clothe 290
 Thy form divine. For thee the mind alone
 Beholds ; nor half thy brightness can reveal
 Through those dim organs, whose corporeal touch

* *Book I, line 211.*† *Book I, line 271.*

O'ershadoweth thy pure essence. Yet, my Muse,
 If fortune call thee to the task, wait thou 295
 Thy favourable seasons; then, while fear
 And doubt are absent, through wide Nature's bounds
 Expatiate with glad step, and choose at will
 Whate'er bright spoils the florid earth contains,
 Whate'er the waters, or the liquid air, 300
 To manifest unblemish'd BEAUTY's praise,
 And o'er the breasts of mortals to extend
 Her gracious empire. * Wilt thou, to the isles
 Atlantic, to the rich Hesperian clime
 Fly in the train of Autumn; and look on, 305
 And learn from him; while, as he roves around,
 Where'er his fingers touch the fruitful grove,
 The branches bloom with gold; where'er his foot
 Imprints the soil, the ripening clusters swell,
 Turning aside their foliage, and come forth 310
 In purple lights, till every hillock glows
 As with the blushes of an evening sky?
 Or wilt thou that Thessalian landscape trace,
 Where slow Penéus his clear glassy tide
 Draws smooth along, between the winding cliffs 315
 Of Ossa, and the pathless woods unshorn
 That wave o'er huge Olympus? Down the stream,
 Look how the mountains with their double range
 Embrace the vale of Tempe; from each side
 Ascending steep to heaven, a rocky mound 320
 Cover'd with ivy and the laurel boughs
 That crown'd young Phœbus for the Python slain.
 Fair Tempe! on whose primrose banks the morn
 Awoke most fragrant, and the noon reposed

In pomp of lights and shadows most sublime : 325
 Whose lawns, whose glades, ere human footsteps yet
 Had traced an entrance, were the hallow'd haunt
 Of sylvan powers immortal : where they sate
 Oft in the golden age, the Nymphs and Fauns,
 Beneath some arbour branching o'er the flood, 330
 And leaning round, hung on the instructive lips
 Of hoary PAN, or o'er some open dale
 Danced in light measures to his sevenfold pipe,
 While Zephyr's wanton hand along their path
 Flung showers of painted blossoms, fertile dew, 335
 And one perpetual spring. But if our task
 More lofty rites demand, with all good vows
 Then let us hasten to the rural haunt
 Where young MELISSA dwells. Nor thou refuse
 The voice which calls thee from thy loved retreat,
 But * hither, gentle maid, thy footsteps turn : 341
 Here, to thy own unquestionable theme,
 O fair ! O graceful ! bend thy polish'd brow,
 Assenting ; and the gladness of thy eyes
 Impart to me, like morning's wished light 345
 Seen through the vernal air. By yonder stream,
 Where beech and elm along the bordering mead
 Send forth wild melody from every bough,
 Together let us wander ; where the hills
 Cover'd with fleeces to the lowing vale 350
 Reply ; where tidings of content and peace
 Each echo brings. Lo, how the western sun,
 O'er fields and floods, o'er every living soul,
 Diffuseth glad repose ! There, while I speak
 Of BEAUTY's honours, thou, MELISSA, thou 355

Shalt hearken, not unconscious : while I tell
 How first from heaven she came ; how after all
 The works of life, the elemental scenes,
 The hours, the seasons, she had oft explored,
 At length her favourite mansion and her throne 360
 She fix'd in woman's form : what pleasing ties
 To virtue bind her ; what effectual aid
 They lend each other's power ; and how divine
 Their union, should some unambitious maid,
 To all the enchantment of the Idalian queen, 365
 Add sanctity and wisdom. While my tongue
 Prolongs the tale, MELISSA, thou may'st feign
 To wonder whence my rapture is inspired ;
 But soon the smile which dawns upon thy lip
 Shall tell it, and the tenderer bloom o'er all 370
 That soft cheek springing to the marble neck,
 Which bends aside in vain, revealing more
 What it would thus keep silent, and in vain
 The sense of praise dissembling. Then my song
 Great Nature's winning arts, which thus inform 375
 With joy and love the rugged breast of man,
 Should sound in numbers worthy such a theme :
 While all whose souls have ever felt the force
 Of those enchanting passions, to my lyre
 Should throng attentive, and receive once more 380
 Their influence, unobscured by any cloud
 Of vulgar care, and purer than the hand
 Of fortune can bestow : nor, to confirm
 Their sway, should awful Contemplation scorn
 To join his dictates to the genuine strain 385
 Of Pleasure's tongue ; nor yet should Pleasure's ear
 Be much averse. Ye chiefly, gentle band

Of youths and virgins, who, through many a wish
 And many a fond pursuit, as in some scene
 Of magic bright and fleeting, are allured 390
 By various beauty ; if the pleasing toil
 Can yield a moment's respite, hither turn
 Your favourable ear, and trust my words.
 I * do not mean, on bless'd Religion's seat
 Presenting Superstition's gloomy form, 395
 To dash your soothing hopes ; I do not mean
 To bid the jealous Thunderer fire the heavens,
 Or shapes infernal rend the groaning earth,
 And scare you from your joys :—my cheerful song
 With happier omens calls you to the field ; 400
 Pleased with your generous ardour in the chase,
 And warm like you. Then tell me (for ye know)
 Doth † BEAUTY ever deign to dwell, where USE
 And APTITUDE are strangers ? is her praise
 Confess'd in aught whose most peculiar ends 403
 Are lame and fruitless ? or did Nature mean
 This pleasing call, the herald of a lie,
 To hide the shame of discord and disease,
 And win each fond admirer into snares,
 Foil'd, baffled ? No : ‡ with better providence 410
 The general Mother, conscious how infirm
 Her offspring tread the paths of good and ill,
 Thus to the choice of credulous desire,
 Doth objects the completest of their tribe
 Distinguish and commend. Yon flowery bank, 415

* Book I, line 341.

† *Venustas, et pulchritudo corporis secerni non potest a valetudine.*
CICERO.

‡ Book I, line 357.

Clothed in the soft magnificence of Spring,
 Will not the flocks approve it? will they ask
 The reedy fen for pasture? That clear rill,
 Which trickleth murmuring from the mossy rock,
 Yields it less wholesome beverage to the worn 420
 And thirsty traveller, than the standing pool
 With muddy weeds o'ergrown? Yon ragged vine,
 Whose lean and sullen clusters mourn the rage
 Of Eurus, will the wine-press or the bowl
 Report of her, as of the swelling grape 425
 Which glitters through the tendrils, like a gem
 When first it meets the sun? Or what are all
 The various charms, to life and sense adjoin'd?
 Are they not pledges of a state entire,
 Where native ORDER reigns, with every part 430
 In health, and every function well perform'd?

Thus † then at first was BEAUTY sent from heaven,
 The lovely minstress of TRUTH and GOOD
 In this dark world; for TRUTH and GOOD are one,
 And BEAUTY dwells in them and they in her 435
 With like participation. Wherefore then,
 O sons of earth! would ye dissolve the tie?
 O! wherefore, with a rash and greedy aim,
 Seek ye to rove through every flattering scene
 Which BEAUTY *seems* to deck, nor once inquire 440
 Where is the suffrage of eternal TRUTH,
 Or where the seal of undecitful GOOD,
 To save your search from folly? Wanting these,
 Lo! Beauty withers in your void embrace,
 And with the glittering of an idiot's toy 445
 Did Fancy mock your vows. Nor yet let Hope,

That kindest inmate of the youthful breast,
 Be hence appall'd ; be turn'd to coward Sloth,
 Sitting in silence, with dejected eyes,
 Incurious, and with folded hands : far less 450
 Let scorn of wild fantastic Folly's dreams,
 Or hatred of the bigot's savage pride,
 Persuade you e'er that BEAUTY, or the love
 Which waits on BEAUTY, may not brook to hear
 The sacred lore of undeceitful Good 455
 And TRUTH eternal. * From the vulgar crowd
 Though SUPERSTITION, tyranness abhorr'd !
 The reverence due to this majestic pair
 With threats and execration still demands ;
 Though the tame wretch, who asks of HER the way 460
 To their celestial dwelling, she constrains
 To quench or set at nought the LAMP OF GOD
 Within his frame ; through many a cheerless wild
 Though forth she leads him, credulous and dark,
 And awed with dubious notion ; though at length 465
 Haply she plunge him into cloister'd cells,
 And mansions unrelenting as the grave,
 But void of quiet ;—there to watch the hours
 Of midnight ;—there, amid the screaming owl's
 Dire song, with spectres or with guilty shades, 470
 To talk of pangs and everlasting woe ;
 Yet be not ye dismay'd ; † a gentler star
 Presides o'er your adventure. From the bower
 Where Wisdom sat with her Athenian sons,
 Could but my happy hand intwine a wreath 475
 Of PLATO'S OLIVE with the Mantuan BAY,
 Then (for what need of cruel fear to you,

* Book I, line 391

† Book I, line 401.

To you whom godlike love can well command ?)
 Then should my powerful voice at once dispel
 Those monkish horrors ; should in words divine 480
 Relate how favour'd minds, like you inspired,
 And taught their inspiration to conduct
 By ruling-heaven's decree, through various walks,
 And prospects various, but delightful all,
 Move onward ; while now myrtle groves appear, 485
 Now arms and radiant trophies, now the rods
 Of empire with the curule throne, or now
 The domes of Contemplation and the Muse.
 Led by that hope sublime, whose cloudless eye
 Through the fair toils and ornaments of earth 490
 Discerns the nobler life reserved for heaven,
 Favor'd alike they worship round the shrine
 Where TRUTH conspicuous with her sister-twins,
 The undivided partners of her sway,
 With GOOD and BEAUTY reigns. * O ! let not us, 495
 By Pleasure's lying blandishments detain'd,
 Or crouching to the frowns of bigot-rage,
 O ! let not us one moment pause to join
 That chosen band. And if the gracious power,
 Who first awaken'd my untutor'd song, 500
 Will to my invocation grant anew
 The tuneful spirit, then through all our paths
 Ne'er shall the sound of this devoted lyre
 Be wanting ; whether on the rosy mead
 When summer smiles, to warn the melting heart 505
 Of Luxury's allurements ; whether firm
 Against the torrent and the stubborn hill
 To urge free Virtue's steps, and to her side

Summon that strong divinity of soul
 Which conquers Chance and Fate; or on the height,
 The goal assign'd her, haply to proclaim 511
 Her triumph; on her brow to place the crown
 Of uncorrupted praise; through future worlds
 To follow her interminated way,
 And bless Heaven's image in the heart of man. 515

Such * is the worth of BEAUTY: such her power,
 So blameless, so revered. It now remains,
 In just gradation through the various ranks
 Of being, to contemplate how her gifts
 Rise in due measure, watchful to attend 520
 The steps of rising Nature. Last and least,
 In colours mingling with a random blaze,
 Doth BEAUTY dwell. Then higher in the forms
 Of simplest, easiest measure: in the bounds
 Of circle, cube, or sphere. The third ascent 525
 To symmetry adds colour: thus the pearl
 Shines in the concave of its purple bed,
 And painted shells along some winding shore
 Catch with indented folds the glancing sun.
 Next as we rise, appear the blooming tribes 530
 Which clothe the fragrant earth; which draw from her
 Their own nutrition; which are born and die;
 Yet, in their seed, immortal: such the flowers
 With which young Maia pays the village-maids
 That hail her natal morn; and such the groves 535
 Which blithe Pomona rears on Vaga's bank,
 To feed the bowl of Ariconian swains
 Who quaff beneath her branches. † Nobler still
 Is BEAUTY's name; where, to the full consent

* Book I, line 438. † Book I, line 464.

Of members and of features, to the pride
 Of colour, and the vital change of growth; 540
 Life's holy flame with piercing sense is given,
 While active motion speaks the temper'd soul:
 So moves the bird of Juno: so the steed
 With rival swiftness beats the dusty plain, 545
 And faithful dogs with eager airs of joy
 Salute their fellows. What sublimer pomp
 Adorns the seat where VIRTUE dwells on earth,
 And TRUTH's eternal day-light shines around;
 What palm belongs to man's imperial front, 550
 And woman, powerful with becoming smiles,
 Chief of terrestrial natures; need we now
 Strive to inculcate? † Thus hath BEAUTY there
 Her most conspicuous praise to matter lent,
 Where most conspicuous through that shadowy veil
 Breaks forth the bright expression of a mind; 556
 By steps directing our enraptured search
 To him the first of minds, the chief, the sole;
 From whom, through this wide complicated world
 Did all her various lineaments begin; 560
 To whom alone, consenting and entire,
 At once their mutual influence all display.
 He, * GOD most high, (bear witness earth and heaven)
 The living fountains in himself contains
 Of BEAUTEOUS and SUBLIME. With him inthroned,
 Ere days or years trod their ethereal way, 566
 In his supreme intelligence inthroned,
 The queen of Love holds her unclouded state,
 URANIA. Thee, O FATHER! this extent
 Of matter; thee, the sluggish earth and tract 570

* Book I, line 481.

† Book I, line 473.

Of seas, the heavens and heavenly splendors feel,
Pervading, quickening, moving. From the depth
Of thy great essence, forth didst thou conduct
Eternal FORM, and there, where Chaos reign'd,
Gavest her dominion to erect her seat,
And sanctify the mansion. All her works 575
Well-pleased thou didst behold; the gloomy fires
Of storm or earthquake, and the purest light
Of summer; soft Campania's new-born rose,
And the slow weed which pines on Russian hills, 580
Comely alike to THY full vision stand;
To thy surrounding vision, which unites
All essences and powers of the great world
In one sole order; fair alike they stand,
As features well consenting, and alike 585
Required by Nature ere she could attain
Her just resemblance to the perfect shape
Of *universal* BEAUTY, which with THEE
Dwelt from the first. Thou also, ANCIENT MIND!
Whom love and free beneficence await 590
In all thy doings; to inferior minds
Thy offspring, and to man thy youngest son,
Refusing no convenient gift nor good,
Their eyes didst open in this earth, yon heaven,
Those starry worlds, the countenance divine 595
Of BEAUTY to behold: but not to them
Didst thou her awful magnitude reveal,
Such as before thine own unbounded sight
She stands, (for never shall created soul
Conceive that object) nor to all their kinds, 600
The same in shape or features didst thou frame
Her image. Measuring well their different spheres

Of sense and action, thy paternal hand
 Hath for each race prepared a different test
 Of BEAUTY, own'd and reverenced as their guide 605
 Most apt, most faithful. Thence inform'd, they scan
 The objects that surround them; and select,
 Since the great whole disclaims their scanty view,
 Each for himself selects peculiar parts
 Of Nature; what the standard fix'd by Heaven 610
 Within his breast approves: acquiring thus
 A *partial* BEAUTY, which becomes his lot;
 A BEAUTY which his eye may comprehend,
 His hand may copy:—leaving, O SUPREME!
 O THOU WHOM NONE HATH UTTER'D! leaving all 615
 To THEE, that infinite, consummate form,
 Which the great powers, the gods around thy throne,
 And nearest to thy counsels, know with THEE
 For ever to have been; but who SHE is,
 Or what HER likeness, know not. Man surveys 620
 A narrower scene, where, by the mix'd effect
 Of things corporeal on his passive mind,
 He judgeth what is fair. Corporeal things
 The mind of man impel with various powers,
 And various features to his eye disclose. 625
 The powers which move his sense with instant joy,
 The features which attract his heart to love,
 He marks, combines, reposit. Other powers
 And features of the self-same thing (unless
 The beauteous form, the creature of his mind, 630
 Request their close alliance) he o'erlooks
 Forgotten; or with self-beguiling zeal,
 Whene'er his passions mingle in the work,
 Half alters, half disowns. The tribes of men

Thus from their different functions, and the shapes,
 Familiar to their eye, with art obtain, 636
 Unconscious of their purpose, yet with art
 Obtain the Beauty fitting man to love :
 Whose proud Desires, from Nature's homely toil
 Oft turn away fastidious; asking still 640
 The mind's high aid, to purify the form
 From matter's gross communion; to secure
 For ever, from the meddling hand of Change
 Or rude Decay, her features; and to add
 Whatever ornaments may suit her mien, 645
 Where'er he finds them scatter'd through the paths
 Of Nature or of Fortune :—then he seats
 The accomplish'd image deep within his breast,
 Reviews it, and accounts it *good and fair*.

Thus the ONE BEAUTY of the world entire, 650
 The *universal* Venus, far beyond
 The keenest effort of created eyes,
 And their most wide horizon, dwells inthroned
 In ancient silence: at her footstool stands
 An altar, burning with eternal fire, 655
 Unsully'd, unconsumed. Here every hour,
 Here every moment, in their turns arrive
 Her offspring; an innumerable band
 Of sisters, comely all; but differing far
 In age, in stature, and expressive mien, 660
 More than bright Helen from her new-born babe.
 To this maternal shrine in turns they come,
 Each with her sacred lamp; that from the source
 Of living flame, which here immortal flows,
 Their portions of its lustre they may draw 665
 For days, or months, or years; for ages some;

As their great parent's discipline requires :
 Then to their several mansions they depart,
 In stars, in planets, through the unknown shores
 Of yon ethereal ocean. Who can tell 670
 Even on the surface of this rolling earth,
 How many make abode ? The fields, the groves,
 The winding rivers, and the azure main,
 Are render'd solemn by their frequent feet,
 Their rites sublime. There, each her destin'd home
 Informs with that pure radiance from the skies 676
 Brought down, and shines throughout her little sphere
 Exulting. Straight, as travellers by night
 Turn towards a distant flame, so some fit eye,
 Among the various tenants of the scene, 680
 Discerns the heaven-born phantom seated there,
 And owns her charms : hence the wide universe,
 Through all the seasons of revolving worlds,
 Bears witness with its people, gods, and men,
 To BEAUTY's blissful power ; and with the voice 685
 Of grateful admiration still resounds :
 That voice, to which is Beauty's frame divine,
 As is the cunning of the master's hand
 To the sweet accent of the well-tuned lyre.

GENIUS * OF ANCIENT GREECE ! whose faithful steps
 Have led us to these awful solitudes 691
 Of Nature and of Science ; Nurse revered
 Of generous counsels and heroic deeds !
 O let some portion of thy matchless praise
 Dwell in my breast, and teach me to adorn 695
 This unattempted theme ! Nor be my thoughts
 Presumptuous counted, if, amid the calm
 Which Hesper sheds along the vernal heaven,

* Book I, line 507.

If I, from vulgar Superstition's walk
 Impatient steal, and from the unseemly rites 700
 Of splendid Adulation, to attend
 With hymns thy presence in the sylvan shade,
 By their malignant footsteps unprofaned.
 Come, O renowned Power! thy glowing mien
 Such, and so elevated all thy form, 705
 As when the great barbaric lord, again
 And yet again diminish'd, hid his face
 Among the herd of satraps and of kings;
 And at the lightning of thy lifted spear,
 Crouch'd like a slave. Bring all thy martial SPOILS,
 Thy PALMS, thy LAURELS, thy triumphal SONGS, 711
 Thy smiling band of ARTS, thy godlike SIREs
 Of civil wisdom, thy unconquer'd YOUTH,
 After some glorious day, rejoicing round
 Their new-elected trophy. * Guide my feet 715
 Through fair Lycéum's walk, the olive shades
 Of Academus, and the sacred vale
 Haunted by steps divine, where once, beneath
 That ever-living plantane's ample boughs, 720
 Ilissus, by SOCRATIC sounds detain'd,
 On his neglected urn attentive lay;
 While Boreas, lingering on the neighbouring steep,
 With beauteous Orithyía, his love-tale
 In silent awe suspended: there let me
 With blameless hand, from thy unenvious fields, 725
 Transplant some living blossoms, to adorn
 My native clime: while, far beyond the meed
 Of Fancy's toil aspiring, I unlock
 The springs of ancient wisdom: while I add
 (What cannot be disjoin'd from BEAUTY's praise) 730

Thy name and native dress ; thy works beloved
 And honour'd : while to my compatriot youth
 I point the great example of thy sons,
 And tune to Attic themes the British lyre. 734

THE END OF BOOK THE FIRST.

ARGUMENT

OR

THE SECOND BOOK.

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

THE
PLEASURES
OF THE
IMAGINATION:
BOOK THE SECOND.
MDCCLXV.

THUS far of BEAUTY and the pleasing Forms
Which man's untutor'd fancy, from the scenes
Imperfect of this ever-changing world,
Creates; and views, enamour'd. Now my song
Severer themes demand: mysterious TRUTH; 5
And VIRTUE, sovran good; the spells, the trains,
The progeny of ERROR; the dread sway
Of PASSION; and whatever hidden stores
From her own lofty deeds and from herself
The mind acquires. Severer argument: 10
Not less attractive; nor deserving less
A constant ear. * For what are all the forms
Educ'd by fancy from corporeal things,
Greatness, or pomp, or symmetry of parts?
Not tending to the heart, soon feeble grows, 13
As the blunt arrow 'gainst the knotty trunk,
Their impulse on the sense; while the pall'd eye
Expects in vain its tribute; asks in vain,

* Book I, line 526.

Where are the ornaments it once admired ?
 Not * so the MORAL species, nor the powers 20
 Of PASSION and of THOUGHT. The ambitious mind
 With objects boundless as her own desires
 Can there converse : by these unfading forms
 Touch'd and awaken'd, still with eager act
 She bends each nerve, and meditates well-pleased 25
 Her gifts, her godlike fortune. Such the scenes
 Now opening round us. May the destined verse
 Maintain its equal tenor, though in tracts
 Obscure and arduous. May the SOURCE of LIGHT
 All-present, all-sufficient, guide our steps 30
 Through every maze : and whom in childish years
 From the loud throng, the beaten paths of wealth
 And power, thou did'st apart send forth to speak
 In tuneful words concerning highest things ;
 Him still do thou, O FATHER, at those hours 35
 Of pensive freedom, when the human soul
 Shuts out the rumour of the world, him still
 Touch thou with secret lessons ; call thou back
 Each erring thought ; and let the yielding strains
 From his full bosom, like a welcome rill, 40
 Spontaneous from its healthy fountain, flow.

But from what name, what favourable sign,
 What heavenly auspice, rather shall I date
 My perilous excursion, than from TRUTH,
 That nearest inmate of the human soul ? 45
 Estranged from whom, the countenance divine
 Of man, disfigured and dishonour'd, sinks
 Among inferior things :—for to the brutes
 Perception, and the transient boons of sense

* Book I, line 532.

Hath Fate imparted : but to man alone 50
 Of sublunary beings was it given
 Each fleeting impulse on the sensual powers
 At leisure to review ; with equal eye
 To scan the passion of the stricken nerve
 Or the vague object striking : to conduct 55
 From sense, the portal turbulent and loud,
 Into the Mind's wide palace one by one,
 The frequent, pressing, fluctuating forms ;
 And question and compare them. Thus he learns
 Their birth and fortunes ; how allied they haunt 60
 The avenues of sense ; what laws direct
 Their union ; and what various discords rise,
 Or fix'd or casual : which when his clear thought
 Retains, and when his faithful words express,
 That living image of the external scene, 65
 As in a polish'd mirror held to view,
 Is TRUTH : where'er it varies from the shape
 And hue of its exemplar, in that part
 Dim ERROR lurks. Moreover, from without
 When oft the same society of forms 70
 In the same order have approach'd his mind,
 He deigns no more their steps with curious heed
 To trace ; no more their features or their garb
 He now examines ; but of them and their
 Condition, as with some diviner's tongue, 75
 Affirms what Heaven in every distant place,
 Through every future season, will decree ;
 This too is TRUTH : where'er his prudent lips
 Wait till EXPERIENCE, diligent and slow,
 Has authorized their sentence, this is TRUTH ; 80
 A second, higher kind : the parent this

Of SCIENCE; or the lofty power herself,
 SCIENCE herself; on whom the wants and cares
 Of social life depend; the substitute
 Of GOD's own wisdom in this toilsome world; 83
 The providence of man. Yet oft in vain
 To earn her aid, with fix'd and anxious eye
 He looks on Nature's and on Fortune's course:
 Too much in vain: his duller visual ray
 The stillness and the persevering acts 90
 Of Nature oft elude; and Fortune oft
 With step fantastic from her wonted walk
 Turns into mazes dim: his sight is foil'd,
 And the crude sentence of his faltering tongue,
 Is but OPINION's verdict; half believed, 95
 And prone to change. Here thou, who feel'st thine ear
 Congenial to my lyre's profounder tone,
 Pause and be watchful. Hitherto the stores,
 Which feed thy mind and exercise her powers,
 Partake the relish of their native soil, 100
 Their parent earth: but know a nobler dower
 Her SIRE at birth decreed her; purer gifts
 From his own treasure; forms which never deign'd
 In eyes or ears to dwell; within the sense
 Of earthly organs; but sublime were placed 105
 In his essential reason; leading there
 That vast ideal host, which all his works
 Through endless ages never will reveal.
 Thus then endow'd, the feeble creature MAN,
 The slave of hunger and the prey of death, 110
 Even now, even here, in earth's dim prison bound,
 The language of INTELLIGENCE DIVINE
 Attains; repeating oft, concerning one

And many, past and present, parts and whole,
 Those sovran dictates, which in farthest heaven, 115
 Where no orb rolls, Eternity's fix'd ear
 Hears from coeval TRUTH, when Chance nor Change,
 Nature's loud progeny, nor Nature's self
 Dares intermeddle, or approach her throne.
 Ere long o'er this corporeal world he learns 120
 To extend her sway; while calling from the deep,
 From earth and air, their multitudes untold
 Of figures and of motions round his walk;
 For each wide family some single birth
 He sets in view, the impartial type of all 125
 Its brethern: suffering it to claim, beyond
 Their common heritage, no private gift,
 No proper fortune. Then whate'er his eye
 In this discerns, his bold unerring tongue
 Pronounceth of the kindred, without bound, 130
 Without condition. Such the rise of forms
 Sequester'd far from sense, and every spot
 Peculiar in the realms of space or time:
 Such is the throne which man for TRUTH, amid
 The paths of mutability hath built, 135
 Secure, unshaken, still; and whence he views,
 In matter's mouldering structures, the pure forms
 Of triangle or circle, cube or cone,
 Impassive all; whose attributes nor Force
 Nor Fate can alter: there he first conceives 140
 True being, and an intellectual world,
 The same this hour and ever: thence HE DEEMS
 OF HIS OWN LOT:—above the painted shapes
 That fleeting move o'er this terrestrial scene
 Looks up; beyond the adamantine gates 145

Of death expatiates ; as his birthright claims
Inheritance in all the works of God ;
Prepares for endless time his plan of life,
And counts the universe itself his home.

Whence also but from TRUTH, the light of minds,
Is human fortune gladden'd with the rays 151
Of VIRTUE ? with the moral colours, thrown
On every walk of this our social scene ;
Adorning for the eyes of gods and men
The PASSIONS, ACTIONS, HABITUDES of life, 155
And rendering earth like heaven, a sacred place,
Where LOVE and PRAISE may take delight to dwell ?
Let none with heedless tongue from TRUTH disjoin
The reign of VIRTUE :—ere the day-spring flow'd,
Like sisters link'd in Concord's golden chain, 160
They stood before the great ETERNAL MIND,
Their common parent ; and by him were both
Sent forth among his creatures, hand in hand,
Inseparably join'd : nor e'er did TRUTH
Find an apt ear to listen to her lore, 165
Which knew not VIRTUE's voice ; nor, save where TRUTH's
Majestic words are heard and understood,
Doth VIRTUE deign to inhabit. Go, inquire
Of Nature ; not among Tartarian rocks,
Whither the hungry vulture with its prey 170
Returns : not where the lion's sullen roar
At noon resounds along the lonely banks
Of ancient Tigris : but her gentler scenes,
The dove-cote and the shepherd's fold at morn,
Consult ; or by the meadow's fragrant hedge, 175
In spring-time when the woodlands first are green,
Attend the linnet singing to his mate,

Couch'd o'er their tender young. To this fond care
 Thou dost not VIRTUE's honourable name
 Attribute ; wherefore, save that not one gleam 180
 Of TRUTH did e'er discover to themselves
 Their little hearts, or teach them by the effects
 Of that parental love, the love itself
 To judge, and measure its officious deeds ?
 But man, *whose eyelids TRUTH has fill'd with day,* 185
 Discerns how skilfully to bounteous ends
 His wise affections move ; with free accord
 Adopts their guidance ; yields himself secure
 To Nature's prudent impulse ; and converts
 Instinct to duty and to sacred law. 190
 Hence RIGHT and FIT on earth : while thus to man
 The ALMIGHTY LEGISLATOR hath explain'd
 The springs of action fix'd within his breast ;
 Hath given him power to slacken, or restrain
 Their effort ; and hath shewn him how they join 195
 Their partial movements with the master-wheel
 Of the great world, and serve that sacred end
 Which he, the Unerring Reason, keeps in view.

For (if a mortal tongue may speak of him
 And his dread ways) even as his boundless eye, 200
 Connecting every form and every change,
 Beholds the perfect BEAUTY ; so his WILL,
 Through every hour producing good to all
 The family of creatures, is itself
 The perfect VIRTUE. Let the grateful swain 205
 Remember this, as oft with joy and praise
 He looks upon the falling dews which clothe
 His lawns with verdure, and the tender seed
 Nourish within his furrows : when between

Dead seas and burning skies, where long unmoved 210
The bark had languish'd, now a rustling gale
Lifts o'er the fickle waves her dancing prow ;
Let the glad pilot, bursting out in thanks,
Remember this : lest blind o'erweening pride
Pollute their offerings : lest their selfish heart 215
Say to the heavenly RULER, " At *our* call
" Relents thy power ; by *us* thy arm is moved."
Fools ! who of God as of each other deem :
And HIS invariable acts deduce
From sudden counsels, transient as their own ; 220
Nor farther of his bounty, than the event,
Which haply meets their loud and eager prayer,
Acknowledge ; nor beyond the drop minute,
Which haply they have tasted, heed the source
That flows for all ; the fountain of his love, 225
Which, from the summit where he sits enthroned,
Pours health and joy, unfailing streams, throughout
The spacious region flourishing in view,
The goodly work of his eternal day,
His own fair universe ; on which alone 230
His counsels fix, and whence alone his will
Assumes her strong direction. Such is now
His sovran purpose ; such it was before
All multitude of years : for his right arm
Was never idle ; his bestowing love 235
Knew no beginning ; was not as a change
Of mood that woke at last, and started up,
After a deep and solitary sloth
Of boundless ages. No : he now is good ;
He EVER WAS. The feet of hoary TIME 240
Through their eternal course have travell'd o'er

No speechless, lifeless desert ; but through scenes
 Cheerful with bounty still ; among a pomp
 Of worlds, for gladness round the Maker's throne
 Loud shouting ; or, in many dialects 245
 Of hope and filial trust, imploring thence
 The fortunes of their people : where so * fix'd
 Were all the dates of being, so disposed
 To every living soul of every kind
 The field of motion, and the hour of rest, 250
 That each the general happiness might serve ;
 And by the discipline of laws divine,
Convinced of folly, or *chastised* from guilt,
 Each might at length be happy. What remains
 Shall be like what is past, but fairer still, 255
 And still increasing in the godlike gifts
 Of Life and Truth. The same † paternal hand,
 From the *mute shellfish* gasping on the shore,
 To *men*, to *angels*, to *celestial minds*,
 Will ever lead the generations on 260
 Through *higher* scenes of being : while, supply'd
 From day to day by his enlivening breath,
Inferior orders in succession rise
 To fill the void below. As flame ascends,
 As vapours to the earth in showers return, 265
 As the poised ocean toward the attracting moon
 Swells, and the ever-listening planets, charm'd
 By the sun's call, their onward pace incline ;
 So ‡ all things which have life aspire to God ;
 Exhaustless fount of intellectual day, 270
 CENTRE of SOULS ! Nor doth the mastering voice
 Of Nature cease within to prompt aright

* Book II, line 329 † Book II, line 343. ‡ Book II, line 355.

Their steps ; nor is the care of Heaven withheld
 From sending to the toil external aid ;
 That in their stations all may persevere 275
 To climb the *ascent* of being, and approach
 For ever nearer to the LIFE DIVINE.

But this ETERNAL FABRIC was not raised
 For man's inspection. Though to some be given
 To catch a transient visionary glimpse 280
 Of that majestic scene which boundless power
 Prepares for perfect goodness, yet in vain
 Would human life her faculties expand
 To imbosom such an object. Nor could e'er
 Virtue or praise have touch'd the hearts of men, 285
 Had not the SOVRAN GUIDE, through every stage
 Of this their various journey, pointed out
 New hopes, new toils, which to their humble sphere
 Of sight and strength might such importance hold
 As doth the wide creation to his own. 290
 Hence all the little charities of life,
 With all their duties : hence that favourite palm
 Of human will, when duty is sufficed,
 And still the liberal soul in ampler deeds
 Would manifest herself ; that sacred sign 295
 Of her revered affinity to him
 Whose bounties are his own ; to whom none said,
 " Create the wisest, fullest, fairest world,
 " And make its offspring happy ;" who, intent
 Some likeness of himself among his works 300
 To view, hath pour'd into the human breast
 A ray of knowledge and of love, which guides
 Earth's feeble race to act their maker's part,
 SELF-JUDGING, SELF-OBLIGED : while, from before

That godlike function, the gigantic power 305
 NECESSITY, though wont to curb the force
 Of Chaos and the savage elements,
 Retires abash'd, as from a scene too high
 For her brute tyranny, and with her bears
 Her scorned followers, TERROR, and BASE AWE 310
 Who blinds herself, and that ill-suited pair,
 OBEDIENCE link'd with HATRED. Then the soul
 Arises in her strength ; and, looking round
 Her busy sphere, whatever work she views,
 Whatever counsel bearing any trace 315
 Of her creator's likeness, whether apt
 To aid her fellows or preserve herself
 In her superior functions unimpair'd,
Thither she turns exulting : *that* she claims
 As her peculiar good : on *that*, through all 320
 The fickle seasons of the day, she looks
 With reverence still : to *that* as to a fence
 Against affliction and the darts of pain,
 Her drooping hopes repair : and, once opposed
 To *that*, all other pleasure, other wealth, 325
 Vile as the dross upon the molten gold
 Appears, and loathsome as the briny sea
 To him who languishes with thirst, and sighs
 For some known fountain pure. For what can strive
 With VIRTUE ? Which of nature's regions vast 330
 Can in so many forms produce to sight
 Such powerful BEAUTY ? BEAUTY, which the eye
 Of HATRED cannot look upon secure :
 Which ENVY's self contemplates, and is turn'd
 Ere long to tenderness, to infant smiles, 335
 Or tears of humblest love. * Is aught so fair

In all the dewy landscapes of the spring,
The summer's noontide groves, the purple eve
At harvest-home, or in the frosty moon
Glittering on some smooth sea, is aught so fair 340
As VIRTUOUS FRIENDSHIP? as the honour'd roof
Whither from highest heaven immortal LOVE
His torch ethereal and his golden bow
Propitious brings, and there a temple holds
To whose unspotted service gladly vow'd 345
The social band of PARENT, BROTHER, CHILD,
With smiles and sweet discourse and gentle deeds
Adore his power? What gift of richest clime
E'er drew such eager eyes, or prompted such
Deep wishes, as the zeal that snatcheth back 350
From SLANDER's poisonous tooth a FOE's renown;
Or crosseth danger in his lion walk,
A RIVAL's life to rescue? as the young
Athenian warrior sitting down in bonds,
That his great father's body might not want 355
A peaceful, humble tomb? the Roman wife
Teaching her lord how harmless was the wound
Of death, how impotent the tyrant's rage,
Who nothing more could threaten to afflict
Their faithful love? Or is there in the abyss, 360
Is * there, among the adamantine spheres
Wheeling unshaken through the boundless void,
Aught that with half such majesty can fill
The human bosom, as when BRUTUS rose
Refulgent from the stroke of CÆSAR's fate 365
Amid the crowd of patriots; and, his arm
Aloft extending like eternal JOVE

* Book I, line 488.

When guilt brings down the thunder, call'd aloud
 On TULLY's name, and shook the crimson sword
 Of justice in his rapt astonish'd eye, 370
 And bade the father of his country hail,
 For lo the tyrant prostrate on the dust,
 And ROME AGAIN IS FREE? Thus, through the paths
 Of human life, in various pomp array'd
 Walks the wise daughter of the judge of heaven, 375
 Fair VIRTUE; from her father's throne supreme
 Sent down to utter laws, such as on earth
 Most apt he knew, most powerful to promote
 The weal of all his works, the gracious end
 Of his dread empire. And though haply, man's 380
 Obscurer sight, so far beyond himself
 And the brief labours of his little home,
 Extends not; yet, by the bright presence won
 Of this divine instructress, to her sway
 Pleased he assents, nor heeds the distant goal 385
 To which her voice conducts him. Thus hath God,
 Still looking toward his own high purpose, fix'd
 The virtues of his creatures; thus he rules
 The parent's fondness and the patriot's zeal;
 Thus the warm sense of honour and of shame; 390
 The vows of gratitude, the faith of love;
 And all the comely intercourse of praise,
 The joy of human life, the earthly heaven.

How far unlike them must the lot of guilt
 Be found! Or what terrestrial woe can match 395
 The SELF-CONVICTED BOSOM, which hath wrought
 The bane of others or enslaved itself
 With shackles vile? Not poison, nor sharp fire,
 Nor the worst pangs that ever monkish hate

Suggested, or despotic rage imposed, 400
 Were at that season an unwish'd exchange ;
 When the soul loaths herself: when, flying thence
 To crowds, on every brow she sees portray'd
 Fell demons, hate or scorn, which drive her back
 To solitude, her judge's VOICE DIVINE 405
 To hear in secret, haply sounding through
 The troubled dreams of midnight, and still, still
 Demanding for his VIOLATED LAWS
 Fit recompence, or charging her own tongue
 To speak the award of justice on herself. 410
 For well she knows what faithful hints within
 Were whisper'd, to beware the lying forms
 Which turn'd her footsteps from the safer way :
 What cautions to suspect their painted dress,
 And look with steady eyelid on their smiles, 415
 Their frowns, their tears. In vain : the dazzling hues
 Of FANCY, and OPINION's eager voice,
 Too much prevail'd. * For mortals tread the path
 In which OPINION says they follow good
 Or fly from evil : and OPINION gives 420
 Report of good or evil, as the scene
 Was drawn by FANCY, pleasing or deform'd :
 Thus her report can never there be true
 Where FANCY cheats the intellectual eye
 With glaring colours and distorted lines. 425
 Is there a † man to whom the name of death
 Brings terror's ghastly pageants conjured up
 Before him, death-bed groans, and dismal vows,
 And the frail soul plunged headlong from the brink
 Of life and daylight down the gloomy air, 430

* Book III, line 23. † Book III, line 31.

An unknown depth, to gulphs of torturing fire
 Unvisited by mercy ? Then what hand
 Can snatch this dreamer from the fatal toils
 Which FANCY and OPINION thus conspire
 To twine around his heart ? or who shall hush 435
 Their clamor, when they tell him that to die,
 To risk those horrors, * is a direr curse
 Than basest life can bring ? Though Love with prayers
 Most tender, with affliction's sacred tears,
 Beseech his aid ; though gratitude and faith 440
 Condemn each step which loiters ; yet let none
 Make answer for him that, if any frown
 Of DANGER thwart his path, he will not stay
 Content, and be a wretch to be secure.
 Here VICE begins then : at the gate of life, 445
 Ere the young multitude to diverse roads
 Part, like fond pilgrims on a journey unknown,
 Sits FANCY, deep inchantress ; and to each
 With kind maternal looks presents her bowl,
 A potent beverage. Heedless they comply : 450
 Till the whole soul from that mysterious draught
 Is tinged, and every transient thought imbibes
 Of gladness or disgust, desire or fear,
 One home-bred colour : which not all the lights
 Of SCIENCE e'er shall change ; not all the storms 455
 Of ADVERSE FORTUNE wash away, nor yet
 The robe of PUREST VIRTUE quite conceal.
 Thence on they pass, where meeting frequent shapes
 Of good and evil, cunning phantoms apt
 To fire or freeze the breast, with them they join 460
 In dangerous parley ; listening oft, and oft

* Book III, line 43.

Gazing with reckless passion, while its garb
 The spectre heightens, and its pompous tale
 Repeats with some new circumstance, to suit
 That early tincture of the hearer's soul. 465

And should the guardian REASON, but for one
 Short moment yield to this illusive scene
 His ear and eye, the intoxicating charm
 Involves him, till no longer he discerns,
 Or only guides to err. * Then revel forth 470

A furious band that spurn him from the throne,
 And all is uproar. Hence ambition climbs
 With sliding feet and hands impure, to grasp
 Those solemn toys which glitter in his view
 On fortune's rugged steep : hence pale Revenge 475
 Unsheaths her murderous dagger : Rapine hence
 And envious Lust, by venal fraud upborne,
 Surmount the reverend barrier of the laws
 Which kept them from their prey : hence all the CRIMES
 That e'er defiled the earth, and all the PLAGUES 480
 That follow them for vengeance, in the guise
 Of HONOUR, SAFETY, PLEASURE, EASE, or POMP,
 Stole first into the fond believing mind.

Yet not by FANCY's witchcraft on the brain
 Are always the tumultuous PASSIONS driven 485
 To guilty deeds, nor REASON bound in chains
 That VICE alone may lord it. † Oft, adorn'd
 With motley pageants, FOLLY mounts his throne,
 And plays her idiot antics, like a queen.
 A thousand garbs she wears : a thousand ways 490
 She whirls her giddy empire. Lo, thus far
 With bold adventure to the Mantuan lyre

* Book III, line 51.

† Book III, line 67.

I sing for contemplation link'd with love,
 A pensive theme. Now haply should my song
 Unbend that serious countenance, and learn 495
 THALIA's tripping gait, her shrill-toned voice,
 Her wiles familiar: whether, scorn she darts
 In wanton ambush from her lip or eye,
 Or whether, with a sad disguise of care
 O'ermantling her gay brow, she acts in sport 500
 The deeds of FOLLY, and from all sides round
 Calls forth impetuous Laughter's gay rebuke;
 Her province. * But through every comic scene
 To lead my Muse with her light pencil arm'd;
 Through every swift occason which the hand 505
 Of Laughter points at, when the mirthful sting
 Distends her labouring sides and chokes her tongue;
 Were endless as to sound each grating note
 With which the rooks, and chattering daws, and grave
 Unwieldy inmates of the village pond, 510
 The changing seasons of the sky proclaim;
 Sun, cloud, or shower. † Suffice it to have said,
 Where'er the power of RIDICULE displays
 Her quaint-eyed visage, some incongruous form
 Some stubborn dissonance of things combined 515
 Strikes on her quick perception: whether pomp,
 Or praise, or beauty, be dragg'd in and shown,
 Where sordid fashions, where ignoble deeds,
 Where foul deformity is wont to dwell;
 Or whether these, with shrewd and wayward spite, 520
 Invade resplendent pomp's imperious mien,
 The charms of beauty, or the boast of praise.

Ask ‡ we for what fair end the almighty SIRE

* Book III, line 241. † Book III, line 248. ‡ Book III, line 259.

In mortal bosoms stirs this gay contempt,
'These grateful pangs of laughter; from disgust 525
Educing pleasure? Wherefore, but to aid
The tardy steps of REASON, and at once
By this prompt impulse urge us to depress
Wild FOLLY's aims? For though the sober light
Of TRUTH slow-dawning on the watchful mind 530
At length unfolds, through many a subtile tie,
How these uncouth disorders end at last
In public evil; yet benignant Heaven,
Conscious how dim the dawn of truth appears
To thousands, conscious what a scanty pause 535
From labour and from care the wider lot
Of humble life affords for studious thought
To scan the maze of nature, therefore stamp'd
These glaring scenes with characters of scorn,
As broad, as obvious to the passing clown 540
As to the letter'd sage's curious eye.

But other evils o'er the steps of man
Through all his walks impend; against whose might
The slender darts of laughter nought avail:
A trivial warfare. Some, like cruel guards, 545
On NATURE's ever-moving throne attend;
With mischief arm'd for him whoe'er shall thwart
The path of her INEXORABLE WHEELS,
While she pursues the work that must be done 549
Through ocean, earth, and air. Hence frequent forms
Of woe; the merchant, with his wealthy bark,
Buried by dashing waves; the traveller
Pierced by the pointed lightning in his haste;
And the poor husbandman, with folded arms,
Surveying his lost labours, and a heap 555

Of blasted chaff the product of the field
 Whence he expected bread. But worse than these
 I deem, far worse, that *other* race of ills
 Which human kind rear up among themselves ;
 That horrid offspring which *misgovern'd will* 560
 Bears to *fantastic error* ; VICES, CRIMES :
 Furies that curse the earth, and make the blows,
 The heaviest blows, of Nature's innocent hand
 Seem sport : which are indeed but as the care
 Of a wise parent, who solicits good 565
 To all her house, though haply at the price
 Of tears and froward wailing and reproach
 From some unthinking child, whom not the less
 Its mother destines to be happy still.

These sources then of pain, this double lot 570
 Of evil in the inheritance of man,
 Required for his protection no slight force,
 No careless watch. And therefore was his breast
 Fenced round with *passions*, quick to be alarm'd,
 Or stubborn to oppose ; with FEAR, more swift 575
 Than beacons catching flame from hill to hill,
 Where armies land ; with ANGER, uncontrol'd
 As the young lion bounding on his prey ;
 With SORROW, that locks up the struggling heart,
 And SHAME, that overcasts the drooping eye 580
 As with a cloud of lightening. These the part
 Perform of eager monitors, and goad
 The soul more sharply than with points of steel,
 Her enemies to shun or to resist.
 And as those *passions*, that converse with good, 585
 Are good themselves ; as HOPE and LOVE and Joy,
 Among the fairest and the sweetest boons

Of life, we rightly count; so these, which guard
 Against INVADING EVIL, still excite
 Some pain, some tumult: these, within the mind 590
 Too oft admitted or too long retain'd,
 Shock their frail seat, and by their uncurb'd rage
 To savages more fell than Libya breeds,
 Transform themselves: till human thought becomes
 A gloomy ruin, haunt of shapes unblest'd, 595
 Of self-tormenting fiends; HORROR, DESPAIR,
 HATRED, and wicked ENVY: foes to all
 The works of Nature and the gifts of Heaven.

But when through blameless paths to righteous ends
 Those keener passions urge the awaken'd soul, 600
 I would not, as ungracious violence,
 Their sway describe, nor from their free career
 The fellowship of pleasure quite exclude.
 For what can render, to the SELF-APPROVED,
 Their temper void of comfort, though in pain? 605
 Who * knows not with what majesty divine
 The forms of TRUTH and JUSTICE to the mind
 Appear, ennobling oft the sharpest woe
 With triumph and rejoicing? Who, that bears
 A human bosom, hath not often felt 610
 How dear are all those ties which bind our race
 In gentleness together, and how sweet
 Their force, let Fortune's wayward hand the while
 Be kind or cruel? † Ask the faithful youth
 Why the cold urn, of her whom long he loved, 615
 So often fills his arms; so often draws
 His lonely footsteps, silent and unseen,
 To pay the mournful tribute of his tears?

* Book II, line 673. † Book II, line 683.

O ! he will tell thee that the wealth of worlds
 Should ne'er seduce his bosom to forego 620
 Those sacred hours ; when, stealing from the noise
 Of care and envy, sweet remembrance sooths
 With VIRTUE's kindest looks his aking breast,
 And turns his tears to rapture. * Ask the crowd,
 Which flies impatient from the village walk 625
 To climb the neighbouring cliffs, when far below
 The savage winds have hurl'd upon the coast
 Some helpless bark ; while holy PITY melts
 The general eye, or TERROR's icy hand
 Smites their distorted limbs and horrent hair ; 630
 While every mother closer to her breast
 Catcheth her child, and, pointing where the waves
 Foam through the shatter'd vessel, shrieks aloud
 As one poor wretch, who spreads his piteous arms
 For succour, swallow'd by the roaring surge ; 635
 As now another, dash'd against the rock,
 Drops lifeless down. O ! deemest thou indeed
 No pleasing influence here by Nature given
 To mutual terror and compassion's tears ?
 No tender charm mysterious, which attracts 640
 O'er all that edge of pain the social powers,
 To this their proper action and their end ?
 Ask † thy own heart ; when, at the midnight hour,
 Slow through that pensive gloom thy pausing eye,
 Led by the glimmering taper, moves around 645
 The reverend volumes of the dead, the songs
 Of Grecian bards, and records writ by fame
 For Grecian heroes, where the SOVRAN POWER
 Of heaven and earth surveys the immortal page,

* Book II, line 693.

† Book II, line 712.

Even as a father meditating all 650
 The praises of his son; and bids the rest
 Of mankind there the fairest model learn
 Of their own nature, and the noblest deeds
 Which yet the world hath seen;—if then thy soul
 Join in the lot of those diviner men? 655
 Say; when the prospect darkens on thy view;
 When sunk by many a wound, heroic states
 Mourn in the dust and tremble at the frown
 Of hard ambition; * when the generous band
 Of youths who fought for freedom and their sires 660
 Lie side by side in death; when brutal force
 Usurps the throne of justice, turns the pomp
 Of guardian power, the majesty of rule,
 The sword, the laurel, and the purple robe,
 To poor dishonest pageants, to adorn 665
 A robber's walk, and glitter in the eyes
 Of such as bow the knee; † when beauteous works,
 Rewards of virtue, sculptured forms, which deck'd
 With more than human grace the warrior's arch,
 Or patriot's tomb, now victims to appease 670
 Tyrannic envy, strew the common path
 With awful ruins; when the Muse's haunt,
 The marble porch, where wisdom wont to talk
 With SOCRATES or TULLY, hears no more,
 Save the hoarse jargon of contentious monks, 675
 Or female superstition's midnight prayer;
 When ruthless havoc from the hand of Time
 Tears the destroying scythe, with surer stroke
 To mow the monuments of glory down;
 Till desolation o'er the grass-grown street 680

* *Book II, line 726.*† *Book II, line 734.*

Expands her raven wings, and, from the gate
 Where * senates once the weal of nations plann'd,
 Hisseth the gliding snake through hoary weeds
 That clasp the mouldering column : thus when all
 The widely-mournful scene is fix'd within 685
 Thy throbbing bosom ; when the patriot's tear
 Starts from thine eye, and thy extended arm
 In fancy, hurls the thunderbolt of Jove
 To fire the impious wreath on PHILIP's brow,
 Or dash OCTAVIUS from the trophied car ; 690
 Say, † doth thy secret soul repine to taste
 The big distress ? or would'st thou then exchange
 Those heart-ennobling sorrows for the lot
 Of him who sits amid the gaudy herd
 Of silent flatterers bending to his nod, 695
 And o'er them, like a giant, casts his eye,
 And says within himself, " I am a king,
 " And wherefore should the clamorous voice of woe
 " Intrude upon mine ear ? " The dregs corrupt
 Of barbarous ages, that Circæan draught 700
 Of servitude and folly, have not yet,
 Bless'd be the ETERNAL RULER of the world !
 Yet have not so dishonour'd, so deform'd
 The native judgment of the human soul,
 Nor so effaced the image of her sire. 705

* Book II, line 748 † Book II, line 757.

THE END OF BOOK THE SECOND.

THE
PLEASURES
OF THE
IMAGINATION:

BOOK THE THIRD.

A FRAGMENT.

MDCCLXX.

WHAT tongue then may explain the various fate
Which reigns o'er earth? or who to mortal eyes
Illustrate this perplexing labyrinth
Of joy and woe through which the feet of man
Are doom'd to wander? That ETERNAL MIND 5
From passions, wants, and envy, far estranged,
Who built the spacious universe, and deck'd
Each part so richly with whate'er pertains
To life, to health, to pleasure; why bade he
The viper EVIL, creeping in, pollute 10
The goodly scene, and with insidious rage,
While the poor inmate looks around and smiles,
Dart her fell sting with poison to his soul?
Hard is the question, and from ancient days
Hath still oppress'd with care the sage's thought; 15
Hath drawn forth accents from the poet's lyre
Too sad, too deeply plaintive: nor did e'er

Those chiefs of human kind, from whom the light
Of heavenly truth first gleam'd on barbarous lands,
Forget this dreadful secret, when they told 20
What wonderful things had to their favour'd eyes
And ears on cloudy mountain been reveal'd,
Or in deep cave by nymph or power divine ;
Portentous oft and wild. Yet one I know,
Could I the speech of lawgivers assume, 25
One old and splendid tale I would record
With which the Muse of SOLON in sweet strains
Adorn'd this theme profound, and render'd all
Its darkness, all its terrors, bright as noon,
Or gentle as the golden star of eve. 30
Who knows not SOLON ? last, and wisest far,
Of those whom Greece triumphant in the height
Of glory, styl'd her fathers ? him whose voice
Through Athens hush'd the storm of civil wrath ;
Taught ENVIOUS WANT and CRUEL WEALTH to join 35
In friendship ; and, with sweet compulsion, tamed
Minerva's eager people to his laws,
Which their own goddess in his breast inspired ?
'Twas now the time when his heroic task
Seem'd but perform'd in vain : when sooth'd by years
Of flattering service, the fond multitude 41
Hung with their sudden counsels on the breath
Of great PISISTRATUS : that chief renown'd,
Whom Hermes and the Idalian queen had train'd
Even from his birth to every powerful art 45
Of pleasing and persuading : from whose lips
Flow'd eloquence, which like the vows of love
Could steal away suspicion from the hearts
Of all who listen'd. Thus from day to day

He won the general suffrage, and beheld 50
Each rival overshadow'd and depress'd
Beneath his ampler state : yet oft complain'd,
As one less kindly treated, who had hoped
To merit favour, but submits perforce
To find another's services preferr'd ; 55
Nor yet relaxeth aught of faith or zeal.
Then tales were scatter'd of his envious foes,
Of snares that watch'd his fame, of daggers aim'd
Against his life. At last with trembling limbs,
His hair diffused and wild, his garments loose, 60
And stain'd with blood from self-inflicted wounds,
He burst into the public place, as there,
There only, were his refuge ; and declared
In broken words, with sighs of deep regret,
The mortal danger he had scarce repell'd. 65
Fired with his tragic tale, the indignant crowd,
To guard his steps, forthwith a menial band,
Array'd beneath his eye for deeds of war,
Decree. *O still too liberal of their trust,*
And oft betray'd by over-grateful love, 70
The generous people ! Now behold him fenced
By mercenary weapons, like a king,
Forth issuing from the city gate at eve
To seek his rural mansion, and with pomp
Crowding the public road. The swain stops short, 75
And sighs : the officious townsmen stand at gaze
And shrinking give the sullen pageant room.
Yet not the less obsequious was his brow ;
Nor less profuse of courteous words his tongue,
Of gracious gifts his hand : the while by stealth, 80
Like a small torrent fed with evening showers,

His train increased. Till, at that fatal time
 Just as the public eye, with doubt and shame
 Startled, began to question what it saw,
 Swift as the sound of earthquakes rush'd a voice 85
 Through Athens, that PISISTRATUS had fill'd
 The rocky citadel with hostile arms,
 Had barr'd the steep ascent, and sate within
 Amid his hirelings, meditating death
 To all whose stubborn necks his yoke refused. 90
 Where then was SOLON? After ten long years
 Of absence, full of haste from foreign shores
 The sage, the lawgiver had now arrived :
 Arrived, alas, to see *that* Athens, *that*
 Fair temple raised by him, and sacred call'd 95
 To LIBERTY and CONCORD, now profaned
 By savage hate, or sunk into a den
 Of slaves, who crouch beneath the master's scourge,
 And deprecate his wrath and court his chains.
 Yet did not the wise patriot's grief impede 100
 His virtuous will, nor was his heart inclined
 One moment with such woman-like distress
 To view the *transient* storms of civil war,
 As thence to yield his country and her hopes
 To all-devouring bondage. His bright helm, 105
 Even while the traitor's impious act is told,
 He buckles on his hoary head : he girds
 With mail his stooping breast : the shield, the spear
 He snatcheth ; and with swift indignant strides
 The assembled people seeks : proclaims aloud 110
 It was no time for counsel : in their spears
 Lay all their prudence now : the tyrant yet
 Was not so firmly seated on his throne,

But that one shock of their united force
 Would dash him from the summit of his pride 115
 Headlong and groveling in the dust. What else
 Can re-assert the lost Athenian name
 So cheaply to the laughter of the world
 Betray'd ; by guile beneath an infant's faith
 So mock'd and scorn'd ? Away then : FREEDOM now
 And SAFETY dwell not but with FAME IN ARMS : 121
 Myself will shew you where their mansion lies,
 And through the walks of Danger or of Death
 Conduct you to them. While he spake, through all
 Their crowded ranks his quick sagacious eye 125
 He darted ; where no cheerful voice was heard
 Of social daring ; no stretch'd arm was seen
 Hastening their common task : but pale mistrust
 Wrinkled each brow : they shook their heads, and down
 Their slack hands hung : colds sighs and whisper'd
 doubts 130
 From breath to breath stole round. The SAGE mean time
 Look'd speechless on, while his big bosom heaved,
 Struggling with shame and sorrow : till at last
 A tear broke forth ; and, O immortal shades,
 O THESEUS, he exclaim'd, O CODRUS, where, 135
 Where are ye now ? behold for what ye toil'd
 Through life ? behold for whom ye chose to die.
 No more he added ; but with lonely steps
 Weary and slow, his silver beard depress'd,
 And his stern eyes bent heedless on the ground, 140
 Back to his silent dwelling he repair'd.
 There o'er the gate, his armour, as a man
 Whom from the service of the war his chief
 Dismisseth after no inglorious toil,

He fix'd in general view. One wishful look 145
 He sent, unconscious, toward the public place
 At parting : then beneath his quiet roof
 Without a word, without a sigh, retired.

Scarce had the morrow's sun his golden rays
 From sweet Hymettus darted o'er the fanes 150
 Of Cecrops to the Salaminian shores,
 When, lo, on SOLON's threshold met the feet
 Of four Athenians, by the same sad care
 Conducted all : than whom the state beheld
 None nobler. First came MEGACLES, the son 155
 Of great ALCMÆON, whom the Lydian king
 The mild, unhappy CRÆSUS, in his days
 Of glory had with costly gifts adorn'd,
 Fair vessels, splendid garments, tinctured webs
 And heaps of treasured gold beyond the lot 160
 Of many sovereigns ; thus requiting well
 That hospitable favour which erewhile
 ALCMÆON to his messengers had shewn,
 Whom he with offerings worthy of the god
 Sent from his throne in Sardis to revere 165
 Apollo's Delphic shrine. With MEGACLES
 Approach'd his son, whom AGARISTA bore,
 The virtuous child of CLISTHENES, whose hand
 Of Grecian sceptres the most ancient far
 In Sicyon sway'd : but greater fame he drew 170
 From arms control'd by justice, from the love
 Of the wise MUSES, and the unenvied wreath
 Which glad OLYMPIA gave. For thither once
 His warlike steeds the hero led, and there
 Contended through the tumult of the course 175
 With skilful wheels. Then victor at the goal,

Amid the applauses of assembled Greece,
 High on his car he stood and waved his arm.
 Silence ensued : when strait the herald's voice
 Was heard, inviting every Grecian youth, 180
 Whom CLISTHENES content might call his son,
 To visit, ere twice thirty days were past,
 The towers of Sicyon. There the chief decreed,
 Within the circuit of the following year,
 To join at Hymen's altar, hand in hand 185
 With his fair daughter, him among the guests
 Whom worthiest he should deem. Forthwith from all
 The bounds of Greece the ambitious wooers came :
 From rich Hesperia ; from the Illyrian shore
 Where Epidamnus over Adria's surge 190
 Looks on the setting sun ; from those brave tribes
 Chaonian or Molossian, whom the race
 Of great ACHILLES governs, glorying still
 In Troy o'erthrown ; from rough Ætolia, nurse
 Of men who first among the Greeks threw off 195
 The yoke of kings, to commerce and to arms
 Devoted ; from Thessalia's fertile meads,
 Where flows Penéus near the lofty walls
 Of Cranon old ; from strong Eretria, queen
 Of all Eubœan cities, who, sublime 200
 On the steep margin of Euripus, views
 Across the tide the Marathonian plain,
 Not yet the haunt of glory. Athens too,
 Minerva's care, among her graceful sons
 Found equal lovers for the princely maid : 205
 Nor was proud Argos wanting ; nor the domes
 Of sacred Elis ; nor the Arcadian groves
 That overshadow Alphéus, echoing oft

Some shepherd's song. But through the illustrious band
 Was none who might with MEGACLES compare 210
 In all the honours of unblemish'd youth.
 His was the beauteous bride : and now their son,
 Young CLISTHENES, betimes, at SOLON's gate
 Stood anxious ; leaning forward on the arm
 Of his great sire, with earnest eyes that ask'd 215
 When the slow hinge would turn, with restless feet,
 And cheeks now pale, now glowing : for his heart
 Throbb'd, full of bursting passions ; anger, grief
 With scorn imbitter'd, by the generous boy
 Scarce understood, but which, like noble seeds, 220
 Are destined for his country and himself
 In riper years to bring forth fruits divine
 Of liberty and glory. Next appear'd
 Two brave companions whom one mother bore
 To different lords ; but whom the better ties 225
 Of firm esteem and friendship render'd more
 Than brothers : first MILTIADES, who drew
 From godlike ÆACUS his ancient line ;
 That ÆACUS whose unimpeach'd renown
 For sanctity and justice won the lyre 230
 Of elder bards to celebrate him throned
 In Hades o'er the dead, where his decrees
 The guilty soul within the burning gates
 Of Tartarus compel, or send the good
 To inhabit with eternal health and peace 235
 The vallies of Elysium. From a stem
 So sacred, ne'er could worthier scyon spring
 Than this MILTIADES ; whose aid ere-long
 The chiefs of Thrace, already on their ways
 Sent by the inspired foreknowing maid, who sits 240

Upon the Delphic tripod, shall implore
To wield their sceptre, and the rural wealth
Of fruitful Chersonesus to protect
With arms and laws. But, nothing careful now
Save for his injured country, here he stands 245
In deep solicitude with CIMON join'd :
Unconscious both what widely-different lots,
Await them, taught by nature as they are
To know one common good, one common ill.
For CIMON, not his valour, not his birth 250
Derived from CODRUS, not a thousand gifts
Dealt round him with a wise, benignant hand,
No, nor the Olympic olive by himself
From his own brow transferr'd to sooth the mind
Of this PISISTRATUS, can long preserve 255
From the fell envy of the Tyrant's sons,
And their assassin dagger. But if death
Obscure upon his gentle steps attend,
Yet fate an ample recompense prepares
In his victorious son, that other great 260
MILTIADES, who o'er the very throne
Of glory shall with Time's assiduous hand
In adamantine characters engrave
The name of ATHENS; and by freedom arm'd
'Gainst the gigantic pride of ASIA'S KING, 265
Shall all the atchievements of the heroes old
Surmount; of Hercules, of all who sail'd
From Thessaly with Jason, all who fought
For empire or for fame, at Thebes or Troy.
Such were the patriots who within the porch 270
Of SOLON had assembled. But the gate
Now opens, and across the ample floor

Straight they proceed into an open space
Bright with the beams of morn : a verdant spot,
Where stands a rural altar, piled with sods 275
Cut from the grassy turf and girt with wreaths
Of branching palm. Here SOLON's self they found
Clad in a robe of purple pure, and deck'd
With leaves of olive on his reverend brow.
He bow'd before the altar, and o'er cakes 280
Of barley from two earthen vessels pour'd
Of honey and of milk a plenteous stream ;
Calling meantime the Muses to accept
His simple offering, by no victim tinged
With blood, nor sullied by destroying fire ; 285
But such as for himself Apollo claims
In his own Delos, where his favourite haunt
Is thence the " Altar of the Pious" named.
Unseen the guests drew near, and silent view'd
That worship ; till the hero-priest his eye 290
Turn'd toward a seat on which prepared there lay
A branch of laurel. Then his friends confess'd
Before him stood. Backward his step he drew,
As loath that care or tumult should approach
Those early rites divine : but soon their looks, 295
So anxious, and their hands, held forth with such
Desponding gesture, bring him on perforce
To speak to their affliction. Are ye come,
He cried, to mourn with me this common shame ?
Or ask ye some new effort which may break 300
Our fetters ? Know then, of the public cause
Not for yon traitor's cunning, or his might
Do I despair : nor could I wish from Jove
Aught dearer, than at this late hour of life,

As once by laws, so now by strenuous arms 305
From impious violation to assert
The rights our fathers left us. But, alas!
What arms? or who shall wield them? Ye beheld
The Athenian people. Many bitter days
Must pass, and many wounds from cruel pride 310
Be felt, ere yet their partial hearts find room
For just resentment, or their hands indure
To smite this tyrant brood, so near to all
Their hopes, so oft admired, so long beloved.
THAT TIME WILL COME, however. Be it yours 315
To watch its fair approach, and urge it on
With honest prudence: me it ill beseems
Again to supplicate the unwilling crowd
To rescue from a vile deceiver's hold
That envied power which once with eager zeal 320
They offer'd to myself; nor can I plunge
In counsels deep and various, nor prepare
For distant wars, thus faltering as I tread
On life's last verge, ere-long to join the shades
Of MINOS and LYCURGUS. But behold 325
What care employs me now. My vows I pay
To the sweet MUSES, teachers of my youth
And solace of my age. If right I deem
Of the still voice that whispers at my heart,
The immortal sisters have not quite withdrawn 330
Their old harmonious influence. Let your tongues
With sacred silence favour what I speak,
And haply shall my faithful lips be taught
To unfold celestial counsels, which may arm,
As with impenetrable steel, your breasts 335
For the long strife before you, and repel

The darts of adverse fate. He said, and snatch'd
 The laurel bough, and sate in silence down,
 Fix'd, wrapp'd in solemn musing, full before
 The sun, who now from all his radiant orb 340
 Drove the gray clouds, and pour'd his genial light
 Upon the breast of SOLON. Solon raised
 Aloft the leafy rod, and thus began.

Ye beauteous offspring of Olympian JOVE
 And MEMORY divine, PIERIAN MAIDS, 345
 Hear me, propitious. In the morn of life,
 When hope shone bright and all the prospect smiled,
 To your sequester'd mansion oft my steps
 Were turn'd, O MUSES, and within your gate
 My offerings paid. Ye taught me then, with strains
 Of flowing harmony to soften war's 351
 Dire voice, or in fair colours, that might charm
 The public eye, to clothe the form austere
 Of civil counsel. Now my feeble age
 Neglected, and supplanted of the hope 355
 On which it lean'd, yet sinks not ; but to you,
 To your mild wisdom flies, refuge beloved
 Of solitude and silence. Ye can teach
 The visions of my bed, whate'er the gods
 In the rude ages of the world inspired, 360
 Or the first heroes acted : ye can make
 The morning light more gladsome to my sense,
 Than ever it appear'd to active youth
 Pursuing careless pleasure : ye can give
 To this long leisure, these unheeded hours, 365
 A labour as sublime, as when the sons
 Of Athens, throng'd and speechless, round me stood
 To hear pronounced for all their future deeds

The bounds of RIGHT and WRONG. CELESTIAL POWERS,
I feel that ye are near me : and behold, 370
To meet your energy divine, I bring
A high and sacred theme ; not less than those
Which to the eternal custody of FAME
Your lips intrusted, when of old ye deign'd
With ORPHEUS or with HOMER to frequent 375
The groves of Hæmus or the Chian shore.

Ye know, HARMONIOUS MAIDS ! (for what of all
My various life was e'er from you estranged ?)
Oft hath my solitary song to you
Reveal'd that duteous pride, which turn'd my steps
To willing exile ; earnest to withdraw 381
From envy and the disappointed thirst
Of lucre ; lest the bold familiar strife,
Which in the eye of Athens they upheld
Against her legislator, should impair 385
With trivial doubt the reverence of his laws.
To Egypt therefore through the Ægean isles
My course I steer'd, and by the banks of Nile
Dwelt in Canopus. Thence the hallow'd domes
Of Saïs, and the rites to Isis paid, 390
I sought, and in her temple's silent courts,
Through many changing moons, attentive heard
The venerable SONCHIS, while his tongue
At morn or midnight the deep story told
Of her who represents whate'er HAS BEEN, 395
Or IS, OR SHALL BE ; whose mysterious veil
No mortal hand hath ever yet removed.
By him exhorted, southward to the walls
Of On I pass'd, the city of the sun,
The ever-youthful god. 'Twas there amid 400

His priests and sages, who the live-long night
Watch the dread movements of the starry sphere,
Or who in wondrous fables half disclose
The secrets of the elements, 'twas there
That great PSEENOPHIS taught my raptured ears 405
The fame of old ATLANTIS, of her chiefs,
And her pure laws, the first which earth obey'd.
Deep in my bosom sunk the noble tale ;
And often, while I listen'd, did my mind
Foretel with what delight her own free lyre 410
Should sometime for an Attic audience raise
Anew that lofty scene, and from their tombs
Call forth those ancient demigods to speak
Of JUSTICE and the hidden PROVIDENCE
That walks among mankind. But yet meantime 415
The mystic pomp of Ammon's gloomy sons
Became less pleasing. With contempt I gazed
On that tame garb, and those unvarying paths,
To which the double yoke of king and priest
Had cramp'd the sullen race. At last with hymns
Invoking our own Pallas and the gods 421
Of cheerful Greece, a glad farewell I gave
To Egypt, and before the southern wind
Spread my full sails. What climes I then survey'd,
What fortunes I encounter'd in the realm 425
Of CRÆSUS or upon the Cyprian shore,
The MUSE, who prompts my bosom, doth not now
Consent that I reveal. But when at length
Ten times the sun returning from the south 429
Had strow'd with flowers the verdant earth, and fill'd
The groves with music, pleased I then beheld
The term of those long errors drawing nigh.

Nor yet, I said, will I sit down within
 The walls of Athens, till my feet have trod
 The Cretan soil, have pierced those reverend haunts
 Whence law and civil concord issued forth 436
 As from their ancient home, and still to Greece
 Their wisest, loftiest discipline proclaim.
 Strait where Amnisus, mart of wealthy ships,
 Appears beneath famed Cnossus and her towers 440
 Like the fair handmaid of a stately queen,
 I check'd my prow, and thence with eager steps
 The city of MINOS enter'd. O ye gods,
 Who taught the leaders of the simpler time
 By WRITTEN WORDS *to curb the* UNTOWARD WILL 445
Of mortals! how within that generous isle
 Have ye the triumphs of your power display'd
 Munificent! Those splendid merchants, lords
 Of traffic and the sea, with what delight
 I saw them at their public meal, like sons 450
 Of the same household, join the plainer sort
 Whose wealth was only freedom! whence to these
 Vile ENVY, and to those fantastic PRIDE,
 Alike was strange; but noble concord still
 Cherish'd the strength untamed, the rustic faith, 455
 Of their first fathers. Then the growing race,
 How pleasing to behold them in their schools,
 Their sports, their labours, ever placed within,
 O shade of MINOS, thy controlling eye!
 Here was a docile band in tuneful tones 460
 Thy laws pronouncing, or with lofty hymns
 Praising the bounteous gods, or, to preserve
 Their country's heroes from oblivious night,
 Resounding what the MUSE inspired of old;

There, on the verge of manhood, others met, 465
 In heavy armour through the heats of noon,
 To march, the rugged mountains height to climb
 With measured swiftness, from the hard-bent bow
 To send resistless arrows to their mark,
 Or for the fame of prowess to contend, 470
 Now wrestling, now with fists and staves opposed,
 Now with the biting falchion, and the fence
 Of brazen shields; while still the warbling flute
 Presided o'er the combat, breathing strains
 Grave, solemn, soft; and changing headlong spite 475
 To thoughtful resolution cool and clear.
 Such I beheld those islanders renown'd,
 So tutor'd from their birth to meet in war
 Each bold invader, and in peace to guard
 That living flame of *reverence for their laws* 480
 Which nor the storms of fortune, nor the flood
 Of foreign wealth diffused o'er all the land,
 Could quench or slacken. First of human names
 In every Cretan's heart was MINOS still; 485
 And holiest far, of what the sun surveys
 Through his whole course, were those primeval seats
 Which with religious footsteps he had taught
 Their sires to approach; the wild Dictæan cave
 Where Jove was born; the ever-verdant meads 490
 Of Ida, and the spacious grotto, where
 His active youth he pass'd, and where his throne
 Yet stands mysterious; whither MINOS came
 Each ninth returning year; the KING OF GODS
 And mortals there in secret to consult 495
 On JUSTICE, and the tables of his law
 To inscribe anew. Oft also with like zeal

Great RHEA's mansion from the Cnossian gates
 Men visit ; nor less oft the antique fane
 Built on that sacred spot, along the banks 500
 Of shady Theron, where benignant Jove
 And his majestic consort join'd their hands
 And spoke their nuptial vows. Alas, 'twas there
 That the dire fame of Athens sunk in bonds
 I first received ; what time an annual feast 505
 Had summon'd all the genial country round,
 By sacrifice and pomp to bring to mind
 That first great spousal ; while the enamour'd youths
 And virgins, with the priest before the shrine,
 Observe the same pure ritual, and invoke 510
 The same glad omens. There, among the crowd
 Of strangers from those naval cities drawn,
 Which deck, like gems, the island's northern shore,
 A merchant of Ægina I descried,
 My ancient host. But, forward as I sprung 515
 To meet him, he, with dark dejected brow,
 Stopp'd half-averse ; and, O Athenian guest,
 He said, art thou in Crete ; these joyful rites
 Partaking ? Know, thy laws are blotted out :
 Thy country kneels before a tyrant's throne. 520
 He added names of men, with hostile deeds
 Disastrous ; which obscure and indistinct
 I heard : for, while he spake my heart grew cold
 And my eyes dim : the altars and their train
 No more were present to me : how I fared, 525
 Or whither turn'd, I know not ; nor recall
 Aught of those moments other than the sense
 Of one who struggles in oppressive sleep
 And from the toils of some distressful dream

To break away, with palpitating heart, 530
 Weak limbs, and temples bath'd in death-like dew,
 Makes many a painful effort. When at last
 The sun and nature's face again appear'd,
 Not far I found me; where the public path,
 Winding through cypress groves and swelling meads,
 From Cnossus to the cave of Jove ascends. 536
 Heedless I follow'd on; till soon the skirts
 Of Ida rose before me, and the vault
 Wide-opening, pierced the mountain's rocky side.
 Entering within the threshold, on the ground 540
 I flung me, sad, faint, overworn with toil,

* * * * *

THE
PLEASURES
OF THE
IMAGINATION:

BOOK THE FOURTH.

A FRAGMENT.

MDCCLXX.

ONE effort more, one cheerful sally more,
Our destined course will finish; and in peace
Then, for an offering sacred to the powers
Who lent us gracious guidance, we will then
Inscribe a monument of deathless praise; 5
O my adventurous song!—with steady speed
Long hast thou, on an untried voyage bound,
Sail'd between earth and heaven: hast now survey'd,
Stretch'd out beneath thee, all the mazy tracts
Of PASSION and OPINION; like a waste 10
Of sands and flowery lawns and tangling woods,
Where mortals roam bewilder'd: and hast now
Exulting soar'd among the worlds above,
Or hover'd near the eternal gates of heaven,
If haply the discourses of the gods, 15
A curious, but an unpresuming guest,
Thou might'st partake; and carry back some strain

Of divine wisdom, lawful to repeat,
And apt to be conceived of man below.
A different task remains; the secret paths 20
Of early genius to explore: to trace
Those haunts where Fancy her predestined sons,
Like to the Demigods of old, doth nurse
Remote from eyes profane. Ye happy souls,
Who now her tender discipline obey, 25
Where dwell ye? What wild river's brink at eve
Imprint your steps? What solemn groves at noon
Use ye to visit, often breaking forth
In rapture 'mid your dilatory walk,
Or musing, as in slumber, on the green? 30
—Would I again were with you!—O ye dales
Of Tyne, and ye most ancient woodlands; where
Oft as the giant flood obliquely strides,
And his banks open, and his lawns extend,
Stops short the pleased traveller to view 35
Presiding o'er the scene some rustic tower
Founded by Norman or by Saxon hands:
O ye Northumbrian shades, which overlook
The rocky pavement and the mossy falls
Of solitary Wensbeck's limpid stream; 40
How gladly I recall your well-known seats
Beloved of old, and that delightful time
When all alone, for many a summer's day,
I wander'd through your calm recesses, led
In silence by some powerful hand unseen. 45
Nor will I e'er forget you. Nor shall e'er
The graver tasks of manhood, or the advice
Of vulgar wisdom, move me to disclaim
Those studies which possess'd me in the dawn

Of life, and fix'd the colour of my mind 50
For every future year : whence even now
From sleep I rescue the clear hours of morn,
And, while the world around lies overwhelm'd
In idle darkness, am alive to thoughts
Of honourable Fame, of Truth divine 55
Or Moral, and of MINDS TO VIRTUE WON
By the SWEET MAGIC OF HARMONIOUS VERSE ;
The themes which now expect us. For thus far
On general habits, and on arts which grow
Spontaneous in the minds of all mankind, 60
Hath dwelt our argument ; and how self-taught,
Though seldom conscious of their own employ,
In Nature's or in Fortune's changeful scene
Men learn to judge of BEAUTY, and acquire
Those forms set up, as idols in the soul 65
For love and zealous praise. Yet indistinct,
In vulgar bosoms, and unnoticed lie
These pleasing stores, unless the casual force
Of things external prompt the heedless mind
To recognize her wealth. But some there are 70
Conscious of nature, and the rule which man
O'er nature holds : some who, within themselves
Retiring from the trivial scenes of chance
And momentary passion, can at will
Call up these fair exemplars of the mind ; 75
Review their features ; scan the secret laws
Which bind them to each other : and display
By FORMS, or SOUNDS, or COLOURS, to the sense
Of all the world their latent charms display :
Even as in NATURE's frame (if such a word, 80
If such a word, so bold, may from the lips

Of man proceed) as in this outward frame
Of things, the great ARTIFICER pourtrays
His own immense idea. Various names
These among mortals bear, as various signs 85
They use, and by peculiar organs speak
To human sense. There are who by the flight
Of air through tubes with moving stops distinct,
Or by extended chords, in measure taught
To vibrate, can assemble powerful sounds 90
Expressing every temper of the mind
From every cause, and charming all the soul
With passion void of care. Others mean time
The rugged mass of metal, wood, or stone
Patiently taming; or with easier hand 95
Describing lines, and with more ample scope
Uniting colours; can to general sight
Produce those permanent and perfect forms,
Those characters of heroes and of gods,
Which from the crude materials of the world 100
Their own high minds created. But the chief
Are POETS; eloquent men, who dwell on earth
To clothe whate'er the soul admires or loves
With LANGUAGE and with NUMBERS. Hence to these
A field is open'd wide as nature's sphere; 105
Nay, wider: various as the sudden acts
Of human wit, and vast as the demands
Of human will. The BARD nor length, nor depth,
Nor place, nor form controls. To eyes, to ears,
To every organ of the copious mind, 110
He offereth all his treasures. Him the hours,
The seasons him obey: and changeful Time
Sees him at will keep measure with his flight,

At will outstrip it. To enhance his toil,
He summoneth, from the uttermost extent 115
Of things which God hath taught him, every form
Auxiliar, every power; and all beside
Excludes imperious. His prevailing hand
Gives, to corporeal essence, life and sense
And every stately function of the SOUL. 120
The SOUL itself to him obsequious lies,
Like MATTER's passive heap; and as he wills,
'To reason and affection he assigns
Their just alliances, their just degrees :
Whence his peculiar honours; whence the race 125
Of men who people his delightful world,
Men genuine and according to themselves,
Transcend as far the uncertain sons of earth,
As earth itself to HIS delightful world
The palm of spotless BEAUTY doth resign.

* * * * *

H Y M N

TO THE

N A I A D S.

MDCCXLVI.

A R G U M E N T.

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

O'ER yonder eastern hill the twilight pale
Walks forth from darkness; and the God of day,
With bright Astræa seated by his side,
Waits yet to leave the ocean. Tarry, NYMPHS,
Ye NYMPHS, ye blue-eyed progeny of Thames,

Who now the mazes of this rugged heath
 Trace with your fleeting steps; who all night long
 Repeat, amid the cool and tranquil air,
 Your lonely murmurs, tarry: and receive
 My offer'd lay. To pay you homage due, 10
 I leave the gates of sleep; nor shall my lyre
 Too far into the splendid hours of morn
 Engage your audience: my observant hand
 Shall close the strain ere any sultry beam
 Approach you. To your subterranean haunts 15
 Ye then may timely steal; to pace with care
 The humid sands; to loosen from the soil
 The bubbling sources; to direct the rills
 To meet in wider channels; or beneath
 Some grotto's dripping arch, at height of noon 20
 To slumber, shelter'd from the burning heaven.

Where shall my song begin, ye NYMPHS? or end?
 Wide is your praise and copious—First of things,
 First of the lonely powers, ere TIME arose,
 Were LOVE and CHAOS. LOVE, the sire of FATE; 25
 Elder than CHAOS. Born of FATE was TIME,

V. 25. — Love —

Elder than Chaos.] Hesiod, in his *Theogony*, gives a different account, and makes Chaos the eldest of beings; though he assigns to Love neither father nor superior: which circumstance is particularly mentioned by Phædrus, in *Plato's Banquet*, as being observable not only in Hesiod, but in all other writers both of verse and prose: and on the same occasion he cites a line from *Parmenides*, in which Love is expressly stiled the eldest of all the gods. Yet *Aristophanes*, in *The Birds*, affirms that "Chaos, and Night, and Erebus, and Tartarus, were first; and that Love was produced from an egg, which the sable-winged night deposited in the immense bosom of Erebus." But it must be observed, that the Love designed by this comic poet was always distinguished from the other, from that original and self-existent being the TO ON or ΑΓΑΘΟΝ of *Plato*, and meant only the ΔΗΜΙΟΥΡΓΟΣ or second person of the old *Græcian* trinity; to whom is inscribed a hymn among those which

Who many sons and many comely births
Devour'd, relentless father : 'till the child

pass under the name of *Orpheus*, where he is called *Protogonos*, or the first-begotten, is said to have been born of an egg, and is represented as the principal or origin of all these external appearances of nature. In the fragments of *Orpheus*, collected by *Henry Stephens*, he is named *Phanes*, the discoverer or discloser; who unfolded the ideas of the supreme intelligence, and exposed them to the perception of inferior beings in this visible frame of the world; as *Macrobius*, and *Proclus*, and *Athenagoras* all agree to interpret the several passages of *Orpheus* which they have preserved.

But the Love designed in our text, is the one self-existent and infinite mind, whom if the generality of ancient mythologists have not introduced or truly described in accounting for the production of the world and its appearances; yet, to a modern poet, it can be no objection that he hath ventured to differ from them in this particular; though, in other respects, he professeth to imitate their manner and conform to their opinions. For, in these great points of natural theology, they differ no less remarkably among themselves; and are perpetually confounding the philosophical relations of things with the traditionary circumstances of mythic history; upon which very account, *Callimachus*, in his hymn to *Jupiter*, declareth his dissent from them concerning even an article of the national creed; adding, that the ancient bards were by no means to be depended on. And yet in the exordium of the old *Argonautic* poem, ascribed to *Orpheus*, it is said, that "Love, whom mortals in later times call *Phanes*, was the father of the eternally-begotten Night;" who is generally represented by these mythological poets, as being herself the parent of all things; and who, in the *Indigitamenta*, or *Orphic Hymns*, is said to be the same with *Cypris*, or Love itself. Moreover, in the body of this *Argonautic* poem, where the personated *Orpheus* introduceth himself singing to his lyre in reply to *Chiron*, he celebrateth "the obscure memory of Chaos, and the natures which it contained within itself in a state of perpetual vicissitude; how the heaven had its boundary determined; the generation of the earth; the depth of the ocean; and also the sapient Love, the most ancient, the self-sufficient; with all the beings which he produced when he separated one thing from another." Which noble passage is more directly to *Aristotle's* purpose in the first book of his metaphysics than any of those which he has there quoted, to shew that the ancient poets and mythologists agreed with *Empedocles*, *Anaxagoras*, and the other more sober philosophers, in that natural anticipation and common notion of mankind concerning the necessity of mind and reason to account for the connexion, motion, and good order of the world. For, though neither this poem, nor the hymns which pass under the same name, are, it should seem, the work of the real *Orpheus*; yet beyond all question, they are very ancient. The hymns, more particularly, are allowed to be older than the invasion of Greece by *Xerxes*; and were probably a set

Of RHEA drove him from the upper sky,
And quell'd his deadly might. Then social reign'd

of public and solemn forms of devotion: as appears by a passage in one of them, which *Demosthenes* hath almost literally cited in his first oration against *Aristogiton*, as the saying of *Orpheus*, the founder of their most holy mysteries. On this account, they are of higher authority than any other mythological work now extant, the *Theogony* of *Hesiod* itself not excepted. The poetry of them is often extremely noble; and the mysterious air which prevails in them, together with its delightful impression upon the mind, cannot be better expressed than in that remarkable description with which they inspired the *German* editor *Eschenbach*, when he accidentally met with them at *Leipsic*: "Thesaurum me reperisse credidi, says he, & profecto thesaurum reperi. Incredibile dictu quo me sacro horrore afflaverint indigitamenta ista deorum: nam et tempus ad illorum lectionem eligere cogebar, quod vel solum horrorem incutere animo potest, nocturnum; cum enim totam diem consumserim in contemplando urbis splendore, & in adeundis, quibus scatet urbs illa, viris doctis; sola nox restabat, quam *Orpheo* consecrare potui. In abyssum quendam mysteriorum venerandæ antiquitatis descendere videbar, quotiescunque silente mundo, solis vigilantibus astris et luna, μελανηφάτης istos hymnos ad manus sumsi."

V. 25. *Chaos.*] The unformed, undigested mass of *Moses* and *Plato*: which *Milton* calls

"The womb of nature."

V. 25. *Love, the sire of Fate.*] Fate is the universal system of natural causes; the work of the Omnipotent Mind, or of Love: so *Minucius Felix*: "Quid enim aliud est fatum, quam quod de unoquoque nostrum deus fatus est." So also *Cicero*, in *The first Book on Divination*: "Fatum autem id appello, quod *Græci* ΕΙΡΜΑΡΜΕΝΗΝ; id est, ordinem seriemque causarum, cum causa causæ nexa rein ex se gignat—ex quo intelligitur, ut fatum sit non id quod superstitiose, sed id quod physice dicitur causa æterna rerum." To the same purpose is the doctrine of *Hierocles*, in that excellent fragment concerning Providence and Destiny. As to the three Fates, or Destinies of the poets, they represented that part of the general system of natural causes which relates to man, and to other mortal beings: for so we are told in the hymn addressed to them among the *Orphic Indigitamenta*, where they are called the daughters of Night (or Love), and, contrary to the vulgar notion, are distinguished by the epithets of gentle, and tender-hearted. According to *Hesiod*, *Theog.* ver. 904, they were the daughters of *Jupiter* and *Themis*: but in the *Orphic Hymn to Venus*, or Love, that Goddess is directly stiled the mother of Necessity, and is represented, immediately after, as governing the three Destinies, and conducting the whole system of natural causes.

V. 26. *Born of Fate was Time.*] *Cronos*, *Saturn*, or *Time*, was,

The kindred powers, TETHYS, and reverend OPS, 31
 And spotless VESTA; while supreme of sway
 Remain'd the CLOUD-COMPELLER. From the couch
 Of TETHYS sprang the sedgy-crowned race,
 Who from a thousand urns, o'er every clime, 35
 Send tribute to their parent; and from them
 Are ye, O NAIADS: ARETHUSA fair,

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

V. 27. *Who many sons devour'd.*] The known fable of Saturn devouring his children was certainly meant to imply the dissolution of natural bodies; which are produced and destroyed by Time.

V. 29. *The child of Rhea.*] *Jupiter*, so called by *Pindar*.

V. 29. *Drove him from the upper sky.*] That *Jupiter* dethroned his father *Saturn*, is recorded by all the mythologists. *Phurnutus*, or *Cornutus*, the author of a little *Greek* treatise, on the nature of the gods, informs us, that by *Jupiter* was meant the vegetable soul of the world, which restrained and prevented those uncertain alterations which *Saturn*, or Time, used formerly to cause in the mundane system.

V. 30. *Then social reign'd.*] Our mythology here supposeth, that before the establishment of the vital, vegetative, plastic nature (represented by *Jupiter*), the four elements were in a variable and unsettled condition; but afterwards, well-disposed and at peace among themselves. *Tethys* was the wife of the Ocean; *Ops*, or *Rhea*, the Earth; *Vesta*, the eldest daughter of *Saturn*, Fire; and the cloud-compeller, or Ζεὺς νεφέληγεσέτης, the Air: though he also represented the plastic principle of nature, as may be seen in the *Orphic* hymn inscribed to him.

V. 34. *The sedgy-crowned race.*] The river-gods; who, according to *Hesiod's* Theogony, were the sons of *Oceanus* and *Tethys*.

V. 36, 37. *From them, are ye, O Naiads.*] The descent of the Naiads is less certain than most points of the *Greek* mythology. *Homer*, *Odyss.* xiii. κῆρυαι Διός. *Virgil* in *The Eighth Book of the Æneid*, speaks as if the Nymphs, or Naiads, were the parents of the rivers: but in this he contradicts the testimony of *Hesiod*, and evidently departs from the orthodox system, which representeth several nymphs as pertaining to every single river. On the other hand, *Callimachus*, who was very learned in all the school-divinity of those times, in his hymn to *Delos*, maketh *Peneus*, the great *Thessalian* river-god, the father of his nymphs: and *Ovid*, in *The Fourteenth Book of his Metamorphoses*, mentions the Naiads of *Latium* as the immediate daughters of the neighbouring river-gods. Accordingly, the Naiads of particular rivers are occasionally, both by *Ovid* and

And tuneful AGANIPPE; that sweet name,
 BANDUSIA; that soft family which dwelt
 With Syrian DAPHNE; and the honour'd tribes 40
 Beloved of PÆON. Listen to my strain,
 Daughters of TETHYS: listen to your praise.

You, NYMPHS! the WINGED OFFSPRING, which of old
 AURORA to divine ASTRÆUS bore,
 Owns, and your aid beseecheth. When the might
 Of HYPERI'ON, from his noontide throne, 46
 Unbends their languid pinions, aid from you
 They ask: FAVONIUS and the mild SOUTH-WEST
 From you relief implore. Your sallying streams
 Fresh vigour to their weary wings impart. 50
 Again they fly, disporting; from the mead
 Half ripen'd and the tender blades of corn,
 To sweep the noxious mildew; or dispel
 Contagious steams, which oft the parched earth
 Breathes on her fainting sons. From noon to eve, 55
 Along the river and the paved brook,

Statius, called by a patronymic, from the name of the river to which they belong.

V. 40. *Syrian Daphne.*] The grove of *Daphne* in *Syria* near *Antioch*, was famous for its delightful fountains.

V. 40, 41. *The tribes beloved by Pæon.* Mineral and medicinal springs. *Pæon* was the physician of the gods.

V. 43. *The winged offspring.*] The Winds; who, according to *Hesiod* and *Apollodorus*, were the sons of *Astræus* and *Aurora*.

V. 46. *Hyperion.*] A son of *Cælum* and *Tellus*, and father of the Sun, who is thence called, by *Pindar*, *Hyperionides*. But *Hyperion* is put by *Homer* in the same manner as here, for the Sun himself.

V. 49. *Your sallying streams.*] The state of the atmosphere with respect to rest and motion is, in several ways, affected by rivers and running streams; and that more especially in hot seasons: first, they destroy its equilibrium, by cooling those parts of it with which they are in contact; and secondly, they communicate their own motion; and the air which is thus moved by them, being left heated, is of consequence more elastic than other parts of the atmosphere, and therefore fitter to preserve and to propagate that motion.

Ascend the cheerful breezes : hail'd of bards
 Who, fast by learned Cam, the Æolian lyre
 Solicit ; nor unwelcome to the youth
 Who on the heights of Tibur, all inclined 60
 O'er rushing Anio, with a pious hand
 The reverend scene delineates, broken fanes,
 Or tombs, or pillar'd aqueducts, the pomp
 Of ancient Time ; and haply, while he scans
 The ruins, with a silent tear revolves 65
 The fame and fortune of imperious Rome.

You too, O NYMPHS, and your unenvious aid
 The rural powers confess ; and still prepare
 For you their choicest treasures. PAN commands,
 Oft as the DELIAN KING with SIRIUS holds 70
 The central heavens, the father of the grove
 Commands his DRYADS over your abodes
 To spread their deepest umbrage. Well the god
 Remembereth how indulgent ye supplied
 Your genial dew to nurse them in their prime. 75

PALES, the pasture's queen, where'er ye stray,
 Pursues your steps, delighted ; and the path
 With living verdure clothes. Around your haunts
 The laughing CHLORIS, with profusest hand,
 Throws wide her blooms, her odours. Still with you
 POMONA seeks to dwell : and o'er the lawns, 81
 And o'er the vale of Richmond, where with Thames
 Ye love to wander, AMALTHEA pours

V. 70. *Delian king.*] One of the epithets of *Apollo*, or the Sun, in the *Orphic* hymn inscribed to him.

V. 79. *Chloris.*] The ancient *Greek* name for *Flora*.

V. 83. *Amalthea.*] The mother of the first *Bacchus*, whose birth and education was written, as *Diodorus Siculus* informs us, in the old *Pelasgic* character, by *Thymætes*, grandson to *Laomedon*, and contemporary with *Orpheus*. *Thymætes* had travelled over *Libya* to

Well-pleas'd the wealth of that Ammonian horn,
 Her dower; unmindful of the fragrant isles 85
 Nysæan or Atlantic. Nor can'st thou,
 (Albeit oft ungrateful, thou dost mock
 The beverage of the sober NAIAD's urn,
 O BROMIUS, O LENÆAN) nor can'st thou
 Disown the powers whose bounty, ill repaid, 90
 With nectar feeds thy tendrils. Yet from me,
 Yet, blameless NYMPHS, from my delighted lyre,
 Accept the rites your bounty well may claim;
 Nor heed the scoffings of the EDONIAN band.

For better praise awaits you. Thames, your sire,
 As down the verdant slope your duteous rills 96
 Descend; the tribute stately Thames receives,
 Delighted; and your piety applauds;
 And bids his copious tide roll on secure,

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

——— "that *Nysæan* isle

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

V. 94. *Edonian band*.] The priestesses and other ministers of *Bacchus*; so called from *Edonus*, a mountain of *Thrace*, where his rites were celebrated.

H Y M N T O T H E N A I A D S. 169

For faithful are his daughters ; and with words 100
 Auspicious gratulates the bark which, now
 His banks forsaking, her adventurous wings
 Yields to the breeze, with Albion's happy gifts
 Extremest isles to bless. And oft at morn,
 When HERMES, from Olympus bent, o'er earth 105
 To bear the words of Jove, on yonder hill
 Stoops lightly-sailing ; oft, intent your springs
 He views : and waving o'er some new-born stream
 His blest pacific wand, " And yet," he cries,
 " Yet," cries the son of MAIA, " though recluse 110
 " And silent be your stores, from you, fair NYMPHS,
 " Flows wealth and kind society to men.
 " By you my function and my honour'd name
 " Do I possess ; while o'er the Boëtic vale,
 " Or through the towers of Memphis, or the palms
 " By sacred Ganges water'd, I conduct 116
 " The English merchant : with the buxom fleece
 " Of fertile Ariconium while I clothe
 " Sarmatian kings ; or to the household gods
 " Of Syria, from the bleak Cornubian shore, 120
 " Dispense the mineral treasure which of old
 " Sidonian pilots sought, when this fair land
 " Was yet unconscious of those generous arts
 " Which wise Phœnicia from their native clime
 " Transplanted to a more indulgent heaven." 125

V. 105. *When Hermes.*] *Hermes*, or *Mercury*, was the patron of commerce ; in which benevolent character he is addressed by the author of the *Indigitamenta*, in these beautiful lines :

Ερμηνεῦ πάντων, κερδέμπορε λυσιμέρινε,
 "Ὅς χερσέσθιν ἔχεις εἰρήνης ὄπλον ἀμέμφες.

V. 121. *Dispense the mineral treasure.*] The merchants of *Sidon* and *Tyre* made frequent voyages to the coast of *Cornwall*, from whence they carried home great quantities of tin.

170 HYMN TO THE NAIADS.

Such are the words of HERMES : such the praise,
 O NAIADS, which from tongues celestial waits
 Your bounteous deeds. From bounty issueth power :
 And those who, sedulous in prudent works,
 Relieve the wants of Nature, Jove repays 130
 With noble wealth, and his own seat on earth,
 Fit judgments to pronounce, and curb the might
 Of wicked men. Your kind unfailing urns
 Not vainly to the hospitable arts
 Of HERMES yield their store. For, O ye NYMPHS,
 Hath he not won the unconquerable queen 136
 Of arms to court your friendship ? You she owns
 The fair associates who extend her sway
 Wide o'er the mighty deep ; and grateful things
 Of you she uttereth, oft as from the shore 140
 Of Thames, or Medway's vale, or the green banks
 Of Vecta, she her thundering navy leads
 To Calpe's foaming channel, or the rough
 Cantabrian surge ; her auspices divine
 Imparting to the senate and the prince 145
 Of Albion, to dismay barbaric kings,
 The Iberian or the Celt. The pride of kings
 Was ever scorn'd by PALLAS : and old
 Rejoiced the virgin, from the brazen prow
 Of Athens o'er Ægina's gloomy surge, 150

V. 136. *Hath he not won.*] *Mercury*, the patron of commerce, being so greatly dependent on the good offices of the Naiads, in return obtains for them the friendship of *Minerva*, the goddess of war : for military power, at least the naval part of it, hath constantly followed the establishment of trade ; which exemplifies the preceding observation, that "from bounty issueth power."

V. 143. 144. *Calpe—Cantabrian surge.*] *Gibraltar* and the Bay of *Biscay*.

V. 150. *Ægina's gloomy surge.*] Near this island, the *Athenians* obtained the victory of *Salamis*, over the *Persian* navy.

HYMN TO THE NAIADS. 171

To drive her clouds and storms : o'erwhelming all
 The Persian's promised glory, when the realms
 Of Indus and the soft Ionian clime,
 When Libya's torrid champain and the rocks
 Of cold Imaüs join'd their servile bands, 155
 To sweep the sons of liberty from earth.

In vain : MINERVA on the bounding prow
 Of Athens stood, and with the thunder's voice
 Denounced her terrors on their impious heads,
 And shook her burning ægis. XERXES saw : 160
 From Heracléum, on the mountain's height,
 Throned in his golden car, he knew the sign.
 Celestial ; felt unrighteous hope forsake
 His faltering heart, and turn'd his face with shame.

Hail, ye who share the stern MINERVA's power ;
 Who arm the hand of liberty for war : 166
 And give to the renown'd Britannic name
 To awe contending monarchs : yet benign,
 Yet mild of nature : to the works of peace
 More prone, and lenient of the many ills 170

Which wait on human life. Your gentle aid
 HYGEIA well can witness ; she who saves,
 From poisonous cates and cups of pleasing bane,
 The wretch devoted to the intangling snares
 Of BACCHUS and of COMUS. Him she leads 175
 To CYNTHIA's lonely haunts. To spread the toils ;
 To beat the coverts ; with the jovial horn
 At dawn of day to summon the loud hounds ;
 She calls the lingering sluggard from his dreams :

V. 160. *Xerxes saw.*] This circumstance is recorded in that passage, perhaps the most splendid among all the remains of ancient history, where *Plutarch*, in his *Life of Themistocles*, describes the sea-fights of *Artemisium* and *Salamis*.

And where his breast may drink the mountain breeze,
 And where the fervor of the sunny vale 181
 May beat upon his brow, through devious paths
 Beckons his rapid courser. Nor when ease,
 Cool ease and welcome slumbers have becalm'd
 His eager bosom, does the queen of health 185
 Her pleasing care withhold. His decent board
 She guards, presiding; and the frugal powers
 With joy sedate leads in: and while the brown
 ENNÆAN dame, with PAN presents her stores;
 While changing still, and comely in the change, 190
 VERTUMNUS and the HOURS before him spread
 The garden's banquet; you to crown his feast,
 To crown his feast, O NAIADS! you the fair
 HYGEIA calls: and from your shelving seats,
 And groves of poplar, plenteous cups ye bring, 195
 To slake his veins: till soon a purer tide
 Flows down those loaded channels; washeth off
 The dregs of luxury, the lurking seeds
 Of crude disease; and through the abodes of life
 Sends vigour, sends repose. Hail! NAIADS: hail!
 Who give, to labour, health; to stooping age, 201
 The joys which youth had squander'd. Oft your urns
 Will I invoke; and frequent in your praise,
 Abash the frantic THYRSUS with my song.

For not estranged from your benignant arts 205
 Is he, the god, to whose mysterious shrine
 My youth was sacred, and my votive cares
 Belong; the learned PÆON. Oft, when all
 His cordial treasures he hath search'd in vain;

V. 204. *Thyrus.*] A staff, or spear, wreathed round with ivy:
 of constant use in the bacchanalian mysteries.

HYMN TO THE NAIADS. 173

When herbs, and potent trees, and drops of balm,
 Rich with the genial influence of the sun ; 211
 To rouse dark fancy from her plaintive dreams,
 To brace the nerveless arm, with food to win
 Sick appetite, or hush the unquiet breast
 Which pines with silent passion, he in vain 215
 Hath proved ; to your deep mansions he descends ;
 Your gates of humid rock, your dim arcades,
 He entereth ; where impurpled veins of ore
 Gleam on the roof ; where through the rigid mine
 Your trickling rills insinuate. There the god, 220
 From your indulgent hands the streaming bowl
 Wafts to his pale-eyed suppliants ; wafts the seeds
 Metallic and the elemental salts,
 Wash'd from the pregnant glebe. They drink : and soon
 Flies pain ; flies inauspicious care : and soon 225
 The social haunt or unfrequented shade
 Hears Io, Io PÆAN ; as of old,
 When PYTHON fell. And, O propitious NYMPHS !
 Oft as for hapless mortals I implore
 Your salutary springs, through every urn 230
 Oh shed your healing treasures. With the first
 And finest breath, which from the genial strife
 Of mineral fermentation springs, like light
 O'er the fresh morning's vapours ; lustrate then
 The fountain, and inform the rising wave. 235
 My lyre shall pay your bounty. Scorn not ye
 That humble tribute. Though a mortal hand
 Excite the strings to utterance, yet for themes
 Not unregarded of celestial powers,

V. 227. *Io, Pæan.*] An exclamation of victory and triumph, derived from *Apollo's* encounter with *Python*.

I frame their language ; and the Muses deign 240
 To guide the pious tenor of my lay.
 The Muses (sacred by their gifts divine)
 In early days did to my wondering sense
 Their secrets oft reveal ; oft my raised ear
 In slumber felt their music : oft, at noon 245
 Or hour of sunset, by some lonely stream,
 In field or shady grove, they taught me words
 Of power from death and envy to preserve
 The good man's name. Whence yet with grateful mind
 And offerings unprofaned by ruder eye, 250
 My vows I send, my homage, to the seats
 Of rocky Cirrha, where with you they dwell :
 Where you, their chaste companions, they admit
 Through all the hallow'd scene : where oft intent,
 And leaning o'er Castalia's mossy verge, 255
 They mark the cadence of your confluent urns,
 How tuneful ! yielding gratefulest repose
 To their consorted measure : 'till again,
 With emulation all the sounding choir,
 And bright Apollo, leader of the song, 260
 Their voices through the liquid air exalt,
 And sweep their lofty strings : those powerful strings
 That charm the mind of gods : that fill the courts
 Of wide Olympus with oblivion sweet
 Of evils, with immortal rest from cares ; 265
 Assuage the terrors of the throne of Jove ;

V. 352. *Cirrha.*] One of the summits of *Parnassus*, and sacred to *Apollo*. Near it were several fountains, said to be frequented by the Muses. *Nysa*, the other eminence of the same mountain, was dedicated to *Bacchus*.

V. 263. *Charm the mind of gods.*] This whole passage, concerning the effects of sacred music among the gods, is taken from *Pindar's* first *Pythian* ode.

HYMN TO THE NAIADS.

And quench the formidable thunderbolt
 Of unrelenting fire. With slacken'd wings,
 While now the solemn concert breathes around,
 Incumbent o'er the sceptre of his lord 270
 Sleeps the stern eagle; by the number'd notes,
 Possess'd; and satiate with the melting tone:
 Sovereign of birds. The furious god of war,
 His darts forgetting, and the winged wheels
 That bear him vengeful o'er the embattled plain, 275
 Relents, and sooths his own fierce heart to ease,
 Most welcome ease. The SIRE of gods and men,
 In that great moment of divine delight,
 Looks down on all that live; and whatsoe'er
 He loves not, o'er the peopled earth and o'er 280
 The interminated ocean; he beholds
 Cursed with abhorrence by his doom severe,
 And troubled at the sound. Ye NAIADS, ye
 With ravish'd ears the melody attend,
 Worthy of sacred silence. But the slaves 285
 Of BACCHUS, with tempestuous clamours strive
 To drown the heavenly strains; of highest Jove,
 Irreverent; and by mad presumption fired,
 Their own discordant raptures to advance
 With hostile emulation. Down they rush 290
 From Nysa's vine-impurpled cliff, the dames
 Of Thrace, the Satyrs, and the unruly Fauns,
 With old Silenus, reeling through the crowd
 Which gambols round him, in convulsions wild
 Tossing their limbs, and brandishing in air 295
 The ivy-mantled thyrsus, or the torch
 Through black smoke flaming, to the Phrygian pipe's

V. 297. *Phrygian pipe's.*] The *Phrygian* music was fantastic and turbulent, and fit to excite disorderly passions.

Shrill voice, and to the clashing cymbals; mix'd
 With shrieks and frantic uproar. May the gods
 From every unpolluted ear avert 300
 Their orgies! If within the seats of men,
 Within the walls, the gates, where Pallas holds
 The guardian key, if haply there be found
 Who loves to mingle with the revel-band
 And hearken to their accents; who aspires 305
 From *such* instructors to inform his breast
 With verse; let him, fit votarist, implore
 Their inspiration. He, perchance, the gifts
 Of young Lyæus, and the dread exploits,
 May sing in aptest numbers: he, the fate 310
 Of sober Pentheus, he, the Paphian rites,
 And naked Mars with Cytherea chain'd,
 And strong Alcides in the spinster's robes,
 May celebrate, applauded. But with you
 O NAIADS, far from that unhallow'd rout, 315
 Must dwell the man, whoe'er to praised themes
 Invokes the immortal Muse. The immortal Muse
 To your calm habitations, to the cave
 Corycian or the Delphic mount, will guide

V. 302. *The gates where Pallas holds*

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

V. 311. *Fate of sober Pentheus.*] *Pentheus* was torn in pieces by the bacchanalian priests and women, for despising their mysteries.

V. 319. *The cave Corycian.*] Of this cave *Pausanias*, in his *Tenth Book*, gives the following description: "Between *Delphi* and the eminences of *Parnassus*, is a road to the grotto of *Corycium*, which has its name from the nymph *Corycia*, and is by far the most remarkable which I have seen. One may walk a great way into it without a torch. 'Tis of a considerable height, and hath

HYMN TO THE NAIADS.

177

His footsteps ; and with your unsullied streams 320
 His lips will bathe : whether the eternal lore
 Of Themis, or the majesty of Jove,
 To mortals he reveal ; or teach his lyre
 The unenvied guerdon of the patriot's toils,
 In those unfading islands of the bless'd, 325
 Where sacred Bards abide. Hail, honour'd Nymphs !
 Thrice hail ! For you the Cyrenaic shell
 Behold, I touch, revering. To my songs
 Be present ye, with favourable feet,
 And all profaner audience far remove. 330

“several springs within it ; and yet a much greater quantity of
 “water distills from the shell and roof, so as to be continually
 “dropping on the ground. The people round *Parnassus* hold it
 “sacred to the *Corycian* nymphs and to *Pan*.”

V. 319. *Delphic mount*.] *Delphi*, the seat and oracle of *Apollo*,
 had a mountaineous and rocky situation, on the skirts of *Parnassus*.

V. 327. *Cyrenaic shell*.] *Cyrene* was the native country of *Cal-
 limachus*, whose hymns are the most remarkable example of that
 mythological passion which is assumed in the preceding poem, and
 have always afforded particular pleasure to the author of it, by
 reason of the mysterious solemnity with which they affect the mind.
 On this account he was induced to attempt somewhat in the same
 manner ; solely by way of exercise : the manner itself being now
 almost entirely abandoned in poetry. And as the mere genealogy,
 or the personal adventures of heathen gods, could have been but
 little interesting to a modern reader ; it was therefore thought pro-
 per to select some convenient part of the history of nature, and to
 employ these ancient divinities as it is probable they were first em-
 ployed ; to wit, in personifying natural causes, and in representing
 the mutual agreement or opposition of the corporeal and moral pow-
 ers of the world ; which hath been accounted the very highest office
 of poetry.



HYMN TO SCIENCE.

“ O vitæ philosophia dux ! O virtutis indagatrix, expultrixq’ vitiorum.
 “ — Tu urbes peperisti ; tu inventrix legum, tu magistra morum et
 “ disciplinæ fuisti : ad te confugimus, a te opem petimus.”

CIC. *Tusc. Quæst.*

SCIENCE ! thou fair effusive ray,
 From the great Source of mental day,

Free, generous, and refined,
Descend with all thy treasures fraught,
Illumine each bewilder'd thought,
And bless my labouring mind. 6

But first with thy resistless light
Disperse those phantoms from my sight,
Those mimic shades of thee,
The scholiast's learning, sophist's cant,
The visionary bigot's rant,
The monk's philosophy. 12

O let thy powerful charms impart
The patient head, the candid heart,
Devoted to thy sway,
Which no weak passions e'er mislead,
Which still with dauntless steps proceed
Where Reason points the way ! 18

Give me to learn each secret cause ;
Let Number's, Figure's, Motion's laws
Reveal'd before me stand ;
These to great Nature's scenes apply,
And round the globe and through the sky
Disclose her working hand. 24

Next, to thy nobler search resign'd,
The busy, restless, HUMAN MIND
Through every maze pursue ;
Detect Perception, where it lies,
Catch the ideas as they rise,
And all their changes view. 30

Say from what simple springs began
The vast ambitious thoughts of MAN,
Which range beyond control ;
Which seek eternity to trace,

Dive through the infinity of space,
And strain to grasp the whole ? 36

Her secret stores let MEMORY tell ;
Bid FANCY quit her fairy cell,
In all her colours drest ;
While prompt, her sallies to control,
REASON, the judge, recalls the soul
To TRUTH's severest test. 42

Then launch through Being's wide extent ;
Let the fair scale with just ascent
And cautious steps be trod,
And from the dead corporeal mass,
Through each progressive order pass
To INSTINCT,—REASON,—GOD. 48

There, SCIENCE ! veil thy daring eye,
No dive too deep, nor soar too high,
In that divine abyss ;
To FAITH, content thy beams to lend,
Her hopes to assure, her steps befriend,
And light her way to bliss. 54

Then downwards take thy flight again,
Mix with the policies of MEN,
And social Nature's ties ;
The plan, the genius of each state,
Its interest, and its powers, relate,
Its fortunes, and its rise. 60

Through PRIVATE LIFE pursue thy course,
Trace every action to its source,
And means and motives weigh ;
Put tempers, passions, in the scale,
Mark what degrees in each prevail,
And fix the doubtful sway. 66

That last, best effort of thy skill,
 To FORM THE LIFE, and RULE THE WILL,
 Propitious Power ! impart ;
 Teach me to cool my passion's fires,
 Make me the judge of my desires,
 The master of my heart.

72

Raise me above the *vulgar's breath*,
Pursuit of fortune, fear of death,
 And all in life that's mean :
 Still true to REASON be my plan,
 Still let my actions speak the MAN
 Through every various scene.

78

Hail ! queen of Manners, light of Truth ;
 Hail ! charm of age, and guide of youth ;
 Sweet refuge of distress ;
 In business thou, exact, polite ;
 Thou givest Retirement its delight,
 Prosperity its grace.

84

Of wealth, power, freedom, thou the cause ;
 Foundress of order, cities, laws ;
 Of arts inventress, thou !
 Without thee, what were humankind ?
 How vast their wants, their thoughts how blind,
 Their joys how mean ! how few !

90

SUN OF THE SOUL ! thy beams unveil ;
 Let others spread the daring sail
 On Fortune's faithless sea,
 While undeluded, happier, I
 From the vain tumult timely fly,
 And sit in peace with thee.

96

