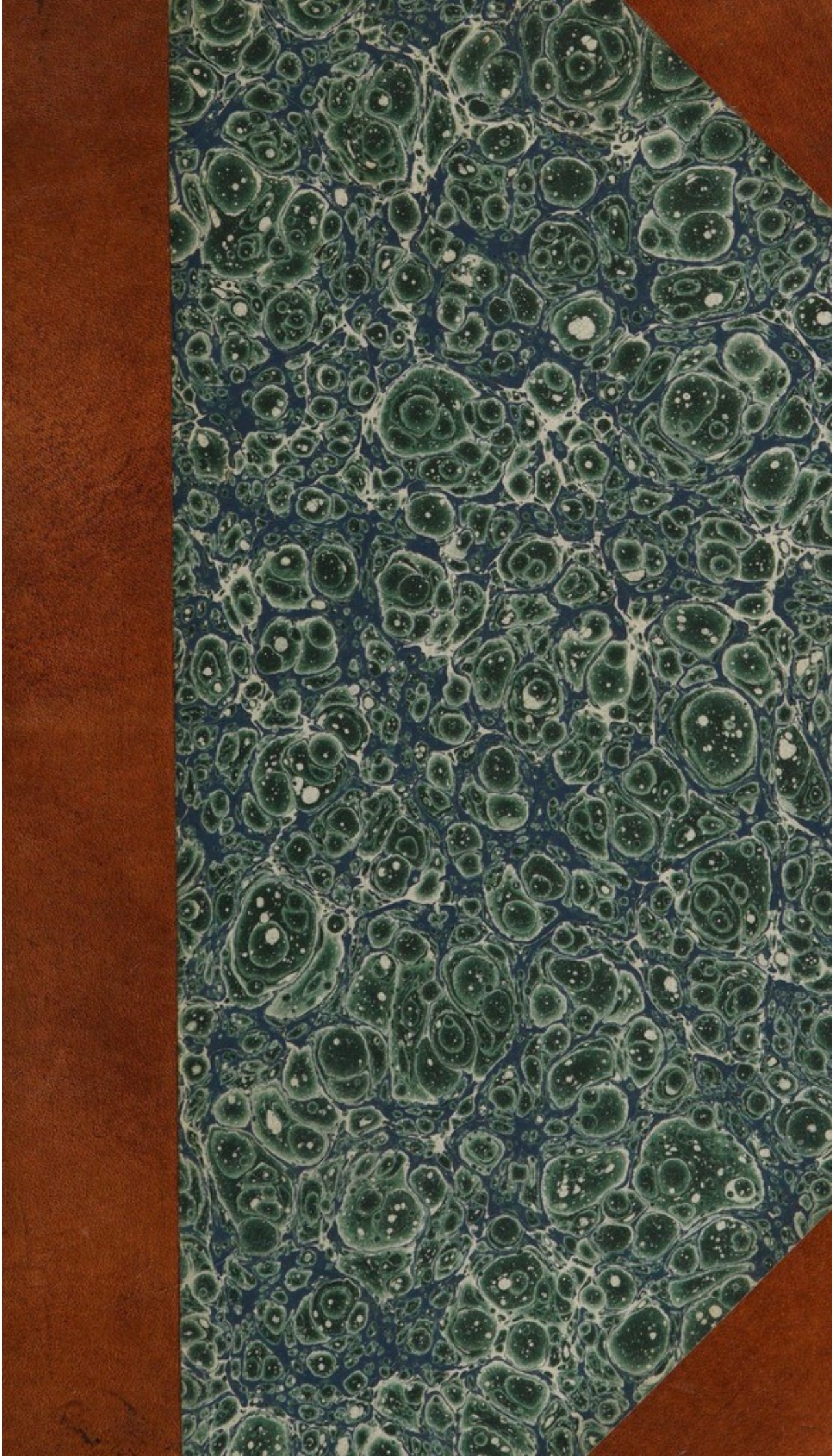

THE ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

By JOHN ARMSTRONG, M.D.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A CRITICAL ESSAY ON THE POEM,

By J. AIKIN, M.D.

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ON

DR. ARMSTRONG'S POEM

ON THE

ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

THE Poems termed *Didactic* may be considered as of two kinds. Those to which the term is more properly applied, are such as directly profess to teach some art or science. The other species consists of those which, taking up some speculative topic, establish a theory concerning it by argument and illustration. Of the former kind, many will familiarly occur to the reader's memory; and the piece before us is an example of it. Of the latter, are various philosophical and argumentative pieces, from the poem of LUCRETIUS on the Epicurean system, to POPE'S Essay on Man, and AKENSIDE'S Pleasures of the Imagination. A middle place between

the two ſeems to be occupied by moral poetry, which, at the ſame time that it lays down practical rules for the conduct of life, diſcuſſes the theoretical principles on which they are founded.

Now, in eſtimating the reſpective value of theſe different products of the poetic art, it will be neceſſary to begin with conſidering what poetry eſſentially is, and what are its powers and purpoſes. It is, I conceive, eſſential to poetry that it ſhould preſent ideas to the imagination, either agreeable of themſelves, or rendered ſo by the cloathing and accompanyments given to them. Its leading aim is to pleaſe; and its powers are, to a certain degree, to make pleaſing what would not be ſo of itſelf. If, therefore, by the poet's art, to the main end of giving pleaſure, can be aſſociated that of communicating inſtruction in ſuch a way as will more ſtrongly and agreeably impreſs it on the mind, its complete purpoſe may be ſaid to be attained. Delight and profit combined are all that can be wiſhed from the nobleſt of the fine arts.

But there are ſubjects, the nature of which renders ſuch a combination ſcarcely poſſible, and in which every attempt to produce it, can only yield an incongruous mixture of ill-placed ornament and defective inſtruction. Theſe are eſpecially to be found in thoſe arts of life which depend upon the application of mechanical rules, or the practical ſkill acquired by experience. To deſcribe the minute proceſſes of manual art in verſe, in ſuch a manner as that they ſhall be underſtood, is not only a very difficult taſk, but a wholly fruitleſs one; ſince, after all, the deſcription cannot be ſo clear and preciſe as one written in proſe, nor can the verſe riſe to poetry. We may, indeed, admire the ſkill ſhewn in the attempt to decorate a barren ſubject, but we muſt regret that the writer's talents were ſo ill employed. So obvious is this concluſion, that we may be aſſured no one ever wrote a didactic poem for the ſimple purpoſe of teaching an art. The choice has therefore been dictated by a ſearch after novelty, or the deſire of exhibiting a proof of poetical ſkill. Theſe motives are expreſsly avowed by VIRGIL

in his Georgics, and are much more probable than the deep political design attributed to that poem, of exciting the Roman nobility to the purſuits of agriculture.

But while perhaps *every* poem ſtrictly didactic labours under the inconvenience of a ſubject not calculated for diſplaying the art of poetry in its faireſt form, ſome, both from their nature, and from the manner of treating them, are leſs defective in this reſpect than others. Thus, certain arts are cloſely connected in their theory with large and philoſophical views of the ſyſtem of the univerſe, or of the principles of the human mind. Some, even in their practice, afford matter for pleaſing deſcription, and admit of eaſy illuſtration from the moſt ſtriking and agreeable objects of external nature. For example, the arts of huſbandry are evidently allied to a vaſt variety of great and intereſting topics; and we all know how advantageouſly VIRGIL has employed them as the ground-work of one of the moſt pleaſing poems of antiquity. This piece, however, will alſo ſerve to ſhew the

unfavourable effect of attempting to expreſs matter purely technical in a poetical manner. For no unprejudiced reader will deny, that in many of the preceptive paſſages, notwithſtanding the variety of reſources he employs to elevate them into poetry, he is overpowered by his ſubject, and chained, as it were, to the earth he is labouring;—while on the other hand, as a teacher of the art, he is frequently ſo obſcure, as to have embarraſſed the whole race of agricultural and literary critics ſince his time. It may alſo be obſerved, that had he extended his views further into the philoſophical part of his ſubject, and made a full uſe of the moral and phyſical variety it was capable of affording, he would not have found it neceſſary to wander into digreſſions ſo remotely connected with his propoſed topics, as ſcarcely to be juſtified by any reaſonable claim of poetic licence. For even the ſemblance of teaching is deſtroyed by deviations, the manifeſt purpoſe of which is to diſengage the reader's attention from the main ſubject, and fix it upon ſomewhat more captivating to the imagination.

With reſpect to the Piece before us, its ſubject ſeems on the whole as happily calculated for didactic poetry, as moſt of thoſe which have been taken for the purpoſe. To ſay that it is a peculiarly proper one for a phyſician to write upon, is ſaying nothing of conſequence to the reader. But the preſervation of health is, in the firſt place, a matter of general importance, and therefore intereſting to readers of every claſs. Then, although its rules, ſcientifically conſidered, belong to a particular profeſſion, and require previous ſtudies for their full comprehenſion, yet in the popular uſe, they are level to the underſtanding and experience of every man of reading and reflection. Had the ſubject been more ſtrictly medical, ſuch as the nature and cure of a particular diſeaſe, it would have been liable to the objections attending a confined and profeſſional topic; and like the *Siphylis* of FRACASTORIUS, could ſcarcely, by the greateſt poetical ſkill, have been rendered generally pleaſing or inſtructive. But every man being in ſome meaſure entruſted with the care of his own health, and

being accuſtomed to ſpeculations concerning Air, Diet, Exerciſe, and the Paſſions, the ſubject may be conſidered as univerſal. It is true, theſe topics can be poetically treated only in a popular manner, and the writer who chuſes the vehicle of verſe in treating of them, muſt take up with common and perhaps ſuperficial notions. But by aſſociating theſe notions with images addreſſed to the imagination, he may convey them in a more agreeable form; and he may advantageouſly employ the diction of poetry to give to practical rules an energy and conciſeneſs of expreſſion which may forcibly imprint them on the memory. This power is, indeed, the principal circumſtance which imparts real utility to didactic poetry; and we all feel its effects on becoming acquainted with the moral and critical works of ſuch authors as HORACE, BOILEAU, and POPE. Further, the topics with which the Art of Health is converſant, are connected with various of the loftieſt and moſt extenſive ſpeculations on general nature; and in purſuing the regular vein of thought, many ſources of truly poetical

ideas may be opened. It remains now to examine how far the author has availed himſelf of the advantages of his ſubject, and in what manner he has ſupported the character of a didactic poet.

As Invocation is an eſtabliſhed part of a regular poem, it was neceſſary that the piece before us ſhould be provided with that decoration. The choice of HYGEIA, or the Goddeſs of Health, for the object of addreſs, was dictated by a very obvious propriety. The manner is imitated from that of LUCRETIUS in his fine invocation of Venus; and much imagination is diſplayed in the deſcription of her approach, and of the various baleful forms of diſeaſe and death that fly from her preſence.

Of the ſources from which health is drawn, ſalubrious air is one of the moſt remarkable. Air, therefore, with propriety, is made the peculiar topic of the firſt book. Perhaps a deſcriptive paſſage of more ſtrength can ſcarcely be met with than that which enumerates the

various contaminations of this element in a crowded city. The ideas, indeed, in their own nature diſguſting, might be thought almoſt too vividly repreſented, did they not by contraſt add to the ſweetneſs of the ſubſequent rural picture, the effect of which is almoſt equal to that of the fabled calenture in calling forth irreſiſtible longings after the country. Every reader familiar with the vicinity of the metropolis will feel peculiar pleaſure from the glimpſes given of thoſe favourite ſummer retreats, Windſor, Richmond, Dulwich, and Hampſtead, which will excite in his mind particular images, always much more engaging to the fancy than general ones. The poet next exerciſes his invention in one of the higher efforts of the art, that of allegorical perſonification. His figure and genealogy of *Quartana*, are well imagined; but like moſt of thoſe who create theſe fancy-formed beings, he fails in the *agency* he attributes to her; for in merely inſpiring a fit of the ague, ſhe acts not as a perſon, but as an incorporeal cauſe.

He goes on to deſcribe the different ſites unfriendly to health, particularly the too moiſt and the too dry, which he makes the foundation of what are called in the ſchools of phyſic the phlegmatic and melancholic temperaments. In his inſtructions how to guard againſt the evils of different ſituations, he ſomewhat anticipates his future topics of diet and exerciſe. The paſſage, however, is full of vigorous deſcription; and the means of correcting the watery and the parched ſoil afford ſpirited ſketches of landſcape. But he is no where ſo minute, as in that perpetual topic of an Engliſhman, the bad weather under which our iſland is ſo frequently ſubmerged. A kind of ſplenetic ſtrength of painting diſtinguiſhes his gloomy draught of loaded ſkies and eaſtern blaſts, and of that vexatious ficklenefs of weather, in which all the ſeaſons ſeem to " mix in every monſtrous day."

We are, however, brought into good-humour again by the deſcription of cheerful, dry, and ſheltered ſpots in which atmoſpherical evils may be palliated; and the

concluding eulogy on the cheering and invigorating influence of ſolar heat, leaves the fancy agreeably impreſſed with a ſenſation ſimilar to that imparted by a ſerene ſummer's day. On the whole, the deſcriptive beauties of this book are conſiderable; but as a leading head of his ſubject, it might, I conceive, have been lengthened with advantage, by ſome circumſtances relative to the influence of air upon health, which he has not touched upon. The ſudden operation upon the ſpirits by alterations in the weight of the atmoſphere, as indicated by the barometer, and the medicinal effects of change of climate upon invalids, would have afforded matter both for curious diſcuſſion, and intereſting, and even pathetic, narration.

Diet, the ſubject of the ſecond book, is, as the writer obſerves on entering upon it, comparatively barren and unfavourable to poetry. It is evidently more immerſed in technical inveſtigations than the former; and its connexion with the groſſeſt of the ſenſual pleaſures, renders

it difficult to be treated on without derogating from the dignity of a philoſophical poem. Dr. ARMSTRONG, however, has managed it with judgment. He begins with a ſcientific topic, neceſſary as a foundation for the preceptive part which is to follow—the circulation of the blood. This function, however, admits of eaſy illuſtration from the common principles of hydraulics, as diſplayed in the motion of water through pipes and channels. The conſtant waſte of ſolid particles that ſuch a perpetual current muſt produce, demonſtrates the neceſſity for a new ſupply by means of ſomewhat taken in. Hence naturally follows the conſideration of food, its concoction, and the choice of aliments, ſolid and fluid, ſuited to perſons of different conſtitutions, and in different climates. This is the general plan of the book. The poet's ſkill conſiſts in taking the ſubject out of the language and reaſonings of ſcience, familiariſing it by apt illuſtration, and diverſifying it by amuſing digreſſion. All this he has attempted, and with ſucceſs.

We ſhall not cloſely follow his ſteps while he treats of the digeſtibility and ſalubrioufneſs of different foods, and lays down rules for the regulation of appetite. The ſubject, as we before hinted, is not of the moſt pleaſing kind, and it is apparently rather from neceſſity than choice that he enters into it. His expreſſions and images are ſtrong, but ſtrength ſo employed is unavoidably a-kin to coarſeneſs. A more agreeable topic is the praiſe of temperance and ſimple diet, from which he eaſily ſlides into a beautiful moral paſſage, ſhewing how much better riches may be employed than in the luxuries of the table—by relieving indigence and unfriended merit. One line is almoſt unrivalled in pathetic energy.

Tho' huſh'd in patient wretchedneſs at home.

The oppoſite evils ariſing from too full and too ſcanty a diet are next enumerated, and cautions are given reſpecting the progreſs from one to the other. The different regimen proper for the ſeveral ſeaſons of the year is then touched upon; and this naturally leads the poet to

open a new ſource of variety in deſcription, derived from a view of human life as ſubſiſting in climates removed to the two extremes from our own. The picture of the frigid zone is but ſlightly ſketched; that of the torrid regions is much more minute, and will ſtrongly remind the reader of a ſimilar one by the hand of THOMSON; but I dare not aſſert that it will loſe nothing by the compariſon. It is rendered leſs appropriate, by the enumeration of vegetable articles which in reality belong to very different climates; the cocoa and anana being many degrees ſeparated from the countries rich in corn and wine. The cedar of Lebanon, likewiſe, as a native of the bleak tops of high mountains, ought not to be placed by the ſide of the palm and plantain.

The ſucceeding paſſage, however, which paints the wonders of the Naiad kingdom, though it alſo has its parallel in the *Seaſons*, is not, I think, ſurpaſſed by that, or any other poem, in ſtrength and grandeur of deſcription. The awful ſublimity of the ſcenes themſelves,

and the artifice of the poet in introducing himſelf as a ſpectator, and marking the ſuppoſed impreſſions on his own mind, elevate this piece to the very ſummit of deſcriptive poetry.

The praiſe of water-drinking follows; with the precepts of the father of phyſic for chuſing rightly this pure and innocent beverage. Notwithſtanding the apparent earneſtneſs with which the poet dwells on this topic, there is ſome reaſon to ſuſpect that he was not quite hearty in the cauſe. For he not only adopts the notion of thoſe who have recommended an occaſional debauch as a ſalutary ſpur to nature; but, deſcanting on the neceſſity a man may find himſelf under to practiſe hard drinking in order to promote the purſuits of ambition or avarice, he adviſes him (between jeſt and earneſt) to enure himſelf to the trial by ſlow degrees. Here the phyſician and ſage ſeem loſt in the jolly companion. He ſoon, however, reſumes thoſe characters; and after remarking the tendency of a continued uſe of wine to bring on premature old age, he

digreſſes into a theoretical account of the proceſs by which the animal machine is gradually impeded in its motions, and at length comes to a full ſtop. This conducts him to a ſtriking termination of the book, in a lofty deſcription of the ravages made by time upon the works of human art, and the world itſelf.

Exerciſe, the ſubject of the third book, is a theme more adapted to poetry, and leſs immerſed in profeſſional diſquiſitions, than that of the preceding. Its benefits in the preſervation of health are univerſally known; and the poet's taſk is rather to frame upon it pictures agreeable to the imagination, than to treat of it in a cloſely preceptive or ſcientific manner. Dr. ARMSTRONG begins with a lively portrait of the ruſtic, rendered firm and robuſt by toil, like a ſturdy oak of the foreſt; and he produces him as a ſpecimen of the influence of exerciſe on the human frame. He then exhorts the votary of health to partake of the various kinds of rural paſtime, the walk in all ſeaſons, the chace, and the ſport

of fiſhing. This laſt amuſement introduces a very pleaſing paſſage, in which the poet characteriſes various ſtreams, particularly the Liddel, on whoſe paſtoral banks he firſt drew breath. The tribute of affection he pays to his native place, and the retroſpect of his own boyiſh years, are ſweetly intereſting, and vie with all that THOMSON and SMOLLET have written on a ſimilar topic.

The ſpecies of exerciſe afforded by gardening, gives occaſion to a moral picture, of a man retired from public life, to the cultivation of his eſtate, ſurrounded with a ſelect ſociety of old companions, of the ſame taſtes and purſuits with himſelf. This is wrought ſo much in the manner of THOMSON, that, were it not for ſome difference of ſtyle, it might paſs undiſtinguiſhed as a paſſage of the Seaſons. The "noctes cœnæque deum" of HORACE, have contributed to adorn the piece.

Resuming the medical consideration of exercise, he next adverts to its power in strengthening weak parts by habitual exertions; and he dwells on the propriety of a gradual progress from rest to labour, and on the mischiefs attending too violent and heedless toils. This leads him to a serious and pathetic apostrophe on the fatal effects proceeding from exposure to cold, or draughts of cold liquor, when heated, which he represents as the most frequent of all causes of mortal disease. The ancient use of warm baths and unctions after exercise is his next topic, in speaking of which, he finds it necessary to touch upon that important function of the body, insensible perspiration. The strict connexion of this with health and disease, according as it is regular or deranged, has been a favourite argument with certain medical schools, and is here briefly illustrated in poetical language. The use of cold bathing in steeling the frame against the inclemencies of a cold climate, and the advantages of frequent ablution in hot ones, and of cleanliness in all, are further subjects of digression.

He returns to the conſideration of exerciſe, as it is limited by recurring changes of the day and year; warning againſt it while the body is loaded with food, and during the heats of a ſummer's noon, and the chills of evening. Theſe preceptive remarks lead him to a vein more fertile of ideas addreſſed to the imagination; for, conceiving the day to be ſunk into the ſilence and gloom of midnight, he views the toil-ſpent hind, wrapt in the arms of profound repoſe, the ſweet ſoother of his labours. Hence he digreſſes to the ſubject of dreams, and paints in vivid colours the horrid ſcenes that diſturb the mind during the delirium of unquiet ſlumber. The proper period in which ſleep is to be indulged, with its due meaſure to different conſtitutions are next conſidered. The influence of habit in this reſpect, brings on an exhortation to proceed very gradually in altering every corporeal habit; and this is made an introduction to a deſcription of the ſucceſſive changes of the year, with the diſtempers they bring. All this, and the remainder

of the book, might perhaps with greater propriety have made a part of the firſt head; ſince its connexion with exerciſe is leſs obvious than with air. To introduce in ſome part of his plan an account of epidemic diſeaſes was, however, evidently proper, both as matter for important inſtruction reſpecting the preſervation of health, and as affording ſcope for poetical variety. After ſome common obſervations on the diſeaſes of Spring and Autumn, and the means of guarding againſt them, with a forcible injunction againſt delay as ſoon as ſymptoms of danger appear; the poet proceeds to an imitation of VIRGIL and LUCRETIUS in the particular deſcription of a peſtilence; and he very happily chuſes for his ſubject the Sweating-Sickneſs which prevailed firſt in England when the EARL OF RICHMOND, afterwards HENRY VII. came hither on his expedition againſt the tyrant RICHARD. So many graphical deſcriptions in proſe and verſe have been made of viſitations of this kind, that ſcarcely any ſource of novelty remained in the *general* circumſtances accompanying them. Dr. ARMSTRONG has

therefore judiciouſly introduced as much as poſſible of the *particular* character of this ſingular diſtemper, which, as far as we learn, was entirely unknown before, and has never appeared ſince, that period. He has not even rejected certain popular errors prevalent reſpecting it, which, though they ought carefully to be avoided in a medical treatiſe, may perhaps be permitted to enhance the wonder of a poetical narration. Such is that, which aſſerts Engliſhmen to have been its only victims, both in their own country and abroad—a notion which certainly adds to the intereſt with which a native of this country reads the relation. The concluſion of this book is a cloſe copy from VIRGIL in the deſign, ſuitably varied in the circumſtances. The deaths beyond the Atlantic allude to the unfortunate expedition to Carthagena, a popular topic of complaint at that period.

The title with which the fourth and laſt book is inſcribed, is *the Paſſions;* but its ſubject would be more accurately expreſſed by the influence of the mind over

the body—a large and elevated topic, detached from the technical matter of any particular profeſſion, and in its full extent compriſing every thing ſublime and affecting in moral poetry. The theory of the union of a ſpiritual principle with the groſs corporeal ſubſtance, is that which the writer adopts as the baſis of his reaſonings. It is this ruling power which

> Wields at his will the dull material world,
> And is the body's health or malady.

He evidently confounds, however, (as all writers on this ſyſtem do) matter of great ſubtilty, with what is not matter—or ſpirit. Theſe "viewleſs atoms," he ſays, "are loſt in thinking," yet thought itſelf is not the enemy of life, but painful thinking, ſuch as that proceeding from anxious ſtudies, and fretful emotions. To prevent the baneful effects of theſe, he counſels us frequently to vary our objects, and to join the bodily exerciſe of reading aloud, to the mental labour of meditation. Solitary brooding over thoughts of a particular kind,

ſuch, eſpecially, as pride or fear preſents to the imagination, is warned againſt, in a paſſage full of energy, as the uſual parent of madneſs or melancholy. Sometimes what the poet terms a *chronic paſſion*, or one ariſing from a misfortune which has made a laſting impreſſion, ſuch as the loſs of a beloved friend, produces a ſympathetic languor in the body, which can only be removed by ſhifting the ſcene, and plunging in amuſement or buſineſs. Some perſons, however, take a leſs innocent method of diſpelling grief,

——————and in the tempting bowl
Of poiſon'd nectar, ſweet oblivion ſwill.

The immediately exhilarating effects, and the ſad ſubſequent reverſe, attending this baneful practice, are here painted in the moſt vivid colouring, and form a highly inſtructive and pathetic leſſon. Particularly, the gradual degradation of character which it infalliby brings on, is finely touched.

A kind of moral lecture ſucceeds, introduced as the ſuppoſed precepts of a ſage in human life, whoſe character is repreſented as a compound of manly ſenſe and cheerfulneſs. How to acquire happineſs by moderation in the purſuit of pleaſure, and by the practice of virtue, is the topic of this paſſage, which, though certainly digreſſive, has, however, a natural affinity with the leading ſubject of the book. Virtue has ſeldom been characterized with more ſpirit and dignity; and trite as the ſentiments are, the energy with which they are expreſſed commands attention.

The poet next reverts to his more direct purpoſe, that of conſidering the paſſions in their influence upon bodily health. In general, he lays it down as a rule, that all emotions which are pleaſing to the mind, are alſo ſalutary to the body. But there are exceptions, ſome being in their nature prone to hurtful exceſs; as an inſtance of which he gives the paſſion of Love. Here, again, he tries his ſtrength with THOMSON, and his deſcription

cannot but remind the reader of that fine picture of a love-ſick youth drawn by this writer in his Spring. THOMSON, however, dwells much more minutely on the mental effects of love. ARMSTRONG, with propriety, fixes the attention more on the changes it induces in the corporeal frame, and this, both as it is a paſſion, and as it leads to ſenſual indulgences. With great force, yet with ſufficient delicacy, he paints the condition of one unnerved and exhauſted by exceſs in amorous delights. This, indeed, is deviating from the expreſs ſubject of the book; ſince love as a paſſion, and the appetite for ſexual enjoyment, are diſtinct things, the latter being certainly able to ſubſiſt without the former, if not the former without the latter. But an inſenſible gradation led him eaſily from the one to the other.

The paſſion of Anger is his next theme, and the bold perſonification with which he has introduced it, is admirably ſuited to its violent and precipitate character. A fit of rage has frequently been known at once to

overpower the vital faculties, and ſtrike with inſtant death. To guard againſt it was therefore a point of peculiar importance; and the poet has preſented many ſtriking moral arguments againſt the indulgence of that habit which makes us prone to ungoverned ſallies of this paſſion. But where reaſon proves too weak for the controul of this and other unruly affections of the mind, to what other power ſhall we reſort for aid? We may, (he hints) oppoſe paſſion to paſſion, and extinguiſh one by its oppoſite. But without dwelling on this contrivance (which, indeed, is neither very philoſophical nor manageable) he proceeds to recognize a power in Nature which may be rendered the univerſal tranquillizer of the breaſt; and this power is Muſic. With a contraſted deſcription of the muſic which exerciſes this ſympathetic dominion over the emotions, and that which is only the execution of difficult trifles, followed by an alluſion to the fabulous ſtories of ſome ancient maſters, and the praiſe of the art itſelf, the poet, ſomewhat abruptly, cloſes the book and the work.

From this curſory view of the contents of Dr. ARMSTRONG's piece, it will probably appear, that together with a ſufficient variety for the purpoſe of amuſement, there is uniformity of deſign enough to conſtitute the proper character of a didactic poem. Almoſt every thing eſſential to the preſervation of health is touched upon during its courſe; and the digreſſive parts are neither wholly impertinent to the main object, nor do they occupy a diſproportionate ſpace. Many topics of an elevated nature are occaſionally introduced; and moral ſentiment is agreeably interwoven with precept and deſcription. The writer has, apparently, found ſome difficulty in adhering to the arrangement of his deſign; for neither are the propoſed topics of the four books equally copious of matter, nor has he with preciſion confined himſelf to the ſubjects belonging to each. However, as the *real* intention of ſuch a work is not to afford ſyſtematic inſtruction, but to impreſs the mind with detached particulars, and to amuſe it with variety, objections in point of method are little to be regarded.

If this performance on the whole offers a fund of uſeful advice and rational entertainment to every cultivated reader, and at the ſame time is in a good degree what it profeſſes to be, it has fulfilled its purpoſe.

It now remains to conſider how far this work is characterized by any peculiarity of ſtyle and manner.

Engliſh blank verſe in its ſtructure approaches ſo nearly to proſe, that they who have employed it on elevated ſubjects, have adopted a variety of methods to give it the ſtamp of poetry. Some have tranſplanted as much as poſſible of the idiom of the ancient languages into their own. They have uſed words in uncommon ſenſes, derived rather from etymology than practice; and in the formation of ſentences, they have ſtudiouſly deviated from the natural order, and copied the involutions and inverſions of the Latin and Greek. Others have enriched their ſtyle with novel terms and compound epithets, and have aimed at an uncommon mode of ſay-

ing the commoneſt things. Very different from theſe is the manner of ARMSTRONG. It is diſtinguiſhed by its ſimplicity—by a free uſe of words which owe their ſtrength to their plainneſs—by the rejection of ambitious ornaments, and a near approach to common phraſeology. His ſentences are generally ſhort and eaſy, his ſenſe clear and obvious. The full extent of his conceptions is taken at the firſt glance; and there are no lofty myſteries to be unravelled by repeated peruſal. What keeps his language from being proſaic, is the vigour of his ſentiments. He thinks boldly, feels ſtrongly, and therefore expreſſes himſelf poetically. Where the ſubject ſinks, his ſtyle ſinks with it; but he has for the moſt part excluded topics incapable either of vivid deſcription, or of the oratory of ſentiment. He had from nature a muſical ear, whence his lines are ſcarcely ever harſh, and are uſually melodious, though apparently without much ſtudy to render them ſo. Perhaps he has not been careful enough to avoid the monotony of making ſeveral ſucceſſive lines cloſe with a reſt or pauſe in the ſenſe.

On the whole, it may not be too much to aſſert that no writer in blank verſe can be found more free from ſtiffneſs and affectation, more energetic without harſhneſs, and more dignified without formality.

BOOK I.

AIR.

THE ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK I.

AIR.

DAUGHTER of Pæon, queen of every joy,
HYGEIA*; whoſe indulgent ſmile ſuſtains
The various race luxuriant nature pours,
And on th' immortal eſſences beſtows
Immortal youth; auſpicious, O deſcend! 5
Thou cheerful guardian of the rolling year,

* Hygeia, the Goddeſs of Health, was, according to the genealogy of the heathen deities, the daughter of Æſculapius; who, as well as Apollo, was diſtinguiſhed by the name of Pæon.

Whether thou wanton'ſt on the weſtern gale,
Or ſhak'ſt the rigid pinions of the north,
Diffuſeſt life and vigour thro' the tracts
Of air, thro' earth, and ocean's deep domain. 10
When thro' the blue ſerenity of heaven
Thy power approaches, all the waſteful hoſt
Of Pain and Sickneſs, ſqualid and deform'd,
Confounded ſink into the loathſome gloom,
Where in deep Erebus involv'd the Fiends 15
Grow more profane. Whatever ſhapes of death,
Shook from the hideous chambers of the globe,
Swarm thro' the ſhuddering air: whatever plagues
Or meagre famine breeds, or with ſlow wings
Riſe from the putrid wat'ry element, 20
The damp waſte foreſt, motionleſs and rank,
That ſmothers earth and all the breathleſs winds,
Or the vile carnage of th' inhuman field;
Whatever baneful breathes the rotten ſouth;
Whatever ills th' extremes or ſudden change 25
Of cold and hot, or moiſt and dry produce;

They fly thy pure effulgence: they and all
The ſecret poiſons of avenging heaven,
And all the pale tribes halting in the train
Of Vice and heedleſs Pleaſure: or if aught 30
The comet's glare amid the burning ſky,
Mournful eclipſe, or planets ill-combin'd,
Portend diſaſtrous to the vital world;
Thy ſalutary power averts their rage,
Averts the general bane: and but for thee 35
Nature would ſicken, nature ſoon would die.

Without thy cheerful active energy
No rapture ſwells the breaſt, no Poet ſings,
No more the maids of Helicon delight.
Come then with me, O Goddeſs heavenly gay! 40
Begin the ſong; and let it ſweetly flow,
And let it wiſely teach thy wholeſome laws:
" How beſt the fickle fabric to ſupport
" Of mortal man; in healthful body how
" A healthful mind the longeſt to maintain." 45

'Tis hard, in ſuch a ſtrife of rules, to chuſe
The beſt, and thoſe of moſt extenſive uſe;
Harder in clear and animated ſong
Dry philoſophic precepts to convey.
Yet with thy aid the ſecret wilds I trace 50
Of nature, and with daring ſteps proceed
Thro' paths the muſes never trod before.

Nor ſhould I wander doubtful of my way
Had I the lights of that ſagacious mind
Which taught to check the peſtilential fire, 55
And quell the deadly Python of the Nile.
O thou belov'd by all the graceful arts,
Thou long the fav'rite of the healing powers,
Indulge, O MEAD! a well-deſign'd eſſay,
Howe'er imperfect: and permit that I 60
My little knowledge with my country ſhare,
Till you the rich Aſclepian ſtores unlock,
And with new graces dignify the theme.

YE who amid this feveriſh world would wear
A body free of pain, of cares a mind; 65
Fly the rank city, ſhun its turbid air;
Breathe not the chaos of eternal ſmoke
And volatile corruption, from the dead,
The dying, ſick'ning, and the living world
Exhal'd, to ſully heaven's tranſparent dome 70
With dim mortality. It is not Air
That from a thouſand lungs reeks back to thine,
Sated with exhalations rank and fell,
The ſpoil of dunghills, and the putrid thaw
Of nature; when from ſhape and texture ſhe 75
Relapſes into fighting elements:
It is not Air, but floats a nauſeous maſs
Of all obſcene, corrupt, offenſive things.
Much moiſture hurts; but here a ſordid bath,
With oily rancour fraught, relaxes more 80
The ſolid frame than ſimple moiſture can.
Beſides, immur'd in many a ſullen bay
That never felt the freſhneſs of the breeze,

This ſlumb'ring Deep remains, and ranker grows
With ſickly reſt: and (tho' the lungs abhor 85
To drink the dun fuliginous abyſs)
Did not the acid vigour of the mine,
Roll'd from ſo many thund'ring chimneys, tame
The putrid ſteams that overſwarm the ſky;
This cauſtic venom would perhaps corrode 90
Thoſe tender cells that draw the vital air,
In vain with all their unctuous rills bedew'd;
Or by the drunken venous tubes, that yawn
In countleſs pores o'er all the pervious ſkin
Imbib'd, would poiſon the balſamic blood, 95
And rouſe the heart to every fever's rage.
While yet you breathe, away; the rural wilds
Invite; the mountains call you, and the vales;
The woods, the ſtreams, and each ambroſial breeze
That fans the ever-undulating ſky; 100
A kindly ſky! whoſe foſt'ring power regales
Man, beaſt, and all the vegetable reign.
Find then ſome Woodland ſcene where nature ſmiles

Benign, where all her honeſt children thrive.
To us there wants not many a happy Seat! 105
Look round the ſmiling land, ſuch numbers riſe
We hardly fix, bewilder'd in our choice.
See where enthron'd in adamantine ſtate,
Proud of her bards, imperial Windſor ſits;
There chuſe thy ſeat, in ſome aſpiring grove 110
Faſt by the ſlowly-winding Thames; or where
Broader ſhe laves fair Richmond's green retreats,
(Richmond that ſees an hundred villas riſe
Rural or gay). O! from the ſummer's rage
O! wrap me in the friendly gloom that hides 115
Umbrageous Ham!—But if the buſy Town
Attract thee ſtill to toil for power or gold,
Sweetly thou may'ſt thy vacant hours poſſeſs
In Hampſtead, courted by the weſtern wind;
Or Greenwich, waving o'er the winding flood; 120
Or loſe the world amid the ſylvan wilds
Of Dulwich, yet by barbarous arts unſpoil'd.
Green riſe the Kentiſh hills in cheerful air;

But on the marſhy plains that Lincoln ſpreads
Build not, nor reſt too long thy wand'ring feet. 125
For on a ruſtic throne of dewy turf,
With baneful fogs her aching temples bound,
Quartana there preſides: a meagre Fiend
Begot by Eurus, when his brutal force
Compreſs'd the ſlothful Naiad of the Fens. 130
From ſuch a mixture ſprung, this fitful peſt
With fev'riſh blaſts ſubdues the ſick'ning land:
Cold tremors come, with mighty love of reſt,
Convulſive yawnings, laſſitude, and pains
That ſting the burden'd brows, fatigue the loins,
And rack the joints and every torpid limb; 136
Then parching heat ſucceeds, till copious ſweats
O'erflow: a ſhort relief from former ills.
Beneath repeated ſhocks the wretches pine;
The vigour ſinks, the habit melts away; 140
The cheerful, pure, and animated bloom
Dies from the face, with ſqualid atrophy
Devour'd, in ſallow melancholy clad.

And oft the Sorcereſs, in her ſated wrath,
Reſigns them to the furies of her train; 145
The bloated Hydrops, and the yellow Fiend
Ting'd with her own accumulated gall.

In queſt of Sites, avoid the mournful plain
Where oſiers thrive, and trees that love the lake;
Where many lazy muddy rivers flow: 150
Nor for the wealth that all the Indies roll
Fix near the marſhy margin of the main.
For from the humid ſoil and wat'ry reign
Eternal vapours riſe; the ſpungy air
For ever weeps: or, turgid with the weight 155
Of waters, pours a ſounding deluge down.
Skies ſuch as theſe let every mortal ſhun
Who dreads the dropſy, palſy, or the gout,
Tertian, corroſive ſcurvy, or moiſt catarrh;
Or any other injury that grows 160
From raw-ſpun fibres idle and unſtrung,
Skin ill-perſpiring, and the purple flood
In languid eddies loitering into phlegm.

Yet not alone from humid ſkies we pine;
For Air may be too dry. The ſubtle heaven, 165
That winnows into duſt the blaſted downs,
Bare and extended wide without a ſtream,
Too faſt imbibes th' attenuated lymph
Which, by the ſurface, from the blood exhales.
The lungs grow rigid, and with toil eſſay 170
Their flexible vibrations; or inflam'd,
Their tender ever-moving ſtructure thaws.
Spoil'd of its limpid vehicle, the blood
A maſs of lees remains, a droſſy tide
That ſlow as Lethe wanders thro' the veins; 175
Unactive in the ſervices of life,
Unfit to lead its pitchy current thro'
The ſecret mazy channels of the brain.
The melancholic fiend (that worſt deſpair
Of phyſic), hence the ruſt-complexion'd man 180
Purſues, whoſe blood is dry, whoſe fibres gain
Too ſtretch'd a tone: and hence in climes aduſt
So ſudden tumults ſeize the trembling nerves,
And burning fevers glow with double rage.

Fly, if you can, theſe violent extremes 185
Of Air; the wholeſome is nor moiſt nor dry.
But as the power of chuſing is deny'd
To half mankind, a further taſk enſues;
How beſt to mitigate theſe fell extremes,
How breathe unhurt the withering element, 190
Or hazy atmoſphere: Tho' Cuſtom moulds
To ev'ry clime the ſoft Promethean clay;
And he who firſt the fogs of Eſſex breath'd
(So kind is native air) may in the fens
Of Eſſex from inveterate ills revive 195
At pure Montpelier or Bermuda caught.
But if the raw and oozy heaven offend:
Correct the ſoil, and dry the ſources up
Of wat'ry exhalation; wide and deep
Conduct your trenches thro' the quaking bog; 200
Solicitous, with all your winding arts,
Betray th' unwilling lake into the ſtream;
And weed the foreſt, and invoke the winds
To break the toils where ſtrangled vapours lie;

Or thro' the thickets ſend the crackling flames. 205
Mean time at home with cheerful fires diſpel
The humid air: And let your table ſmoke
With ſolid roaſt or bak'd; or what the herds
Of tamer breed ſupply; or what the wilds
Yield to the toilſome pleaſures of the chaſe. 210
Generous your wine, the boaſt of rip'ning years;
But frugal be your cups: the languid frame,
Vapid and ſunk from yeſterday's debauch,
Shrinks from the cold embrace of wat'ry heavens.
But neither theſe nor all Apollo's arts, 215
Diſarm the dangers of the dropping ſky,
Unleſs with exerciſe and manly toil
You brace your nerves, and ſpur the lagging blood.
The fat'ning clime let all the ſons of eaſe
Avoid; if indolence would wiſh to live. 220
Go, yawn and loiter out the long ſlow year
In fairer ſkies. If droughty regions parch
The ſkin and lungs, and bake the thickening blood;
Deep in the waving foreſt chuſe your ſeat,

Where fuming trees refreſh the thirſty air;
And wake the fountains from their ſecret beds,
And into lakes dilate the rapid ſtream.
Here ſpread your gardens wide; and let the cool,
The moiſt relaxing vegetable ſtore
Prevail in each repaſt: Your food ſupplied 230
By bleeding life, be gently waſted down,
By ſoft decoction and a mellowing heat,
To liquid balm; or, if the ſolid maſs
You chuſe, tormented in the boiling wave;
That thro' the thirſty channels of the blood 235
A ſmooth diluted chyle may ever flow,
The fragrant dairy from its cool receſs
Its nectar acid or benign will pour
To drown your thirſt; or let the mantling bowl
Of keen Sherbet the fickle taſte relieve. 240
For with the viſcous blood the ſimple ſtream
Will hardly mingle; and fermented cups
Oft diſſipate more moiſture than they give.
Yet when pale ſeaſons riſe, or winter rolls

His horrors o'er the world, thou may'ſt indulge 245
In feaſts more genial, and impatient broach
The mellow caſk. Then too the ſcourging air
Provokes to keener toils than ſultry droughts
Allow. But rarely we ſuch ſkies blaſpheme.
Steep'd in continual rains, or with raw fogs 250
Bedew'd, our ſeaſons droop: incumbent ſtill
A ponderous heaven o'erwhelms the ſinking ſoul.
Lab'ring with ſtorms in heapy mountains riſe
Th' imbattled clouds, as if the Stygian ſhades
Had left the dungeon of eternal night, 255
Till black with thunder all the South deſcends.
Scarce in a ſhowerleſs day the heavens indulge
Our melting clime; except the baleful Eaſt
Withers the tender ſpring, and ſourly checks
The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk 260
Of ſummers, balmy airs, and ſkies ſerene.
Good heaven! for what unexpiated crimes
This diſmal change! The brooding elements
Do they, your powerful miniſters of wrath,

Prepare ſome fierce exterminating plague? 265
Or is it fix'd in the Decrees above
That lofty Albion melt into the main?
Indulgent Nature! O diſſolve this gloom!
Bind in eternal adamant the winds
That drown or wither: Give the genial Weſt 270
To breathe, and in its turn the ſprightly North:
And may once more the circling ſeaſons rule
The year; not mix in every monſtrous day.

Mean time, the moiſt malignity to ſhun
Of burthen'd ſkies; mark where the dry champaign 275
Swells into cheerful hills; where Marjoram
And Thyme, the love of bees, perfume the air;
And where the * Cynorrhodon with the roſe
For fragance vies; for in the thirſty ſoil
Moſt fragrant breathe the aromatic tribes. 280
There bid thy roofs high on the baſking ſteep
Aſcend, there light thy hoſpitable fires.

* The wild roſe, or that which grows on the common briar.

And let them ſee the winter morn ariſe,
The ſummer evening bluſhing in the weſt;
While with umbrageous oaks the ridge behind 285
O'erhung, defends you from the bluſt'ring north,
And bleak affliction of the peeviſh eaſt.
O! when the growling winds contend, and all
The ſounding foreſt fluctuates in the ſtorm;
To ſink in warm repoſe, and hear the din 290
Howl o'er the ſteady battlements, delights
Above the luxury of vulgar ſleep.
The murmuring rivulet, and the hoarſer ſtrain
Of waters ruſhing o'er the ſlippery rocks,
Will nightly lull you to ambroſial reſt. 295
To pleaſe the fancy is no trifling good,
Where health is ſtudied; for whatever moves
The mind with calm delight, promotes the juſt
And natural movements of th' harmonious frame.
Beſides, the ſportive brook for ever ſhakes 300
The trembling air; that floats from hill to hill
From vale to mountain, with inceſſant change

Of pureſt element, refreſhing ſtill
Your airy ſeat, and uninfected Gods.
Chiefly for this I praiſe the man who builds 305
High on the breezy ridge, whoſe lofty ſides
Th' ethereal deep with endleſs billows chafes.
His purer manſion nor contagious years
Shall reach, nor deadly putrid airs annoy.

But may no fogs, from lake or fenny plain, 310
Involve my hill! And wherefoe'er you build;
Whether on ſun-burnt Epſom, or the plains
Waſh'd by the ſilent Lee; in Chelſea low,
Or high Blackheath with wint'ry winds aſſail'd;
Dry be your houſe: but airy more than warm. 315
Elſe every breath of ruder wind will ſtrike
Your tender body thro' with rapid pains;
Fierce coughs will teize you, hoarſeneſs bind your voice,
Or moiſt Gravedo load your aching brows.
Theſe to defy, and all the fates that dwell 320
In cloiſter'd air tainted with ſteaming life,

Let lofty ceilings grace your ample rooms;
And ſtill at azure noontide may your dome
At every window drink the liquid ſky.

Need we the ſunny ſituation here, 325
And theatres open to the ſouth, commend?
Here, where the morning's miſty breath infeſts
More than the torrid noon? How ſickly grow,
How pale, the plants in thoſe ill-fated vales
That, circled round with the gigantic heap 330
Of mountains, never felt, nor ever hope
To feel, the genial vigour of the ſun!
While on the neighbouring hill the roſe inflames
The verdant ſpring; in virgin beauty blows
The tender lily, languiſhingly ſweet; 335
O'er every hedge the wanton woodbine roves,
And autumn ripens in the ſummer's ray.
Nor leſs the warmer living tribes demand
The foſt'ring ſun: whoſe energy divine
Dwells not in mortal fire; whoſe gen'rous heat 340

Glows thro' the maſs of groſſer elements,
And kindles into life the ponderous ſpheres.
Cheer'd by thy kind invigorating warmth,
We court thy beams, great majeſty of day!
If not the ſoul, the regent of this world, 345
Firſt-born of heaven, and only leſs than God!

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

BOOK II.

DIET.

THE ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK II.

DIET.

ENOUGH of Air. A desart subject now,
Rougher and wilder, rises to my sight.
A barren waste, where not a garland grows
To bind the Muse's brow; not ev'n a proud
Stupendous solitude frowns o'er the heath, 5
To rouse a noble horror in the soul:
But rugged paths fatigue, and error leads
Thro' endless labyrinths the devious feet.
Farewel, ethereal fields! the humbler arts

Of life; the Table and the homely Gods 10
Demand my ſong. Elyſian gales adieu!

The blood, the fountain whence the ſpirits flow,
The generous ſtream that waters every part,
And motion, vigour, and warm life conveys
To every particle that moves or lives; 15
This vital fluid, thro' unnumber'd tubes
Pour'd by the heart, and to the heart again
Refunded; ſcourg'd for ever round and round;
Enrag'd with heat and toil, at laſt forgets
Its balmy nature; virulent and thin 20
It grows; and now, but that a thouſand gates
Are open to its flight, it would deſtroy
The parts it cheriſh'd and repair'd before.
Beſides, the flexible and tender tubes
Melt in the mildeſt moſt nectareous tide 25
That ripening nature rolls; as in the ſtream
Its crumbling banks; but what the vital force
Of plaſtic fluids hourly batters down,
That very force, thoſe plaſtic particles

Rebuild: So mutable the ſtate of man. 30
For this the watchful appetite was giv'n,
Daily with freſh materials to repair
This unavoidable expence of life,
This neceſſary waſte of fleſh and blood.
Hence the concoctive powers, with various art, 35
Subdue the cruder aliments to chyle;
The chyle to blood; the foamy purple tide
To liquors, which thro' finer arteries
To different parts their winding courſe purſue;
To try new changes, and new forms put on, 40
Or for the public, or ſome private uſe.

Nothing ſo foreign but th' athletic hind
Can labour into blood. The hungry meal
Alone he fears, or aliments too thin;
By violent powers too eaſily ſubdu'd, 45
Too ſoon expell'd. His daily labour thaws,
To friendly chyle, the moſt rebellious maſs
That ſalt can harden, or the ſmoke of years;

Nor does his gorge the luſcious bacon rue,
Nor that which Ceſtria ſends, tenacious paſte 50
Of ſolid milk. But ye of ſofter clay,
Infirm and delicate! and ye who waſte
With pale and bloated ſloth the tedious day!
Avoid the ſtubborn aliment, avoid
The full repaſt; and let ſagacious age 55
Grow wiſer, leſſon'd by the dropping teeth.

Half ſubtiliz'd to chyle, the liquid food
Readieſt obeys th' aſſimilating powers;
And ſoon the tender vegetable maſs
Relents; and ſoon the young of thoſe that tread 60
The ſtedfaſt earth, or cleave the green abyſs,
Or pathleſs ſky. And if the Steer muſt fall,
In youth and ſanguine vigour let him die;
Nor ſtay till rigid age, or heavy ails,
Abſolve him ill-requited from the yoke. 65
Some with high forage, and luxuriant eaſe,
Indulge the veteran Ox; but wiſer thou,

From the bald mountain or the barren downs,
Expect the flocks by frugal nature fed;
A race of purer blood, with exercise 70
Refin'd and ſcanty fare: For, old or young,
The ſtall'd are never healthy; nor the cramm'd.
Not all the culinary arts can tame,
To wholeſome food, the abominable growth
Of reſt and gluttony; the prudent taſte 75
Rejects like bane ſuch loathſome luſciouſneſs.
The languid ſtomach curſes even the pure
Delicious fat, and all the race of oil:
For more the oily aliments relax
Its feeble tone; and with the eager lymph 80
(Fond to incorporate with all it meets)
Coily they mix, and ſhun with ſlippery wiles
The woo'd embrace. Th' irreſoluble oil,
So gentle late and blandiſhing, in floods
Of rancid bile o'erflows: What tumults hence, 85
What horrors riſe, were nauſeous to relate.
Chuſe leaner viands, ye whoſe jovial make

Too faſt the gummy nutriment imbibes :
Chuſe ſober meals ; and rouſe to active life
Your cumbrous clay ; nor on th' infeebling down, 90
Irreſolute, protract the morning hours.
But let the man whoſe bones are thinly clad,
With cheerful eaſe and ſucculent repaſt
Improve his habit if he can ; for each
Extreme departs from perfect ſanity. 95

I could relate what table this demands
Or that complexion ; what the various powers
Of various foods : But fifty years would roll,
And fifty more before the tale were done.
Beſides there often lurks ſome nameleſs, ſtrange, 100
Peculiar thing ; nor on the ſkin diſplay'd,
Felt in the pulſe, nor in the habit ſeen ;
Which finds a poiſon in the food that moſt
The temp'rature affects. There are, whoſe blood
Impetuous rages thro' the turgid veins, 105
Who better bear the fiery fruits of Ind

Than the moiſt Melon, or pale Cucumber.
Of chilly nature others fly the board
Supply'd with ſlaughter, and the vernal powers
For cooler, kinder, ſuſtenance implore.
Some even the generous nutriment deteſt 110
Which, in the ſhell, the ſleeping embryo rears.
Some, more unhappy ſtill, repent the gifts
Of Pales; ſoft, delicious and benign:
The balmy quinteſſence of every flower,
And every grateful herb that decks the ſpring; 115
The foſt'ring dew of tender ſprouting life;
The beſt refection of declining age;
The kind reſtorative of thoſe who lie
Half dead and panting, from the doubtful ſtrife
Of nature ſtruggling in the graſp of death. 120
Try all the bounties of this fertile globe,
There is not ſuch a ſalutary food
As ſuits with every ſtomach. But (except,
Amid the mingled maſs of fiſh and fowl,
And boil'd and bak'd, you heſitate by which 125

You ſunk oppreſs'd, or whether not by all;)
Taught by experience ſoon you may diſcern
What pleaſes, what offends. Avoid the cates
That lull the ſicken'd appetite too long;
Or heave with fev'riſh fluſhings all the face, 130
Burn in the palms, and parch the rough'ning tongue;
Or much diminiſh or too much increaſe
Th' expence, which nature's wiſe œconomy,
Without or waſte or avarice, maintains.
Such cates abjur'd, let prouling hunger looſe, 135
And bid the curious palate roam at will;
They ſcarce can err amid the various ſtores
That burſt the teeming entrails of the world.

Led by ſagacious taſte, the ruthleſs king
Of beaſts on blood and ſlaughter only lives; 140
The Tiger, form'd alike to cruel meals,
Would at the manger ſtarve: Of milder ſeeds
The generous horſe to herbage and to grain
Confines his wiſh; tho' fabling Greece reſound

The Thracian ſteeds with human carnage wild. 145
Prompted by inſtinct's never-erring power,
Each creature knows its proper aliment;
But man, th' inhabitant of ev'ry clime,
With all the commoners of nature feeds.
Directed, bounded, by this power within, 150
Their cravings are well-aim'd: Voluptuous Man
Is by ſuperior faculties miſled;
Miſled from pleaſure even in queſt of joy.
Sated with nature's boons, what thouſands ſeek,
With diſhes tortur'd from their native taſte, 155
And mad variety, to ſpur beyond
Its wiſer will the jaded appetite!
Is this for pleaſure? Learn a juſter taſte;
And know that temperance is true luxury.
Or is it pride? Purſue ſome nobler aim. 160
Diſmiſs your paraſites, who praiſe for hire;
And earn the fair eſteem of honeſt men,
Whoſe praiſe is fame. Form'd of ſuch clay as yours,
The ſick, the needy, ſhiver at your gates.

Even modeſt want may bleſs your hand unſeen, 165
Tho' huſh'd in patient wretchedneſs at home.
Is there no virgin, grac'd with every charm
But that which binds the mercenary vow?
No youth of genius, whoſe neglected bloom
Unfoſter'd ſickens in the barren ſhade? 170
No worthy man, by fortune's random blows,
Or by a heart too generous and humane,
Conſtrain'd to leave his happy natal ſeat,
And ſigh for wants more bitter than his own?
There are, while human miſeries abound, 175
A thouſand ways to waſte ſuperfluous wealth,
Without one fool or flatterer at your board,
Without one hour of ſickneſs or diſguſt.

But other ills th' ambiguous feaſt purſue,
Beſides provoking the laſcivious taſte. 180
Such various foods, though harmleſs each alone,
Each other violate; and oft we ſee
What ſtrife is brew'd, and what pernicious bane,

From combinations of innoxious things.
Th' unbounded taſte I mean not to confine 185
To hermit's diet needleſly ſevere.
But would you long the ſweets of health enjoy,
Or huſband pleaſure; at one impious meal
Exhauſt not half the bounties of the year,
Of every realm. It matters not mean while 190
How much to-morrow differ from to-day;
So far indulge: 'tis fit, beſides, that man,
To change obnoxious, be to change inur'd.
But ſtay the curious appetite, and taſte
With caution fruits you never tried before. 195
For want of uſe the kindeſt aliment
Sometimes offends; while cuſtom tames the rage
Of poiſon to mild amity with life.

So heav'n has form'd us to the general taſte
Of all its gifts; ſo cuſtom has improv'd 200
This bent of nature; that few ſimple foods,
Of all that earth, or air, or ocean yield,

But by excefs offend. Beyond the fenfe
Of light refection, at the genial board
Indulge not often; nor protract the feaft 205
To dull fatiety; till foft and flow
A drowzy death creeps on, th' expanfive foul
Oppref's'd, and fmother'd the celeftial fire.
The ftomach, urg'd beyond it's active tone,
Hardly to nutrimental chyle fubdues 210
The fofteft food: unfinifh'd and deprav'd,
The chyle, in all its future wanderings, owns
Its turbid fountain; not by purer ftreams
So to be clear'd, but foulnefs will remain.
To fparkling wine what ferment can exalt 215
Th' unripen'd grape? Or what mechanic fkill
From the crude ore can fpin the ductile gold?

Grofs riot treafures up a wealthy fund
Of plagues: but more immedicable ills
Attend the lean extreme. For phyfic knows 220
How to difburden the too tumid veins,

Even how to ripen the half-labour'd blood:
But to unlock the elemental tubes,
Collaps'd and ſhrunk with long inanity,
And with balſamic nutriment repair 225
The dried and worn-out habit, were to bid
Old age grow green, and wear a ſecond ſpring;
Or the tall aſh, long raviſh'd from the ſoil,
Thro' wither'd veins imbibe the vernal dew.
When hunger calls, obey; nor often wait 230
Till hunger ſharpen to corroſive pain:
For the keen appetite will feaſt beyond
What nature well can bear; and one extreme
Ne'er without danger meets its own reverſe.
Too greedily th' exhauſted veins abſorb 235
The recent chyle, and load enfeebled powers
Oft to th' extinction of the vital flame.
To the pale cities, by the firm-ſet ſiege
And famine humbled, may this verſe be borne;
And hear, ye hardieſt ſons that Albion breeds, 240
Long toſs'd and famiſh'd on the wintry main;

The war ſhook off, or hoſpitable ſhore
Attain'd, with temperance bear the ſhock of joy;
Nor crown with feſtive rites th' auſpicious day:
Such feaſt might prove more fatal than the waves, 245
Than war or famine. While the vital fire
Burns feebly, heap not the green fuel on;
But prudently foment the wandering ſpark
With what the ſooneſt feeds its kindred touch:
Be frugal ev'n of that: a little give 250
At firſt; that kindled, add a little more;
Till, by deliberate nouriſhing, the flame
Reviv'd, with all it's wonted vigour glows.

But tho' the two (the full and the jejune)
Extremes have each their vice; it much avails 255
Ever with gentle tide to ebb and flow
From this to that: So nature learns to bear
Whatever chance or headlong appetite
May bring. Beſides, a meagre day ſubdues
The cruder clods by ſloth or luxury 260

Collected, and unloads the wheels of life.
Sometimes a coy averſion to the feaſt
Comes on, while yet no blacker omen lours;
Then is a time to ſhun the tempting board,
Were it your natal or your nuptial day. 265
Perhaps a faſt ſo ſeaſonable ſtarves
The latent ſeeds of woe, which rooted once
Might coſt you labour. But the day return'd
Of feſtal luxury, the wiſe indulge
Moſt in the tender vegetable breed: 270
Then chiefly when the ſummer beams inflame
The brazen heavens; or angry Sirius ſheds
A feveriſh taint thro' the ſtill gulph of air.
The moiſt cool viands then, and flowing cup
From the freſh dairy-virgin's liberal hand, 275
Will ſave your head from harm, tho' round the world
The dreaded *Cauſos roll his waſteful fires.
Pale humid winter loves the generous board,
The meal more copious, and a warmer fare;
And longs with old wood and old wine to cheer 280

* The burning fever.

His quaking heart. The ſeaſons which divide
Th' empires of heat and cold; by neither claim'd,
Influenc'd by both; a middle regimen
Impoſe. Thro' autumn's languiſhing domain
Deſcending, nature by degrees invites 285
To glowing luxury. But from the depth
Of winter when th' invigorated year
Emerges; when Favonius fluſh'd with love,
Toyful and young, in every breeze deſcends
More warm and wanton on his kindling bride; 290
Then, ſhepherds, then begin to ſpare your flocks;
And learn, with wiſe humanity, to check
The luſt of blood. Now pregnant earth commits
A various offspring to th' indulgent ſky:
Now bounteous nature feeds with laviſh hand 295
The prone creation; yields what once ſuffic'd
Their dainty ſovereign, when the world was young;
Ere yet the barbarous thirſt of blood had ſeiz'd
The human breaſt.—Each rolling month matures
The food that ſuits it moſt; ſo does each clime. 300

Far in the horrid realms of Winter, where
Th' eſtabliſh'd ocean heaps a monſtrous waſte
Of ſhining rocks and mountains to the pole:
There lives a hardy race, whoſe plaineſt wants
Relentleſs earth, their cruel ſtep-mother, 305
Regards not. On the waſte of iron fields,
Untam'd, intractable, no harveſts wave:
Pomona hates them, and the clowniſh God
Who tends the garden. In this frozen world
Such cooling gifts were vain: a fitter meal 310
Is earn'd with eaſe; for here the fruitful ſpawn
Of Ocean ſwarms, and heaps their genial board
With generous fare and luxury profuſe.
Theſe are their bread, the only bread they know;
Theſe, and their willing ſlave the deer that crops 315
The ſhrubby herbage on their meagre hills.
Girt by the burning Zone, not thus the South
Her ſwarthy ſons in either Ind, maintains:
Or thirſty Libya; from whoſe fervid loins
The lion burſts, and every fiend that roams 320

Th' affrighted wilderneſs. The mountain herd,
Aduſt and dry, no ſweet repaſt affords;
Nor does the tepid main ſuch kinds produce,
So perfect, ſo delicious, as the ſhoals
Of icy Zembla. Raſhly where the blood 325
Brews feveriſh frays; where ſcarce the tubes ſuſtain
Its tumid fervour and tempeſtuous courſe;
Kind nature tempts not to ſuch gifts as theſe.
But here in livid ripeneſs melts the Grape:
Here, finiſh'd by invigorating ſuns, 330
Thro' the green ſhade the golden Orange glows:
Spontaneous here the turgid Melon yields
A generous pulp: the Coco ſwells on high
With milky riches; and in horrid mail
The criſp Ananas wraps its poignant ſweets. 335
Earth's vaunted progeny: In ruder air
Too coy to flouriſh, even too proud to live;
Or hardly rais'd by artificial fire
To vapid life. Here with a mother's ſmile
Glad Amalthea pours her copious horn. 340

Here buxom Ceres reigns: Th' autumnal ſea
In boundleſs billows fluctuates o'er their plains.
What ſuits the climate beſt, what ſuits the men,
Nature profuſes moſt, and moſt the taſte
Demands. The fountain, edg'd with racy wine 345
Or acid fruit, bedews their thirſty ſouls.
The breeze eternal breathing round their limbs
Supports in elſe intolerable air:
While the cool Palm, the Plantain, and the grove
That waves on gloomy Lebanon, aſſuage 350
The torrid hell that beams upon their heads.

Now come, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead;
Now let me wander thro' your gelid reign.
I burn to view th' enthuſiaſtic wilds
By mortal elſe untrod. I hear the din 355
Of waters thund'ring o'er the ruin'd cliffs.
With holy reverence I approach the rocks
Whence glide the ſtreams renown'd in ancient ſong.
Here from the deſart down the rumbling ſteep

Firſt ſprings the Nile; here burſts the ſounding Po
In angry waves; Euphrates hence devolves 361
A mighty flood to water half the Eaſt;
And there, in Gothic ſolitude reclin'd,
The cheerleſs Tanais pours his hoary urn.
What ſolemn twilight! What ſtupendous ſhades 365
Enwrap theſe infant floods! Thro' every nerve
A ſacred horror thrills, a pleaſing fear
Glides o'er my frame. The foreſt deepens round;
And more gigantic ſtill th' impending trees
Stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom.
Are theſe the confines of ſome fairy world? 371
A land of Genii? Say, beyond theſe wilds
What unknown nations? If indeed beyond
Aught habitable lies. And whither leads,
To what ſtrange regions, or of bliſs or pain, 375
That ſubterraneous way! Propitious maids,
Conduct me, while with fearful ſteps I tread
This trembling ground. The taſk remains to ſing
Your gifts (ſo Pæon, ſo the powers of health

Command) to praiſe your cryſtal element: 380
The chief ingredient in heaven's various works;
Whoſe flexile genius ſparkles in the gem,
Grows firm in oak, and fugitive in wine;
The vehicle, the ſource, of nutriment
And life, to all that vegetate or live. 385

O comfortable ſtreams! With eager lips
And trembling hand the languid thirſty quaff
New life in you; freſh vigour fills their veins.
No warmer cups the rural ages knew;
None warmer ſought the fires of human kind. 390
Happy in temperate peace! Their equal days
Felt not th' alternate fits of feveriſh mirth,
And ſick dejection. Still ſerene and pleas'd
They knew no pains but what the tender ſoul
With pleaſure yields to, and would ne'er forget. 395
Bleſt with divine immunity from ails,
Long centuries they liv'd; their only fate
Was ripe old age, and rather ſleep than death.

Oh! could thoſe worthies from the world of Gods
Return to viſit their degenerate ſons, 400
How would they ſcorn the joys of modern time,
With all our art and toil improved to pain!
Too happy they! But wealth brought luxury,
And luxury on ſloth begot diſeaſe.

Learn temperance, friends; and hear without diſdain
The choice of water. Thus the *Coan ſage 406
Opin'd, and thus the learn'd of every School.
What leaſt of foreign principles partakes
Is beſt: The lighteſt then; what bears the touch
Of fire the leaſt, and ſooneſt mounts in air; 410
The moſt inſipid; the moſt void of ſmell.
Such the rude mountain from his horrid ſides
Pours down; ſuch waters in the ſandy vale
For ever boil, alike of winter froſts
And ſummer's heat ſecure. The cryſtal ſtream, 415
Through rocks reſounding, or for many a mile
O'er the chaf'd pebbles hurl'd, yields wholeſome, pure

* Hippocrates.

And mellow draughts; except when winter thaws,
And half the mountains melt into the tide.
Tho' thirſt were e'er ſo reſolute, avoid 420
The ſordid lake, and all ſuch drowſy floods
As fill from Lethe Belgia's ſlow canals;
(With reſt corrupt, with vegetation green;
Squalid with generation, and the birth
Of little monſters;) till the power of fire 425
Has from profane embraces diſengag'd
The violated lymph. The virgin ſtream
In boiling waſtes its finer ſoul in air.

Nothing like ſimple element dilutes
The food, or gives the chyle ſo ſoon to flow. 430
But where the ſtomach indolent and cold
Toys with its duty, animate with wine
Th' inſipid ſtream: Tho' golden Ceres yields
A more voluptuous, a more ſprightly draught;
Perhaps more active. Wine unmix'd, and all 435
The gluey floods that from the vex'd abyſs

Of fermentation ſpring; with ſpirit fraught,
And furious with intoxicating fire;
Retard concoction, and preſerve unthaw'd
Th' embodied maſs. You ſee what countleſs years, 440
Embalm'd in fiery quinteſſence of wine,
The puny wonders of the reptile world,
The tender rudiments of life, the ſlim
Unravellings of minute anatomy,
Maintain their texture, and unchang'd remain. 445

We curſe not wine: The vile exceſs we blame;
More fruitful than th' accumulated board,
Of pain and miſery. For the ſubtle draught
Faſter and ſurer ſwells the vital tide;
And with more active poiſon, than the floods 450
Of groſſer crudity convey, pervades
The far remote meanders of our frame.
Ah! ſly deceiver! Branded o'er and o'er,
Yet ſtill believ'd! Exulting o'er the wreck
Of ſober vows!—But the Parnaſſian Maids 455

* Another time perhaps ſhall ſing the joys,
The fatal charms, the many woes of wine;
Perhaps its various tribes, and various powers.

Mean time, I would not always dread the bowl,
Nor every treſpaſs ſhun. The feveriſh ſtrife, 460
Rous'd by the rare debauch, ſubdues, expels
The loitering crudities that burden life;
And, like a torrent full and rapid, clears
Th' obſtructed tubes. Beſides, this reſtleſs world
Is full of chances, which by habit's power 465
To learn to bear is eaſier than to ſhun.
Ah! when ambition, meagre love of gold,
Or ſacred country calls, with mellowing wine
To moiſten well the thirſty ſuffrages;
Say how, unſeaſon'd to the midnight frays 470
Of Comus and his rout, wilt thou contend
With Centaurs long to hardy deeds inur'd?
Then learn to revel; but by ſlow degrees:
By ſlow degrees the liberal arts are won;

* See Book IV.

And Hercules grew ſtrong. But when you ſmooth 475
The brows of care, indulge your feſtive vein
In cups by well-inform'd experience found
The leaſt your bane: and only with your friends.
There are ſweet follies; frailties to be ſeen
By friends alone, and men of generous minds. 480

Oh! ſeldom may the fated hours return
Of drinking deep! I would not daily taſte,
Except when life declines, even ſober cups.
Weak withering age no rigid law forbids,
With frugal nectar, ſmooth and ſlow with balm, 485
The ſapleſs habit daily to bedew,
And give the heſitating wheels of life
Gliblier to play. But youth has better joys:
And is it wiſe when youth with pleaſure flows,
To ſquander the reliefs of age and pain! 490

What dextrous thouſands juſt within the goal
Of wild debauch direct their nightly courſe!

Perhaps no ſickly qualms bedim their days,
No morning admonitions ſhock the head.
But ah! what woes remain! Life rolls apace, 495
And that incurable diſeaſe old age,
In youthful bodies more ſeverely felt,
More ſternly active, ſhakes their blaſted prime:
Except kind nature by ſome haſty blow
Prevent the lingering fates. For know, whate'er 500
Beyond its natural fervour hurries on
The ſanguine tide; whether the frequent bowl,
High-ſeaſon'd fare, or exerciſe to toil
Protracted; ſpurs to its laſt ſtage tir'd life,
And ſows the temples with untimely ſnow. 505
When life is new, the ductile fibres feel
The heart's increaſing force; and, day by day,
The growth advances: till the larger tubes,
Acquiring (from their * elemental veins,

* In the human body, as well as in thoſe of other animals, the larger blood veſſels are compoſed of ſmaller ones; which, by the violent motion and preſſure of the fluids in the large veſſels, loſe their cavities by degrees, and degenerate into impervious chords or

Condens'd to ſolid chords) a firmer tone, 510
Suſtain, and juſt ſuſtain, th' impetuous blood.
Here ſtops the growth. With overbearing pulſe
And preſſure, ſtill the great deſtroy the ſmall;
Still with the ruins of the ſmall grow ſtrong.
Life glows mean time, amid the grinding force 515
Of viſcous fluids and elaſtic tubes;
Its various functions vigorouſly are plied
By ſtrong machinery; and in ſolid health
The Man confirm'd long triumphs o'er diſeaſe.
But the full ocean ebbs: There is a point, 520
By nature fix'd, whence life muſt downward tend.
For ſtill the beating tide conſolidates
The ſtubborn veſſels, more reluctant ſtill
To the weak throbs of th' ill-ſupported heart.

fibres. In proportion as theſe ſmall veſſels become ſolid, the larger muſt of courſe grow leſs extenſile, more rigid, and make a ſtronger reſiſtance to the action of the heart, and force of the blood. From this gradual condenſation of the ſmaller veſſels, and conſequent rigidity of the larger ones, the progreſs of the human body from infancy to old age is accounted for.

This languiſhing, theſe ſtrength'ning by degrees 525
To hard unyielding unelaſtic bone,
Thro' tedious channels the congealing flood
Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on;
It loiters ſtill: And now it ſtirs no more.
This is the period few attain; the death 530
Of nature; thus (ſo heav'n ordain'd it) life
Deſtroys itſelf; and could theſe laws have chang'd,
Neſtor might now the fates of Troy relate;
And Homer live immortal as his ſong.

What does not fade? The tower that long had ſtood
The cruſh of thunder and the warring winds, 536
Shook by the ſlow but ſure deſtroyer, Time,
Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its baſe.
And flinty pyramids, and walls of braſs,
Deſcend: the Babylonian ſpires are ſunk; 540
Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down.
Time ſhakes the ſtable tyranny of thrones,
And tottering empires cruſh by their own weight.

This huge rotundity we tread grows old;
And all thoſe worlds that roll around the ſun, 545
The ſun himſelf, ſhall die; and ancient Night
Again involve the deſolate abyſs:
Till the great FATHER thro' the lifeleſs gloom
Extend his arm to light another world,
And bid new planets roll by other laws. 550
For thro' the regions of unbounded ſpace,
Where unconfin'd Omnipotence has room,
BEING, in various ſyſtems, fluctuates ſtill
Between creation and abhor'd decay:
It ever did; perhaps and ever will. 555
New worlds are ſtill emerging from the deep;
The old deſcending, in their turns to riſe.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

BOOK III.

EXERCISE.

THE ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK III.

EXERCISE.

THRO' various toils th' adventurous Muſe has paſt;
But half the toil, and more than half, remains.
Rude is her Theme, and hardly fit for Song;
Plain, and of little ornament; and I
But little practis'd in th' Aonian arts. 5
Yet not in vain ſuch labours have we tried,
If aught theſe lays the fickle health confirm.
To you, ye delicate, I write; for you

I tame my youth to philoſophic cares,
And grow ſtill paler by the midnight lamps. 10
Not to debilitate with timorous rules
A hardy frame; nor needleſsly to brave
Inglorious dangers, proud of mortal ſtrength;
Is all the leſſon that in wholeſome years
Concerns the ſtrong. His care were ill beſtow'd 15
Who would with warm effeminacy nurſe
The thriving oak which on the mountain's brow
Bears all the blaſts that ſweep the wint'ry heav'n.

Behold the labourer of the glebe, who toils
In duſt, in rain, in cold and ſultry ſkies; 20
Save but the grain from mildews and the flood,
Nought anxious he what ſickly ſtars aſcend.
He knows no laws by Eſculapius given;
He ſtudies none. Yet him nor midnight fogs
Infeſt, nor thoſe envenom'd ſhafts that fly 25
When rabid Sirius fires th' autumnal noon.
His habit pure with plain and temperate meals,

Robuſt with labour, and by cuſtom ſteel'd
To every caſualty of varied life;
Serene he bears the peeviſh Eaſtern blaſt. 30
And uninfected breathes the mortal South.

Such the reward of rude and ſober life;
Of labour ſuch. By health the peaſant's toil
Is well repaid; if exerciſe were pain
Indeed, and temperance pain. By arts like theſe 35
Laconia nurs'd of old her hardy ſons;
And Rome's unconquer'd legions urg'd their way,
Unhurt, thro' every toil in every clime.

Toil, and be ſtrong. By toil the flaccid nerves
Grow firm, and gain a more compacted tone; 40
The greener juices are by toil ſubdu'd,
Mellow'd, and ſubtiliz'd; the vapid old
Expell'd, and all the rancour of the blood.
Come, my companions, ye who feel the charms
Of nature and the year; come, let us ſtray 45

Where chance or fancy leads our roving walk:
Come, while the ſoft voluptuous breezes fan
The fleecy heavens, enwrap the limbs in balm,
And ſhed a charming languor o'er the ſoul.
Nor when bright Winter ſows with prickly froſt 50
The vigorous ether, in unmanly warmth
Indulge at home; nor even when Eurus' blaſts
This way and that convolve the lab'ring woods.
My liberal walks, ſave when the ſkies in rain
Or fogs relent, no ſeaſon ſhould confine 55
Or to the cloiſter'd gallery or arcade.
Go, climb the mountain; from th' ethereal ſource
Imbibe the recent gale. The cheerful morn
Beams o'er the hills; go, mount th' exulting ſteed.
Already, ſee, the deep-mouth'd beagles catch 60
The tainted mazes; and, on eager ſport
Intent, with emulous impatience try
Each doubtful trace. Or, if a nobler prey
Delight you more, go chaſe the deſperate deer;
And thro' its deepeſt ſolitudes awake 65
The vocal foreſt with the jovial horn.

But if the breathleſs chaſe o'er hill and dale
Exceed your ſtrength; a ſport of leſs fatigue,
Not leſs delightful, the prolific ſtream
Affords. The cryſtal rivulet, that o'er 70
A ſtony channel rolls its rapid maze,
Swarms with the ſilver fry. Such, thro' the bounds
Of paſtoral Stafford, runs the brawling Trent;
Such Eden, ſprung from Cumbrian mountains; ſuch
The Eſk, o'erhung with woods; and ſuch the ſtream
On whoſe Arcadian banks I firſt drew air, 76
Liddal; till now, except in Doric lays
Tun'd to her murmurs by her love-ſick ſwains,
Unknown in ſong: Tho' not a a purer ſtream,
Thro' meads more flowery or more romantic groves, 80
Rolls toward the weſtern main. Hail, ſacred flood!
May ſtill thy hoſpitable ſwains be bleſt
In rural innocence; thy mountains ſtill
Teem with the fleecy race; thy tuneful woods
For ever flouriſh; and thy vales look gay 85
With painted meadows, and the golden grain!

Oft, with thy blooming ſons, when life was new,
Sportive and petulant, and charm'd with toys,
In thy tranſparent eddies have I lav'd:
Oft trac'd with patient ſteps thy fairy banks, 90
With the well-imitated fly to hook
The eager trout, and with the ſlender line
And yielding rod ſolicite to the ſhore
The ſtruggling panting prey; while vernal clouds
And tepid gales obſcur'd the ruffled pool, 95
And from the deeps call'd forth the wanton ſwarms.

Form'd on the Samian ſchool, or thoſe of Ind,
There are who think theſe paſtimes ſcarce humane.
Yet in my mind (and not relentleſs I)
His life is pure that wears no fouler ſtains. 100
But if thro' genuine tenderneſs of heart,
Or ſecret want of reliſh for the game,
You ſhun the glories of the chaſe, nor care
To haunt the peopled ſtream; the Garden yields
A ſoft amuſement, an humane delight. 105

To raiſe th' inſipid nature of the ground;
Or tame its ſavage genius to the grace
Of careleſs ſweet ruſticity, that ſeems
The amiable reſult of happy chance,
Is to create; and gives a god-like joy, 110
Which every year improves. Nor thou diſdain
To check the lawleſs riot of the trees,
To plant the grove, or turn the barren mould.
O happy he! whom, when his years decline,
(His fortune and his fame by worthy means 115
Attain'd, and equal to his moderate mind;
His life approv'd by all the wiſe and good,
Even envied by the vain) the peaceful groves
Of Epicurus, from this ſtormy world,
Receive to reſt; of all ungrateful cares 120
Abſolv'd, and ſacred from the ſelfiſh crowd.
Happieſt of men! if the ſame ſoil invites
A choſen few, companions of his youth,
Once fellow-rakes perhaps, now rural friends;
With whom in eaſy commerce to purſue 125

Nature's free charms, and vie for ſylvan fame:
A fair ambition; void of ſtrife or guile,
Or jealouſy, or pain to be outdone.
Who plans th' enchanted garden, who directs
The viſto beſt, and beſt conducts the ſtream: 130
Whoſe groves the faſteſt thicken and aſcend;
Whom firſt the welcome Spring ſalutes; who ſhews
The earlieſt bloom, the ſweeteſt proudeſt charms
Of Flora, who gives Pomona's juice
To match the ſprightly genius of champain. 135
Thrice happy days! in rural buſineſs paſt:
Bleſt winter nights! when as the genial fire
Cheers the wide hall, his cordial family
With ſoft domeſtic arts the hours beguile,
And pleaſing talk that ſtarts no timorous fame, 140
With witleſs wantonneſs to hunt it down:
Or thro' the fairy-land of tale or ſong
Delighted wander, in fictitious fates
Engag'd, and all that ſtrikes humanity:
Till loſt in fable, they the ſtealing hour 145

Of timely reſt forget. Sometimes, at eve
His neighbours lift the latch, and bleſs unbid
His feſtal roof; while, o'er the light repaſt,
And ſprightly cups, they mix in ſocial joy;
And, thro' the maze of converſation, trace 150
Whate'er amuſes or improves the mind.
Sometimes at eve (for I delight to taſte
The native zeſt and flavour of the fruit,
Where ſenſe grows wild and takes of no manure)
The decent, honeſt, cheerful huſbandman 155
Should drown his labours in my friendly bowl;
And at my table find himſelf at home.

Whate'er you ſtudy, in whate'er you ſweat,
Indulge your taſte. Some love the manly foils;
The tennis ſome; and ſome the graceful dance. 160
Others more hardy, range the purple heath,
Or naked ſtubble; where from field to field
The ſounding coveys urge their labouring flight;
Eager amid the riſing cloud to pour

The gun's unerring thunder: And there are 165
Whom ſtill the * meed of the green archer charms.
He chuſes beſt, whoſe labour entertains
His vacant fancy moſt: The toil you hate
Fatigues you ſoon, and ſcarce improves your limbs.

As beauty ſtill has blemiſh; and the mind 170
The moſt accompliſh'd its imperfect ſide;
Few bodies are there of that happy mould
But ſome one part is weaker than the reſt:
The legs, perhaps, or arms refuſe their load,
Or the cheſt labours. Theſe aſſiduouſly, 175
But gently, in their proper arts employ'd,
Acquire a vigour and ſpringy activity
To which they were not born. But weaker parts
Abhor fatigue and violent diſcipline.

Begin with gentle toils; and, as your nerves 180
Grow firm, to hardier by juſt ſteps aſpire.

* This word is much uſed by ſome of the old Engliſh poets, and ſignifies *Reward* or *Prize*.

The prudent, even in every moderate walk,
At firſt but ſaunter; and by ſlow degrees
Increaſe their pace. This doctrine of the wiſe
Well knows the maſter of the flying ſteed. 185
Firſt from the goal the manag'd courſers play
On bended reins: as yet the ſkilful youth
Repreſs their foamy pride; but every breath
The race grows warmer, and the tempeſt ſwells;
Till all the fiery mettle has its way, 190
And the thick thunder hurries o'er the plain.
When all at once from indolence to toil
You ſpring, the fibres by the haſty ſhock
Are tir'd and crack'd, before their unctuous coats,
Compreſs'd, can pour the lubricating balm. 195
Beſides, collected in the paſſive veins,
The purple maſs a ſudden torrent rolls,
O'erpowers the heart and deluges the lungs
With dangerous inundation: Oft the ſource
Of fatal woes; a cough that foams with blood, 200

Asthma and feller * Peripneumony,
Or the slow minings of the hectic fire.

Th' athletic Fool, to whom what heaven deny'd
Of soul is well compensated in limbs,
Oft from his rage, or brainless frolic, feels 205
His vegetation and brute force decay.
The men of better clay and finer mould
Know nature, feel the human dignity;
And scorn to vie with oxen or with apes.
Pursu'd prolixly, even the gentlest toil 210
Is waste of health: repose by small fatigue
Is earn'd; and (where your habit is not prone
To thaw) by the first moisture of the brows.
The fine and subtle spirits cost too much
To be profus'd, too much the roscid balm. 215
But when the hard varieties of life
You toil to learn; or try the dusty chase,
Or the warm deeds of some important day:

* The inflammation of the lungs.

Hot from the field, indulge not yet your limbs
In wiſh'd repoſe; nor court the fanning gale, 220
Nor taſte the ſpring. O! by the ſacred tears
Of widows, orphans, mothers, ſiſters, ſires,
Forbear! No other peſtilence has driven
Such myriads o'er th' irremeable deep.
Why this ſo fatal, the ſagacious Muſe 225
Thro' nature's cunning labyrinths could trace:
But there are ſecrets which who knows not now,
Muſt, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps
Of Science; and devote ſeven years to toil.
Beſides, I would not ſtun your patient ears 230
With what it little boots you to attain.
He knows enough, the mariner, who knows
Where lurk the ſhelves, and where the whirlpools boil,
What ſigns portend the ſtorm: To ſubtler minds
He leaves to ſcan, from what myſterious cauſe 235
Charybdis rages in th' Ionian wave;
Whence thoſe impetuous currents in the main
Which neither oar nor ſail can ſtem; and why

The roughening deep expects the ſtorm, as ſure
As red Orion mounts the ſhrouded heaven. 240

In ancient times, when Rome with Athens vied
For poliſh'd luxury and uſeful arts;
All hot and reeking from th' Olympic ſtrife,
And warm Paleſtra, in the tepid bath
Th' athletic youth relax'd their weary limbs. 245
Soft oils bedew'd them, with the grateful pow'rs
Of Nard and Caſſia fraught, to ſooth and heal
The cheriſh'd nerves. Our leſs voluptuous clime
Not much invites us to ſuch arts as theſe.
'Tis not for thoſe, whom gelid ſkies embrace, 250
And chilling fogs; whoſe perſpiration feels
Such frequent bars from Eurus and the North;
'Tis not for thoſe to cultivate a ſkin
Too ſoft; or teach the recremental ſume
Too faſt to crowd thro' ſuch precarious ways. 255
For thro' the ſmall arterial mouths, that pierce
In endleſs millions the cloſe-woven ſkin,

The baſer fluids in a conſtant ſtream
Eſcape, and viewleſs melt into the winds.
While this eternal, this moſt copious, waſte 260
Of blood, degenerate into vapid brine,
Maintains its wonted meaſure, all the powers
Of health befriend you, all the wheels of life
With eaſe and pleaſure move: But this reſtrain'd
Or more or leſs, ſo more or leſs you feel 265
The functions labour: From this fatal ſource
What woes deſcend is never to be ſung.
To take their numbers were to count the ſands
That ride in whirlwind the parch'd Libyan air;
Or waves that, when the bluſtering North embroils 270
The Baltic, thunder on the German ſhore.
Subject not then, by ſoft emollient arts,
This grand expence, on which your fates depend,
To every caprice of the ſky; nor thwart
The genius of your clime: For from the blood 275
Leaſt fickle riſe the recremental ſteams,
And leaſt obnoxious to the ſtyptic air,

Which breathe thro' ſtraiter and more callous pores.
The temper'd Scythian hence, half-naked treads
His boundleſs ſnows, nor rues th' inclement heaven; 280
And hence our painted anceſtors defied
The Eaſt: nor curs'd, like us, their fickle ſky.

The body, moulded by the clime, endures
Th' Equator heats or Hyperborean froſt:
Except by habits foreign to its turn, 285
Unwiſe you counteract its forming pow'r.
Rude at the firſt, the winter ſhocks you leſs
By long acquaintance: Study then your ſky,
Form to its manners your obſequious frame,
And learn to ſuffer what you cannot ſhun. 290
Againſt the rigors of a damp cold heav'n
To fortify their bodies, ſome frequent
The gelid ciſtern; and, where nought forbids,
I praiſe their dauntleſs heart: A frame ſo ſteel'd
Dreads not the cough, nor thoſe ungenial blaſts 295
That breathe the Tertian or fell Rheumatiſm;

The nerves ſo temper'd never quit their tone,
No chronic languors haunt ſuch hardy breaſts.
But all things have their bounds: and he who makes
By daily uſe the kindeſt regimen 300
Eſſential to his health, ſhould never mix
With human kind, nor art nor trade purſue.
He not the ſafe viciſſitudes of life
Without ſome ſhock endures; ill-fitted he
To want the known, or bear unuſual things. 305
Beſides, the powerful remedies of pain
(Since pain in ſpite of all our care will come)
Should never with your proſperous days of health
Grow too familiar: For by frequent uſe
The ſtrongeſt medicines loſe their healing power, 310
And even the ſureſt poiſons theirs to kill.

Let thoſe who from the frozen Arctos reach
Parch'd Mauritania, or the ſultry Weſt,
Or the wide flood that laves rich Indoſtan,
Plunge thrice a day, and in the tepid wave 315

Untwiſt their ſtubborn pores; that full and free
Th' evaporation thro' the ſoften'd ſkin
May bear proportion to the ſwelling blood.
So may they 'ſcape the fever's rapid flames;
So feel untainted the hot breath of hell. 320
With us, the man of no complaint demands
The warm ablution juſt enough to clear
The ſluices of the ſkin, enough to keep
The body ſacred from indecent ſoil.
Still to be pure, ev'n did it not conduce 325
(As much it does) to health, were greatly worth
Your daily pains. 'Tis this adorns the rich;
The want of this is poverty's worſt woe;
With this external virtue Age maintains
A decent grace; without it youth and charms 330
Are loathſome. This the venal Graces know;
So doubtleſs do your wives: For married ſires,
As well as lovers, ſtill pretend to taſte;
Nor is it leſs (all prudent wives can tell)
To loſe a huſband's than a lover's heart. 335

But now the hours and ſeaſons when to toil
From foreign themes recall my wandering ſong.
Some labour faſting, or but ſlightly fed
To lull the grinding ſtomach's hungry rage.
Where nature feeds too corpulent a frame 340
'Tis wiſely done: For while the thirſty veins,
Impatient of lean penury, devour
The treaſur'd oil, then is the happieſt time
To ſhake the lazy balſam from its cells.
Now while the ſtomach from the full repaſt 345
Subſides, but ere returning hunger gnaws,
Ye leaner habits, give an hour to toil:
And ye whom no luxuriancy of growth
Oppreſſes yet, or threatens to oppreſs.
But from the recent meal no labours pleaſe, 350
Of limbs or mind. For now the cordial powers
Claim all the wandering ſpirits to a work
Of ſtrong and ſubtle toil, and great event:
A work of time: and you may rue the day
You hurried, with untimely exerciſe, 355

A half-concocted chyle into the blood.
The body overcharg'd with unctuous phlegm
Much toil demands: The lean elastic less.
While winter chills the blood and binds the veins,
No labours are too hard: By those you 'scape 360
The slow diseases of the torpid year;
Endless to name; to one of which alone,
To that which tears the nerves, the toil of slaves
Is pleasure: Oh! from such inhuman pains
May all be free who merit not the wheel! 365
But from the burning Lion when the sun
Pours down his sultry wrath; now while the blood
Too much already maddens in the veins,
And all the finer fluids thro' the skin
Explore their flight; me, near the cool cascade 370
Reclin'd, or saunt'ring in the lofty grove,
No needless slight occasion should engage
To pant and sweat beneath the fiery noon.
Now the fresh morn alone and mellow eve
To shady walks and active rural sports 375

Invite. But, while the chilling dews deſcend,
May nothing tempt you to the cold embrace
Of humid ſkies; tho' 'tis no vulgar joy
To trace the horrors of the ſolemn wood
While the ſoft evening ſaddens into night: 380
Tho' the ſweet Poet of the vernal groves
Melts all the night in ſtrains of am'rous woe.

The ſhades deſcend, and midnight o'er the world
Expands her ſable wings. Great Nature droops
Thro' all her works. Now happy he whoſe toil 385
Has o'er his languid powerleſs limbs diffus'd
A pleaſing laſſitude: He not in vain
Invokes the gentle Deity of dreams.
His powers the moſt voluptuouſly diſſolve
In ſoft repoſe: On him the balmy dews 390
Of ſleep with double nutriment deſcend.
But would you ſweetly waſte the blank of night
In deep oblivion; or on Fancy's wings
Viſit the paradiſe of happy Dreams,

And waken cheerful as the lively morn; 395
Oppreſs not Nature ſinking down to reſt
With feaſts too late, too ſolid, or too full:
But be the firſt concoction half-matur'd
Ere you to mighty indolence reſign
Your paſſive faculties. He from the toils 400
And troubles of the day to heavier toil
Retires, whom trembling from the tower that rocks
Amid the clouds, or Calpe's hideous height,
The buſy dæmons hurl; or in the main
O'erwhelm; or bury ſtruggling under ground. 405
Not all a monarch's luxury the woes
Can counterpoiſe of that moſt wretched man,
Whoſe nights are ſhaken with the frantic fits
Of wild Oreſtes; whoſe delirious brain, 409
Stung by the Furies, works with poiſon'd thought:
While pale and monſtrous painting ſhocks the ſoul;
And mangled conſciouſneſs bemoans itſelf
For ever torn; and chaos floating round.
What dreams preſage, what dangers theſe or thoſe

Portend to ſanity, tho' prudent ſeers 415
Reveal'd of old and men of deathleſs fame,
We would not to the ſuperſtitious mind
Suggeſt new throbs, new vanities of fear.
'Tis ours to teach you from the peaceful night
To baniſh omens and all reſtleſs woes. 420

In ſtudy ſome protract the ſilent hours,
Which others conſecrate to mirth and wine;
And ſleep till noon, and hardly live till night.
But ſurely this redeems not from the ſhades
One hour of life. Nor does it nought avail 425
What ſeaſon you to drowſy Morpheus give
Of th' ever-varying circle of the day;
Or whether, thro' the tedious winter gloom,
You tempt the midnight or the morning damps.
The body, freſh and vigorous from repoſe, 430
Defies the early fogs: but, by the toils
Of wakeful day, exhauſted and unſtrung,
Weakly reſiſts the night's unwholeſome breath.

The grand diſcharge, th' effuſion of the ſkin,
Slowly impair'd, the languid maladies 435
Creep on, and thro' the ſick'ning functions ſteal.
As, when the chilling Eaſt invades the ſpring,
The delicate Narciſſus pines away
In hectic languor; and a ſlow diſeaſe
Taints all the family of flowers, condemn'd 440
To cruel heav'ns. But why, already prone
To fade, ſhould beauty cheriſh it's own bane?
O ſhame! O pity! nipt with pale Quadrille,
And midnight cares, the bloom of Albion dies!

By toil ſubdu'd, the Warrior and the Hind 445
Sleep faſt and deep: their active functions ſoon
With generous ſtreams the ſubtle tubes ſupply;
And ſoon the tonic irritable nerves
Feel the freſh impulſe and awake the ſoul.
The ſons of indolence with long repoſe, 450
Grow torpid; and with ſloweſt Lethe drunk,
Feebly and lingringly return to life,

Blunt every ſenſe and pow'rleſs every limb.
Ye, prone to ſleep (whom ſleeping moſt annoys)
On the hard matraſs or elaſtic couch 455
Extend your limbs, and wean yourſelves from ſloth;
Nor grudge the lean projector, of dry brain
And ſpringy nerves, the blandiſhments of down:
Nor envy while the buried Bacchanal
Exhales his ſurfeit in prolixer dreams. 460

He without riot, in the balmy feaſt
Of life, the wants of nature has ſupply'd,
Who riſes, cool, ſerene, and full of ſoul.
But pliant nature more or leſs demands,
As cuſtom forms her; and all ſudden change 465
She hates of habit, even from bad to good.
If faults in life, or new emergencies,
From habits urge you by long time confirm'd,
Slow may the change arrive, and ſtage by ſtage;
Slow as the ſhadow o'er the dial moves, 470
Slow as the ſtealing progreſs of the year.

Obſerve the circling year. How unperceiv'd
Her ſeaſons change! Behold! by ſlow degrees,
Stern Winter tam'd into a ruder Spring;
The ripen'd Spring a milder Summer glows; 475
Departing Summer ſheds Pomona's ſtore;
And aged Autumn brews the winter-ſtorm.
Slow as they come, theſe changes come not void
Of mortal ſhocks: The cold and torrid reigns,
The two great periods of th' important year, 480
Are in their firſt approaches ſeldom ſafe:
Funereal Autumn all the ſickly dread,
And the black fates deform the lovely Spring.
He well advis'd who taught our wiſer ſires
Early to borrow Muſcovy's warm ſpoils, 485
Ere the firſt froſt has touch'd the tender blade;
And late reſign them, tho' the wanton Spring
Should deck her charms with all her ſiſter's rays.
For while the effluence of the ſkin maintains
Its native meaſure, the pleuritic Spring 490
Glides harmleſs by; and Autumn, ſick to death
With ſallow Quartans, no contagion breathes.

I in prophetic numbers could unfold
The omens of the year : what ſeaſons teem
With what diſeaſes ; what the humid South 495
Prepares, and what the Demon of the Eaſt :
But you perhaps refuſe the tedious ſong.
Beſides, whatever plagues in heat, or cold,
Or drought, or moiſture dwell, they hurt not you,
Skill'd to correct the vices of the ſky, 500
And taught already how to each extreme
To bend your life. But ſhould the public bane
Infect you ; or ſome treſpaſs of your own,
Or flaw of nature, hint mortality :
Soon as a not unpleaſing horror glides 505
Along the ſpine, thro' all your torpid limbs ;
When firſt the head throbs, or the ſtomach feels
A ſickly load, a weary pain the loins ;
Be Celſus call'd : The Fates come ruſhing on ;
The rapid Fates admit of no delay. 510
While wilful you, and fatally ſecure,
Expect to-morrow's more auſpicious ſun,

The growing peſt, whoſe infancy was weak
And eaſy vanquiſh'd, with triumphant ſway
O'erpow'rs your life. For want of timely care, 515
Millions have died of medicable wounds.

Ah! in what perils is vain life engag'd!
What ſlight neglects, what trivial faults deſtroy
The hardieſt frame! of indolence, of toil,
We die; of want, of ſuperfluity: 520
The all-ſurrounding heaven, the vital air,
Is big with death. And, tho' the putrid South
Be ſhut; tho' no convulſive agony
Shake, from the deep foundations of the world,
Th' impriſon'd plagues; a ſecret venom oft 525
Corrupts the air, the water, and the land.
What livid deaths has ſad Byzantium ſeen!
How oft has Cairo, with a mother's woe,
Wept o'er her ſlaughter'd ſons and lonely ſtreets!
Even Albion, girt with leſs malignant ſkies, 530
Albion the poiſon of the Gods has drank,
And felt the ſting of monſters all her own.

Ere yet the fell Plantagenets had ſpent
Their ancient rage, at Boſworth's purple field;
While, for which tyrant England ſhould receive, 535
Her legions in inceſtuous murders mix'd,
And daily horrors; till the Fates were drunk
With kindred blood by kindred hands profus'd:
Another plague of more gigantic arm
Aroſe, a monſter never known before, 540
Rear'd from Cocytus it's portentous head.
This rapid Fury not, like other peſts,
Purſu'd a gradual courſe, but in a day
Ruſh'd as a ſtorm o'er half th' aſtoniſh'd iſle,
And ſtrew'd with ſudden carcaſes the land. 545

Firſt thro' the ſhoulders, or whatever part
Was ſeiz'd the firſt, a fervid vapour ſprung.
With raſh combuſtion thence, the quivering ſpark
Shot to the heart, and kindled all within;
And ſoon the ſurface caught the ſpreading fires. 550
Thro' all the yielding pores, the melted blood

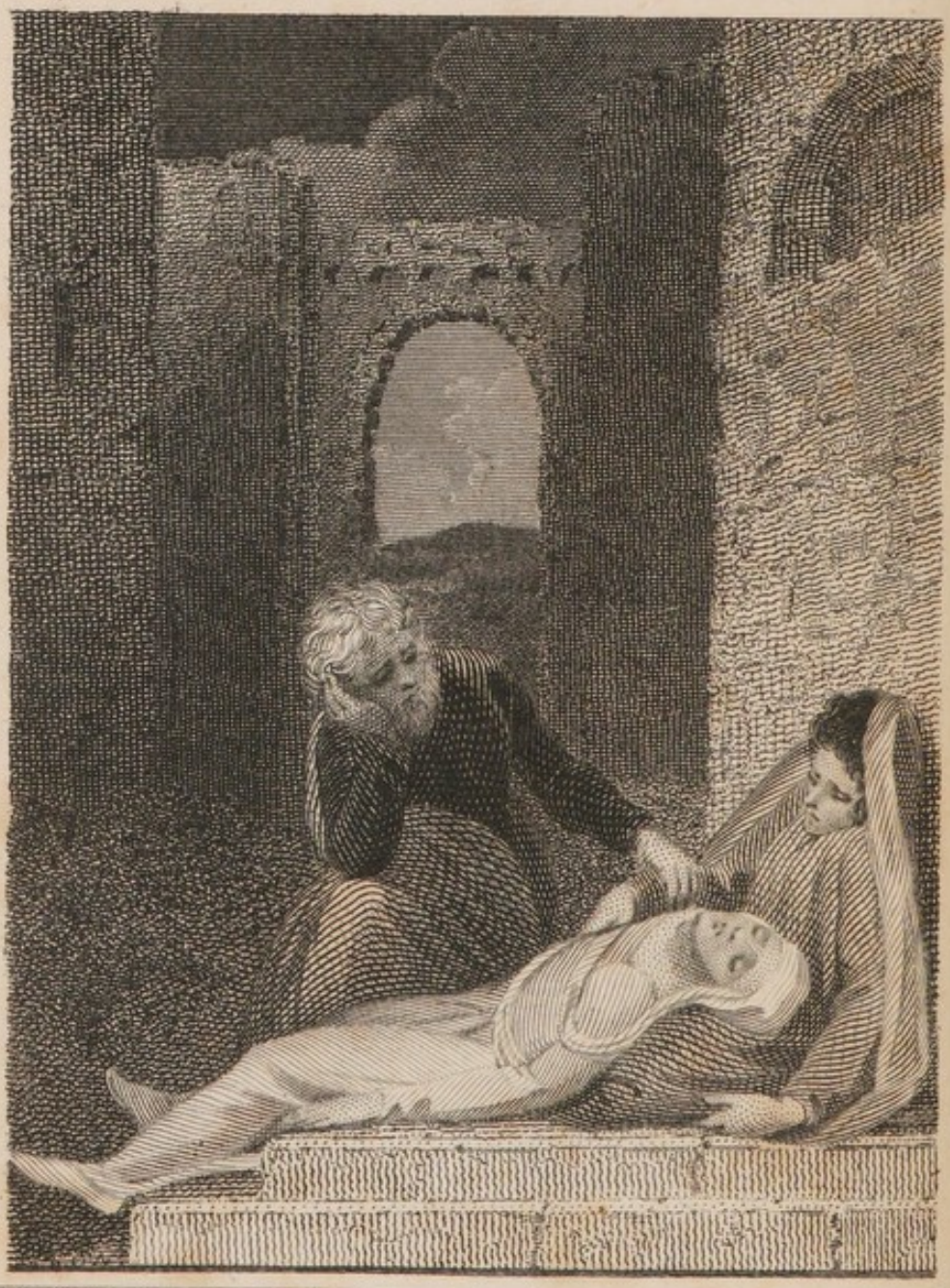
Gush'd out in smoaky sweats; but nought assuag'd
The torrid heat within, nor aught reliev'd
The stomach's anguish. With incessant toil,
Desperate of ease, impatient of their pain, 555
They toss'd from side to side. In vain the stream
Ran full and clear, they burnt and thirsted still.
The restless arteries with rapid blood
Beat strong and frequent. Thick and pantingly
The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'rings heav'd.
At last a heavy pain oppress'd the head, 561
A wild delirium came; their weeping friends
Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs.
Harrass'd with toil on toil, the sinking powers
Lay prostrate and o'erthrown; a ponderous sleep 565
Wrapt all the senses up: they slept and died.

In some a gentle horror crept at first
O'er all the limbs; the sluices of the skin
Withheld their moisture, till by art provok'd
The sweats o'erflow'd; but in a clammy tide: 570

Now free and copious, now reſtrain'd and ſlow;
Of tinctures various, as the temperature
Had mix'd the blood; and rank with fetid ſteams:
As if the pent-up humours by delay
Were grown more fell, more putrid, and malign. 575
Here lay their hopes (tho' little hope remain'd)
With full effuſion of perpetual ſweats
To drive the venom out. And here the fates
Were kind, that long they linger'd not in pain.
For who ſurviv'd the ſun's diurnal race 580
Roſe from the dreary gates of hell redeem'd:
Some the ſixth hour oppreſs'd, and ſome the third.

Of many thouſands few untainted 'ſcap'd;
Of thoſe infected fewer 'ſcap'd alive;
Of thoſe who liv'd ſome felt a ſecond blow; 585
And whom the ſecond ſpar'd a third deſtroy'd.
Frantic with fear, they ſought by flight to ſhun
The fierce contagion. O'er the mournful land
Th' infected city pour'd her hurrying ſwarms:

Rous'd by the flames that fir'd her ſeats around, 590
Th' infected country ruſh'd into the town.
Some, ſad at home, and in the deſart ſome,
Abjur'd the fatal commerce of mankind;
In vain: where'er they fled, the Fates purſu'd.
Others, with hopes more ſpecious, croſs'd the main,
To ſeek protection in far diſtant ſkies; 596
But none they found. It ſeem'd the general air,
From pole to pole, from Atlas to the Eaſt,
Was then at enmity with Engliſh blood.
For, but the race of England, all were ſafe
In foreign climes; nor did this Fury taſte 600
The foreign blood which England then contain'd.
Where ſhould they fly? The circumambient heaven
Involv'd them ſtill; and every breeze was bane.
Where find relief? The ſalutary art
Was mute; and, ſtartled at the new diſeaſe, 605
In fearful whiſpers hopeleſs omens gave.
To Heaven with ſuppliant rites they ſent their pray'rs;
Heav'n heard them not. Of every hope depriv'd;



T. Stothard R.A. pinx.t J. Heath sculp.t

'Twas all the Business then
To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.
In Heaps they fell:

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Fatigu'd with vain reſources; and ſubdued
With woes reſiſtleſs and enfeebling fear; 610
Paſſive they ſunk beneath the weighty blow.
Nothing but lamentable ſounds was heard,
Nor aught was ſeen but ghaſtly views of death.
Infectious horror ran from face to face,
And pale deſpair. 'Twas all the buſineſs then 615
To tend the ſick, and in their turns to die.
In heaps they fell: and oft one bed, they ſay,
The ſick'ning, dying, and the dead contain'd.

Ye guardian Gods, on whom the Fates depend
Of tottering Albion! ye eternal Fires 620
That lead thro' heav'n the wandering year! ye powers
That o'er th' incircling elements preſide!
May nothing worſe than what this age has ſeen
Arrive! Enough abroad, enough at home
Has Albion bled. Here a diſtemper'd heaven 625
Has thin'd her cities; from thoſe lofty cliffs
That awe proud Gaul, to Thule's wintry reign;

While in the Weſt, beyond th' Atlantic foam,
Her braveſt ſons, keen for the fight, have dy'd
The death of cowards and of common men : 630
Sunk void of wounds, and fall'n without renown.

But from theſe views the weeping Muſes turn,
And other themes invite my wandering ſong.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

BOOK IV.

THE PASSIONS.

THE ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK IV.

THE PASSIONS.

THE choice of Aliment, the choice of Air,
The uſe of Toil and all external things,
Already ſung; it now remains to trace
What good, what evil from ourſelves proceeds:
And how the ſubtle Principle within 5
Inſpires with health, or mines with ſtrange decay
The paſſive Body. Ye poetic Shades,
Who know the ſecrets of the world unſeen,

Aſſiſt my ſong! For, in a doubtful theme
Engag'd, I wander thro' myſterious ways. 10

There is, they ſay, (and I believe there is)
A ſpark within us of th' immortal fire,
That animates and moulds the groſſer frame;
And when the body ſinks eſcapes to heaven,
Its native ſeat, and mixes with the Gods. 15
Mean while this heavenly particle pervades
The mortal elements; in every nerve
It thrills with pleaſure, or grows mad with pain.
And, in its ſecret conclave, as it feels
The body's woes and joys, this ruling power 20
Wields at its will the dull material world,
And is the body's health or malady.

By its own toil the groſs corporeal frame
Fatigues, extenuates, or deſtroys itſelf.
Nor leſs the labours of the mind corrode 25
The ſolid fabric: for by ſubtle parts

And viewleſs atoms, ſecret Nature moves
The mighty wheels of this ſtupendous world.
By ſubtle fluids pour'd thro' ſubtle tubes
The natural, vital, functions are perform'd. 30
By theſe the ſtubborn aliments are tam'd;
The toiling heart diſtributes life and ſtrength;
Theſe the ſtill-crumbling frame rebuild; and theſe
Are loſt in thinking, and diſſolve in air.

But 'tis not Thought (for ſtill the ſoul's employ'd) 35
'Tis painful thinking that corrodes our clay.
All day the vacant eye without fatigue
Strays o'er the heaven and earth; but long intent
On microſcopic arts its vigour fails.
Juſt ſo the mind, with various thought amus'd, 40
Nor akes itſelf, nor gives the body pain.
But anxious Study, Diſcontent, and Care,
Love without hope, and Hate without revenge,
And Fear, and Jealouſy, fatigue the ſoul,
Engroſs the ſubtle miniſters of life, 45

And ſpoil the lab'ring functions of their ſhare.
Hence the lean gloom that Melancholy wears;
The Lover's paleneſs; and the ſallow hue
Of Envy, Jealouſy; the meagre ſtare
Of ſore Revenge: the canker'd body hence 50
Betrays each fretful motion of the mind.

The ſtrong-built pedant; who both night and day
Feeds on the coarſeſt fare the ſchools beſtow,
And crudely fattens at groſs Burman's ſtall;
O'erwhelm'd with phlegm lies in a dropſy drown'd, 55
Or ſinks in lethargy before his time.
With uſeful ſtudies you, and arts that pleaſe
Employ your mind, amuſe but not fatigue.
Peace to each drowſy metaphyſic ſage!
And ever may all heavy ſyſtems reſt! 60
Yet ſome there are, even of elaſtic parts,
Whom ſtrong and obſtinate ambition leads
Thro' all the rugged roads of barren lore,
And gives to reliſh what their generous taſte

Would elſe refuſe. But may nor thirſt of fame, 65
Nor love of knowledge, urge you to fatigue
With conſtant drudgery the liberal ſoul.
Toy with your books: and, as the various fits
Of humour ſeize you, from Philoſophy
To Fable ſhift; from ſerious Antonine 70
To Rabelais' ravings, and from proſe to ſong.

While reading pleaſes, but no longer, read;
And read aloud reſounding Homer's ſtrain,
And wield the thunder of Demoſthenes.
The cheſt ſo exercis'd improves its ſtrength; 75
And quick vibrations thro' the bowels drive
The reſtleſs blood, which in unactive days
Would loiter elſe thro' unelaſtic tubes.
Deem it not trifling while I recommend
What poſture ſuits: To ſtand and ſit by turns, 80
As nature prompts, is beſt. But o'er your leaves
To lean for ever, cramps the vital parts,
And robs the fine machinery of its play.

'Tis the great art of life to manage well
The reſtleſs mind. For ever on purſuit 85
Of knowledge bent, it ſtarves the groſſer powers:
Quite unemploy'd, againſt its own repoſe
It turns its fatal edge, and ſharper pangs
Than what the body knows embitter life.
Chiefly where Solitude, ſad nurſe of Care, 90
To ſickly muſing gives the penſive mind,
There Madneſs enters; and the dim-ey'd Fiend,
Sour Melancholy, night and day provokes
Her own eternal wound. The ſun grows pale;
A mournful viſionary light o'erſpreads 95
The cheerful face of nature: earth becomes
A dreary deſart, and heaven frowns above.
Then various ſhapes of curs'd illuſion riſe:
Whate'er the wretched fears, creating Fear
Forms out of nothing; and with monſters teems 100
Unknown in hell. The proſtrate ſoul beneath
A load of huge imagination heaves;
And all the horrors that the murderer feels
With anxious flutterings wake the guiltleſs breaſt.

Such phantoms Pride in ſolitary ſcenes, 105
Or Fear, on delicate Self-love creates.
From other cares abſolv'd, the buſy mind
Finds in yourſelf a theme to pore upon;
It finds you miſerable, or makes you ſo.
For while yourſelf you anxiouſly explore, 110
Timorous Self-love, with ſick'ning Fancy's aid,
Preſents the danger that you dread the moſt,
And ever galls you in your tender part.
Hence ſome for love, and ſome for jealouſy,
For grim religion ſome, and ſome for pride, 115
Have loſt their reaſon: ſome for fear of want
Want all their lives; and others every day
For fear of dying ſuffer worſe than death.
Ah! from your boſoms baniſh, if you can,
Thoſe fatal gueſts: and firſt the Dæmon Fear; 120
That trembles at impoſſible events,
Leſt aged Atlas ſhould reſign his load,
And heaven's eternal battlements ruſh down.
Is there an evil worſe than Fear itſelf?

And what avails it, that indulgent heaven 125
From mortal eyes has wrapt the woes to come,
If we, ingenious to torment ourſelves,
Grow pale at hideous fictions of our own?
Enjoy the preſent; nor with needleſs cares,
Of what may ſpring from blind misfortune's womb, 130
Appall the ſureſt hour that life beſtows.
Serene, and maſter of yourſelf, prepare
For what may come; and leave the reſt to Heaven.

Oft from the Body, by long ails miſtun'd,
Theſe evils ſprung the moſt important health, 135
That of the Mind, deſtroy: and when the mind
They firſt invade, the conſcious body ſoon
In ſympathetic languiſhment declines.
Theſe chronic Paſſions, while from real woes
They riſe, and yet without the body's fault 140
Infeſt the ſoul, admit one only cure;
Diverſion, hurry, and a reſtleſs life.
Vain are the conſolations of the wiſe;

In vain your friends would reaſon down your pain.
O ye, whoſe ſouls relentleſs love has tam'd 145
To ſoft diſtreſs, or friends untimely fall'n!
Court not the luxury of tender thought;
Nor deem it impious to forget thoſe pains
That hurt the living, nought avail the dead.
Go, ſoft enthuſiaſt! quit the cypreſs groves, 150
Nor to the rivulet's lonely moanings tune
Your ſad complaint. Go, ſeek the cheerful haunts
Of men, and mingle with the buſtling crowd;
Lay ſchemes for wealth, or power, or fame, the wiſh
Of nobler minds, and puſh them night and day. 155
Or join the caravan in queſt of ſcenes
New to your eyes, and ſhifting every hour,
Beyond the Alps, beyond the Apennines.
Or more advent'rous, ruſh into the field
Where war grows hot; and, raging thro' the ſky, 160
The lofty trumpet ſwells the madd'ning ſoul:
And in the hardy camp and toilſome march
Forget all ſofter and leſs manly cares.

But moſt too paſſive, when the blood runs low,
Too weakly indolent to ſtrive with pain, 165
And bravely by reſiſting conquer Fate,
Try Circe's arts; and in the tempting bowl
Of poiſon'd Nectar ſweet oblivion ſwill.
Struck by the pow'rful charm, the gloom diſſolves
In empty air; Elyſium opens round, 170
A pleaſing phrenzy buoys the lighten'd ſoul,
And ſanguine hopes diſpel your fleeting care;
And what was difficult, and what was dire,
Yields to your proweſs and ſuperior ſtars:
The happieſt you of all that e'er were mad, 175
Or are, or ſhall be, could this folly laſt.
But ſoon your heaven is gone; a heavier gloom
Shuts o'er your head: and as the thund'ring ſtream,
Swoln o'er its banks with ſudden mountain rain,
Sinks from its tumult to a ſilent brook; 180
So, when the frantic raptures in your breaſt
Subſide, you languiſh into mortal man;
You ſleep, and waking find yourſelf undone.

For prodigal of life, in one raſh night
You laviſh'd more than might ſupport three days. 185
A heavy morning comes; your cares return
With tenfold rage. An anxious ſtomach well
May be endur'd; ſo may the throbbing head:
But ſuch a dim delirium, ſuch a dream,
Involves you; ſuch a daſtardly deſpair 190
Unmans your ſoul, as madd'ning Pentheus felt,
When, baited round Cithæron's cruel ſides,
He ſaw two Suns, and double Thebes aſcend.
You curſe the ſluggiſh Port; you curſe the wretch,
The felon, with unnatural mixture firſt 195
Who dar'd to violate the virgin Wine.
Or on the fugitive Champain you pour
A thouſand curſes; for to heav'n it wrapt
Your ſoul, to plunge you deeper in deſpair.
Perhaps you rue even that divineſt gift, 200
The gay, ſerene, good-natur'd Burgundy,
Or the freſh fragrant vintage of the Rhine:
And wiſh that heaven from mortals had with-held
The grape, and all intoxicating bowls.

Beſides, it wounds you ſore to recollect 205
What follies in your loſe unguarded hour
Eſcap'd. For one irrevocable word,
Perhaps that meant no harm, you loſe a friend.
Or in the rage of wine your haſty hand
Performs a deed to haunt you to the grave. 210
Add that your means, your health, your parts decay;
Your friends avoid you; brutiſhly transform'd
They hardly know you; or if one remains
To wiſh you well, he wiſhes you in heaven.
Deſpis'd, unwept you fall; who might have left 215
A ſacred, cheriſh'd, ſadly-pleaſing name;
A name ſtill to be utter'd with a ſigh.
Your laſt ungraceful ſcene has quite effac'd
All ſenſe and memory of your former worth.

How to live happieſt; how avoid the pains, 220
The diſappointments, and diſguſts of thoſe
Who would in pleaſure all their hours employ;
The Precepts here of a divine old man

I could recite. Tho' old, he ſtill retain'd
His manly ſenſe, and energy of mind. 225
Virtuous and wiſe he was, but not ſevere;
He ſtill remember'd that he once was young;
His eaſy preſence check'd no decent joy.
Him even the diſſolute admir'd; for he
A graceful looſeneſs when he pleas'd put on, 230
And laughing could inſtruct. Much had he read,
Much more had ſeen; he ſtudied from the life,
And in th' original perus'd mankind.

Vers'd in the woes and vanities of life,
He pitied Man: and much he pitied thoſe 235
Whom falſely-ſmiling Fate has curs'd with means
To diſſipate their days in queſt of joy.
Our aim is happineſs; 'tis yours, 'tis mine,
He ſaid, 'tis the purſuit of all that live;
Yet few attain it, if 'twas e'er attain'd. 240
But they the wideſt wander from the mark,
Who thro' the flowery paths of ſaunt'ring Joy

Seek this coy Goddeſs; that from ſtage to ſtage
Invites us ſtill, but ſhifts as we purſue.
For, not to name the pains that pleaſure brings 245
To counterpoiſe itſelf, relentleſs Fate
Forbids that we thro' gay voluptuous wilds
Should ever roam: and were the Fates more kind,
Our narrow luxuries would ſoon grow ſtale.
Were theſe exhauſtleſs, Nature would grow ſick, 250
And, cloy'd with pleaſure, ſqueamiſhly complain
That all is vanity, and life a dream.
Let nature reſt: be buſy for yourſelf,
And for your friend; be buſy even in vain
Rather than teaze her ſated appetites. 255
Who never faſts, no banquet e'er enjoys;
Who never toils or watches, never ſleeps.
Let nature reſt: and when the taſte of joy
Grows keen, indulge; but ſhun ſatiety.

'Tis not for mortals always to be bleſt. 260
But him the leaſt the dull or painful hours

Of life oppreſs, whom ſober Senſe conducts,
And Virtue, thro' this labyrinth we tread.
Virtue and Senſe I mean not to disjoin;
Virtue and Senſe are one: and, truſt me, ſtill 265
A faithleſs Heart betrays the Head unſound.
Virtue (for mere Good-nature is a fool)
Is Senſe and Spirit, with Humanity:
'Tis ſometimes angry, and its frown confounds;
'Tis even vindictive, but in vengeance juſt. 270
Knaves fain would laugh at it; ſome great ones dare;
But at his heart the moſt undaunted ſon
Of fortune dreads its name and awful charms.
To nobleſt uſes this determines wealth;
This is the ſolid pomp of proſperous days; 275
The peace and ſhelter of adverſity.
And if you pant for glory, build your fame
On this foundation, which the ſecret ſhock
Defies of Envy and all-ſapping Time.
The gawdy gloſs of fortune only ſtrikes 280
The vulgar eye: the ſuffrage of the wiſe

The praiſe that's worth ambition, is attain'd
By Senſe alone, and dignity of mind.

Virtue, the ſtrength and beauty of the ſoul,
Is the beſt gift of heaven: a happineſs 285
That even above the ſmiles and frowns of fate
Exalts great Nature's favourites: a wealth
That ne'er encumbers, nor can be transferr'd.
Riches are oft by guilt and baſeneſs earn'd;
Or dealt by chance, to ſhield a lucky knave, 290
Or throw a cruel ſunſhine on a fool.
But for one end, one much-neglected uſe,
Are riches worth your care: (for Nature's wants
Are few, and without opulence ſupply'd.)
This noble end is, to produce the Soul; 295
To ſhew the virtues in their faireſt light;
To make Humanity the Miniſter
Of bounteous Providence; and teach the breaſt
That generous luxury the Gods enjoy.

Thus, in his graver vein, the friendly Sage 300
Sometimes declaim'd. Of Right and Wrong he taught
Truths as refin'd as ever Athens heard;
And (ſtrange to tell!) he practis'd what he preach'd.
Skill'd in the Paſſions, how to check their ſway
He knew, as far as Reaſon can controul 305
The lawleſs Powers. But other cares are mine:
Form'd in the ſchool of Pæon, I relate
What Paſſions hurt the body, what improve:
Avoid them, or invite them, as you may.

Know then, whatever cheerful and ſerene 310
Supports the mind, ſupports the body too.
Hence, the moſt vital movement mortals feel
Is Hope; the balm and life-blood of the ſoul.
It pleaſes, and it laſts. Indulgent heaven
Sent down the kind deluſion, thro' the paths 315
Of rugged life to lead us patient on;
And make our happieſt ſtate no tedious thing.

Our greateſt good, and what we leaſt can ſpare,
Is Hope: the laſt of all our evils, Fear.

But there are Paſſions grateful to the breaſt, 320
And yet no friends to Life: perhaps they pleaſe
Or to exceſs, and diſſipate the ſoul;
Or while they pleaſe, torment. The ſtubborn Clown,
The ill-tam'd Ruffian, and pale Uſurer,
(If Love's omnipotence ſuch hearts can mould) 325
May ſafely mellow into love; and grow
Refin'd, humane, and generous, if they can.
Love in ſuch boſoms never to a fault
Or pains or pleaſes. But, ye finer Souls,
Form'd to ſoft luxury, and prompt to thrill 330
With all the tumults, all the joys and pains,
That beauty gives; with caution and reſerve
Indulge the ſweet deſtroyer of repoſe,
Nor court too much the Queen of charming cares.
For, while the cheriſh'd poiſon in your breaſt 335
Ferments and maddens; ſick with jealouſy,

Abſence, diſtruſt, or even with anxious joy,
The wholeſome appetites and powers of life
Diſſolve in languor. The coy ſtomach loaths
The genial board: Your cheerful days are gone; 340
The generous bloom that fluſh'd your cheeks is fled.
To ſighs devoted and to tender pains,
Penſive you ſit, or ſolitary ſtray,
And waſte your youth in muſing. Muſing firſt
Toy'd into care your unſuſpecting heart: 345
It found a liking there, a ſportful fire,
And that fomented into ſerious love;
Which muſing daily ſtrengthens and improves
Thro' all the heights of fondneſs and romance:
And you're undone, the fatal ſhaft has ſped, 350
If once you doubt whether you love or no.
The body waſtes away; th' infected mind,
Diſſolv'd in female tenderneſs, forgets
Each manly virtue, and grows dead to fame.
Sweet heaven from ſuch intoxicating charms 355
Defend all worthy breaſts! Not that I deem

Love always dangerous, always to be ſhun'd.
Love well repaid, and not too weakly ſunk
In wanton and unmanly tenderneſs,
Adds bloom to Health; o'er ev'ry virtue ſheds 360
A gay, humane, a ſweet, and generous grace,
And brightens all the ornaments of man.
But fruitleſs, hopeleſs, diſappointed, rack'd
With jealouſy, fatigu'd with hope and fear,
Too ſerious, or too languiſhingly fond, 365
Unnerves the body, and unmans the ſoul.
And ſome have died for love; and ſome run mad;
And ſome with deſperate hands themſelves have ſlain.

Some to extinguiſh, others to prevent,
A mad devotion to one dangerous Fair, 370
Court all they meet; in hopes to diſſipate
The cares of Love amongſt an hundred Brides.
Th' event is doubtful: for there are who find
A cure in this; there are who find it not.
'T is no relief, alas! it rather galls 375

The wound, to thoſe who are ſincerely ſick.
For while from feveriſh and tumultuous joys
The nerves grow languid and the ſoul ſubſides,
The tender fancy ſmarts with every ſting,
And what was Love before is Madneſs now. 380
Is health your care, or luxury your aim,
Be temperate ſtill: When Nature bids, obey;
Her wild impatient ſallies bear no curb:
But when the prurient habit of delight,
Or looſe Imagination, ſpurs you on 385
To deeds above your ſtrength, impute it not
To Nature: Nature all compulſion hates.
Ah! let nor luxury nor vain renown
Urge you to feats you well might ſleep without;
To make what ſhould be rapture a fatigue, 390
A tedious taſk; nor in the wanton arms
Of twining Laïs melt your manhood down.
For from the colliquation of ſoft joys
How chang'd you riſe! the ghoſt of what you was!
Languid, and melancholy, and gaunt, and wan; 395

Your veins exhauſted, and your nerves unſtrung.
Spoil'd of its balm and ſprightly zeſt, the blood
Grows vapid phlegm; along the tender nerves
(To each ſlight impulſe tremblingly awake)
A ſubtle Fiend that mimics all the plagues 400
Rapid and reſtleſs ſprings from part to part.
The blooming honours of your youth are fallen;
Your vigour pines; your vital powers decay;
Diſeaſes haunt you; and untimely Age
Creeps on; unſocial, impotent, and lewd. 405
Infatuate, impious, epicure! to waſte
The ſtores of pleaſure, cheerfulneſs, and health!
Infatuate all who make delight their trade,
And coy perdition every hour purſue.

Who pines with Love, or in laſcivious flames 410
Conſumes, is with his own conſent undone;
He chuſes to be wretched, to be mad;
And warn'd proceeds and wilful to his fate.
But there's a Paſſion, whoſe tempeſtuous ſway

Tears up each virtue planted in the breaſt, 415
And ſhakes to ruins proud Philoſophy.
For pale and trembling Anger ruſhes in,
With fault'ring ſpeech, and eyes that wildly ſtare;
Fierce as the Tiger, madder than the ſeas,
Deſperate, and arm'd with more than human ſtrength.
How ſoon the calm, humane, and poliſh'd man 421
Forgets compunction, and ſtarts up a fiend!
Who pines in Love, or waſtes with ſilent Cares,
Envy, or ignominy, or tender grief,
Slowly deſcends, and ling'ring, to the ſhades. 425
But he whom Anger ſtings, drops, if he dies,
At once, and ruſhes apoplectic down;
Or a fierce fever hurries him to hell.
For, as the Body thro' unnumber'd ſtrings
Reverberates each vibration of the Soul; 430
As is the Paſſion, ſuch is ſtill the Pain
The Body feels: or chronic, or acute.
And oft a ſudden ſtorm at once o'erpowers
The Life, or gives your Reaſon to the winds.

Such fates attend the raſh alarm of Fear, 435
And ſudden Grief, and Rage, and ſudden Joy.

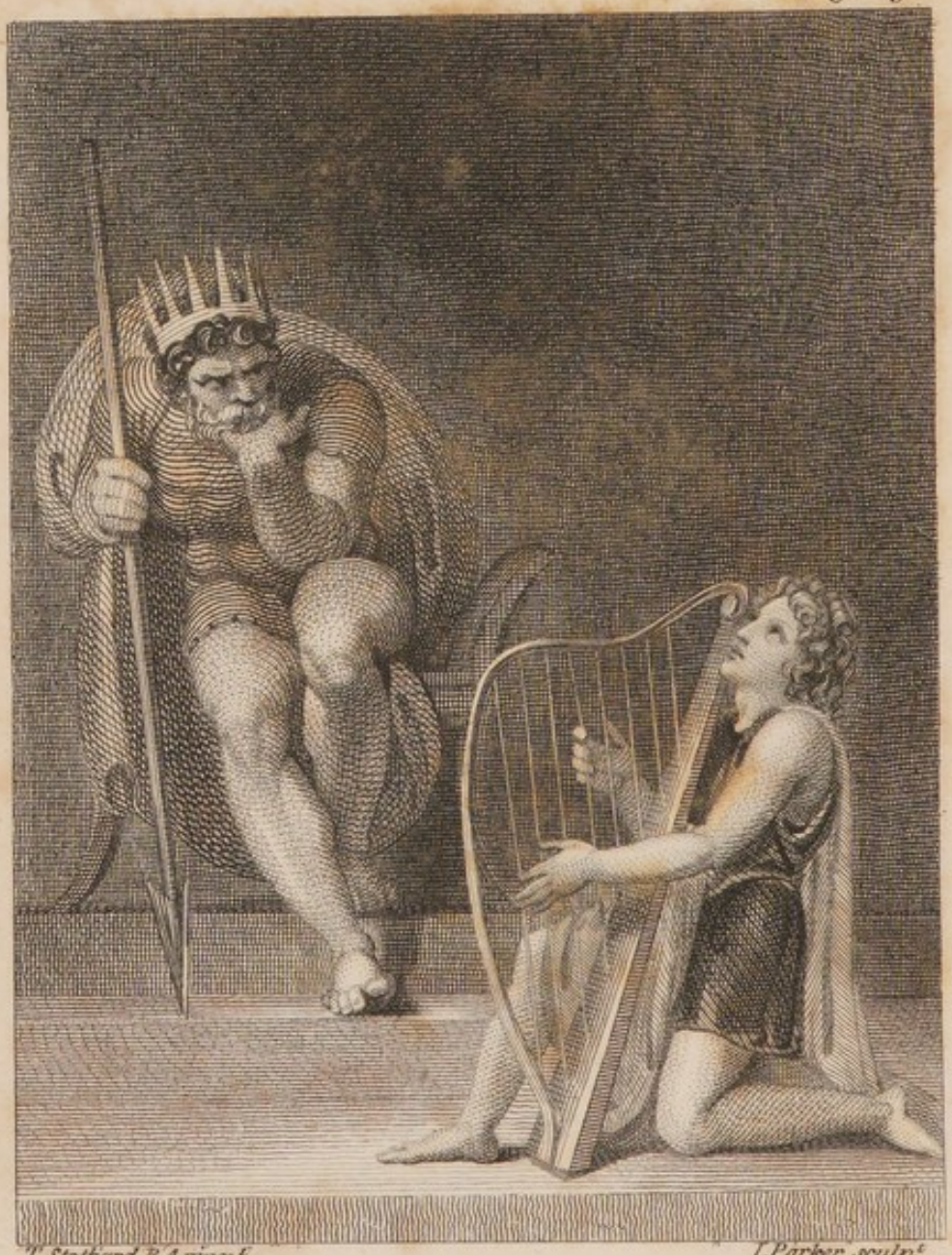
There are, mean time, to whom the boiſt'rous fit
Is Health, and only fills the ſails of life.
For where the mind a torpid winter leads,
Wrapt in a body corpulent and cold, 440
And each clogg'd function lazily moves on;
A generous ſally ſpurns th' incumbent load,
Unlocks the breaſt, and gives a cordial glow.
But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil,
Or are your nerves too irritably ſtrung, 445
Wave all diſpute; be cautious, if you joke;
Keep Lent for ever; and forſwear the Bowl.
For one raſh moment ſends you to the ſhades,
Or ſhatters ev'ry hopeful ſcheme of life,
And gives to horror all your days to come. 450
Fate, arm'd with thunder, fire, and ev'ry plague,
That ruins, tortures, or diſtracts mankind,
And makes the happy wretched in an hour,

O'erwhelms you not with woes ſo horrible
As your own wrath, nor gives more ſudden blows. 455

While Choler works, good Friend, you may be wrong;
Diſtruſt yourſelf, and ſleep before you fight.
Tis not too late to-morrow to be brave;
If honour bids, to-morrow kill or die.
But calm advice againſt a raging fit 460
Avails too little; and it braves the power
Of all that ever taught in Proſe or Song,
To tame the Fiend that ſleeps a gentle Lamb,
And wakes a Lion. Unprovok'd and calm,
You reaſon well; ſee as you ought to ſee, 465
And wonder at the madneſs of mankind:
Seiz'd with the common rage, you ſoon forget
The ſpeculations of your wiſer hours.
Beſet with Furies of all deadly ſhapes,
Fierce and inſidious, violent and ſlow: 470
With all that urge or lure us on to Fate:
What refuge ſhall we ſeek? what arms prepare?

Where Reaſon proves too weak, or void of wiles
To cope with ſubtle or impetuous powers,
I would invoke new Paſſions to your aid : 475
With Indignation would extinguiſh Fear,
With Fear or generous Pity vanquiſh Rage,
And Love with Pride ; and force to force oppoſe.

There is a Charm, a Power, that ſways the breaſt ;
Bids every Paſſion revel or be ſtill ; 480
Inſpires with Rage, or all your Cares diſſolves ;
Can ſooth Diſtraction, and almoſt Deſpair.
That power is Muſic : Far beyond the ſtretch
Of thoſe unmeaning warblers on our ſtage ;
Thoſe clumſy Heroes, thoſe fat-headed Gods, 485
Who move no paſſion juſtly but Contempt :
Who, like our dancers (light indeed and ſtrong !)
Do wond'rous feats, but never heard of grace.
The fault is ours ; we bear thoſe monſtrous arts ;
Good Heaven ! we praiſe them : we, with loudeſt peals,
Applaud the fool that higheſt lifts his heels ; 491



T. Stothard, R.A. pinx.t I. Parker sculp.t

Such was the Bard, whose heav'nly Strains of old
Appeas'd the Fiend of melancholy Saul.

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And, with insipid shew of rapture, die
Of ideot notes impertinently long.
But he the Muse's laurel justly shares,
A Poet he, and touch'd with Heaven's own fire; 495
Who, with bold rage or solemn pomp of sounds,
Inflames, exalts, and ravishes the soul;
Now tender, plaintive, sweet almost to pain,
In Love dissolves you; now in sprightly strains
Breathes a gay rapture thro' your thrilling breast; 500
Or melts the heart with airs divinely sad;
Or wakes to horror the tremendous strings.
Such was the Bard, whose heavenly strains of old
Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul.
Such was, if old and heathen fame say true, 505
The man who bade the Theban domes ascend,
And tam'd the savage nations with his song;
And such the Thracian, whose melodious lyre,
Tun'd to soft woe, made all the mountains weep;
Sooth'd even th' inexorable powers of Hell, 510
And half redeem'd his lost Eurydice.

Mufic exalts each Joy, allays each Grief,
Expels Difeafes, foftens every Pain,
Subdues the rage of Poifon, and the Plague;
And hence the wife of ancient days ador'd 515
One Power of Phyfic, Melody, and Song.

THE END.