

The art of preserving health; a poem / [John Armstrong].

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Armstrong, John, 1709-1779

Publication/Creation

London : A. Millar, 1754.

Persistent URL

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THE
HALL
OF
FAME



THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH:
A
POEM.

By JOHN ARMSTRONG, M. D.



L O N D O N,
Printed for A. MILLAR in the *Strand*.
MDCCLIV.

THE
T R A
OF THE
H E A L T H
P O E M
BY JOHN ARMYSTRONG, M.D.
LONDON

LONDON
Printed for A. MILLAR in the Strand
MDCCCIV



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 chearful 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 heav'n
Thy power approaches, all the wastefull host
Of Pain and Sickness, squalid and deform'd,
Confounded sink into the loathsom gloom,
Where in deep Erebus involv'd the fiends 15
Grow more prophane. Whatever shapes of death,
Shook from the hideous chambers of the globe,
Swarm thro' the shudd'ring air : whatever plagues
Or meagre famine breeds, or with flow wings
Rise from the putrid watry 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

Book I. *Preserving* HEALTH. 3

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 chearful 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 heathful 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.

Y E 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, sickning, and the living world

Exhal'd, to fully 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

Book I. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 5

Much moisture hurts ; but here a fordid bath,
With oily rancor fraught, relaxes more 80

The solid frame than simple moisture can.

Besides, immur'd in many a fullen bay

That never felt the freshness of the breeze,

This slumbring deep remains, and ranker grows

With sickly rest : and (tho' the lungs abhor 85

To drink the dun fuliginous abyfs)

Did not the acid vigour of the mine,

Roll'd from so many thundring chimneys, tame

The putrid salts that overswarm the sky ;

This caustick 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 soft'ring power regales

Man, beast, and all the vegetable reign.

Find them some Woodland scene where nature smiles

Benign,

Benign, where all her honest children thrive.
To us there wants not many a happy feat; 105
Look round the smiling land, such numbers rise
We hardly fix, bewilder'd in our choice.
See where enthron'd in adamantinè state,
Proud of her bards, imperial Windsor sits;
There chuse thy feat, 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 mayst 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 barb'rous arts unspoil'd.
Green rise the Kentish hills in chearful air;
But on the marshy plains that Essex spreads
Build not, nor rest too long thy wandering feet. 125
For on a rustic throne of dewy turf,
With baneful fogs her aching temples bound,
Quartana there presides; a meagre fiend

Begot

Book I. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 7

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, and mighty love of rest,
Convulsive yawnings, lassitude, and pains
That sting the burden'd brows, fatigue the loins, 135
And rack the joints, and every torpid limb ;
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 chearful, pure, and animated bloom
Dies from the face, with squalid atrophy
Devour'd, in fallow melancholy clad.
And oft the forc'refs, in her fated wrath,
Requies 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

For from the humid soil, and watry reign,
Eternal vapours rise; the spongy air
For ever weeps; or, turgid with the weight 155
Of waters, pours a founding deluge down.
Skies such as these let ev'ry mortal shun
Who dreads the dropfy, 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 loit'ring 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 flow as Lethe wanders thro' the veins; 175
Unactive in the services of life,

Unfit

Book I. *Preserving* HEALTH. 9.

Unfit to lead its pitchy current thro'
The secret mazy channels of the brain.
The melancholic fiend, (that worst despair
Of phyfic) 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 watry 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 fend the crackling flames. 205

Mean time, at home with chearful 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 toilsom 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 watry 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 drougthy regions parch
The skin and lungs, and bake the thick'ning blood ;
Deep in the waving forest chuse your seat,
Where fuming trees refresh the thirsty air ; 225
And wake the fountains from their secret beds,

And

And into lakes dilate the running 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 pond'rous heaven o'erwhelms the sinking foul.
 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 cheeks
 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 375
 Swells into chearful hills ; where Marjoram

And Thyme, the love of bees perfume the air ;
And where the * Cynorrhodon with the rose
For fragrance 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.
And let them see the winter morn arise,
The summer ev'ning 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 wild rose or that which grows on the wild briar.

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 fides
Th' etherial 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 wheresoe'er you build ;
Whether on sun-burnt Epsom, or the plains
Wash'd by the silent Lee ; in Chelsea low,
Or high Blackheath with wintry 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

Book I. *Preserving* HEALTH

15

Need we the funny situation here, 325
And theatres open to the south, commend ?
Here, where the mornings 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 vigor 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 soft'ring sun : whose energy divine
Dwells not in mortal fire ; whose gen'rous heat 340
Glow thro' the mass of grosser elements ;
And kindles into life the pond'rous spheres.
Chear'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 !

THE

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.
BOOK II.
DIET.

THE

THE

THE

OF PRESERVING

HEALTH

BOOK II

DISEASES

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK II.

D I E T.

ENOUGH of air. A desert subject now,
Rougher and wider, 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, etherial fields ! the humbler arts

Of life ; the table and the homely Gods, 10
Demand my song. Elyfian 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

Book II. *Preserving* HEALTH. 21

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 rancid 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

Relents; and soon the young of those that tread 60
The stedfast earth, or cleave the green abyfs,
Or pathless sky. And if the Steer must fall,
In youth and vigour glorious 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

Book II. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 23

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' enfeebling down,
Irresolute, protract the morning hours. 90
But let the man whose bones are thinly clad,
With chearful ease and succulent repast
Improve his slender habit. Each extreme
From the blest mean of sanity departs.

I could relate what table this demands, 95
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,
Peculiar thing ; nor on the skin display'd, 100
Felt in the pulse, nor in the habit seen ;
Which finds a poison in the food that most
The temp'ature affects. There are, whose blood
Impetuous rages thro' the turgid veins,
Who better bear the fiery fruits of Ind, 105
Than the moist Melon, or pale Cucumber.
Of chilly nature others fly the board
Supply'd with slaughter, and the vernal powers
For

For cooler, kinder, sustenance implore.
 Some even the generous nutriment detest
 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 ev'ry flower,
 And ev'ry grateful herb that decks the spring ;
 The soft'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.
 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
 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 sickn'd appetite too long ;
 Or heave with fev'rish flushings all the face,
 Burn in the palms, and parch the roughning tongue ;
 Or much diminish or too much increase
 Th' expence which nature's wise œconomy,

Without

Book II. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 25

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 tyger, form'd alike to cruel meals,
Would at the manger starve : Of milder feeds,
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 every clime,
With all the commoners of nature feeds.
Directed, bounded, by this pow'r 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, tho' harmless each alone,

Each

Book II. *Preserving* HEALTH. 27

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 needlessly 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 excess offend. Beyond the sense
Of light refection, at the genial board
Indulge not often ; nor protract the feast 205

To dull satiety; till soft and slow
A drowzy death creeps on, th' expansive soul
Oppress'd, and smother'd the celestial fire.
The stomach, urg'd beyond its active tone,
Hardly to nutrimental chyle subdues 210
The softest food: unfinish'd and deprav'd,
The chyle, in all its future wanderings, owns
Its turbid fountain; not by purer streams
So to be clear'd, but foulness will remain.
To sparkling wine what ferment can exalt 215
Th' unripen'd grape? Or what mechanic skill
From the crude ore can spin the ductile gold?
Gross riot treasures up a wealthy fund
Of plagues: but more immedicable ills
Attend the lean extreme. For physic knows 220
How to disburden 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

Book II. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 29

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 tofs'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 feels 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 its wonted vigour glows.

But

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 averfion 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: 170
 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.

* The burning fever.

Book II. *Preserving* HEALTH. 31

Pale humid Winter loves the generous board,
The meal more copious, and a warmer fare ;
And longs with old wood and old wine to chear 280
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 ;
E're 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

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, untractable, 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 Lybia ; from those fervid loins
The lion bursts, and every fiend that roams 320
Th' affrighted wilderness. The mountain herd,
Aust and dry, no sweet repast affords ;
Nor does the tepid main such kinds produce,
So perfect, so delicious, as the stores
Of icy Zembla. Rashly where the blood

Brews

Book II. *Preserving* HEALTH. 33

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 poinant 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 climates 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 elfe untrod. I hear the din 355

Of waters thundering 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 desert down the rumbling steep

First springs the Nile ; here bursts the sounding Po 360

In angry waves ; Euphrates hence devolves

A mighty flood to water half the East ;

And there, in Gothic solitude reclin'd,

The chearless Tanais pours his hoary urn.

What solemn twilight ! What stupendous shades 365

Enwarp 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. 370

Are these the confines of some fairy world ?

A land of Genii ? Say, beyond these wilds

What unknown nations ? If indeed beyond

Aught habitable lies. And whither leads,

To

Book II. *Preserving* HEALTH. 35

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 chrystal element : 280
The chief ingredient in heavens various works ;
Whose flexile geninus 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 fought 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 improv'd to pain!
 Too happy they! But wealth brought luxury,
 And luxury on sloth begot disease.

Learn temperance, friends; and hear without
 disdain 405
 The choice of water. Thus the * Coan sage
 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 chrystal stream, 415
 O'er rocks resounding, or for many a mile
 Hurl'd down the pebbly channel, wholesome yields
 And mellow draughts; except when winter thaws,
 And half the mountains melt into the tide.
 Tho' thirst were ne'er so resolute, avoid 420
 The fordid lake, and all such drowsy floods

* Hippocrates.

As

Book II. *Preserving* HEALTH. 37

As fill from Lethe Belgia's flow canals ;
(With rest corrupt, with vegetation green ;
Squalid with generation, and the birth
Of little monsters ;) till the power of fire 425
Has from prophane 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, indolently given,
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 abyfs
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. 455
We

We curse not wine : The vile excess we blame ;
 More fruitful than the 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 460
 Of grosser crudity convey, pervades
 The far-remote meanders of our frame.
 Ah ! fly deceiver ! Branded o'er and o'er,
 Yet still believ'd ! Exulting o'er the wreck
 Of sober vows ! But the Parnassian maids 495
 * Another time perhaps shall sing the joys,
 The fatal charms, the many woes of wine ;
 Perhaps its various tribes, and various powers.

Meantime, I would not always dread the bowl,
 Nor every trespass shun. The feverish strife, 470
 Rous'd by the rare debauch, subdues, expells
 The loitering crudities, that burthen 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 475
 To learn to bear is easier than to shun.
 Ah ! when ambition, meagre love of gold,
 Or sacred country calls, with mellowing wine

* See Book iv.

Book II. *Preserving* HEALTH. 39

To moisten well the thirsty suffrages;
Say how, unseason'd to the midnight frays 480
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;
And Hercules grew strong. But when you smooth 485
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. 490

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, 495
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? 500

What

What dext'rous 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, 505
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 510
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. 515
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 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.

Book II. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 41

Condens'd to solid chords) a firmer tone,
Sustain, and just sustain, th' impetuous blood. 520
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
Of viscous fluids and elastic tubes; 525
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,
By natur'd fix'd, whence life must downwards tend. 530
For still the beating tide consolidates
The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still
To the weak throbbings of th' ill-supported heart.
This languishing, these strengthening by degrees
To hard unyielding unelastic bone, 535
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
Of nature: thus (so heav'n ordain'd it) life 540
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, 545
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 ;
Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down. 550
Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,
And tottering empires rush by their own weight.
This huge rotundity we tread grows old ;
And all those worlds that roll around the sun,
The sun himself, shall die ; and ancient Night 555
Again involve the desolate abyfs :
Till the great FATHER thro' the lifeless gloom
Extend his arm to light another world,
And bid new planets roll by other laws.
For thro' the regions of unbounded space, 560
Where unconfin'd omnipotence has room,
BEING, in various systems, fluctuates still
Between creation and abhorr'd decay :
It ever did ; perhaps and ever will.
New worlds are still emerging from the deep ; 565
The old descending, in their turns to rise.

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.
BOOK III.
EXERCISE.

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
THE
BOOK
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

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
Unglorious 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 wintry 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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 47

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 subtilis'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 fows 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

Or to the cloister'd gallery or arcade.

Go, climb the mountain ; from th' etherial source

Imbibe the recent gale. The chearful 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 chrystal 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 75

On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air,

Liddal ; till now, except in Doric lays

Tun'd to her murmurs by her love-sick swains,

Unknown

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 49

Unknown in song: Tho' not 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 sollicit 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

G

But

But if thro' genuine tenderness of heart,
Or secret want of relish for the game,
You shun the glories of the chace, 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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 51

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 the enchanted garden, who directs
The vists 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 best 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, chearful 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 founding 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.

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

Book III. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 53

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.
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

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 * Peripneumonie,
 Or the flow minings of the hectic fire.

The athletic fool, to whom what heav'n 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.
 Pursued proluxly, even the gentlest toil 210
 Is waste of health : repose by small fatigue
 Is earn'd ; and (where your habit is not prone

* The inflammation of the lungs.

Book III. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 55

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 :
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, fires,
Forbear ! No other pestilence has driven
Such myriads o'er the 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

Charybdis rages in the 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 the olympic strife,
 And warm Palestra, in the tepid bath
 Th' athletic youth relax'd their weary'd 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 fume
 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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 57

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 the inclement heaven; 280
And hence our painted ancestors defied
The East; nor curs'd, like us, their fickle sky.

H

The

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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 59

(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 waters Indostan,
Plunge thrice a day, and in the tepid wave 315
Untwist their stubborn pores ; that full and free
Th' evaporation thro' the softned skin
May bear proportion to the swelling blood.
So shall 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 fires,
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

Book III. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 61

Of strong and subtle toil, and great event;
A work of time : and you may rue the day
You hurried, with ill-season'd 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 fauntring 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

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 fable 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 chearful 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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 63

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,
Stung by the Furies, works with poison'd thought : 410
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 sickning functions steal.
 So, 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 its own bane?
 O shame! O pity! nipt with pale Quadrille,
 And midnight cares, the bloom of Albion dies!

By

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 65

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 tonick 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 mattrafs 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 supplied
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 fires
Early to borrow Muscovy's warm spoils; 485
Ere the first frost hastouch'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

Glides

Book III. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 67

Glides harmless by ; and Autumn, sick to death
With fallow 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 Dæmon 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 extream
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 drunk,
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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 69

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 its portentous head.
This rapid Fury not, like other pests,
Pursued 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

Beat strong and frequent. Thick and pantingly
The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'rings 560
heav'd.

At last a heavy pain opprefs'd the head,
A wild delirium came; their weeping friends
Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs.
Harass'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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 71

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 fought 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 desert some,
Abjur'd the fatal commerce of mankind ;
In vain : where'er they fled the Fates pursued.
Others, with hopes more specious, cross'd the
main, 595
To seek protection in far-distant skies ;
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 Albion then contain'd.
Where should they fly ? The circumambient heaven
Involv'd

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 omen gave.
To heaven with suppliant rites they sent their pray'rs;
Heav'n heard them not. Of every hope depriv'd;
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 sickening, dying, and the dead contain'd.

Ye guardian Gods, on whom the Fates depend
Of tottering Albion! Ye eternal fires
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

Book III. *Preserving* HEALTH. 73

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 died
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.



K

THE

THE
ART
OF PRESERVING
HEALTH.

BOOK IV.
The PASSIONS.

THE

T R A

OF PRESERVING

H E A L T H

BOOK IV.

The Passions

K 2

Book IV. THE

A R T

OF PRESERVING

H E A L T H.

B O O K IV.

The P A S S I O N S.

TH E choice of aliment, the choice of air,
The use of toil and all external things,
Already fung ; it now remains to trace
What good, what evil from ourselves proceeds :
And how the subtle principle within
Inspires with health, or mines with strange decay
The passive body. Ye poetic Shades,
That 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
Weilds 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

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 79

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 fallow hue
Of Envy, Jealousy; the meagre stare
Of fore 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

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 drousy metaphysic sage!

And ever may the German folios 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 weild 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

Book IV. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 81

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 chearful face of nature : earth becomes
A dreary desert, 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.

L

And

And all the horrors that the guilty feel
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, 610
Timorous Self-love, with sickning 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 Demon Fear, 120
That trembles at impossible events;
Left 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

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 83

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,
Appal the surest hour that life bestows. 131
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;
Diversión, 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 slain!
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 chearful haunts
 Of men, and mingle with the bustling croud ;
 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 maddening 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 drink.
 Struck by the powerful 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

Book IV. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 85

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 thundering 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 fides,
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 rapt
Your soul, to plunge you deeper in despair.

Perhaps

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 loose, ungarded hour
 Escap'd. By 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 your 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

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 87

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 flow'ry 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

Forbids that we thro' gay voluptuous wilds
Should ever roam : And were the Fates more kind,
Our narrow luxuries would soon be stale.

Were these exhaustless, Nature would grow sick, 250
And, cloy'd with pleasure, squeamishly complain
That all was vanity, and life a dream.

Let nature rest : Be busy for yourself,
And for your friend ; be busy even in vain
Rather than teize her fated 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, he 265
Who has not virtue is not truly wise.

Virtue (for meer 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

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 89

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 to baser hands
Can be transfer'd : it is the only good
Man justly boasts of, or can call his own. 290
Riches are oft by guilt and baseness earn'd ;
Or dealt by chance, to shield a lucky knave,
Or throw a cruel sun-shine on a fool.
But for one end, one much-neglected use,

M

Are

Are riches worth your care : (for Nature's wants 295
Are few, and without opulence supplied.)
This noble end is, to produce the Soul ;
To shew the virtues in their fairest light ;
To make Humanity the Minister
Of bounteous Providence ; and teach the breast 300
That generous luxury the Gods enjoy.

Thus, in his graver vein, the friendly Sage
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 306
He knew, as far as Reason can controul
The lawless Powers. But other cares are mine :
Form'd in the school of Pæon, I relate
What Passions hurt the body, what improve : 310
Avoid them, or invite them, as you may.

Know then, whatever chearful and serene
Supports the mind, supports the body too.
Hence the most vital movement mortals feel
Is Hope ; the balm and life-blood of the soul. 315
It pleases, and it lasts. Indulgent heaven

Sent

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 91

Sent down the kind delusion, thro' the paths
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, 320
Is Hope ; the last of all our evils, Fear.

But there are Passions grateful to the breast,
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, 326
(If Love's omnipotence such hearts can mould)
May safely mellow into love ; and grow
Refin'd, humane, and generous, if they can.
Love in such bosoms never to a fault 330
Or pains or pleasures. But ye finer Souls,
Form'd to soft luxury, and prompt to thrill
With all the tumults, all the joys and pains,
That beauty gives ; with caution and reserve
Indulge the sweet destroyer of repose, 335
Nor court too much the Queen of charming cares.
For, while the cherish'd poison in your breast
Ferments ~~and~~ and maddens ; sick with jealousy,
Absence, distrust, or even with anxious joy,
The wholesome appetites and powers of life 340

Dissolve in languor. The coy stomach loaths
 The genial board: Your chearful days are gone:
 The generous bloom that flush'd your cheeks is fled.
 To sighs devoted and to tender pains,
 Pensive you sit, or solitary stray, 345
 And waste your youth in musing. Musing first
 Toy'd into care your unsuspecting heart:
 It found a liking there, a sportful fire,
 And that fomented into serious love;
 Which musing daily strengthens and improves 350
 'Thro' all the heights of fondness and romance:
 And you're undone, the fatal shaft has sped,
 If once you doubt whether you love or no.
 The body wastes away; th' infected mind,
 Dissolv'd in female tendernefs, forgets 355
 Each manly virtue, and grows dead to fame.
 Sweet heaven from such intoxicating charms
 Defend all worthy breasts! Not that I deem
 Love always dangerous, always to be shun'd.
 Love well repaid, and not too weakly sunk 360
 In wanton and unmanly tendernefs,
 Adds bloom to Health; o'er every virtue sheds
 A gay, humane, and amiable grace,
 And brightens all the ornaments of man.
 But fruitless, hopeless, disappointed, rack'd 365
 With

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 93

With jealousy, fatigued with hope and fear,
Too serious, or too languishingly fond,
Unnerves the body and unmans the soul.
And some have died for Love; and some run mad;
And some with desperate hand themselves have
slain. 370

Some to extinguish, others to prevent,
A mad devotion to one dangerous Fair,
Court all they meet; in hopes to dissipate
The cares of Love amongst a hundred Brides.
Th' event is doubtful: for there are who find 375
A cure in this; there are who find it not.

'Tis no relief, alas! it rather galls
The wound, to those who are sincerely sick.
For while from feverish and tumultuous joys
The nerves grow languid and the soul subsides; 380
The tender Fancy smarts with every sting;
And what was Love before is Madness now.
Is health your care, or luxury your aim,
Be temperate still: When Nature bids, obey;
Her wild impatient sallies bear no curb. 385

But when the prurient habit of delight,
Or loose Imagination, spurs you on
To deeds above your strength, impute it not

To

To Nature: Nature all compulsion hates,
Ah! let nor luxury nor vain renown 390
Urge you to feats you well might sleep without;
To make what should be rapture a fatigue,
A tedious task; nor in the wanton arms
Of twining Laïs melt your manhood down.
For from the colliquation of soft joys 395
How chang'd you rise! the ghost of what you was!
Languid, and melancholy, and gaunt, and wan;
Your veins exhausted, and your nerves unstrung.
Spoil'd of its balm and sprightly zest, the blood
Grows vapid phlegm; along the tender nerves 400
(To each slight impulse tremblingly awake)
A subtle Fiend that mimics all the plagues
Rapid and restless springs from part to part.
The blooming honours of your youth are fallen;
Your vigour pines; your vital powers decay; 405
Diseases haunt you; and untimely Age
Creeps on; unsocial, impotent, and lewd.
Infatuate, impious, epicure! to waste
The stores of pleasure, chearfulness, and health!
Infatuate all who make delight their trade,
And coy perdition every hour pursue.

Book IV. *Preserving* H E A L T H. 95

Who pines with Love, or in lascivious flames
Consumes, is with his own consent undone :
He chuses to be wretched, to be mad ;
And warn'd proceeds and wilful to his fate. 415
But there's a Passion, whose tempestuous sway
Tears up each virtue planted in the breast,
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, 421
Desperate, and arm'd with more than human strength.
How soon the calm, humane, and polish'd man
Forgets compunction, and starts up a fiend !
Who pines in Love, or wastes with silent Cares, 425
Envy, or Ignominy, or tender Grief,
Slowly descends, and ling'ring, to the shades.
But he whom Anger stings, drops, if he dies,
At once, and rushes apoplectic down ;
Or a fierce fever hurries him to hell. 430
For, as the Body thro' unnumber'd strings
Reverberates each vibration of the Soul ;
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 435

The

The Life, or gives your Reason to the winds.
 Such fates attend the rash alarm of Fear,
 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. 440
 For where the Mind a torpid winter leads,
 Wrapt in a Body corpulent and cold,
 And each clogg'd function lazily moves on;
 A generous folly spurns th' incumbent load,
 Unlocks the breast, and gives a cordial glow. 445
 But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil,
 Or are your nerves too irritably strung,
 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, 450
 Or shatters every hopeful scheme of life,
 And gives to horror all your days to come.
 Fate, arm'd with thunder, fire, and every plague
 That ruins, tortures, or distracts mankind,
 And makes the happy wretched in an hour, 455
 O'erwhelms you not with woes so horrible
 As your own Wrath, nor gives more sudden blows.

While

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 97

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 ; 460
If honour bids, to morrow kill or die.
But calm advice against a raging fit
Avails too little ; and it tries the power
Of all that ever taught in Prose or Song,
To tame the Fiend that sleeps a gentle Lamb, 465
And wakes a Lion. Unprovok'd and calm,
You reason well, see as you ought to see,
And wonder at the madness of mankind :
Seiz'd with the common rage, you soon forget
The speculations of your wiser hours. 470
Beset with Furies of all deadly shapes,
Fierce and insidious, violent and slow ;
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, 475
To cope with subtle or impetuous Powers,
I would invoke new Passions to your aid :
With Indignation would extinguish Fear,
With Fear or generous Pity vanquish Rage, 479
And Love with Pride ; and force to force oppose.
N There

There is a Charm, a Power, that sways the breast;
Bids every Passion revel or be still;
Inspires with Rage, or all your Cares dissolves;
Can sooth Distraction, and almost Despair.

That Power is Music: Far beyond the stretch 485
Of those unmeaning warblers on our stage;

Those clumsy Heroes, those fat-headed Gods,
Who move no Passion justly but Contempt:

Who, like our dancers (light indeed and strong!)
Do wond'rous feats, but never heard of grace. 490

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;
And, with insipid shew of rapture, die
Of idiot notes impertinently long. 495

But he the Muse's laurel justly shares,
A Poet he, and touch'd with Heaven's own fire;

Who, with bold rage or solemn pomp of sounds,
Inflames, exalts, and ravishes the soul;

Now tender, plaintive, sweet almost to pain, 500

In Love dissolves you; now in sprightly strains
Breathes a gay rapture thro' your thrilling breast;

Or melts the heart with airs divinely sad;

Or wakes to horror the tremendous strings.

Book IV. *Preserving* HEALTH. 99

Such was the bard, whose heavenly strains of old 505
Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul.

Such was, if old and heathen fame say true,
The man who bade the Theban domes ascend,
And tam'd the savage nations with his song;
And such the Thracian, whose harmonious lyre, 510
Tun'd to soft woe, made all the mountains weep;
Sooth'd even th' inexorable powers of Hell,
And half redeem'd his lost Eurydice.

Music exalts each Joy, allays each Grief,
Expels Diseases, softens every Pain, 515
Subdues the rage of Poison, and the Plague;
And hence the wise of ancient days ador'd
One Power of Physic, Melody, and Song.

The END.

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