

## The ARBOUR : AN ODE TO CONTENTMENT.

By Mr. THOMAS COLE.

**T**O these lone shades, where Peace delights to dwell,  
 May Fortune oft permit me to retreat ;  
 Here bid the world, with all its cares, farewell,  
 And leave its pleasures to the rich and great.

Oft as the summer's sun shall cheer this scene,  
 With that mild gleam which points his parting ray,  
 Here let my soul enjoy each eve serene,  
 Here share its calm, 'till life's declining day.

No gladsome image then should 'scape my sight,  
 From these gay flow'rs, which border near my eye,  
 To yon bright cloud, that decks, with richest light,  
 The gilded mantle of the western sky.

With ample gaze, I'd trace that ridge remote,  
 Where op'ning cliffs disclose the boundless main ;  
 With earnest ken, from each low hamlet note  
 The steeple's summit peeping o'er the plain.

What various works that rural landscape fill,  
 Where mingling hedge-rows beauteous fields inclose ;  
 And prudent Culture, with industrious skill,  
 Her chequer'd scene of crops and fallows shows ?

How



How should I love to mark that riv'let's maze,  
 Through which it works its untaught course along ;  
 Whilst near its grassy banks the herd shall graze,  
 And blithsome milkmaid chaunt her thoughtless song ?

Still would I note the shades of length'ning sheep,  
 As scatter'd o'er the hill's slant brow they rove ;  
 Still note the day's last glimm'ring lustre creep  
 From off the verge of yonder upland grove.

Nor should my leisure seldom wait to view  
 The slow-wing'd rooks in homeward train succeed ;  
 Nor yet forbear the swallow to pursue,  
 With quicker glance, close skimming o'er the mead.

But mostly here should I delight t' explore  
 The bounteous laws of Nature's mystic pow'r ;  
 Then muse on him who blesteth all her store,  
 And give to solemn thoughts the sober hour.

Let Mirth unenvy'd laugh with proud disdain,  
 And deem it spleen one moment thus to waste ;  
 If so she keep far hence her noisy train,  
 Nor interrupt those joys she cannot taste.

Far sweeter streams shall flow from Wisdom's spring,  
 Than she receives from Folly's costliest bowl ;  
 And what delights can her chief dainties bring,  
 Like those which feast the heavenly-pensive soul ?

Hail



Hail Silence then! be thou my frequent guest;  
 For thou art wont my gratitude to raise,  
 As high as wonder can the theme suggest,  
 Whene'er I meditate my Maker's praise.

What joy for tutor'd Piety to learn,  
 All that my christian solitude can teach,  
 Where weak-ey'd Reason's self may well discern  
 Each clearer truth the gospel deigns to preach?

No object here but may convince the mind,  
 Of more than thoughtful honesty shall need;  
 Nor can Suspense long question here to find  
 Sufficient evidence to fix its creed.

'Tis God that gives this bow'r its awful gloom;  
 His arched verdure does its roof invest;  
 He breathes the life of fragrance on its bloom;  
 And with his kindness makes its owner blest.

Oh! may the guidance of thy grace attend  
 The use of all thy bounty shall bestow;  
 Lest folly should mistake its sacred end,  
 Or vice convert it into means of woe.

Incline and aid me still my life to steer,  
 As conscience dictates what to shun or chuse;  
 Nor let my heart feel anxious hope or fear,  
 For aught this world can give me or refuse.

Then



Then shall not wealth's parade one wish excite,  
 For wretched state to barter peace away ;  
 Nor vain ambition's lure my pride invite,  
 Beyond Contentment's humble path to stray.

What tho' thy wisdom may my lot deny,  
 The treasur'd plenty freely to dispense ;  
 Yet well thy goodness can that want supply  
 With larger portions of benevolence.

And sure the heart that wills the gen'rous deed,  
 May all the joys of Charity command ;  
 For she best loves from notice to recede,  
 And deals her unfought gifts with secret hand.

Then will I sometimes bid my fancy steal,  
 That unclaim'd wealth no property restrains ;  
 Soothe with fictitious aid my friendly zeal,  
 And realize each godly act she feigns.

So shall I gain the gold without alloy ;  
 Without oppression, toil, or treach'rous snares ;  
 So shall I know its use, its pow'r employ,  
 And yet avoid its dangers and its cares.

And spite of all that boastful wealth can do,  
 In vain would Fortune strive the rich to bless,  
 Were they not flatter'd with some distant view  
 Of what she ne'er can give them to possess.



E'en Wisdom's high conceit great wants would feel,  
 If not supply'd from Fancy's boundless store;  
 And nought but shame makes pow'r itself conceal,  
 That she, to satisfy, must promise more.

But tho' experience will not fail to show,  
 Howe'er its truth man's weakness may upbraid,  
 That what he mostly values here below,  
 Owes half its relish to kind Fancy's aid;

Yet should not Prudence her light wing command,  
 She may too far extend her heedless flight;  
 For Pleasure soon shall quit her fairy-land  
 If Nature's regions are not held in fight.

From Truth's abode, in search of kind deceit,  
 Within due limits she may safely roam;  
 If roving does not make her hate retreat,  
 And with aversion shun her proper home.

But thanks to those, whose fond parental care  
 To Learning's paths my youthful steps confin'd,  
 I need not shun a state which lets me share  
 Each calm delight that soothes the studious mind.

While genius lasts, *his* fame shall ne'er decay,  
 Whose artful hand first caus'd its fruits to spread;  
 In lasting volumes stamp't the printed lay,  
 And taught the Muses to embalm the dead.



To him I owe each fair instructive page,  
 Where Science tells me what her sons have known ;  
 Collects their choicest works from ev'ry age,  
 And makes me wise with knowledge not my own.

Books rightly us'd may ev'ry state secure :  
 From fortune's evils may our peace defend ;  
 May teach us how to shun, or to endure,  
 The foe malignant, and the faithless friend.

Should rigid Want withdraw all outward aid,  
 Kind stores of inward comfort they can bring ;  
 Should keen Disease life's tainted stream invade,  
 Sweet to the soul from them pure health may spring.

Should both at once man's weakly frame infest,  
 Some letter'd charm may still relief supply ;  
 'Gainst all events prepare his patient breast,  
 And make him quite resign'd to live, or die.

For tho' no words can time or fate restrain ;  
 No sounds suppress the call of Nature's voice ;  
 Tho' neither rhymes, nor spells, can conquer pain,  
 Nor magic's self make wretchedness our choice ;

Yet reason, while it forms the subtile plan,  
 Some purer source of pleasure to explore,  
 Must deem it vain for that poor pilgrim, man,  
 To think of resting 'till his journey's o'er ;

Must



Must deem each fruitless toil, by heav'n design'd  
 To teach him where to look for real blifs ;  
 Else why should heav'n excite the hope to find  
 What balk'd pursuit must here for ever miss ?



The GROTTO: An ODE to SILENCE.

By the Same.

COME, musing Silence, nor refuse to shed  
 Thy sober influence o'er this darkling cell :  
 Thy desert waste and lonely plain,  
 Could ne'er confine thy peaceful reign ;  
 Nor dost thou only love to dwell  
 'Mid the dark mansions of the vaulted dead :  
 For still at eve's sereneest hour,  
 All Nature owns thy soothing pow'r :  
 Oft hast thou deign'd with me to rove,  
 Beneath the calm sequester'd grove ;  
 Oft deign'd my secret steps to lead  
 Along the dewy pathless mead ;  
 Or up the dusky lawn, to spy  
 The last faint gleamings of the twilight sky.  
 Then wilt thou still thy pensive vot'ry meet,  
 Oft as he calls thee to this gloomy seat :