

ARGUMENT of the SIXTH BOOK.

*Bells at a distance.—Their effect.—A fine noon in winter.—
—A sheltered walk.—Meditation better than books.—
Our familiarity with the course of nature makes it appear less wonderful than it is.—The transformation that spring effects in a shrubbery described.—A mistake concerning the course of nature corrected.—God maintains it by an unremitted act.—The amusements fashionable at this hour of the day reprov'd.—Animals happy, a delightful sight.—Origin of cruelty to animals.—That it is a great crime proved from scripture.—That proof illustrated by a tale.—A line drawn between the lawful and the unlawful destruction of them.—Their good and useful properties insisted on.—Apology for the encomiums bestowed by the author on animals.—Instances of man's extravagant praise of man.—The groans of the creation shall have an end.—A view taken of the restoration of all things.—An Invocation and an Invitation of him who shall bring it to pass.—The retired man vindicated from the charge of uselessness.—Conclusion.*

B O O K VI.

THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

THERE is in souls a sympathy with sounds,

And as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleas'd

With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave,

Some chord in unison with what we hear

Is touched within us, and the heart replies.

How soft the music of those village bells

Falling at intervals upon the ear

In cadence sweet! now dying all away,

Now pealing loud again and louder still,

Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on,

With easy force it opens all the cells

Where mem'ry slept. Wherever I have heard
 A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
 And with it all its pleasures and its pains,
 Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
 That in a few short moments I retrace
 (As in a map the voyager his course)
 The windings of my way through many years.
 Short as in retrospect the journey seems,
 It seem'd not always short; the rugged path
 And prospect oft so dreary and forlorn
 Moved many a sigh at its disheart'ning length,
 Yet feeling present evils, while the past
 Faintly impresses the mind, or not at all,
 How readily we wish time spent revoked,
 That we might try the ground again, where once
 (Through inexperience as we now perceive)
 We mis'd that happiness we might have found,
 Some friend is gone, perhaps his son's best friend
 A father, whose authority, in show

When

When most severe, and must'ring all its force,
 Was but the graver countenance of love.
 Whose favour like the clouds of spring, might low'r
 And utter now and then an awful voice,
 But had a blessing in its darkest frown,
 Threat'ning at once and nourishing the plant.
 We loved, but not enough the gentle hand
 That reared us. At a thoughtless age allured
 By ev'ry gilded folly, we renounced
 His shelt'ring side, and wilfully forewent
 That converse which we now in vain regret.
 How gladly would the man recall to life
 The boy's neglected fire! a mother too,
 That softer friend, perhaps more gladly still
 Might he demand them at the gates of death.
 Sorrow has since they went subdued and tamed
 The playful humour, he could now endure,
 (Himself grown sober in the vale of tears)
 And feel a parent's presence no restraint.
 But not to understand a treasure's worth

'Till

'Till time has stol'n away the flighted good,
 Is cause of half the poverty we feel,
 And makes the world the wilderness it is,
 The few that pray at all pray oft amidst,
 And seeking grace t' improve the prize they hold
 Would urge a wiser suit, than asking more.

The night was winter in his roughest mood,
 The morning sharp and clear. But now at noon
 Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
 And where the woods fence off the northern blast,
 The season smiles resigning all its rage
 And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue
 Without a cloud, and white without a speck
 The dazzling splendour of the scene below,
 Again the harmony comes o'er the vale,
 And through the trees I view th' embattled tow'r
 Whence all the music. I again perceive
 The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
 And settle in soft musings as I tread

The

The walk still verdant under oaks and elms,
 Whose outspread branches overarch the glade.
 The roof though moveable through all its length
 As the wind sways it, has yet well sufficed,
 And intercepting in their silent fall
 The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me,
 No noise is here, or none that hinders thought,
 The red-breast warbles still, but is content
 With slender notes and more than half suppress'd,
 Pleased with his solitude, and flitting light
 From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes
 From many a twig the pendent drops of ice,
 That tinkle in the wither'd leaves below.
 Stillness accompanied with sounds so soft
 Charms more than silence, Meditation here
 May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
 May give an useful lesson to the head,
 And learning wiser grow without his books.
 Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
 Have oft times no connexion. Knowledge dwells
 In

In heads replete with thoughts of other men,
 Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
 Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
 The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
 'Till smooth'd and squared and fitted to its place
 Does but incumber whom it seems t' enrich.
 Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much,
 Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
 Books are not seldom talismans and spells
 By which the magic art of shrewder wits
 Holds an unthinking multitude enthral'd,
 Some to the fascination of a name
 Surrender judgment hood-wink'd. Some the stile
 Infatuates, and through labyrinth and wilds
 Of error, leads them by a tune entranced.
 While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear
 The insupportable fatigue of thought,
 And swallowing therefore without pause or choice
 The total grift unsifted, husks and all.
 But trees, and rivulets whose rapid course

Defies the check of winter, haunts of deer,
 And sheep-walks populous with bleating lambs,
 And lanes in which the primrose 'ere her time
 Peeps through the moss that cloaths the hawthorn root,
 Deceive no student. Wisdom there, and truth,
 Not shy as in the world, and to be won
 By slow solicitation, seize at once
 The roving thought, and fix it on themselves.

What prodigies can pow'r divine perform
 More grand, than it produces year by year,
 And all in sight of inattentive man?
 Familiar with th' effect we flight the cause,
 And in the constancy of nature's course,
 The regular return of genial months,
 And renovation of a faded world,
 See nought to wonder at. Should God again
 As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race
 Of the undeviating and punctual sun,
 How would the world admire! but speaks it less

And

An agency divine, to make him know
 His moment when to sink and when to rise
 Age after age, than to arrest his course?
 All we behold is miracle, but seen
 So duly, all is miracle in vain.
 Where now the vital energy that moved
 While summer was, the pure and subtle lymph
 Through th' imperceptible mæandering veins
 Of leaf and flow'r? It sleeps; and the icy touch
 Of unprolific winter has impress'd
 A cold stagnation on th' intestine tide.
 But let the months go round, a few short months,
 And all shall be restored. These naked shoots
 Barren as lances, among which the wind
 Makes wintry music, fighting as it goes,
 Shall put their graceful foliage on again,
 And more aspiring and with ampler spread
 Shall boast new charms, and more than they have lost
 Then, each in its peculiar honors clad,
 Shall publish even to the distant eye

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Its family and tribe. Laburnum rich
 In streaming gold; fyinga iv'ry-pure;
 The scented and the scentless rose; this red
 And of an humbler growth, the *other tall,
 And throwing up into the darkest gloom
 Of neighb'ring cypres or more fable yew
 Her silver globes, light as the foamy surf
 That the wind severs from the broken wave.
 The lilac various in array, now white,
 Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
 With purple spikes pyramidal, as if
 Studious of ornament, yet unresolv'd
 Which hue she most approved, she chose them all.
 Copious of flow'rs the woodbine, pale and wan,
 But well compensating their fickly looks
 With never-cloying odours, early and late.
 Hypericum all bloom, so thick a swarm
 Of flow'rs like flies cloathing her slender rods
 That scarce a leaf appears. Mezerion too
 Though leafless well attired, and thick beset

With

* The Guelder-rose.

With blushing wreaths investing ev'ry spray,
 Althaea with the purple eye, the broom,
 Yellow and bright as bullion unalloy'd
 Her blossoms, and luxuriant above all
 The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
 The deep dark green of whose unvarnish'd leaf
 Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more
 The bright profusion of her scatter'd stars.—
 These have been, and these shall be in their day,
 And all this uniform uncoloured scene
 Shall be dismantled of its fleecy load,
 And flush into variety again.
 From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
 Is Nature's progress when the lectures man
 In heav'nly truth; evincing as she makes
 The grand transition, that there lives and works
 A soul in all things, and that soul is God.
 The beauties of the wilderness are his,
 That make so gay the solitary place
 Where no eye sees them. And the fairer forms

That

That cultivation glories in, are his.
 He sets the bright procession on its way,
 And marshals all the order of the year.
 He marks the bounds which winter may not pass,
 And blunts his pointed fury. In its case
 Ruffet and rude, folds up the tender germ
 Uninjured, with inimitable art,
 And 'ere one flow'ry season fades and dies
 Designs the blooming wonders of the next.

Some say that in the origin of things
 When all creation started into birth,
 The infant elements received a law
 From which they swerve not since. That under force
 Of that controuling ordinance they move,
 And need not his immediate hand, who first
 Prescribed their course, to regulate it now.
 Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
 The incumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
 The great Artificer of all that moves

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'The stress of a continual act, the pain
 Of unremitted vigilance and care,
 As too laborious and severe a task.
 So man the moth, is not afraid it seems
 To span Omnipotence, and measure might
 That knows no measure, by the scanty rule
 And standard of his own, that is to day,
 And is not, 'ere to-morrow's fun go down.
 But how should matter occupy a charge
 Dull as it is, and satisfy a law
 So vast in its demands, unless impell'd
 To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,
 And under pressure of some conscious cause?
 The Lord of all, himself through all diffused,
 Sustains and is the life of all that lives.
 Nature is but a name for an effect
 Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire
 By which the mighty process is maintain'd,
 Who sleeps not, is not weary, in whose fight
 Slow-circling ages are as transient days;

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Whose work is without labor, whose designs
 No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts,
 And whose beneficence no charge exhausts.
 Him blind antiquity profaned, not serv'd,
 With self-taught rites and under various names
 Female and male, Pomona, Pales, Pan,
 And Flora and Vertumnus; peopling earth
 With tutelary goddesses and gods
 That were not, and commending as they would
 To each some province, garden, field, or grove.
 But all are under one. One spirit—His
 Who wore the platted thorns with bleeding brows,
 Rules universal nature! Not a flow'r
 But shows some touch in freckle, streak or stain,
 Of his unrivall'd pencil. He inspires
 Their balmy odors and imparts their hues,
 And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes
 In grains as countless as the sea-side sands,
 The forms with which he sprinkles all the earth.
 Happy who walks with him to whom what he finds

Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flow'r,
 Or what he views of beautiful or grand
 In Nature, from the broad majestic oak
 To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
 Prompts with remembrance of a present God.
 His presence who made all so fair, perceived,
 Makes all still fairer. As with him no scene
 Is dreary, so with him all seasons please.
 Though winter had been none, had man been true,
 And earth be punished for its tenant's sake,
 Yet not in vengeance; as this smiling sky
 So soon succeeding such an angry night,
 And these dissolving snows, and this clear stream
 Recov'ring fast its liquid music, prove.

Who then that has a mind well strung and tuned
 To contemplation, and within his reach
 A scene so friendly to his fav'rite task,
 Would waste attention at the chequer'd board,
 His host of wooden warriors to and fro

Marching

Marching and counter-marching, with an eye
 As fixt as marble, with a forehead ridged
 And furrow'd into storms, and with a hand
 Trembling, as if eternity were hung
 In balance on his conduct of a pin?
 Nor envies he aught more their idle sport
 Who pant with application misapplied
 To trivial toys, and pushing iv'ry balls
 Across the velvet level, feel a joy
 Akin to rapture, when the bawble finds
 Its destin'd goal of difficult access.
 Nor deems he wiser him, who gives his noon
 To Mifs, the Mercer's plague, from shop to shop
 Wand'ring, and litt'ring with unfolded silks
 The polished counter, and approving none,
 Or promising with smiles to call again.
 Nor him, who by his vanity seduced
 And footh'd into a dream that he discerns
 The difference of a Guido from a daub,
 Frequents the crowded auction. Station'd there

As duely as the Langford of the show,
 With glafs at eye, and catalogue in hand,
 And tongue accomplish'd in the fulsome can,
 And pedantry that coxcombs learn with ease,
 Oft as the price-deciding hammer falls
 He notes it in his book, then raps his box
 Swears 'tis a bargain, rails at his hard fate
 That he has let it pass—but never bids.

Here unmolested, through whatever sign
 The fun proceeds, I wander. Neither mist,
 Nor freezing sky, nor sultry, checking me,
 Nor stranger intermeddling with my joy.
 Ev'n in the spring and play-time of the year
 That calls the unwonted villager abroad
 With all her little ones, a sportive train,
 To gather king-cups in the yellow mead,
 And prink their hair with daisies, or to pick
 A cheap but wholesome fallad from the brook,
 These shades are all my own. The tim'rous hare

Grown

Grown so familiar with her frequent guest
 Scarce shuns me; and the stock-dove unalarm'd
 Sits cooing in the pine-tree, nor suspends
 His long love-ditty for my near approach.
 Drawn from his refuge in some lonely elm
 That age or injury has hollow'd deep,
 Where on his bed of wool and matted leaves
 He has outlept the winter, ventures forth
 To frisk awhile, and bask in the warm sun,
 The squirrel, flippant, pert, and full of play,
 He sees me, and at once, swift as a bird
 Ascends the neighb'ring beech; there whisks his brush
 And perks his ears, and stamps and scolds aloud,
 With all the prettiness of feign'd alarm,
 And anger insignificantly fierce.
 The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
 For human fellowship, as being void
 Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike
 To love and friendship both, that is not pleas'd

With sight of animals enjoying life,
 Nor feels their happiness augment his own.
 The bounding fawn that darts across the glade
 When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,
 And spirits buoyant with excess of glee;
 The horse, as wanton and almost as fleet,
 That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,
 Then stops and snorts, and throwing high his heels
 Starts to the voluntary race again;
 The very kine that gambol at high noon,
 The total herd receiving first from one
 That leads the dance, a summons to be gay,
 Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth
 Their efforts, yet resolved with one consent
 To give such act and utterance as they may
 To extasy too big to be suppress'd—
 These, and a thousand images of bliss,
 With which kind nature graces ev'ry scene
 Where cruel man defeats not her design,
 Impart to the benevolent, who wish,

All that are capable of pleasure, pleas'd,
 A far superior happiness to theirs,
 The comfort of a reasonable joy.

Man scarce had ris'n, obedient to his call
 Who form'd him, from the dust his future grave,
 When he was crown'd as never king was since.

God set the diadem upon his head,
 And angel choirs attended. Wond'ring stood
 The new-made monarch, while before him pass'd,
 All happy and all perfect in their kind
 The creatures, summon'd from their various haunts
 To see their sov'reign, and confess his sway.

Vast was his empire, absolute his pow'r,
 Or bounded only by a law whose force

'Twas his sublimest privilege to feel

And own, the law of universal love.

He ruled with meekness, they obeyed with joy,

No cruel purpose lurk'd within his heart,

And no distrust of his intent in theirs.

So

All

So Eden was a scene of harmless sport,
 Where kindness on his part who ruled the whole
 Begat a tranquil confidence in all,
 And fear as yet was not, nor cause for fear.
 But sin marr'd all. And the revolt of man,
 That source of evils not exhausted yet,
 Was punish'd with revolt of his from him.
 Garden of God, how terrible the change
 Thy groves and lawns then witness'd! ev'ry heart,
 Each animal of ev'ry name, conceived
 A jealousy and an instinctive fear,
 And conscious of some danger, either fled
 Precipitate the loath'd abode of man,
 Or growl'd defiance in such angry fort,
 As taught him too to tremble in his turn.
 Thus harmony and family accord
 Were driv'n from Paradise; and in that hour
 The seeds of cruelty that since have swell'd
 To such gigantic and enormous growth,
 Were sown in human nature's fruitful soil.

Hence

Hence date the persecution and the pain
 That man inflicts on all inferior kinds
 Regardless of their plaints. To make him sport,
 To gratify the frenzy of his wrath,
 Or his base gluttony, are causes good
 And just in his account, why bird and beast
 Should suffer torture, and the streams be dyed
 With blood of their inhabitants impaled.
 Earth groans beneath the burthen of a war
 Waged with defenceless innocence, while he,
 Not fatisfied to prey on all around,
 Adds tenfold bitterness to death, by pangs
 Needless, and first torments 'ere he devours,
 Now happiest they that occupy the scenes
 The most remote from his abhorr'd resort,
 Whom once as delegate of God on earth
 They fear'd, and as his perfect image loved.
 The wilderness is theirs with all its caves,
 Its hollow glens, its thickets, and its plains
 Unvisited by man. There they are free,

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And howl and roar as likes them, uncontroul'd,
Nor ask his leave to slumber or to play.

Woe to the tyrant if he dare intrude

Within the confines of their wild domain;

The lion tells him—I am monarch here—

And if he spare him, spares him on the terms

Of royal mercy, and through gen'rous scorn

To rend a victim trembling at his foot.

In measure as by force of instinct drawn,

Or by necessity constrain'd, they live

Dependent upon man, those in his fields,

These at his crib, and some beneath his roof,

They prove too often at how dear a rate

He sells protection. Witnesses, at his foot

The spaniel dying for some venial fault,

Under dissection of the knotted scourge.

Witness, the patient ox, with stripes and yells

Driv'n to the slaughter, goaded as he runs

To madness, while the savage at his heels

Laughs at the frantic suff'ers fury spent

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Upon the guiltless passenger o'erthrown.

He too is witness, noblest of the train

That wait on man, the flight-performing horse.

With unsuspecting readiness he takes

His murth'rer on his back, and push'd all day

With bleeding sides and flanks that heave for life

To the far-distant goal, arrives and dies.

So little mercy shows who needs so much!

Does law, so jealous in the cause of man,

Denounce no doom on the delinquent? None.

He lives, and o'er his brimming beaker boasts

(As if barbarity were high desert)

Th' inglorious feat, and clamorous in praise

Of the poor brute, seems wisely to suppose

The honors of his matchless horse his own.

But many a crime, deem'd innocent on earth,

Is register'd in heav'n, and these no doubt,

Have each their record, with a curse annext.

Man may dismiss compassion from his heart,

But God will never. When he charged the Jew

T' assist

T' assist his foe's down-fallen beast to rise,
 And when the bush-exploring boy that seized
 The young, to let the parent bird go free,
 Proved he not plainly that his meaner works
 Are yet his care, and have an interest all,
 All, in the universal father's love.
 On Noah, and in him on all mankind
 The charter was conferr'd by which we hold
 The flesh of animals in fee, and claim
 O'er all we feed on, pow'r of life and death.
 But read the instrument, and mark it well.
 Th' oppression of a tyrannous controul
 Can find no warrant there. Feed then, and yield
 Thanks for thy food. Carnivorous through fin
 Feed on the slain, but spare the living brute.

The Governor of all, himself to all
 So bountiful, in whose attentive ear
 The unfledged raven and the lion's whelp
 Plead not in vain for pity on the pangs

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Of hunger unassuaged, has interposed,
 Not seldom, his avenging arm, to smite
 Th' injurious trampler upon nature's law
 That claims forbearance even for a brute.
 He hates the hardness of a Balaam's heart;
 And prophet as he was, he might not strike
 The blameless animal, without rebuke,
 On which he rode. Her opportune offence
 Saved him, or th' unrelenting feer had died.
 He sees that human equity is slack
 To interfere, though in so just a cause,
 And makes the task his own. Inspiring dumb
 And helpless victims with a sense so keen
 Of injury, with such knowledge of their strength,
 And such sagacity to take revenge,
 That oft the beast has seemed to judge the man.
 An ancient, not a legendary tale,
 By one of sound intelligence rehears'd
 (If such, who plead for Providence, may seem
 In modern eyes) shall make the doctrine clear.

Where

Where England stretch'd towards the setting sun
 Narrow and long, o'erlooks the western wave,
 Dwelt young Misagathus. A scorner he
 Of God and goodness, atheist in ostent,
 Vicious in act, in temper savage-fierce.
 He journey'd, and his chance was as he went,
 To join a traveller of far different note
 Evander, famed for piety, for years
 Deserving honor, but for wisdom more.
 Fame had not left the venerable man
 A stranger to the manners of the youth,
 Whose face too was familiar to his view.
 Their way was on the margin of the land,
 O'er the green summit of the rocks whose base
 Beats back the roaring furge, scarce heard so high.
 The charity that warm'd his heart was moved
 At sight of the man-monster. With a smile
 Gentle, and affable, and full of grace,
 As fearful of offending whom he wish'd
 Much to persuade, he plied his ear with truths

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Not harshly thunder'd forth or rudely press'd,
 But like his purpose, gracious, kind, and sweet,
 And dost thou dream, th' impenetrable man
 Exclaim'd, that me, the lullabies of age
 And fantasies of dotards such as thou
 Can cheat, or move a moment's fear in me?
 Mark now the proof I give thee, that the brave
 Need no such aids as superstition lends
 To steel their hearts against the dread of death.
 He spoke, and to the precipice at hand
 Push'd with a madman's fury. Fancy shrinks,
 And the blood thrills and curdles at the thought
 Of such a gulph as he design'd his grave.
 But though the felon on his back could dare
 The dreadful leap, more rational his steed
 Declined the death, and wheeling swiftly round
 Or 'ere his hoof had press'd the crumbling verge,
 Baffled his rider, saved against his will.
 The frenzy of the brain may be redress'd
 By med'cine well applied, but without grace

The

S

The heart's infamy admits no cure,
 Enraged the more by what might have reform'd
 His horrible intent, again he fought
 Destruction with a zeal to be destroyed,
 With founding whip and rowels dyed in blood.
 But still in vain. The providence that meant
 A longer date to the far nobler beast,
 Spared yet again th' ignobler for his sake.
 And now, his prowess proved, and his sincere
 Incurable obduracy evinced,
 His rage grew cool; and pleas'd perhaps t' have earn'd
 So cheaply the renown of that attempt,
 With looks of some complacence he resumed
 His road, deriding much the blank amaze
 Of good Evander, still where he was left
 Fixt motionless, and petrified with dread.
 So on they fared; discourse on other themes
 Ensuing, seem'd to obliterate the past,
 And tamer far for so much fury shown,
 (As is the course of rash and fiery men)

The rude companion smil'd as if transform'd:
 But 'twas a transient calm. A storm was near,
 An unsuspected storm. His hour was come.
 The impious challenger of pow'r divine
 Was now to learn, that heav'n though flow to wrath,
 Is never with impunity defied.
 His horse, as he had caught his master's mood,
 Snorting, and starting into sudden rage,
 Unbidden, and not now to be controul'd,
 Rush'd to the cliff, and having reach'd it, stood.
 At once the shock unseated him. He flew
 Sheer o'er the craggy barrier, and immersed
 Deep in the flood; found, when he fought it not,
 The death he had deserved, and died alone.
 So God wrought double justice; made the fool
 The victim of his own tremendous choice
 And taught a brute the way to safe revenge.

I would not enter on my list of friends
 (Though grac'd with polish'd manners and fine sense

Yet wanting sensibility) the man
 Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm,
 An inadvertent step may crush the snail
 That crawls at evening in the public path,
 But he that has humanity, forewarned,
 Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.
 The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,
 And charged perhaps with venom, that intrudes
 A visitor unwelcome into scenes
 Sacred to neatness and repose, th' alcove,
 The chamber, or refectory, may die.
 A necessary act incurs no blame.
 Not so when held within their proper bounds
 And guiltless of offence, they range the air,
 Or take their pastime in the spacious field.
 There they are privileged. And he that hunts
 Or harms them there, is guilty of a wrong,
 Disturbs th' oeconomy of nature's realm,
 Who when she form'd, designed them an abode.
 The sum is this ; if man's convenience, health,

Or

Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
 Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs,
 Else they are all—the meanest things that are,
 As free to live and to enjoy that life,
 As God was free to form them at the first,
 Who in his sov'reign wisdom made them all.
 Ye therefore who love mercy, teach your sons
 To love it too. The spring-time of our years
 Is soon dishonour'd and defiled in most
 By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand
 To check them. But alas! none sooner shoots,
 If unrestrain'd, into luxuriant growth,
 Than cruelty, most devilish of them all,
 Mercy to him that shows it, is the rule
 And righteous limitation of its act
 By which heav'n moves in pard'ning guilty man;
 And he that shows none, being ripe in years,
 And conscious of the out'rage he commits
 Shall seek it, and not find it in his turn.

Distinguish

S 3

Distinguish'd much by reason, and still more
 By our capacity of grace divine,
 From creatures that exist but for our sake,
 Which having served us, perish, we are held
 Accountable, and God, some future day,
 Will reckon with us roundly for th' abuse
 Of what he deems no mean or trivial trust.
 Superior as we are, they yet depend
 Not more on human help, than we on theirs.
 Their strength, or speed, or vigilance, were giv'n
 In aid of our defects. In some are found
 Such teachable and apprehensive parts,
 That man's attainments in his own concerns
 Match'd with th' expertness of the brutes in theirs,
 Are oft-times vanquish'd and thrown far behind.
 Some show that nice sagacity of smell,
 And read with such discernment, in the port
 And figure of the man, his secret aim,
 That oft we owe our safety to a skill
 We could not teach, and must despair to learn,

But

But learn we might, if not too proud to stoop
 To quadrupede instructors, many a good
 And useful quality, and virtue too,
 Rarely exemplified among ourselves.
 Attachment never to be wean'd, or changed
 By any change of fortune, proof alike
 Against unkindness, absence, and neglect;
 Fidelity, that neither bribe nor threat
 Can move or warp, and gratitude for small
 And trivial favors, lasting as the life,
 And glist'ning even in the dying eye.

Man praises man. Desert in arts or arms
 Wins public honor; and ten thousand fit
 Patiently present at a sacred song,
 Commemoration-mad; content to hear
 (Oh wonderful effect of music's pow'r!)
 Messiah's eulogy, for Handel's sake.
 But less, methinks, than sacrilege might serve—
 (For was it less? What heathen would have dared

To strip Jove's statue of his oaken wreath
 And hang it up in honor of a man!)
 Much less might serve, when all that we design
 Is but to gratify an itching ear,
 And give the day to a musician's praise.
 Remember Handel? who that was not born
 Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
 Or can, the more than Homer of his age?
 Yes—we remember him. And while we praise
 A talent so divine, remember too
 That His most holy book from whom it came
 Was never meant, was never used before
 To buckram out the mem'ry of a man.
 But hush!—the muse perhaps is too severe,
 And with a gravity beyond the size
 And measure of th' offence, rebukes a deed
 Less impious than absurd, and owing more
 To want of judgment than to wrong design,
 So in the chapel of old Ely House,
 When wand'ring Charles, who meant to be the third,
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Had fled from William, and the news was fresh,
 The simple clerk but loyal, did announce,
 And eke did rear right merrily, two staves,
 Sung to the praise and glory of King George.
 —Man praises man, and Garrick's mem'ry next,
 When time hath somewhat mellow'd it, and made
 The idol of our worship while he lived,
 The God of our idolatry once more,
 Shall have its altar ; and the world shall go
 In pilgrimage to bow before his shrine,
 The theatre too small, shall suffocate
 Its squeezed contents, and more than it admits
 Shall sigh at their exclusion, and return
 Ungratified. For there some noble lord
 Shall stuff his shoulders with king Richard's bunch,
 Or wrap himself in Hamlet's inky cloak,
 And strut, and storm and straddle, stamp and stare,
 To show the world how Garrick did not act,
 For Garrick was a worshipper himself ;
 He drew the Liturgy, and framed the rites

And

e third,
 Had

And solemn ceremonial of the day,
 And call'd the world to worship on the banks
 Of Avon famed in song. Ah pleasant proof!
 That piety has still in human hearts
 Some place, a spark or two not yet extinct.
 The mulb'ry tree was hung with blooming wreaths,
 The mulb'ry tree stood center of the dance,
 The mulb'ry tree was hymn'd with dulcet airs,
 And from his touchwood trunk, the mulb'ry tree
 Supplied such relics, as devotion holds
 Still sacred, and preserves with pious care.
 So 'twas an hallow'd time. Decorum reign'd,
 And mirth without offence. No few return'd
 Doubtless much edified, and all refreshed.
 —Man praises man. The rabble all alive,
 From tipling-benches, cellars, stalls, and styes,
 Swarm in the streets. The statesman of the day,
 A pompous and slow-moving pageant comes.
 Some shout him, and some hang upon his car
 To gaze in's eyes and bless him. Maidens wave
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Their kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy,
 While others not so satisfied unhorse
 The gilded equipage, and turning loose
 His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve.
 Why? what has charm'd them? Hath he saved the state?
 No. Doth he purpose its salvation? No,
 Inchanting novelty, that moon at full,
 That finds out ev'ry crevice of the head
 That is not found and perfect, hath in theirs
 Wrought this disturbance. But the wane is near,
 And his own cattle must suffice him soon,
 Thus idly do we waste the breath of praise,
 And dedicate a tribute, in its use
 And just direction, sacred, to a thing
 Doomed to the dust, or lodged already there.
 Encomium in old time was poet's work;
 But poets having lavishly long since
 Exhausted all materials of the art,
 The task now falls into the public hand.
 And I, contented with an humble theme,

Have

Have poured my stream of panegyric down
 The vale of nature, where it creeps and winds
 Among her lovely works, with a secure
 And unambitious course, reflecting clear
 If not the virtues yet the worth of brutes,
 And I am recompensed, and deem the toils
 Of poetry not lost, if verse of mine
 May stand between an animal and woe,
 And teach one tyrant pity for his drudge,

The groans of nature in this nether world
 Which heav'n has heard for ages, have an end,
 Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung
 Whose fire was kindled at the prophets lamp,
 The time of rest, the promised sabbath comes,
 Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh
 Fulfilled their tardy and disastrous course
 Over a sinful world. And what remains
 Of this tempestuous state of human things,
 Is merely as the working of a sea

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Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest.
 For he whose car the winds are, and the clouds
 The dust that waits upon his fultry march
 When sin hath moved him, and his wrath is hot,
 Shall visit earth in mercy; shall descend
 Propitious, in his chariot paved with love,
 And what his storms have blasted and defaced
 For man's revolt, shall with a smile repair.

Sweet is the harp of prophecy. Too sweet
 Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch;
 Nor can the wonders it records, be fung
 To meaner music, and not suffer loss.
 But when a poet, or when one like me,
 Happy to rove among poetic flow'rs
 Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last
 On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,
 Such is the impulse and the spur he feels
 To give it praise proportioned to its worth,

That

Before

That not t' attempt it, arduous as he deems
The labor, were a talk more arduous still.

Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! which who can see
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?
Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
And clothe all climes with beauty; the reproach
Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field
Laughs with abundance, and the land once lean,
Or fertile only in its own disgrace,
Exults to see its thifty curse repealed.
The various seasons woven into one,
And that one season an eternal spring,
The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence
For there is none to covet, all are full.
The lion and the libbard and the bear
Graze with the fearless flocks. All bask at noon
Together, or all gambol in the shade

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Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.

Antipathies are none. No foe to man

Lurks in the serpent now. The mother sees

And smiles to see her infant's playful hand

Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,

To stroak his azure neck, or to receive

The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.

All creatures worship man, and all mankind

One Lord, one Father. Error has no place;

That creeping pestilence is driv'n away,

The breath of heav'n has chafed it. In the heart

No passion touches a discordant string,

But all is harmony and love. Disease

Is not. The pure and uncontaminate blood

Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age.

One song employs all nations, and all cry

“Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us”

The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks

Shout to each other, and the mountain tops

From distant mountains catch the flying joy,

Till

'Till nation after nation taught the strain,
 Earth rolls the rapturous Hofanna round,
 Behold the measure of the promise filled,
 See Salem built, the labour of a God!
 Bright as a sun the sacred city shines;
 All kingdoms and all princes of the earth
 Flock to that light; the glory of all lands
 Flows into her, unbounded is her joy
 And endless her encrease. Thy rams are there
 * Nebaioth, and the flocks of Kedar there;
 The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,
 And Saba's spicey groves pay tribute there.
 Praise is in all her gates. Upon her walls,
 And in her streets, and in her spacious courts
 Is heard salvation. Eastern Java there
 Kneels with the native of the farthest West,

* Nebaioth and Kedar the sons of Ishmael and progenitors of
 the Arabs, in the prophetic scripture here alluded to, may be
 reasonably considered as representatives of the Gentiles at large.

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And Æthiopia spreads abroad the hand
 And worships. Her report has travell'd forth
 Into all lands. From every clime they come
 To see thy beauty and to share thy joy
 O Sion ! an assembly such as earth
 Saw never, such as heav'n stoops down to see,

Thus heav'n-ward all things tend. For all were once
 Perfect, and all must be at length restored.

So God has greatly purposed; who would else
 In his dishonoured works himself endure
 Dishonor, and be wrong'd without redress.

Haste then, and wheel away a shatter'd world
 Ye slow-revolving seasons ! we would see,

(A sight to which our eyes are strangers yet)

A world that does not dread and hate his laws,
 And suffer for its crime. Would learn how fair

The creature is that God pronounces good,

How pleasant in itself what pleases him.

Here ev'ry drop of honey hides a sting,

Worms wind themselves into our sweetest flow'rs,

T

And

And ev'n the joy that haply some poor heart
 Derives from heav'n, pure as the fountain is
 Is sullied in the stream; taking a taint
 From touch of human lips, at best impure.
 Oh for a world in principle as chaste
 As this is gross and selfish! over which
 Custom and préjudice shall bear no sway
 That govern all things here, should'ring aside
 The meek and modest truth, and forcing her
 To seek a refuge from the tongue of strife
 In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men.
 Where violence shall never lift the sword,
 Nor cunning justify the proud man's wrong,
 Leaving the poor no remedy but tears.
 Where he that fills an office, shall esteem
 Th' occasion it presents of doing good
 More than the perquisite. Where law shall speak
 Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts
 And equity; not jealous more to guard
 A worthless form, than to decide aright.

Where

Where fashion shall not sanctify abuse,
 Nor smooth good-breeding (supplemental grace)
 With lean performance ape the work of love.

Come then, and added to thy many crowns
 Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
 Thou who alone art worthy! it was thine
 By antient covenant 'ere nature's birth,
 And thou hast made it thine by purchase since,
 And overpaid its value with thy blood.
 Thy faints proclaim thee king; and in their hearts
 Thy title is engraven with a pen
 Dipt in the fountain of eternal love.
 Thy faints proclaim thee king; and thy delay
 Gives courage to their foes, who, could they see
 The dawn of thy last advent long-desired,
 Would creep into the bowels of the hills,
 And flee for safety to the falling rocks.
 The very spirit of the world is tired
 Of its own taunting question ask'd so long,

T 2

" Where

Where

“ Where is the promise of your Lord’s approach ?”

The infidel has shot his bolts away,

’Till his exhausted quiver yielding none,

He gleans the blunted shafts that have recoiled,

And aims them at the shield of truth again.

The veil is rent, rent too by priestly hands,

That hides divinity from mortal eyes,

And all the mysteries to faith propos’d

Insulted and traduced, are cast aside

As useless, to the moles and to the bats.

They now are deem’d the faithful and are praised,

Who constant only in rejecting thee,

Deny thy Godhead with a martyr’s zeal,

And quit their office for their errors sake.

Blind and in love with darkness ! yet ev’n these

Worthy, compared with sycophants, who knee

Thy name, adoring, and then preach thee man,

So fares thy church. But how thy church may fare

The world takes little thought ; who will may preach,

And what they will. All pastors are alike

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To wand'ring sheep, resolved to follow none,
 Two gods divide them all, pleasure and gain,
 For these they live, they sacrifice to these,
 And in their service wage perpetual war
 With conscience and with thee. Lust in their hearts,
 And mischief in their hands, they roam the earth
 To prey upon each other; stubborn, fierce,
 High-minded, foaming out their own disgrace.
 Thy prophets speak of such; and noting down
 The features of the last degen'rate times,
 Exhibit ev'ry lineament of these.
 Come then, and added to thy many crowns
 Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,
 Due to thy last and most effectual work,
 Thy word fulfilled, the conquest of a world.

He is the happy man, whose life ev'n now
 Shows somewhat of that happier life to come.
 Who doomed to an obscure but tranquil state
 Is pleased with it, and were he free to chose,

Would make his fate his choice. Whom peace, the fruit
 Of virtue, and whom virtue, fruit of faith,
 Prepare for happiness; bespeak him one
 Content indeed to sojourn while he must
 Below the skies, but having there his home,
 The world o'erlooks him in her busy search,
 Of objects more illustrious in her view;
 And occupied as earnestly as she
 Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the world.
 She scorns his pleasures, for she knows them not;
 He seeks not hers, for he has proved them vain.
 He cannot skim the ground like summer birds
 Pursuing gilded flies, and such he deems
 Her honors, her emoluments, her joys.
 Therefore in contemplation is his bliss,
 Whose pow'r is such, that whom she lifts from earth
 She makes familiar with a heav'n unseen,
 And shows him glories yet to be revealed,
 Not slothful he, though seeming unemployed,
 And censured oft as uselefs. Stillest streams

Oft water fairest meadows, and the bird
 That flutters least, is longest on the wing.
 Ask him indeed, what trophies he has raised,
 Or what atchievements of immortal fame
 He purposes, and he shall answer—none,
 His warfare is within. There unfatigued
 His fervent spirit labors. There he fights,
 And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself,
 And never-with'ring wreaths, compared with which
 The laurels that a Cæsar reaps are weeds,
 Perhaps the self-approving haughty world
 That as she sweeps him with her whistling silks
 Scarce deigns to notice him, or if she see
 Deems him a cypher in the works of God,
 Receives advantage from his noiseless hours
 Of which she little dreams. Perhaps she owes
 Her sunshine and her rain, her blooming spring
 And plenteous harvest, to the pray'r he makes,
 When Isaac like, the solitary faint
 Walks forth to meditate at even-tide,

And think on her, who thinks not for herself.
 Forgive him then, thou buffler in concerns
 Of little worth, and idler in the best,
 If author of no mischief and some good,
 He seek his proper happiness by means
 That may advance, but cannot hinder thine.
 Nor though he tread the secret path of life,
 Engage no notice, and enjoy much ease,
 Account him an incumbrance on the state,
 Receiving benefits, and rend'ring none.
 His sphere though humble, if that humble sphere
 Shine with his fair example, and though small
 His influence, if that influence all be spent
 In soothing sorrow and in quenching strife,
 In aiding helpless indigence, in works
 From which at least a grateful few derive
 Some taste of comfort in a world of woe,
 Then let the supercilious great confess
 He serves his country; recompenses well
 The state beneath the shadow of whose vine

He sits secure, and in the scale of life
 Holds no ignoble, though a slighted place,
 The man whose virtues are more felt than seen,
 Must drop indeed the hope of public praise,
 But he may boast what few that win it can,
 That if his country stand not by his skill,
 At least his follies have not wrought her fall,
 Polite refinement offers him in vain
 Her golden tube, through which a sensual world
 Draws gross impurity, and likes it well,
 The neat conveyance hiding all th' offence.
 Not that he peevishly rejects a mode
 Because that world adopts it, If it bear
 The stamp and clear impression of good sense,
 And be not costly more than of true worth,
 He puts it on, and for decorum sake
 Can wear it e'en as gracefully as she.
 She judges of refinement by the eye,
 He by the test of conscience, and a heart
 Not soon deceived; aware that what is base

No

No polish can make sterling, and that vice
 Though well perfumed and elegantly dress'd,
 Like an unburied carcase trick'd with flow'rs
 Is but a garnish'd nuisance, fitter far
 For cleanly riddance than for fair attire.
 So life glides smoothly and by stealth away,
 More golden than that age of fabled gold
 Renown'd in ancient song; not vex'd with care
 Or stained with guilt, beneficent, approved
 Of God and man, and peaceful in its end,
 So glide my life away! and so at last
 My share of duties decently fulfilled,
 May some disease, not tardy to perform
 Its destin'd office, yet with gentle stroke,
 Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat
 Beneath the turf that I have often trod.
 It shall not grieve me, then, that once when called
 To dress a Sofa with the flow'rs of verse,
 I play'd awhile, obedient to the fair
 With that light task, but soon to please her more

Whom

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Whom flow'rs alone I knew would little please,
 Let fall th' unfinish'd wreath, and roved for fruit.
 Roved far and gather'd much. Some harsh, 'tis true,
 Pick'd from the thorns and briars of reproof,
 But wholesome, well-digested. Grateful some
 To palates that can taste immortal truth,
 Insipid else, and sure to be despis'd.
 But all is in his hand whose praise I seek.
 In vain the poet sings, and the world hears,
 If he regard not, though divine the theme.
 'Tis not in artful measures, in the chime
 And idle tinkling of a minstrel's lyre
 To charm his ear, whose eye is on the heart.
 Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,
 Whose approbation—prosper even mine.