

Against ILL-NATURE.

I.

OFSPRING of folly and of pride,
 To all that's odious, all that's base allied;
 Nurs'd up by vice, by pravity misled,
 By pedant affectation taught and bred;
 Away, thou hideous hell-born spright,
 Go, with thy looks of dark design,
 Sullen, sour, and saturnine;
 Fly to some gloomy shade, nor blot the goodly light.
 Thy planet was remote, when I was born;
 'Twas Mercury that rul'd my natal morn,
 What time the sun exerts his genial ray,
 And ripens for enjoyment every growing day;
 When to exist is but to love and sing,
 And sprightly Aries smiles upon the spring.

II.

There in yon lonesome heath,
 Which Flora, or Sylvanus never knew,
 Where never vegetable drank the dew,
 Or beast, or fowl attempts to breathe;
 Where Nature's pencil has no colours laid;
 But all is blank, and universal shade;
 Contrast to figure, motion, life and light,
 There may'st thou vent thy spight,
 For ever cursing, and for ever curs'd,
 Of all th' infernal crew the worst;

The worst in genius, measure and degree;
For envy, hatred, malice, are but parts of thee.

III.

Or woud'st thou change the scene, and quit thy den,
Behold the heav'n-deserted fen,
Where spleen, by vapours dense begot and bred,
Hardness of heart, and heaviness of head,
Have rais'd their darksome walls, and plac'd their thorny
bed;

There may'st thou all thy bitterness unload,
There may'st thou croak, in concert with the toad,
With thee the hollow howling winds shall join,
Nor shall the bittern her base throat deny,
The querulous frogs shall mix their dirge with thine,
Th' ear-piercing hern, and plover screaming high,
While million humming gnats fit æstrum shall supply.

IV.

Away---away---behold an hideous band
An herd of all thy minions are at hand,
Suspicion first with jealous caution stalks,
And ever looks around her as she walks,
With bibulous ear imperfect sounds to catch,
And prompt to listen at her neighbours latch.
Next Scandal's meagre shade,
Foe to the virgins, and the poet's fame,
A wither'd, time-deflow'ed old maid,
That ne'er enjoy'd love's ever sacred flame.

Hypo-

Hypocrisy succeeds with faint-like look,
And elevates her hands and plods upon her book.
Next comes illiberal scrambling Avarice,
Then Vanity and Affectation nice---
See, she salutes her shadow with a bow
As in short Gallic trips she minces by,
Starting antipathy is in her eye,
And squeamishly she knits her scornful brow.
To thee, Ill-Nature, all the numerous group
With lowly reverence stoop---
They wait thy call, and mourn thy long delay,
Away--thou art infectious--haste away.