



A NIGHT-PIECE on DEATH.

BY the blue Tapers trembling Light,
 No more I waste the wakeful Night,

Intent with endless view to pore

The Schoolmen and the Sages o'er :

Their Books from Wisdom widely stray,

Or point at best the longest Way.

I'll seek a readier Path, and go

Where Wisdom's surely taught *below*.

How deep yon Azure dies the Sky !

Where Orbs of Gold unnumber'd lye,

While

While thro' their Ranks in silver pride
 The nether Crescent seems to glide.
 The slumb'ring Breeze forgets to breathe,
 The Lake is smooth and clear beneath,
 Where once again the spangled Show
 Descends to meet our Eyes below.
 The Grounds which on the right aspire,
 In dimness from the View retire :
 The Left presents a Place of Graves,
 Whose Wall the silent Water laves.
 That Steeple guides thy doubtful fight
 Among the livid gleams of Night,
 There pass with melancholy State,
 By all the solemn Heaps of Fate,
 And think, as softly-fad you tread
 Above the venerable Dead,
Time was, like thee they Life possess,
And Time shall be, that thou shalt Rest.

Those

Those Graves, with bending Oser bound,
That nameless heave the crumbled Ground,
Quick to the glancing Thought disclose
Where *Toil* and *Poverty* repose.

The flat smooth Stones that bear a Name,
The Chissels slender help to Fame,
(Which e'er our Sett of Friends decay
Their frequent Steps may wear away.)
A middle Race of Mortals own,
Men, half ambitious, all unknown.

The Marble Tombs that rise on high,
Whose Dead in vaulted Arches lye,
Whose Pillars swell with sculptur'd Stones,
Arms, Angels, Epitaphs and Bones,

These

These (all the poor Remains of State)
 Adorn the *Rich*, or praise the *Great*;
 Who while on Earth in Fame they live,
 Are senseless of the Fame they give.

Ha! while I gaze, pale *Cynthia* fades,
 The bursting Earth unveils the Shades!
 All flow, and wan, and wrap'd with Shrouds,
 They rise in visionary Crouds,
 And all with sober Accent cry,
Think, Mortal, what it is to dye,

Now from yon black and fun'ral Yew,
 That bathes the Charnel House with Dew,
 Methinks I hear a *Voice* begin;
 (Ye Ravens, cease your croaking Din,
 Ye tolling Clocks, no Time resound
 O'er the long Lake and midnight Ground)

It sends a Peal of hollow Groans,
Thus speaking from among the Bones.

When Men my Scythe and Darts supply,
How great a *King of Fears* am I!

They view me like the last of Things:

They make, and then they dread, my Stings.

Fools! if you less provok'd your Fears,

No more my Spectre-Form appears.

Death's but a Path that must be trod,

If Man wou'd ever pass to God:

A Port of Calms, a State of Ease

From the rough Rage of swelling Seas.

Why then thy flowing sable Stoles;

Deep pendent Cypres, mourning Poles;

Loose Scarfs to fall athwart thy Weeds,

Long Palls, drawn Herfes, cover'd Steeds,

And

And Plumes of black, that as they tread,
Nod o'er the 'Scutcheons of the Dead?

Nor can the parted Body know,
Nor wants the Soul, these Forms of Woe:
As Men who long in Prison dwell,
With Lamps that glimmer round the Cell,
When e'er their suffering Years are run,
Spring forth to greet the glitt'ring Sun:
Such Joy, tho' far transcending Sense,
Have pious Souls at parting hence.
On Earth, and in the Body plac't,
A few, and evil Years, they waft:
But when their Chains are cast aside,
See the glad Scene unfolding wide,
Clap the glad Wing and tow'r away,
And mingle with the Blaze of Day.