

ELEGY,

Written on the

PLAIN OF FONTENOY.

CHILL blows the blast, and Twilight's dewy hand
Draws in the West her dusky veil away ;
A deeper shadow steals along the land,
And NATURE muses at the DEATH of DAY !

Near this bleak Waste no friendly mansion rears
Its walls, where Mirth, and social joys resound,
But each sad object melts the soul to tears,
While Horror treads the scatter'd bones around.

As thus, alone and comfortless I roam,
Wet with the drizzling show'r, I sigh sincere ;
I cast a fond look tow'rds my native home,
And think what valiant BRITONS perish'd here.

Yes, the time was, nor very far the date,
When carnage here her crimson toil began ;
When Nations' Standards wav'd in threat'ning state,
And Man the murd'rer met the murd'rer Man.

FOR WAR is MURDER, tho' the voice of Kings
Has styl'd it Justice, styl'd it Glory too!
Yet from worst motives, fierce Ambition springs,
And there, fix'd Prejudice is all we view!

But sure, 'tis Heaven's immutable decree,
For thousands ev'ry age in fight to fall;
Some NAT'RAL CAUSE prevails, we cannot see,
And that is FATE, which we *Ambition* call.

O let th' aspiring Warrior think with grief,
That as produc'd by CHYMIC art refin'd;—
So glitt'ring CONQUEST, from the *laurel leaf*
Extracts a GEN'RAL POISON for Mankind.

Here let him wander at the midnight hour,
These morbid rains, these gelid gales to meet;
And mourn, like me, the ravages of Pow'r!
And feel, like me, that Vict'ry is defeat!

Nor deem, ye vain! that e'er I mean to swell
My feeble Verse with many a sounding Name;
Of such, the mercenary Bard may tell,
And call such dreary desolation, Fame.

The genuine Muse removes the thin disguise
That cheats the World, whene'er she deigns to sing;
And full as meritorious to her eyes
Seems the Poor Soldier, as the Mighty King!

Alike I shun in labour'd strain to show,
 How BRITAIN more than triumph'd, tho' she fled,
 Where LOUIS stood, where stalk'd the column slow ;
 I turn from these, and DWELL UPON THE DEAD.

Yet much my beating breast respects the brave ;
 Too well I love them, not to mourn their fate,
 Why should they seek for greatness in the grave ?
 Their hearts are noble—and in life they're great.

Nor think 'tis but in War the Brave excell,—
 TO VALOUR EV'RY VIRTUE IS ALLIED !
 Here faithful friendship 'mid the Battle fell,
 And Love, true Love, in bitter anguish died.

Alas ! the solemn slaughter I retrace,
 That checks life's current circling thro' my veins,
 Bath'd in moist sorrow, many a beauteous face,
 And gave a grief, perhaps, that still remains.

I can no more—an agony too keen
 Absorbs my senses, and my mind subdues,
 Hard were that heart which here could beat serene,
 Or the just tribute of a pang refuse.

But lo ! thro' yonder op'ning clouds afar
 Shoots the bright PLANET's sanguinary ray
 That bears thy name, FICTITIOUS LORD OF WAR !
 And with red lustre guides my lonely way.

Then FONTENOY, farewell! Yet much I fear,
(Wherever chance my course compells) to find
Discord and Blood—the thrilling sounds I hear,
“ The noise of battle hurtles in the wind.”

From barb'rous *Turkey* to *Britannia's* shore,
Opposing int'rests into rage increase ;
Destruction rears her sceptre, tumults roar,
Ah! where shall hapless man repose in peace ?

DELLA CRUSCA.
