

VERSES WRITTEN IN SICKNESS.

December, 1804.

O THOU, whom Folly's votaries slight,
Domestic Love! assuasive power!
Life's ruby gem, which sheds its light
Through age and sorrow's darkest hour,

Sweeter than Pleasure's syren lay,
Brighter than Passion's fevered dream!
Still round my pillow soothing stay,
Still spread thy kindly lambent beam.

Alas! for him whose youth has bowed
Beneath the oppressive hand of pain;
Whose claim to pity disallowed
Bids him the unheeded groan restrain.

Alas! for him who droops like me,
Who mourns life's faded vigour flown,
But finds no soothing sympathy,
No tender cares his loss atone.

For him no wakeful eye of love
Resists the slumbers health would shed,
With kind assistance prompt to move,
And gently prop the aching head:

With delicate attention paid
In hope to minister relief,
He sees no sacrifices made;
He sees no Mother's anxious grief!

But I, poor sufferer, doomed in vain
To woo the health which Heaven denied,
Though nights of horror, days of pain
The baffled opiate's force deride,

Yet well I know, and grateful feel,
How much can lenient kindness do,
From anguish half its darts to steal,
And faded hope's sick smile renew.

Oh! how consoling is the eye
Of the dear friend that shares our woes!
Oh! what relief those cares supply,
Which watchful, active love bestows!

And these are mine!—Shall I then dare
To murmur at so mild a lot?
Nor dwell on comforts still my share
With thankful and contented thought?

Though destined to the couch of pain,
Though torn from pleasures once too dear,
Around that couch shall still remain
The love that every pain can cheer.

And o'er that couch, in fondness bent,
My languid glance shall grateful meet
The eye of love benevolent,
The tender smile, the tear most sweet.

And still for me affection's hand
Shall o'er that couch her roses shed
And woo from ease her popped band,
To twine around this throbbing head.

O pitying Heaven! these comforts spare,
Though age untimely chill gay hope;
May Love still crown the sufferer's prayer,
And gently smooth life's downward slope!