

PLEASURE.

Ah, syren Pleasure! when thy flattering strains
Lured me to seek thee through thy flowery plains,
Taught from thy sparkling cup full joys to sip,
And suck sweet poison from thy velvet lip,
Didst thou in opiate charms my virtue steep,
Was Reason silent, and did Conscience sleep?
How could I else enjoy thy faithless dreams,
And fancy day-light in thy meteor gleams;
Think all was happiness, that smiled like joy,
And with dear purchase seize each glittering toy?
Till roused at length, deep rankling in my heart,
I felt the latent anguish of thy dart!
Oh, let the young and innocent beware,
Nor think uninjured to approach thy snare!

Their surest conquest is, the foe to shun;
By fight infected, and by truce undone.
Secure, at distance let her shores be past,
Whose sight can poison, and whose breath can blast.
Contentment blooms not on her glowing ground,
And round her splendid shrine no peace is found.
If once enchanted by her magic charms,
They seek for bliss in Dissipation's arms:
If once they touch the limits of her realm,
Offended Principle resigns the helm,
Simplicity forsakes the treacherous shore,
And once discarded, she returns no more.
Thus the charmed mariner on every side
Of poisoned Senegal's ill-omened tide,
Eyes the rich carpet of the varied hue
And plains luxuriant opening to his view:
Now the steep banks with towering forests crowned,
Clothed to the margin of the sloping ground;
Where with full foliage bending o'er the waves,
Its verdant arms the spreading Mangrove laves;

And now smooth, level lawns of deeper green
Betray the richness of the untrodden scene:
Between the opening groves such prospects glow,
As Art with mimic hand can ne'er bestow,
While lavish Nature wild profusion yields,
And spreads, unbid, the rank uncultured fields;
Flings with fantastic hand in every gale
Ten thousand blossoms o'er each velvet vale,
And bids unclassed their fragrant beauties die
Far from the painter's hand or sage's eye.
From cloudless suns perpetual lustre streams,
And swarms of insects glisten in their beams.
Near and more near the heedless sailors steer,
Spread all their canvas, and no warnings hear.
See, on the edge of the clear liquid glass
The wondering beasts survey them as they pass,
And fearless bounding o'er their native green,
Adorn the landscape, and enrich the scene;
Ah, fatal scene! the deadly vapours rise,
And swift the vegetable poison flies,

Putrescence loads the rank infected ground,
 Deceitful calms deal subtle death around;
 Even as they gaze their vital powers decay,
 Their wasted health and vigour melt away;
 Till quite extinct the animating fire,
 Pale, ghastly victims, they at last expire.