

Metamorphoses

Ovid

TRANSLATED BY SIR SAMUEL GARTH, JOHN DRYDEN



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by Ovid

translated by Sir Samuel Garth, John Dryden

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739 S Hayes St, Moscow, Idaho 83843

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BOOK THE FIRST

The Creation of the World

Of bodies chang'd to various forms, I sing:
Ye Gods, from whom these miracles did spring,
Inspire my numbers with coelestial heat;
'Till I my long laborious work compleat:
And add perpetual tenour to my rhimes,
Deduc'd from Nature's birth, to Caesar's times.
Before the seas, and this terrestrial ball,
And Heav'n's high canopy, that covers all,
One was the face of Nature; if a face:
Rather a rude and indigested mass:
A lifeless lump, unfashion'd, and unfram'd,
Of jarring seeds; and justly Chaos nam'd.
No sun was lighted up, the world to view;
No moon did yet her blunted horns renew:
Nor yet was Earth suspended in the sky,
Nor pois'd, did on her own foundations lye:
Nor seas about the shores their arms had thrown;
But earth, and air, and water, were in one.
Thus air was void of light, and earth unstable,
And water's dark abyss unnavigable.
No certain form on any was imprest;
All were confus'd, and each disturb'd the rest.
For hot and cold were in one body fixt;
And soft with hard, and light with heavy mixt.

But God, or Nature, while they thus contend,
To these intestine discords put an end:
Then earth from air, and seas from earth were driv'n,
And grosser air sunk from aethereal Heav'n.
Thus disembroil'd, they take their proper place;

The next of kin, contiguously embrace;
And foes are sunder'd, by a larger space.
The force of fire ascended first on high,
And took its dwelling in the vaulted sky:
Then air succeeds, in lightness next to fire;
Whose atoms from unactive earth retire.
Earth sinks beneath, and draws a num'rous throng
Of pondrous, thick, unwieldy seeds along.
About her coasts, unruly waters roar;
And rising, on a ridge, insult the shore.
Thus when the God, whatever God was he,
Had form'd the whole, and made the parts agree,
That no unequal portions might be found,
He moulded Earth into a spacious round:
Then with a breath, he gave the winds to blow;
And bad the congregated waters flow.
He adds the running springs, and standing lakes;
And bounding banks for winding rivers makes.
Some part, in Earth are swallow'd up, the most
In ample oceans, disembogu'd, are lost.
He shades the woods, the vallies he restrains
With rocky mountains, and extends the plains.

And as five zones th' aethereal regions bind,
Five, correspondent, are to Earth assign'd:
The sun with rays, directly darting down,
Fires all beneath, and fries the middle zone:
The two beneath the distant poles, complain
Of endless winter, and perpetual rain.
Betwixt th' extreams, two happier climates hold
The temper that partakes of hot, and cold.
The fields of liquid air, inclosing all,
Surround the compass of this earthly ball:
The lighter parts lye next the fires above;
The grosser near the watry surface move:
Thick clouds are spread, and storms engender there,
And thunder's voice, which wretched mortals fear,
And winds that on their wings cold winter bear.
Nor were those blustering brethren left at large,
On seas, and shores, their fury to discharge:

Bound as they are, and circumscrib'd in place,
 They rend the world, resistless, where they pass;
 And mighty marks of mischief leave behind;
 Such is the rage of their tempestuous kind.
 First Eurus to the rising morn is sent
 (The regions of the balmy continent);
 And Eastern realms, where early Persians run,
 To greet the blest appearance of the sun.
 Westward, the wanton Zephyr wings his flight;
 Pleas'd with the remnants of departing light:
 Fierce Boreas, with his off-spring, issues forth
 T' invade the frozen waggon of the North.
 While frowning Auster seeks the Southern sphere;
 And rots, with endless rain, th' unwholsom year.

High o'er the clouds, and empty realms of wind,
 The God a clearer space for Heav'n design'd;
 Where fields of light, and liquid aether flow;
 Purg'd from the pondrous dregs of Earth below.

Scarce had the Pow'r distinguish'd these, when streight
 The stars, no longer overlaid with weight,
 Exert their heads, from underneath the mass;
 And upward shoot, and kindle as they pass,
 And with diffusive light adorn their heav'nly place.
 Then, every void of Nature to supply,
 With forms of Gods he fills the vacant sky:
 New herds of beasts he sends, the plains to share:
 New colonies of birds, to people air:
 And to their oozy beds, the finny fish repair.

A creature of a more exalted kind
 Was wanting yet, and then was Man design'd:
 Conscious of thought, of more capacious breast,
 For empire form'd, and fit to rule the rest:
 Whether with particles of heav'nly fire
 The God of Nature did his soul inspire,
 Or Earth, but new divided from the sky,
 And, pliant, still retain'd th' aetherial energy:
 Which wise Prometheus temper'd into paste,

And, mixt with living streams, the godlike image cast.

Thus, while the mute creation downward bend
Their sight, and to their earthly mother tend,
Man looks aloft; and with erected eyes
Beholds his own hereditary skies.
From such rude principles our form began;
And earth was metamorphos'd into Man.

The Golden Age

The golden age was first; when Man yet new,
No rule but uncorrupted reason knew:
And, with a native bent, did good pursue.
Unforc'd by punishment, un-aw'd by fear,
His words were simple, and his soul sincere;
Needless was written law, where none oppress:
The law of Man was written in his breast:
No suppliant crowds before the judge appear'd,
No court erected yet, nor cause was heard:
But all was safe, for conscience was their guard.
The mountain-trees in distant prospect please,
E're yet the pine descended to the seas:
E're sails were spread, new oceans to explore:
And happy mortals, unconcern'd for more,
Confin'd their wishes to their native shore.
No walls were yet; nor fence, nor mote, nor mound,
Nor drum was heard, nor trumpet's angry sound:
Nor swords were forg'd; but void of care and crime,
The soft creation slept away their time.
The teeming Earth, yet guiltless of the plough,
And unprovok'd, did fruitful stores allow:
Content with food, which Nature freely bred,
On wildings and on strawberries they fed;
Cornels and bramble-berries gave the rest,
And falling acorns furnish'd out a feast.
The flow'rs unsown, in fields and meadows reign'd:
And Western winds immortal spring maintain'd.
In following years, the bearded corn ensu'd
From Earth unask'd, nor was that Earth renew'd.
From veins of vallies, milk and nectar broke;

And honey sweating through the pores of oak.

The Silver Age

But when good Saturn, banish'd from above,
 Was driv'n to Hell, the world was under Jove.
 Succeeding times a silver age behold,
 Excelling brass, but more excell'd by gold.
 Then summer, autumn, winter did appear:
 And spring was but a season of the year.
 The sun his annual course obliquely made,
 Good days contracted, and enlarg'd the bad.
 Then air with sultry heats began to glow;
 The wings of winds were clogg'd with ice and snow;
 And shivering mortals, into houses driv'n,
 Sought shelter from th' inclemency of Heav'n.
 Those houses, then, were caves, or homely sheds;
 With twining oziars fenc'd; and moss their beds.
 Then ploughs, for seed, the fruitful furrows broke,
 And oxen labour'd first beneath the yoke.

The Brazen Age

To this came next in course, the brazen age:
 A warlike offspring, prompt to bloody rage,
 Not impious yet...

The Iron Age

Hard steel succeeded then:
 And stubborn as the metal, were the men.
 Truth, modesty, and shame, the world forsook:
 Fraud, avarice, and force, their places took.
 Then sails were spread, to every wind that blew.
 Raw were the sailors, and the depths were new:
 Trees, rudely hollow'd, did the waves sustain;
 E're ships in triumph plough'd the watry plain.

Then land-marks limited to each his right:
 For all before was common as the light.
 Nor was the ground alone requir'd to bear
 Her annual income to the crooked share,
 But greedy mortals, rummaging her store,
 Digg'd from her entrails first the precious oar;

Which next to Hell, the prudent Gods had laid;
And that alluring ill, to sight display'd.
Thus cursed steel, and more accursed gold,
Gave mischief birth, and made that mischief bold:
And double death did wretched Man invade,
By steel assaulted, and by gold betray'd,
Now (brandish'd weapons glittering in their hands)
Mankind is broken loose from moral bands;
No rights of hospitality remain:
The guest, by him who harbour'd him, is slain,
The son-in-law pursues the father's life;
The wife her husband murders, he the wife.
The step-dame poyson for the son prepares;
The son inquires into his father's years.
Faith flies, and piety in exile mourns;
And justice, here opprest, to Heav'n returns.

The Giants' War

Nor were the Gods themselves more safe above;
Against beleaguer'd Heav'n the giants move.
Hills pil'd on hills, on mountains mountains lie,
To make their mad approaches to the skie.
'Till Jove, no longer patient, took his time
T' avenge with thunder their audacious crime:
Red light'ning plaid along the firmament,
And their demolish'd works to pieces rent.
Sing'd with the flames, and with the bolts transfixt,
With native Earth, their blood the monsters mixt;
The blood, indu'd with animating heat,
Did in th' impregnant Earth new sons beget:
They, like the seed from which they sprung, accurst,
Against the Gods immortal hatred nurst,
An impious, arrogant, and cruel brood;
Expressing their original from blood.

Which when the king of Gods beheld from high
(Withal revolving in his memory,
What he himself had found on Earth of late,
Lycaon's guilt, and his inhumane treat),
He sigh'd; nor longer with his pity strove;

But kindled to a wrath becoming Jove:

Then call'd a general council of the Gods;
 Who summon'd, issue from their blest abodes,
 And fill th' assembly with a shining train.
 A way there is, in Heav'n's expanded plain,
 Which, when the skies are clear, is seen below,
 And mortals, by the name of Milky, know.
 The ground-work is of stars; through which the road
 Lyes open to the Thunderer's abode:
 The Gods of greater nations dwell around,
 And, on the right and left, the palace bound;
 The commons where they can: the nobler sort
 With winding-doors wide open, front the court.
 This place, as far as Earth with Heav'n may vie,
 I dare to call the Louvre of the skie.
 When all were plac'd, in seats distinctly known,
 And he, their father, had assum'd the throne,
 Upon his iv'ry sceptre first he leant,
 Then shook his head, that shook the firmament:
 Air, Earth, and seas, obey'd th' almighty nod;
 And, with a gen'ral fear, confess'd the God.
 At length, with indignation, thus he broke
 His awful silence, and the Pow'rs bespoke.

I was not more concern'd in that debate
 Of empire, when our universal state
 Was put to hazard, and the giant race
 Our captive skies were ready to imbrace:
 For tho' the foe was fierce, the seeds of all
 Rebellion, sprung from one original;
 Now, wheresoever ambient waters glide,
 All are corrupt, and all must be destroy'd.
 Let me this holy protestation make,
 By Hell, and Hell's inviolable lake,
 I try'd whatever in the godhead lay:
 But gangren'd members must be lopt away,
 Before the nobler parts are tainted to decay.
 There dwells below, a race of demi-gods,
 Of nymphs in waters, and of fawns in woods:

Who, tho' not worthy yet, in Heav'n to live,
Let 'em, at least, enjoy that Earth we give.
Can these be thought securely lodg'd below,
When I my self, who no superior know,
I, who have Heav'n and Earth at my command,
Have been attempted by Lycaon's hand?

At this a murmur through the synod went,
And with one voice they vote his punishment.
Thus, when conspiring traitors dar'd to doom
The fall of Caesar, and in him of Rome,
The nations trembled with a pious fear;
All anxious for their earthly Thunderer:
Nor was their care, o Caesar, less esteem'd
By thee, than that of Heav'n for Jove was deem'd:
Who with his hand, and voice, did first restrain
Their murmurs, then resum'd his speech again.
The Gods to silence were compos'd, and sate
With reverence, due to his superior state.

Cancel your pious cares; already he
Has paid his debt to justice, and to me.
Yet what his crimes, and what my judgments were,
Remains for me thus briefly to declare.
The clamours of this vile degenerate age,
The cries of orphans, and th' oppressor's rage,
Had reach'd the stars: I will descend, said I,
In hope to prove this loud complaint a lye.
Disguis'd in humane shape, I travell'd round
The world, and more than what I heard, I found.
O'er Maenalus I took my steepy way,
By caverns infamous for beasts of prey:
Then cross'd Cyllene, and the piny shade
More infamous, by curst Lycaon made:
Dark night had cover'd Heaven, and Earth, before
I enter'd his unhospitable door.
Just at my entrance, I display'd the sign
That somewhat was approaching of divine.
The prostrate people pray; the tyrant grins;
And, adding prophanation to his sins,

I'll try, said he, and if a God appear,
 To prove his deity shall cost him dear.
 'Twas late; the graceless wretch my death prepares,
 When I shou'd soundly sleep, opprest with cares:
 This dire experiment he chose, to prove
 If I were mortal, or undoubted Jove:
 But first he had resolv'd to taste my pow'r;
 Not long before, but in a luckless hour,
 Some legates, sent from the Molossian state,
 Were on a peaceful errand come to treat:
 Of these he murders one, he boils the flesh;
 And lays the mangled morsels in a dish:
 Some part he roasts; then serves it up, so drest,
 And bids me welcome to this humane feast.
 Mov'd with disdain, the table I o'er-turn'd;
 And with avenging flames, the palace burn'd.
 The tyrant in a fright, for shelter gains
 The neighb'ring fields, and scours along the plains.
 Howling he fled, and fain he wou'd have spoke;
 But humane voice his brutal tongue forsook.
 About his lips the gather'd foam he churns,
 And, breathing slaughters, still with rage he burns,
 But on the bleating flock his fury turns.
 His mantle, now his hide, with rugged hairs
 Cleaves to his back; a famish'd face he bears;
 His arms descend, his shoulders sink away
 To multiply his legs for chase of prey.
 He grows a wolf, his hoariness remains,
 And the same rage in other members reigns.
 His eyes still sparkle in a narr'wer space:
 His jaws retain the grin, and violence of his face

This was a single ruin, but not one
 Deserves so just a punishment alone.
 Mankind's a monster, and th' ungodly times
 Confed'rate into guilt, are sworn to crimes.
 All are alike involv'd in ill, and all
 Must by the same relentless fury fall.
 Thus ended he; the greater Gods assent;
 By clamours urging his severe intent;

The less fill up the cry for punishment.
Yet still with pity they remember Man;
And mourn as much as heav'nly spirits can.
They ask, when those were lost of humane birth,
What he wou'd do with all this waste of Earth:
If his dispeopl'd world he would resign
To beasts, a mute, and more ignoble line;
Neglected altars must no longer smoke,
If none were left to worship, and invoke.
To whom the Father of the Gods reply'd,
Lay that unnecessary fear aside:
Mine be the care, new people to provide.
I will from wondrous principles ordain
A race unlike the first, and try my skill again.

Already had he toss'd the flaming brand;
And roll'd the thunder in his spacious hand;
Preparing to discharge on seas and land:
But stopt, for fear, thus violently driv'n,
The sparks should catch his axle-tree of Heav'n.
Remembring in the fates, a time when fire
Shou'd to the battlements of Heaven aspire,
And all his blazing worlds above shou'd burn;
And all th' inferior globe to cinders turn.
His dire artill'ry thus dismiss, he bent
His thoughts to some securer punishment:
Concludes to pour a watry deluge down;
And what he durst not burn, resolves to drown.

The northern breath, that freezes floods, he binds;
With all the race of cloud-dispelling winds:
The south he loos'd, who night and horror brings;
And foggs are shaken from his flaggy wings.
From his divided beard two streams he pours,
His head, and rheumy eyes distill in show'rs,
With rain his robe, and heavy mantle flow:
And lazy mists are lowring on his brow;
Still as he swept along, with his clench'd fist
He squeez'd the clouds, th' imprison'd clouds resist:
The skies, from pole to pole, with peals resound;

And show'rs inlarg'd, come pouring on the ground.
 Then, clad in colours of a various dye,
 Junonian Iris breeds a new supply
 To feed the clouds: impetuous rain descends;
 The bearded corn beneath the burden bends:
 Defrauded clowns deplore their perish'd grain;
 And the long labours of the year are vain.

Nor from his patrimonial Heaven alone
 Is Jove content to pour his vengeance down;
 Aid from his brother of the seas he craves,
 To help him with auxiliary waves.
 The watry tyrant calls his brooks and floods,
 Who rowl from mossie caves (their moist abodes);
 And with perpetual urns his palace fill:
 To whom in brief, he thus imparts his will.

Small exhortation needs; your pow'rs employ:
 And this bad world, so Jove requires, destroy.
 Let loose the reins to all your watry store:
 Bear down the damms, and open ev'ry door.

The floods, by Nature enemies to land,
 And proudly swelling with their new command,
 Remove the living stones, that stopt their way,
 And gushing from their source, augment the sea.
 Then, with his mace, their monarch struck the ground;
 With inward trembling Earth receiv'd the wound;
 And rising streams a ready passage found.
 Th' expanded waters gather on the plain:
 They float the fields, and over-top the grain;
 Then rushing onwards, with a sweepy sway,
 Bear flocks, and folds, and lab'ring hinds away.
 Nor safe their dwellings were, for, sap'd by floods,
 Their houses fell upon their household Gods.
 The solid piles, too strongly built to fall,
 High o'er their heads, behold a watry wall:
 Now seas and Earth were in confusion lost;
 A world of waters, and without a coast.

One climbs a cliff; one in his boat is born:
And ploughs above, where late he sow'd his corn.
Others o'er chimney-tops and turrets row,
And drop their anchors on the meads below:
Or downward driv'n, they bruise the tender vine,
Or tost aloft, are knock'd against a pine.
And where of late the kids had cropt the grass,
The monsters of the deep now take their place.
Insulting Nereids on the cities ride,
And wond'ring dolphins o'er the palace glide.
On leaves, and masts of mighty oaks they brouze;
And their broad fins entangle in the boughs.
The frighted wolf now swims amongst the sheep;
The yellow lion wanders in the deep:
His rapid force no longer helps the boar:
The stag swims faster, than he ran before.
The fowls, long beating on their wings in vain,
Despair of land, and drop into the main.
Now hills, and vales no more distinction know;
And levell'd Nature lies oppress'd below.
The most of mortals perish in the flood:
The small remainder dies for want of food.

A mountain of stupendous height there stands
Betwixt th' Athenian and Boeotian lands,
The bound of fruitful fields, while fields they were,
But then a field of waters did appear:
Parnassus is its name; whose forky rise
Mounts thro' the clouds, and mates the lofty skies.
High on the summit of this dubious cliff,
Deucalion wafting, moor'd his little skiff.
He with his wife were only left behind
Of perish'd Man; they two were human kind.
The mountain nymphs, and Themis they adore,
And from her oracles relief implore.
The most upright of mortal men was he;
The most sincere, and holy woman, she.

When Jupiter, surveying Earth from high,
Beheld it in a lake of water lie,

That where so many millions lately liv'd,
 But two, the best of either sex, surviv'd;
 He loos'd the northern wind; fierce Boreas flies
 To puff away the clouds, and purge the skies:
 Serenely, while he blows, the vapours driv'n,
 Discover Heav'n to Earth, and Earth to Heav'n.
 The billows fall, while Neptune lays his mace
 On the rough sea, and smooths its furrow'd face.
 Already Triton, at his call, appears
 Above the waves; a Tyrian robe he wears;
 And in his hand a crooked trumpet bears.
 The sovereign bids him peaceful sounds inspire,
 And give the waves the signal to retire.
 His writhen shell he takes; whose narrow vent
 Grows by degrees into a large extent,
 Then gives it breath; the blast with doubling sound,
 Runs the wide circuit of the world around:
 The sun first heard it, in his early east,
 And met the rattling ecchos in the west.
 The waters, listning to the trumpet's roar,
 Obey the summons, and forsake the shore.

A thin circumference of land appears;
 And Earth, but not at once, her visage rears,
 And peeps upon the seas from upper grounds;
 The streams, but just contain'd within their bounds,
 By slow degrees into their channels crawl;
 And Earth increases, as the waters fall.
 In longer time the tops of trees appear,
 Which mud on their dishonour'd branches bear.

At length the world was all restor'd to view;
 But desolate, and of a sickly hue:
 Nature beheld her self, and stood aghast,
 A dismal desart, and a silent waste.

Which when Deucalion, with a piteous look
 Beheld, he wept, and thus to Pyrrha spoke:
 Oh wife, oh sister, oh of all thy kind
 The best, and only creature left behind,

By kindred, love, and now by dangers joyn'd;
Of multitudes, who breath'd the common air,
We two remain; a species in a pair:
The rest the seas have swallow'd; nor have we
Ev'n of this wretched life a certainty.
The clouds are still above; and, while I speak,
A second deluge o'er our heads may break.
Shou'd I be snatcht from hence, and thou remain,
Without relief, or partner of thy pain,
How cou'dst thou such a wretched life sustain?
Shou'd I be left, and thou be lost, the sea
That bury'd her I lov'd, shou'd bury me.
Oh cou'd our father his old arts inspire,
And make me heir of his informing fire,
That so I might abolisht Man retrieve,
And perisht people in new souls might live.
But Heav'n is pleas'd, nor ought we to complain,
That we, th' examples of mankind, remain.
He said; the careful couple joyn their tears:
And then invoke the Gods, with pious prayers.
Thus, in devotion having eas'd their grief,
From sacred oracles they seek relief;
And to Cephysus' brook their way pursue:
The stream was troubled, but the ford they knew;
With living waters, in the fountain bred,
They sprinkle first their garments, and their head,
Then took the way, which to the temple led.
The roofs were all defil'd with moss, and mire,
The desert altars void of solemn fire.
Before the gradual, prostrate they ador'd;
The pavement kiss'd; and thus the saint implor'd.

O righteous Themis, if the Pow'rs above
By pray'rs are bent to pity, and to love;
If humane miseries can move their mind;
If yet they can forgive, and yet be kind;
Tell how we may restore, by second birth,
Mankind, and people desolated Earth.
Then thus the gracious Goddess, nodding, said;
Depart, and with your vestments veil your head:

And stooping lowly down, with losen'd zones,
 Throw each behind your backs, your mighty mother's bones.
 Amaz'd the pair, and mute with wonder stand,
 'Till Pyrrha first refus'd the dire command.
 Forbid it Heav'n, said she, that I shou'd tear
 Those holy reliques from the sepulcher.
 They ponder'd the mysterious words again,
 For some new sense; and long they sought in vain:
 At length Deucalion clear'd his cloudy brow,
 And said, the dark Aenigma will allow
 A meaning, which, if well I understand,
 From sacrilege will free the God's command:
 This Earth our mighty mother is, the stones
 In her capacious body, are her bones:
 These we must cast behind. With hope, and fear,
 The woman did the new solution hear:
 The man diffides in his own augury,
 And doubts the Gods; yet both resolve to try.
 Descending from the mount, they first unbind
 Their vests, and veil'd, they cast the stones behind:
 The stones (a miracle to mortal view,
 But long tradition makes it pass for true)
 Did first the rigour of their kind expel,
 And suppl'd into softness, as they fell;
 Then swell'd, and swelling, by degrees grew warm;
 And took the rudiments of human form.
 Imperfect shapes: in marble such are seen,
 When the rude chizzel does the man begin;
 While yet the roughness of the stone remains,
 Without the rising muscles, and the veins.
 The sappy parts, and next resembling juice,
 Were turn'd to moisture, for the body's use:
 Supplying humours, blood, and nourishment;
 The rest, too solid to receive a bent,
 Converts to bones; and what was once a vein,
 Its former name and Nature did retain.
 By help of pow'r divine, in little space,
 What the man threw, assum'd a manly face;
 And what the wife, renew'd the female race.
 Hence we derive our nature; born to bear

Laborious life; and harden'd into care.

The rest of animals, from teeming Earth
Produc'd, in various forms receiv'd their birth.
The native moisture, in its close retreat,
Digested by the sun's aetherial heat,
As in a kindly womb, began to breed:
Then swell'd, and quicken'd by the vital seed.
And some in less, and some in longer space,
Were ripen'd into form, and took a sev'ral face.
Thus when the Nile from Pharian fields is fled,
And seeks, with ebbing tides, his ancient bed,
The fat manure with heav'nly fire is warm'd;
And crusted creatures, as in wombs, are form'd;
These, when they turn the glebe, the peasants find;
Some rude, and yet unfinish'd in their kind:
Short of their limbs, a lame imperfect birth:
One half alive; and one of lifeless earth.

For heat, and moisture, when in bodies join'd,
The temper that results from either kind
Conception makes; and fighting 'till they mix,
Their mingled atoms in each other fix.
Thus Nature's hand the genial bed prepares
With friendly discord, and with fruitful wars.

From hence the surface of the ground, with mud
And slime besmear'd (the faeces of the flood),
Receiv'd the rays of Heav'n: and sucking in
The seeds of heat, new creatures did begin:
Some were of sev'ral sorts produc'd before,
But of new monsters, Earth created more.
Unwillingly, but yet she brought to light
Thee, Python too, the wondring world to fright,
And the new nations, with so dire a sight:
So monstrous was his bulk, so large a space
Did his vast body, and long train embrace.
Whom Phoebus basking on a bank espy'd;
E're now the God his arrows had not try'd
But on the trembling deer, or mountain goat;

At this new quarry he prepares to shoot.
 Though ev'ry shaft took place, he spent the store
 Of his full quiver; and 'twas long before
 Th' expiring serpent wallow'd in his gore.
 Then, to preserve the fame of such a deed,
 For Python slain, he Pythian games decred.
 Where noble youths for mastership shou'd strive,
 To quoit, to run, and steeds, and chariots drive.
 The prize was fame: in witness of renown
 An oaken garland did the victor crown.
 The laurel was not yet for triumphs born;
 But every green alike by Phoebus worn,
 Did, with promiscuous grace, his flowing locks adorn.

The Transformation of Daphne into a Laurel

The first and fairest of his loves, was she
 Whom not blind fortune, but the dire decree
 Of angry Cupid forc'd him to desire:
 Daphne her name, and Peneus was her sire.
 Swell'd with the pride, that new success attends,
 He sees the stripling, while his bow he bends,
 And thus insults him: Thou lascivious boy,
 Are arms like these for children to employ?
 Know, such achievements are my proper claim;
 Due to my vigour, and unerring aim:
 Resistless are my shafts, and Python late
 In such a feather'd death, has found his fate.
 Take up the torch (and lay my weapons by),
 With that the feeble souls of lovers fry.
 To whom the son of Venus thus reply'd,
 Phoebus, thy shafts are sure on all beside,
 But mine of Phoebus, mine the fame shall be
 Of all thy conquests, when I conquer thee.

He said, and soaring, swiftly wing'd his flight:
 Nor stopt but on Parnassus' airy height.
 Two diff'rent shafts he from his quiver draws;
 One to repel desire, and one to cause.
 One shaft is pointed with refulgent gold:
 To bribe the love, and make the lover bold:

One blunt, and tipt with lead, whose base allay
Provokes disdain, and drives desire away.
The blunted bolt against the nymph he drest:
But with the sharp transfixt Apollo's breast.

Th' enamour'd deity pursues the chace;
The scornful damsel shuns his loath'd embrace:
In hunting beasts of prey, her youth employs;
And Phoebe rivals in her rural joys.
With naked neck she goes, and shoulders bare;
And with a fillet binds her flowing hair.
By many suitors sought, she mocks their pains,
And still her vow'd virginity maintains.
Impatient of a yoke, the name of bride
She shuns, and hates the joys, she never try'd.
On wilds, and woods, she fixes her desire:
Nor knows what youth, and kindly love, inspire.
Her father chides her oft: 'Thou ow'st, says he,
A husband to thy self, a son to me.
She, like a crime, abhors the nuptial bed:
She glows with blushes, and she hangs her head.
Then casting round his neck her tender arms,
Sooths him with blandishments, and filial charms:
Give me, my Lord, she said, to live, and die,
A spotless maid, without the marriage tye.
'Tis but a small request; I beg no more
Than what Diana's father gave before.
The good old sire was soften'd to consent;
But said her wish wou'd prove her punishment:
For so much youth, and so much beauty join'd,
Oppos'd the state, which her desires design'd.

The God of light, aspiring to her bed,
Hopes what he seeks, with flattering fancies fed;
And is, by his own oracles, mis-led.
And as in empty fields the stubble burns,
Or nightly travellers, when day returns,
Their useless torches on dry hedges throw,
That catch the flames, and kindle all the row;
So burns the God, consuming in desire,

And feeding in his breast a fruitless fire:
 Her well-turn'd neck he view'd (her neck was bare)
 And on her shoulders her dishevel'd hair;
 Oh were it comb'd, said he, with what a grace
 Wou'd every waving curl become her face!
 He view'd her eyes, like heav'nly lamps that shone,
 He view'd her lips, too sweet to view alone,
 Her taper fingers, and her panting breast;
 He praises all he sees, and for the rest
 Believes the beauties yet unseen are best:
 Swift as the wind, the damsel fled away,
 Nor did for these alluring speeches stay:
 Stay Nymph, he cry'd, I follow, not a foe.
 Thus from the lyon trips the trembling doe;
 Thus from the wolf the frighten'd lamb removes,
 And, from pursuing falcons, fearful doves;
 Thou shunn'st a God, and shunn'st a God, that loves.
 Ah, lest some thorn shou'd pierce thy tender foot,
 Or thou shou'dst fall in flying my pursuit!
 To sharp uneven ways thy steps decline;
 Abate thy speed, and I will bate of mine.
 Yet think from whom thou dost so rashly fly;
 Nor basely born, nor shepherd's swain am I.
 Perhaps thou know'st not my superior state;
 And from that ignorance proceeds thy hate.
 Me Claros, Delphi, Tenedos obey;
 These hands the Patareian scepter sway.
 The King of Gods begot me: what shall be,
 Or is, or ever was, in Fate, I see.
 Mine is th' invention of the charming lyre;
 Sweet notes, and heav'nly numbers, I inspire.
 Sure is my bow, unerring is my dart;
 But ah! more deadly his, who pierc'd my heart.
 Med'cine is mine; what herbs and simples grow
 In fields, and forrests, all their pow'rs I know;
 And am the great physician call'd, below.
 Alas that fields and forrests can afford.
 No remedies to heal their love-sick lord!
 To cure the pains of love, no plant avails:
 And his own physick, the physician falls.

She heard not half; so furiously she flies;
And on her ear th' imperfect accent dies,
Fear gave her wings; and as she fled, the wind
Increasing, spread her flowing hair behind;
And left her legs and thighs expos'd to view:
Which made the God more eager to pursue.
The God was young, and was too hotly bent
To lose his time in empty compliment:
But led by love, and fir'd with such a sight,
Impetuously pursu'd his near delight.

As when th' impatient greyhound slipt from far,
Bounds o'er the glebe to course the fearful hare,
She in her speed does all her safety lay;
And he with double speed pursues the prey;
O'er-runs her at the sitting turn, and licks
His chaps in vain, and blows upon the flix:
She scapes, and for the neighb'ring covert strives,
And gaining shelter, doubts if yet she lives:
If little things with great we may compare,
Such was the God, and such the flying fair,
She urg'd by fear, her feet did swiftly move,
But he more swiftly, who was urg'd by love.
He gathers ground upon her in the chace:
Now breathes upon her hair, with nearer pace;
And just is fast'ning on the wish'd embrace.
The nymph grew pale, and in a mortal fright,
Spent with the labour of so long a flight;
And now despairing, cast a mournful look
Upon the streams of her paternal brook;
Oh help, she cry'd, in this extreamest need!
If water Gods are deities indeed:
Gape Earth, and this unhappy wretch intomb;
Or change my form, whence all my sorrows come.
Scarce had she finish'd, when her feet she found
Benumb'd with cold, and fasten'd to the ground:
A filmy rind about her body grows;
Her hair to leaves, her arms extend to boughs:
The nymph is all into a lawrel gone;

The smoothness of her skin remains alone.
 Yet Phoebus loves her still, and casting round
 Her bole, his arms, some little warmth he found.
 The tree still panted in th' unfinish'd part:
 Not wholly vegetive, and heav'd her heart.
 He fixt his lips upon the trembling rind;
 It swerv'd aside, and his embrace declin'd.
 To whom the God, Because thou canst not be
 My mistress, I espouse thee for my tree:
 Be thou the prize of honour, and renown;
 The deathless poet, and the poem, crown.
 Thou shalt the Roman festivals adorn,
 And, after poets, be by victors worn.
 Thou shalt returning Caesar's triumph grace;
 When poms shall in a long procession pass.
 Wreath'd on the posts before his palace wait;
 And be the sacred guardian of the gate.
 Secure from thunder, and unharm'd by Jove,
 Unfading as th' immortal Pow'rs above:
 And as the locks of Phoebus are unshorn,
 So shall perpetual green thy boughs adorn.
 The grateful tree was pleas'd with what he said;
 And shook the shady honours of her head.

The Transformation of Io into a Heifer

An ancient forest in Thessalia grows;
 Which Tempe's pleasing valley does inclose:
 Through this the rapid Peneus take his course;
 From Pindus rolling with impetuous force;
 Mists from the river's mighty fall arise:
 And deadly damps inclose the cloudy skies:
 Perpetual fogs are hanging o'er the wood;
 And sounds of waters deaf the neighbourhood.
 Deep, in a rocky cave, he makes abode
 (A mansion proper for a mourning God).
 Here he gives audience; issuing out decrees
 To rivers, his dependant deities.
 On this occasion hither they resort;
 To pay their homage, and to make their court.
 All doubtful, whether to congratulate

His daughter's honour, or lament her fate.
Sperchaeus, crown'd with poplar, first appears;
Then old Apidanus came crown'd with years:
Enipeus turbulent, Amphrysos tame;
And Aeas last with lagging waters came.
Then, of his kindred brooks, a num'rous throng
Condole his loss; and bring their urns along.
Not one was wanting of the wat'ry train,
That fill'd his flood, or mingled with the main:
But Inachus, who in his cave, alone,
Wept not another's losses, but his own,
For his dear Io, whether stray'd, or dead,
To him uncertain, doubtful tears he shed.
He sought her through the world; but sought in vain;
And no where finding, rather fear'd her slain.

Her, just returning from her father's brook,
Jove had beheld, with a desiring look:
And, Oh fair daughter of the flood, he said,
Worthy alone of Jove's imperial bed,
Happy whoever shall those charms possess;
The king of Gods (nor is thy lover less)
Invites thee to yon cooler shades; to shun
The scorching rays of the meridian sun.
Nor shalt thou tempt the dangers of the grove
Alone, without a guide; thy guide is Jove.
No puny Pow'r, but he whose high command
Is unconfi'd, who rules the seas and land;
And tempers thunder in his awful hand,
Oh fly not: for she fled from his embrace
O'er Lerna's pastures: he pursu'd the chace
Along the shades of the Lyrcaean plain;
At length the God, who never asks in vain,
Involv'd with vapours, imitating night,
Both Air, and Earth; and then suppress'd her flight,
And mingling force with love, enjoy'd the full delight.
Mean-time the jealous Juno, from on high,
Survey'd the fruitful fields of Arcady;
And wonder'd that the mist shou'd over-run
The face of day-light, and obscure the sun.

No nat'ral cause she found, from brooks, or bogs,
 Or marshy lowlands, to produce the fogs;
 Then round the skies she sought for Jupiter,
 Her faithless husband; but no Jove was there:
 Suspecting now the worst, Or I, she said,
 Am much mistaken, or am much betray'd.
 With fury she precipitates her flight:
 Dispels the shadows of dissembled night;
 And to the day restores his native light.
 Th' Almighty Leacher, careful to prevent
 The consequence, foreseeing her descent,
 Transforms his mistress in a trice; and now
 In Io's place appears a lovely cow.
 So sleek her skin, so faultless was her make,
 Ev'n Juno did unwilling pleasure take
 To see so fair a rival of her love;
 And what she was, and whence, enquir'd of Jove:
 Of what fair herd, and from what pedigree?
 The God, half caught, was forc'd upon a lye:
 And said she sprung from Earth. She took the word,
 And begg'd the beauteous heyfer of her lord.
 What should he do? 'twas equal shame to Jove
 Or to relinquish, or betray his love:
 Yet to refuse so slight a gift, wou'd be
 But more t' increase his consort's jealousy:
 Thus fear, and love, by turns, his heart assail'd;
 And stronger love had sure, at length, prevail'd:
 But some faint hope remain'd, his jealous queen
 Had not the mistress through the heyfer seen.
 The cautious Goddess, of her gift possest,
 Yet harbour'd anxious thoughts within her breast;
 As she who knew the falshood of her Jove;
 And justly fear'd some new relapse of love.
 Which to prevent, and to secure her care,
 To trusty Argus she commits the fair.

The head of Argus (as with stars the skies)
 Was compass'd round, and wore an hundred eyes.
 But two by turns their lids in slumber steep;
 The rest on duty still their station keep;

Nor cou'd the total constellation sleep.
Thus, ever present, to his eyes, and mind,
His charge was still before him, tho' behind.
In fields he suffer'd her to feed by Day,
But when the setting sun to night gave way,
The captive cow he summon'd with a call;
And drove her back, and ty'd her to the stall.
On leaves of trees, and bitter herbs she fed,
Heav'n was her canopy, bare earth her bed:
So hardly lodg'd, and to digest her food,
She drank from troubled streams, defil'd with mud.
Her woeful story fain she wou'd have told,
With hands upheld, but had no hands to hold.
Her head to her ungentle keeper bow'd,
She strove to speak, she spoke not, but she low'd:
Affrighted with the noise, she look'd around,
And seem'd t' inquire the author of the sound.

Once on the banks where often she had play'd
(Her father's banks), she came, and there survey'd
Her alter'd visage, and her branching head;
And starting, from her self she wou'd have fled.
Her fellow nymphs, familiar to her eyes,
Beheld, but knew her not in this disguise.
Ev'n Inachus himself was ignorant;
And in his daughter, did his daughter want.
She follow'd where her fellows went, as she
Were still a partner of the company:
They stroak her neck; the gentle heyfer stands,
And her neck offers to their stroaking hands.
Her father gave her grass; the grass she took;
And lick'd his palms, and cast a piteous look;
And in the language of her eyes, she spoke.
She wou'd have told her name, and ask'd relief,
But wanting words, in tears she tells her grief.
Which, with her foot she makes him understand;
And prints the name of Io in the sand.

Ah wretched me! her mournful father cry'd;
She, with a sigh, to wretched me reply'd:

About her milk-white neck, his arms he threw;
 And wept, and then these tender words ensue.
 And art thou she, whom I have sought around
 The world, and have at length so sadly found?
 So found, is worse than lost: with mutual words
 Thou answer'st not, no voice thy tongue affords:
 But sighs are deeply drawn from out thy breast;
 And speech deny'd, by lowing is express'd.
 Unknowing, I prepar'd thy bridal bed;
 With empty hopes of happy issue fed.
 But now the husband of a herd must be
 Thy mate, and bell'wing sons thy progeny.
 Oh, were I mortal, death might bring relief:
 But now my God-head but extends my grief:
 Prolongs my woes, of which no end I see,
 And makes me curse my immortality!
 More had he said, but fearful of her stay,
 The starry guardian drove his charge away,
 To some fresh pasture; on a hilly height
 He sate himself, and kept her still in sight.

The Eyes of Argus transform'd into a Peacock's Train

Now Jove no longer cou'd her sufferings bear;
 But call'd in haste his airy messenger,
 The son of Maia, with severe decree
 To kill the keeper, and to set her free.
 With all his harness soon the God was sped,
 His flying hat was fastned on his head,
 Wings on his heels were hung, and in his hand
 He holds the vertue of the snaky wand.
 The liquid air his moving pinions wound,
 And, in the moment, shoot him on the ground.
 Before he came in sight, the crafty God
 His wings dismiss'd, but still retain'd his rod:
 That sleep-procuring wand wise Hermes took,
 But made it seem to sight a sherpherd's hook;
 With this, he did a herd of goats controul;
 Which by the way he met, and slily stole.
 Clad like a country swain, he pip'd, and sung;
 And playing, drove his jolly troop along.

With pleasure, Argus the musician heeds;
But wonders much at those new vocal reeds.
And whosoe'er thou art, my friend, said he,
Up hither drive thy goats, and play by me:
This hill has browz for them, and shade for thee.
The God, who was with ease induc'd to climb,
Began discourse to pass away the time;
And still betwixt, his tuneful pipe he plies;
And watch'd his hour, to close the keeper's eyes.
With much ado, he partly kept awake;
Not suff'ring all his eyes repose to take:
And ask'd the stranger, who did reeds invent,
And whence began so rare an instrument?

The Transformation of Syrinx into Reeds

Then Hermes thus: A nymph of late there was
Whose heav'nly form her fellows did surpass.
The pride and joy of fair Arcadia's plains,
Belov'd by deities, ador'd by swains:
Syrinx her name, by Sylvans oft pursu'd,
As oft she did the lustful Gods delude:
The rural, and the woodland Pow'rs disdain'd;
With Cynthia hunted, and her rites maintain'd:
Like Phoebe clad, even Phoebe's self she seems,
So tall, so streight, such well-proportion'd limbs:
The nicest eye did no distinction know,
But that the goddess bore a golden bow:
Distinguish'd thus, the sight she cheated too.
Descending from Lycaeus, Pan admires
The matchless nymph, and burns with new desires.
A crown of pine upon his head he wore;
And thus began her pity to implore.
But e'er he thus began, she took her flight
So swift, she was already out of sight.
Nor stay'd to hear the courtship of the God;
But bent her course to Ladon's gentle flood:
There by the river stopt, and tir'd before;
Relief from water nymphs her pray'rs implore.

Now while the lustful God, with speedy pace,
 Just thought to strain her in a strict embrace,
 He fill'd his arms with reeds, new rising on the place.
 And while he sighs, his ill success to find,
 The tender canes were shaken by the wind;
 And breath'd a mournful air, unheard before;
 That much surprizing Pan, yet pleas'd him more.
 Admiring this new musick, Thou, he said,
 Who canst not be the partner of my bed,
 At least shall be the comfort of my mind:
 And often, often to my lips be joyn'd.
 He form'd the reeds, proportion'd as they are,
 Unequal in their length, and wax'd with care,
 They still retain the name of his ungrateful fair.

While Hermes pip'd, and sung, and told his tale,
 The keeper's winking eyes began to fail,
 And drowsie slumber on the lids to creep;
 'Till all the watchman was at length asleep.
 Then soon the God his voice, and song suppress;
 And with his pow'rful rod confirm'd his rest:
 Without delay his crooked faulchion drew,
 And at one fatal stroke the keeper slew.
 Down from the rock fell the dissever'd head,
 Opening its eyes in death; and falling, bled;
 And mark'd the passage with a crimson trail:
 Thus Argus lies in pieces, cold, and pale;
 And all his hundred eyes, with all their light,
 Are clos'd at once, in one perpetual night.
 These Juno takes, that they no more may fail,
 And spreads them in her peacock's gaudy tail.

Impatient to revenge her injur'd bed,
 She wreaks her anger on her rival's head;
 With Furies frights her from her native home;
 And drives her gadding, round the world to roam:
 Nor ceas'd her madness, and her flight, before
 She touch'd the limits of the Pharian shore.
 At length, arriving on the banks of Nile,
 Wearied with length of ways, and worn with toil,

She laid her down; and leaning on her knees,
Invok'd the cause of all her miseries:
And cast her languishing regards above,
For help from Heav'n, and her ungrateful Jove.
She sigh'd, she wept, she low'd; 'twas all she cou'd;
And with unkindness seem'd to tax the God.
Last, with an humble pray'r, she beg'd repose,
Or death at least, to finish all her woes.
Jove heard her vows, and with a flatt'ring look,
In her behalf to jealous Juno spoke,
He cast his arms about her neck, and said,
Dame, rest secure; no more thy nuptial bed
This nymph shall violate; by Styx I swear,
And every oath that binds the Thunderer.
The Goddess was appeas'd; and at the word
Was Io to her former shape restor'd.
The rugged hair began to fall away;
The sweetness of her eyes did only stay,
Tho' not so large; her crooked horns decrease;
The wideness of her jaws and nostrils cease:
Her hoofs to hands return, in little space:
The five long taper fingers take their place,
And nothing of the heyfer now is seen,
Beside the native whiteness of the skin.
Erected on her feet she walks again:
And two the duty of the four sustain.
She tries her tongue; her silence softly breaks,
And fears her former lowings when she speaks:
A Goddess now, through all th' Aegyptian State:
And serv'd by priests, who in white linnen wait.

Her son was Epaphus, at length believ'd
The son of Jove, and as a God receiv'd;
With sacrifice ador'd, and publick pray'rs,
He common temples with his mother shares.
Equal in years, and rival in renown
With Epaphus, the youthful Phaeton
Like honour claims; and boasts his sire the sun.
His haughty looks, and his assuming air,
The son of Isis could no longer bear:

Thou tak'st thy mother's word too far, said he,
 And hast usurp'd thy boasted pedigree.
 Go, base pretender to a borrow'd name.
 Thus tax'd, he blush'd with anger, and with shame;
 But shame repress'd his rage: the daunted youth
 Soon seeks his mother, and enquires the truth:
 Mother, said he, this infamy was thrown
 By Epaphus on you, and me your son.
 He spoke in publick, told it to my face;
 Nor durst I vindicate the dire disgrace:
 Even I, the bold, the sensible of wrong,
 Restrain'd by shame, was forc'd to hold my tongue.
 To hear an open slander, is a curse:
 But not to find an answer, is a worse.
 If I am Heav'n-begot, assert your son
 By some sure sign; and make my father known,
 To right my honour, and redeem your own.
 He said, and saying cast his arms about
 Her neck, and beg'd her to resolve the doubt.

'Tis hard to judge if Clymene were mov'd
 More by his pray'r, whom she so dearly lov'd,
 Or more with fury fir'd, to find her name
 Traduc'd, and made the sport of common fame.
 She stretch'd her arms to Heav'n, and fix'd her eyes
 On that fair planet that adorns the skies;
 Now by those beams, said she, whose holy fires
 Consume my breast, and kindle my desires;
 By him, who sees us both, and clears our sight,
 By him, the publick minister of light,
 I swear that Sun begot thee; if I lye,
 Let him his chearful influence deny:
 Let him no more this perjur'd creature see;
 And shine on all the world but only me.
 If still you doubt your mother's innocence,
 His eastern mansion is not far from hence;
 With little pains you to his Leve go,
 And from himself your parentage may know.
 With joy th' ambitious youth his mother heard,
 And eager, for the journey soon prepar'd.

He longs the world beneath him to survey;
To guide the chariot; and to give the day:
From Meroe's burning sands he bends his course,
Nor less in India feels his father's force:
His travel urging, till he came in sight;
And saw the palace by the purple light.

BOOK THE EIGHTH

The Story of Nisus and Scylla

Now shone the morning star in bright array,
To vanquish night, and usher in the day:
The wind veers southward, and moist clouds arise,
That blot with shades the blue meridian skies.
Cephalus feels with joy the kindly gales,
His new allies unfurl the swelling sails;
Steady their course, they cleave the yielding main,
And, with a wish, th' intended harbour gain.
Mean-while King Minos, on the Attick strand,
Displays his martial skill, and wastes the land.
His army lies encamp't upon the plains,
Before Alcatheo's walls, where Nisus reigns;
On whose grey head a lock of purple hue,
The strength, and fortune of his kingdom, grew.

Six moons were gone, and past, when still from far
Victoria hover'd o'er the doubtful war.
So long, to both inclin'd, th' impartial maid
Between 'em both her equal wings display'd.
High on the walls, by Phoebus vocal made,
A turret of the palace rais'd its head;
And where the God his tuneful harp resign'd.
The sound within the stones still lay enshrin'd:
Hither the daughter of the purple king
Ascended oft, to hear its musick ring;
And, striking with a pebble, wou'd release
Th' enchanted notes, in times of happy peace.
But now, from thence, the curious maid beheld
Rough feats of arms, and combats of the field:
And, since the siege was long, had learnt the name

Of ev'ry chief, his character, and fame;
 Their arms, their horse, and quiver she descry'd,
 Nor cou'd the dress of war the warriour hide.

Europa's son she knew above the rest,
 And more, than well became a virgin breast:
 In vain the crested morion veils his face,
 She thinks it adds a more peculiar grace:
 His ample shield, embost with burnish'd gold,
 Still makes the bearer lovelier to behold:
 When the tough jav'lin, with a whirl, he sends,
 His strength and skill the sighing maid commends;
 Or, when he strains to draw the circling bow,
 And his fine limbs a manly posture show,
 Compar'd with Phoebus, he performs so well,
 Let her be judge, and Minos shall excell.

But when the helm put off, display'd to sight,
 And set his features in an open light;
 When, vaulting to his seat, his steed he prest,
 Caparison'd in gold, and richly drest;
 Himself in scarlet sumptuously array'd,
 New passions rise, and fire the frantick maid.
 O happy spear! she cries, that feels his touch;
 Nay, ev'n the reins he holds are blest too much.
 Oh! were it lawful, she cou'd wing her way
 Thro' the stern hostile troops without dismay;
 Or throw her body to the distant ground,
 And in the Cretans happy camp be found.
 Wou'd Minos but desire it! she'd expose
 Her native country to her country's foes;
 Unbar the gates, the town with flames infest,
 Or any thing that Minos shou'd request.

And as she sate, and pleas'd her longing sight,
 Viewing the king's pavilion veil'd with white,
 Shou'd joy, or grief, she said, possess my breast,
 To see my country by a war opprest?
 I'm in suspense! For, tho' 'tis grief to know
 I love a man that is declar'd my foe;

Yet, in my own despite, I must approve
That lucky war, which brought the man I love.
Yet, were I tender'd as a pledge of peace,
The cruelties of war might quickly cease.
Oh! with what joy I'd wear the chains he gave!
A patient hostage, and a willing slave.
Thou lovely object! if the nymph that bare
Thy charming person, were but half so fair;
Well might a God her virgin bloom desire,
And with a rape indulge his amorous fire.
Oh! had I wings to glide along the air,
To his dear tent I'd fly, and settle there:
There tell my quality, confess my flame,
And grant him any dowry that he'd name.
All, all I'd give; only my native land,
My dearest country, shou'd excepted stand,
For, perish love, and all expected joys,
E're, with so base a thought, my soul complies.
Yet, oft the vanquish'd some advantage find,
When conquer'd by a noble, gen'rous mind.
Brave Minos justly has the war begun,
Fir'd with resentment for his murder'd son:
The righteous Gods a righteous cause regard,
And will, with victory, his arms reward:
We must be conquer'd; and the captive's fate
Will surely seize us, tho' it seize us late.
Why then shou'd love be idle, and neglect
What Mars, by arms and perils, will effect?
Oh! Prince, I dye, with anxious fear opprest,
Lest some rash hand shou'd wound my charmer's breast:
For, if they saw, no barb'rous mind cou'd dare
Against that lovely form to raise a spear.

But I'm resolv'd, and fix'd in this decree,
My father's country shall my dowry be.
Thus I prevent the loss of life and blood,
And, in effect, the action must be good.
Vain resolution! for, at ev'ry gate
The trusty centinels, successive, wait:
The keys my father keeps; ah! there's my grief;

'Tis he obstructs all hopes of my relief.
 Gods! that this hated light I'd never seen!
 Or, all my life, without a father been!
 But Gods we all may be; for those that dare,
 Are Gods, and Fortune's chiefest favours share.
 The ruling Pow'rs a lazy pray'r detest,
 The bold adventurer succeeds the best.
 What other maid, inspir'd with such a flame,
 But wou'd take courage, and abandon shame?
 But wou'd, tho' ruin shou'd ensue, remove
 Whate'er oppos'd, and clear the way to love?
 This, shall another's feeble passion dare?
 While I sit tame, and languish in despair:
 No; for tho' fire and sword before me lay,
 Impatient love thro' both shou'd force its way.
 Yet I have no such enemies to fear,
 My sole obstruction is my father's hair;
 His purple lock my sanguine hope destroys,
 And clouds the prospect of my rising joys.

Whilst thus she spoke, amid the thick'ning air
 Night supervenes, the greatest nurse of care:
 And, as the Goddess spreads her sable wings,
 The virgin's fears decay, and courage springs.
 The hour was come, when Man's o'er-labour'd breast
 Surceas'd its care, by downy sleep possest:
 All things now hush'd, Scylla with silent tread
 Urg'd her approach to Nisus' royal bed:
 There, of the fatal lock (accursed theft!)
 She her unwitting father's head bereft.
 In safe possession of her impious prey,
 Out at a postern gate she takes her way.
 Embolden'd, by the merit of the deed
 She traverses the adverse camp with speed,
 'Till Minos' tent she reach'd: the righteous king
 She thus bespoke, who shiver'd at the thing.

Behold th' effect of love's resistless sway!
 I, Nisus' royal seed, to thee betray
 My country, and my Gods. For this strange task,

Minos, no other boon but thee I ask.
This purple lock, a pledge of love, receive;
No worthless present, since in it I give
My father's head.- Mov'd at a crime so new,
And with abhorrence fill'd, back Minos drew,
Nor touch'd th' unhallow'd gift; but thus exclaim'd
(With mein indignant, and with eyes inflam'd),
Perdition seize thee, thou, thy kind's disgrace!
May thy devoted carcass find no place
In earth, or air, or sea, by all out-cast!
Shall Minos, with so foul a monster, blast
His Cretan world, where cradled Jove was nurst?
Forbid it Heav'n!- away, thou most accurst!

And now Alcatheo, its lord exchange'd,
Was under Minos' domination rang'd.
While the most equal king his care applies
To curb the conquer'd, and new laws devise,
The fleet, by his command, with hoisted sails,
And ready oars, invites the murm'ring gales.
At length the Cretan hero anchor weigh'd,
Repaying, with neglect, th' abandon'd maid.
Deaf to her cries, he furrows up the main:
In vain she prays, sollicit him in vain.

And now she furious grows in wild despair,
She wrings her hands, and throws aloft her hair.
Where run'st thou? (thus she vents her deep distress)
Why shun'st thou her that crown'd thee with success?
Her, whose fond love to thee cou'd sacrifice
Her country, and her parent, sacred ties!
Can nor my love, nor proffer'd presents find
A passage to thy heart, and make thee kind?
Can nothing move thy pity? O ingrate,
Can'st thou behold my lost, forlorn estate,
And not be soften'd? Can'st thou throw off one
Who has no refuge left but thee alone?
Where shall I seek for comfort? whither fly?
My native country does in ashes lye:
Or were't not so, my treason bars me there,

And bids me wander. Shall I next repair
 To a wrong'd father, by my guilt undone?
 Me all Mankind deservedly will shun.
 I, out of all the world, my self have thrown,
 To purchase an access to Crete alone;
 Which, since refus'd, ungen'rous man, give o'er
 To boast thy race; Europa never bore
 A thing so savage. Thee some tygress bred,
 On the bleak Syrt's inhospitable bed;
 Or where Charybdis pours its rapid tide
 Tempestuous. Thou art not to Jove ally'd;
 Nor did the king of Gods thy mother meet
 Beneath a bull's forg'd shape, and bear to Crete.
 That fable of thy glorious birth is feign'd;
 Some wild outrageous bull thy dam sustain'd.
 O father Nisus, now my death behold;
 Exult, o city, by my baseness sold:
 Minos, obdurate, has aveng'd ye all;
 But 'twere more just by those I wrong'd to fall:
 For why shou'dst thou, who only didst subdue
 By my offending, my offence pursue?
 Well art thou matcht to one whose am'rous flame
 Too fiercely rag'd, for human-kind to tame;
 One who, within a wooden heifer thrust,
 Courted a low'ring bull's mistaken lust;
 And, from whose monster-teeming womb, the Earth
 Receiv'd, what much it mourn'd, a bi-form birth.
 But what avails my plaints? the whistling wind,
 Which bears him far away, leaves them behind.
 Well weigh'd Pasiphae, when she prefer'd
 A bull to thee, more brutish than the herd.
 But ah! Time presses, and the labour'd oars
 To distance drive the fleet, and lose the less'ning shores.
 Think not, ungrateful man, the liquid way
 And threat'ning billows shall inforce my stay.
 I'll follow thee in spite: My arms I'll throw
 Around thy oars, or grasp thy crooked prow,
 And drag thro' drenching seas. Her eager tongue
 Had hardly clos'd the speech, when forth she sprung
 And prov'd the deep. Cupid with added force

Recruits each nerve, and aids her wat'ry course.
Soon she the ship attains, unwelcome guest;
And, as with close embrace its sides she prest,
A hawk from upper air came pouring down
('Twas Nisus cleft the sky with wings new grown).
At Scylla's head his horny bill he aims;
She, fearful of the blow, the ship disclaims,
Quitting her hold: and yet she fell not far,
But wond'ring, finds her self sustain'd in air.
Chang'd to a lark, she mottled pinions shook,
And, from the ravish'd lock, the name of Ciris took.

The Labyrinth

Now Minos, landed on the Cretan shore,
Performs his vows to Jove's protecting pow'r;
A hundred bullocks of the largest breed,
With flowrets crown'd, before his altar bleed:
While trophies of the vanquish'd, brought from far
Adorn the palace with the spoils of war.

Mean-while the monster of a human-beast,
His family's reproach, and stain, increas'd.
His double kind the rumour swiftly spread,
And evidenc'd the mother's beastly deed.
When Minos, willing to conceal the shame
That sprung from the reports of tatling Fame,
Resolves a dark inclosure to provide,
And, far from sight, the two-form'd creature hide.

Great Daedalus of Athens was the man
That made the draught, and form'd the wondrous plan;
Where rooms within themselves encircled lye,
With various windings, to deceive the eye.
As soft Maeander's wanton current plays,
When thro' the Phrygian fields it loosely strays;
Backward and forward rous the dimpl'd tide,
Seeming, at once, two different ways to glide:
While circling streams their former banks survey,
And waters past succeeding waters see:
Now floating to the sea with downward course,

Now pointing upward to its ancient source,
 Such was the work, so intricate the place,
 That scarce the workman all its turns cou'd trace;
 And Daedalus was puzzled how to find
 The secret ways of what himself design'd.

These private walls the Minotaur include,
 Who twice was glutted with Athenian blood:
 But the third tribute more successful prov'd,
 Slew the foul monster, and the plague remov'd.
 When Theseus, aided by the virgin's art,
 Had trac'd the guiding thread thro' ev'ry part,
 He took the gentle maid, that set him free,
 And, bound for Dias, cut the briny sea.
 There, quickly cloy'd, ungrateful, and unkind,
 Left his fair consort in the isle behind,
 Whom Bacchus saw, and straining in his arms
 Her rifled bloom, and violated charms,
 Resolves, for this, the dear engaging dame
 Shou'd shine for ever in the rolls of Fame;
 And bids her crown among the stars be plac'd,
 With an eternal constellation grac'd.
 The golden circlet mounts; and, as it flies,
 Its diamonds twinkle in the distant skies;
 There, in their pristin form, the gemmy rays
 Between Alcides, and the dragon blaze.

The Story of Daedalus and Icarus

In tedious exile now too long detain'd,
 Daedalus languish'd for his native land:
 The sea foreclos'd his flight; yet thus he said:
 Tho' Earth and water in subjection laid,
 O cruel Minos, thy dominion be,
 We'll go thro' air; for sure the air is free.
 Then to new arts his cunning thought applies,
 And to improve the work of Nature tries.
 A row of quils in gradual order plac'd,
 Rise by degrees in length from first to last;
 As on a cliff th' ascending thicket grows,
 Or, different reeds the rural pipe compose.

Along the middle runs a twine of flax,
The bottom stems are joyn'd by pliant wax.
Thus, well compact, a hollow bending brings
The fine composure into real wings.

His boy, young Icarus, that near him stood,
Unthinking of his fate, with smiles pursu'd
The floating feathers, which the moving air
Bore loosely from the ground, and wasted here and there.
Or with the wax impertinently play'd,
And with his childish tricks the great design delay'd.

The final master-stroke at last impos'd,
And now, the neat machine compleatly clos'd;
Fitting his pinions on, a flight he tries,
And hung self-ballanc'd in the beaten skies.
Then thus instructs his child: My boy, take care
To wing your course along the middle air;
If low, the surges wet your flagging plumes;
If high, the sun the melting wax consumes:
Steer between both: nor to the northern skies,
Nor south Orion turn your giddy eyes;
But follow me: let me before you lay
Rules for the flight, and mark the pathless way.
Then teaching, with a fond concern, his son,
He took the untry'd wings, and fix'd 'em on;
But fix'd with trembling hands; and as he speaks,
The tears roul gently down his aged cheeks.
Then kiss'd, and in his arms embrac'd him fast,
But knew not this embrace must be the last.
And mounting upward, as he wings his flight,
Back on his charge he turns his aking sight;
As parent birds, when first their callow care
Leave the high nest to tempt the liquid air.
Then cheers him on, and oft, with fatal art,
Reminds the stripling to perform his part.

These, as the angler at the silent brook,
Or mountain-shepherd leaning on his crook,
Or gaping plowman, from the vale descries,

They stare, and view 'em with religious eyes,
 And strait conclude 'em Gods; since none, but they,
 Thro' their own azure skies cou'd find a way.

Now Delos, Paros on the left are seen,
 And Samos, favour'd by Jove's haughty queen;
 Upon the right, the isle Lebynthos nam'd,
 And fair Calymne for its honey fam'd.
 When now the boy, whose childish thoughts aspire
 To loftier aims, and make him ramble high'r,
 Grown wild, and wanton, more embolden'd flies
 Far from his guide, and soars among the skies.
 The soft'ning wax, that felt a nearer sun,
 Dissolv'd apace, and soon began to run.
 The youth in vain his melting pinions shakes,
 His feathers gone, no longer air he takes:
 Oh! Father, father, as he strove to cry,
 Down to the sea he tumbled from on high,
 And found his Fate; yet still subsists by fame,
 Among those waters that retain his name.

The father, now no more a father, cries,
 Ho Icarus! where are you? as he flies;
 Where shall I seek my boy? he cries again,
 And saw his feathers scatter'd on the main.
 Then curs'd his art; and fun'ral rites confer'd,
 Naming the country from the youth interr'd.

A partridge, from a neighb'ring stump, beheld
 The sire his monumental marble build;
 Who, with peculiar call, and flutt'ring wing,
 Chirpt joyful, and malicious seem'd to sing:
 The only bird of all its kind, and late
 Transform'd in pity to a feather'd state:
 From whence, O Daedalus, thy guilt we date.

His sister's son, when now twelve years were past,
 Was, with his uncle, as a scholar plac'd;
 The unsuspecting mother saw his parts,
 And genius fitted for the finest arts.

This soon appear'd; for when the spiny bone
In fishes' backs was by the stripling known,
A rare invention thence he learnt to draw,
Fill'd teeth in ir'n, and made the grating saw.
He was the first, that from a knob of brass
Made two strait arms with widening stretch to pass;
That, while one stood upon the center's place,
The other round it drew a circling space.
Daedalus envy'd this, and from the top
Of fair Minerva's temple let him drop;
Feigning, that, as he lean'd upon the tow'r,
Careless he stoop'd too much, and tumbled o'er.

The Goddess, who th' ingenious still befriends,
On this occasion her assistance lends;
His arms with feathers, as he fell, she veils,
And in the air a new made bird he sails.
The quickness of his genius, once so fleet,
Still in his wings remains, and in his feet:
Still, tho' transform'd, his ancient name he keeps,
And with low flight the new-shorn stubble sweeps,
Declines the lofty trees, and thinks it best
To brood in hedge-rows o'er its humble nest;
And, in remembrance of the former ill,
Avoids the heights, and precipices still.

At length, fatigu'd with long laborious flights,
On fair Sicilia's plains the artist lights;
Where Cocalus the king, that gave him aid,
Was, for his kindness, with esteem repaid.
Athens no more her doleful tribute sent,
That hardship gallant Theseus did prevent;
Their temples hung with garlands, they adore
Each friendly God, but most Minerva's pow'r:
To her, to Jove, to all, their altars smok,
They each with victims, and perfumes invoke.

Now talking Fame, thro' every Grecian town,
Had spread, immortal Theseus, thy renown.
From him the neighb'ring nations in distress,

In suppliant terms implore a kind redress.

The Story of Meleager and Atalanta

From him the Caledonians sought relief;
 Though valiant Meleagros was their chief.
 The cause, a boar, who ravag'd far and near:
 Of Cynthia's wrath, th' avenging minister.
 For Oeneus with autumnal plenty bless'd,
 By gifts to Heav'n his gratitude express'd:
 Cull'd sheafs, to Ceres; to Lyaeus, wine;
 To Pan, and Pales, offer'd sheep and kine;
 And fat of olives, to Minerva's shrine.
 Beginning from the rural Gods, his hand
 Was lib'ral to the Pow'rs of high command:
 Each deity in ev'ry kind was bless'd,
 'Till at Diana's fane th' invidious honour ceas'd.

Wrath touches ev'n the Gods; the Queen of Night,
 Fir'd with disdain, and jealous of her right,
 Unhonour'd though I am, at least, said she,
 Not unreveng'd that impious act shall be.
 Swift as the word, she sped the boar away,
 With charge on those devoted fields to prey.
 No larger bulls th' Aegyptian pastures feed,
 And none so large Sicilian meadows breed:
 His eye-balls glare with fire suffus'd with blood;
 His neck shoots up a thick-set thorny wood;
 His bristled back a trench impal'd appears,
 And stands erected, like a field of spears;
 Froth fills his chaps, he sends a grunting sound,
 And part he churns, and part befoams the ground,
 For tusks with Indian elephants he strove,
 And Jove's own thunder from his mouth he drove.
 He burns the leaves; the scorching blast invades
 The tender corn, and shrivels up the blades:
 Or suff'ring not their yellow beards to rear,
 He tramples down the spikes, and intercepts the year:
 In vain the barns expect their promis'd load,
 Nor barns at home, nor recks are heap'd abroad:
 In vain the hinds the threshing-floor prepare,

And exercise their flail in empty air.
With olives ever-green the ground is strow'd,
And grapes ungather'd shed their gen'rous blood.
Amid the fold he rages, nor the sheep
Their shepherds, nor the grooms their bulls can keep.

From fields to walls the frightened rabble run,
Nor think themselves secure within the town:
'Till Meleagros, and his chosen crew,
Contemn the danger, and the praise pursue.
Fair Leda's twins (in time to stars decreed)
One fought on foot, one curb'd the fiery steed;
Then issu'd forth fam'd Jason after these,
Who mann'd the foremost ship that sail'd the seas;
Then Theseus join'd with bold Perithous came;
A single concord in a double name:
The Thestian sons, Idas who swiftly ran,
And Ceneus, once a woman, now a man.
Lynceus, with eagle's eyes, and lion's heart;
Leucippus, with his never-erring dart;
Acastus, Phileus, Phoenix, Telamon,
Echion, Lelix, and Eurytion,
Achilles' father, and great Phocus' son;
Dryas the fierce, and Hippasus the strong;
With twice old Iolas, and Nestor then but young.
Laertes active, and Ancaeus bold;
Mopsus the sage, who future things foretold;
And t' other seer, yet by his wife unsold.
A thousand others of immortal fame;
Among the rest, fair Atalanta came,
Grace of the woods: a diamond buckle bound
Her vest behind, that else had flow'd upon the ground,
And shew'd her buskin'd legs; her head was bare,
But for her native ornament of hair;
Which in a simple knot was ty'd above,
Sweet negligence! unheeded bait of love!
Her sounding quiver, on her shoulder ty'd,
One hand a dart, and one a bow supply'd.
Such was her face, as in a nymph display'd
A fair fierce boy, or in a boy betray'd

The blushing beauties of a modest maid.
 The Caledonian chief at once the dame
 Beheld, at once his heart receiv'd the flame,
 With Heav'ns averse. O happy youth, he cry'd;
 For whom thy fates reserve so fair a bride!
 He sigh'd, and had no leisure more to say;
 His honour call'd his eyes another way,
 And forc'd him to pursue the now-neglected prey.

There stood a forest on a mountain's brow,
 Which over-look'd the shaded plains below.
 No sounding ax presum'd those trees to bite;
 Coeval with the world, a venerable sight.
 The heroes there arriv'd, some spread around
 The toils; some search the footsteps on the ground:
 Some from the chains the faithful dogs unbound.
 Of action eager, and intent in thought,
 The chiefs their honourable danger sought:
 A valley stood below; the common drain
 Of waters from above, and falling rain:
 The bottom was a moist, and marshy ground,
 Whose edges were with bending oziers crown'd:
 The knotty bulrush next in order stood,
 And all within of reeds a trembling wood.

From hence the boar was rous'd, and sprung amain,
 Like lightning sudden, on the warrior train;
 Beats down the trees before him, shakes the ground.
 The forest echoes to the crackling sound;
 Shout the fierce youth, and clamours ring around.
 All stood with their protended spears prepar'd,
 With broad steel heads the brandish'd weapons glar'd.
 The beast impetuous with his tusks aside
 Deals glancing wounds; the fearful dogs divide:
 All spend their mouths aloof, but none abide.
 Echion threw the first, but miss'd his mark,
 And stuck his boar-spear on a maple's bark.
 Then Jason; and his javelin seem'd to take,
 But fail'd with over-force, and whiz'd above his back.
 Mopsus was next; but e'er he threw, address'd

To Phoebus, thus: O patron, help thy priest:
If I adore, and ever have ador'd
Thy pow'r divine, thy present aid afford;
That I may reach the beast. The God allow'd
His pray'r, and smiling, gave him what he cou'd:
He reach'd the savage, but no blood he drew:
Dian unarm'd the javelin, as it flew.

This chaf'd the boar, his nostrils flames expire,
And his red eye-balls roul with living fire.
Whirl'd from a sling, or from an engine thrown,
Amid the foes, so flies a mighty stone,
As flew the beast: the left wing put to flight,
The chiefs o'er-born, he rushes on the right.
Eupalamos and Pelagon he laid
In dust, and next to death, but for their fellows' aid.
Onesimus far'd worse, prepar'd to fly,
The fatal fang drove deep within his thigh,
And cut the nerves: the nerves no more sustain
The bulk; the bulk unprop'd, falls headlong on the plain.

Nestor had fail'd the fall of Troy to see,
But leaning on his lance, he vaulted on a tree;
Then gath'ring up his feet, look'd down with fear,
And thought his monstrous foe was still too near.
Against a stump his tusk the monster grinds,
And in the sharpen'd edge new vigour finds;
Then, trusting to his arms, young Othrys found,
And ranch'd his hips with one continu'd wound.

Now Leda's twins, the future stars, appear;
White were their habits, white their horses were:
Conspicuous both, and both in act to throw,
Their trembling lances brandish'd at the foe:
Nor had they miss'd; but he to thickets fled,
Conceal'd from aiming spears, not pervious to the steed.
But Telamon rush'd in, and happ'd to meet
A rising root, that held his fastned feet;
So down he fell, whom, sprawling on the ground,
His brother from the wooden gyves unbound.

Mean-time the virgin-huntress was not slow
 T' expel the shaft from her contracted bow:
 Beneath his ear the fastned arrow stood,
 And from the wound appear'd the trickling blood.
 She blush'd for joy: but Meleagros rais'd
 His voice with loud applause, and the fair archer prais'd.
 He was the first to see, and first to show
 His friends the marks of the successful blow.
 Nor shall thy valour want the praises due,
 He said; a virtuous envy seiz'd the crew.
 They shout; the shouting animates their hearts,
 And all at once employ their thronging darts:
 But out of order thrown, in air they joyn,
 And multitude makes frustrate the design.
 With both his hands the proud Ancaeus takes,
 And flourishes his double-biting ax:
 Then, forward to his fate, he took a stride
 Before the rest, and to his fellows cry'd,
 Give place, and mark the diff'rence, if you can,
 Between a woman warrior, and a man,
 The boar is doom'd; nor though Diana lend
 Her aid, Diana can her beast defend.
 Thus boasted he; then stretch'd, on tiptoe stood,
 Secure to make his empty promise good.
 But the more wary beast prevents the blow,
 And upward rips the groin of his audacious foe.
 Ancaeus falls; his bowels from the wound
 Rush out, and clotted blood distains the ground.

Perithous, no small portion of the war,
 Press'd on, and shook his lance: to whom from far
 Thus Theseus cry'd; O stay, my better part,
 My more than mistress; of my heart, the heart.
 The strong may fight aloof; Ancaeus try'd
 His force too near, and by presuming dy'd:
 He said, and while he spake his javelin threw,
 Hissing in air th' unerring weapon flew;
 But on an arm of oak, that stood betwixt
 The marks-man and the mark, his lance he fixt.

Once more bold Jason threw, but fail'd to wound
The boar, and slew an undeserving hound,
And thro' the dog the dart was nail'd to ground.

Two spears from Meleager's hand were sent,
With equal force, but various in th' event:
The first was fix'd in earth, the second stood
On the boar's bristled back, and deeply drank his blood.
Now while the tortur'd savage turns around,
And flings about his foam, impatient of the wound,
The wound's great author close at hand provokes
His rage, and plies him with redoubled strokes;
Wheels, as he wheels; and with his pointed dart
Explores the nearest passage to his heart.
Quick, and more quick he spins in giddy gires,
Then falls, and in much foam his soul expires.
This act with shouts heav'n-high the friendly band
Applaud, and strain in theirs the victor's hand.
Then all approach the slain with vast surprise,
Admire on what a breadth of earth he lies,
And scarce secure, reach out their spears afar,
And blood their points, to prove their partnership of war.

But he, the conqu'ring chief, his foot impress'd
On the strong neck of that destructive beast;
And gazing on the nymph with ardent eyes,
Accept, said he, fair Nonacrine, my prize,
And, though inferior, suffer me to join
My labours, and my part of praise, with thine:
At this presents her with the tusky head
And chine, with rising bristles roughly spread.
Glad she receiv'd the gift; and seem'd to take
With double pleasure, for the giver's sake.
The rest were seiz'd with sullen discontent,
And a deaf murmur through the squadron went:
All envy'd; but the Thestyan brethren show'd
The least respect, and thus they vent their spleen aloud:
Lay down those honour'd spoils, nor think to share,
Weak woman as thou art, the prize of war:

Ours is the title, thine a foreign claim,
 Since Meleagrus from our lineage came.
 Trust not thy beauty; but restore the prize,
 Which he, besotted on that face, and eyes,
 Would rend from us: at this, inflam'd with spite,
 From her they snatch the gift, from him the giver's right.

But soon th' impatient prince his fauchion drew,
 And cry'd, Ye robbers of another's due,
 Now learn the diff'rence, at your proper cost,
 Betwixt true valour, and an empty boast.
 At this advanc'd, and sudden as the word,
 In proud Plexippus' bosom plung'd the sword:
 Toxeus amaz'd, and with amazement slow,
 Or to revenge, or ward the coming blow,
 Stood doubting; and while doubting thus he stood,
 Receiv'd the steel bath'd in his brother's blood.

Pleas'd with the first, unknown the second news;
 Althaea to the temples pays their dues
 For her son's conquest; when at length appear
 Her grisly brethren stretch'd upon the bier:
 Pale at the sudden sight, she chang'd her cheer,
 And with her cheer her robes; but hearing tell
 The cause, the manner, and by whom they fell,
 'Twas grief no more, or grief and rage were one
 Within her soul; at last 'twas rage alone;
 Which burning upwards in succession, dries
 The tears, that stood consid'ring in her eyes.

There lay a log unlighted on the hearth,
 When she was lab'ring in the throws of birth
 For th' unborn chief; the fatal sisters came,
 And rais'd it up, and toss'd it on the flame:
 Then on the rock a scanty measure place
 Of vital flax, and turn'd the wheel apace;
 And turning sung, To this red brand and thee,
 O new born babe, we give an equal destiny;
 So vanish'd out of view. The frighted dame
 Sprung hasty from her bed, and quench'd the flame:

The log, in secret lock'd, she kept with care,
And that, while thus preserv'd, preserv'd her heir.
This brand she now produc'd; and first she strows
The hearth with heaps of chips, and after blows;
Thrice heav'd her hand, and heav'd, she thrice repress'd:
The sister and the mother long contest,
Two doubtful titles, in one tender breast:
And now her eyes, and cheeks with fury glow,
Now pale her cheeks, her eyes with pity flow:
Now low'ring looks presage approaching storms,
And now prevailing love her face reforms:
Resolv'd, she doubts again; the tears she dry'd
With burning rage, are by new tears supply'd;
And as a ship, which winds and waves assail
Now with the current drives, now with the gale,
Both opposite, and neither long prevail:
She feels a double force, by turns obeys
Th' imperious tempest, and th' impetuous seas:
So fares Althaea's mind, she first relents
With pity, of that pity then repents:
Sister, and mother long the scales divide,
But the beam nodded on the sister's side.
Sometimes she softly sigh'd, then roar'd aloud;
But sighs were stifled in the cries of blood.

The pious, impious wretch at length decreed,
To please her brothers' ghost, her son should bleed:
And when the fun'ral flames began to rise,
Receive, she said, a sister's sacrifice;
A mother's bowels burn: high in her hand,
Thus while she spoke, she held the fatal brand;
Then thrice before the kindled pile she bow'd,
And the three Furies thrice invok'd aloud:
Come, come, revenging sisters, come, and view
A sister paying her dead brothers due:
A crime I punish, and a crime commit;
But blood for blood, and death for death is fit:
Great crimes must be with greater crimes repaid,
And second fun'ral on the former laid.
Let the whole household in one ruin fall,

And may Diana's curse o'ertake us all.
 Shall Fate to happy Oenus still allow
 One son, while Thestius stands depriv'd of two?
 Better three lost, than one unpunish'd go.
 Take then, dear ghosts (while yet admitted new
 In Hell you wait my duty), take your due:
 A costly offering on your tomb is laid,
 When with my blood the price of yours is paid.

Ah! whither am I hurry'd? Ah! forgive,
 Ye shades, and let your sister's issue live;
 A mother cannot give him death; tho' he
 Deserves it, he deserves it not from me.

Then shall th' unpunish'd wretch insult the slain,
 Triumphant live, nor only live, but reign?
 While you, thin shades, the sport of winds, are tost
 O'er dreary plains, or tread the burning coast.
 I cannot, cannot bear; 'tis past, 'tis done;
 Perish this impious, this detested son:
 Perish his sire, and perish I withal;
 And let the house's heir, and the hop'd kingdom fall.

Where is the mother fled, her pious love,
 And where the pains with which ten months I strove!
 Ah! had'st thou dy'd, my son, in infant years,
 Thy little herse had been bedew'd with tears.

Thou liv'st by me; to me thy breath resign;
 Mine is the merit, the demerit thine.
 Thy life by double title I require;
 Once giv'n at birth, and once preserv'd from fire:
 One murder pay, or add one murder more,
 And me to them who fell by thee restore.

I would, but cannot: my son's image stands
 Before my sight; and now their angry hands
 My brothers hold, and vengeance these exact;
 This pleads compassion, and repents the fact.

He pleads in vain, and I pronounce his doom:
My brothers, though unjustly, shall o'ercome.
But having paid their injur'd ghosts their due,
My son requires my death, and mine shall his pursue.

At this, for the last time, she lifts her hand,
Averts her eyes, and, half unwilling, drops the brand.
The brand, amid the flaming fewel thrown,
Or drew, or seem'd to draw, a dying groan;
The fires themselves but faintly lick'd their prey,
Then loath'd their impious food, and would have shrunk away.

Just then the heroe cast a doleful cry,
And in those absent flames began to fry:
The blind contagion rag'd within his veins;
But he with manly patience bore his pains:
He fear'd not Fate, but only griev'd to die
Without an honest wound, and by a death so dry.
Happy Ancaeus, thrice aloud he cry'd,
With what becoming fate in arms he dy'd!
Then call'd his brothers, sisters, sire around,
And, her to whom his nuptial vows were bound,
Perhaps his mother; a long sigh she drew,
And his voice failing, took his last adieu.
For as the flames augment, and as they stay
At their full height, then languish to decay,
They rise and sink by fits; at last they soar
In one bright blaze, and then descend no more:
Just so his inward heats, at height, impair,
'Till the last burning breath shoots out the soul in air.

Now lofty Calidon in ruins lies;
All ages, all degrees unsluice their eyes,
And Heav'n, and Earth resound with murmurs, groans, and cries.
Matrons and maidens beat their breasts, and tear
Their habits, and root up their scatter'd hair:
The wretched father, father now no more,
With sorrow sunk, lies prostrate on the floor,
Deforms his hoary locks with dust obscene,
And curses age, and loaths a life prolong'd with pain.

By steel her stubborn soul his mother freed,
And punish'd on her self her impious deed.

Had I a hundred tongues, a wit so large
As could their hundred offices discharge;
Had Phoebus all his Helicon bestow'd
In all the streams, inspiring all the God;
Those tongues, that wit, those streams, that God in vain
Would offer to describe his sisters' pain:
They beat their breasts with many a bruizing blow,
'Till they turn livid, and corrupt the snow.
The corps they cherish, while the corps remains,
And exercise, and rub with fruitless pains;
And when to fun'ral flames 'tis born away,
They kiss the bed on which the body lay:
And when those fun'ral flames no longer burn
(The dust compos'd within a pious urn),
Ev'n in that urn their brother they confess,
And hug it in their arms, and to their bosoms press.

His tomb is rais'd; then, stretch'd along the ground,
Those living monuments his tomb surround:
Ev'n to his name, inscrib'd, their tears they pay,
'Till tears, and kisses wear his name away.

But Cynthia now had all her fury spent,
Not with less ruin than a race content:
Excepting Gorge, perish'd all the seed,
And her whom Heav'n for Hercules decreed.
Sate at last, no longer she pursu'd
The weeping sisters; but With Wings endu'd,
And horny beaks, and sent to flit in air;
Who yearly round the tomb in feather'd flocks repair.

The Transformation of the Naiads

Theseus mean-while acquitting well his share
In the bold chace confed'rate like a war,
To Athens' lofty tow'rs his march ordain'd,
By Pallas lov'd, and where Erectheus reign'd.
But Achelous stop'd him on the way,

By rains a deluge, and constrain'd his stay.

O fam'd for glorious deeds, and great by blood,
Rest here, says he, nor trust the rapid flood;
It solid oaks has from its margin tore,
And rocky fragments down its current bore,
The murmur hoarse, and terrible the roar.
Oft have I seen herds with their shelt'ring fold
Forc'd from the banks, and in the torrent rould;
Nor strength the bulky steer from ruin freed,
Nor matchless swiftness sav'd the racing steed.
In cataracts when the dissolving snow
Falls from the hills, and floods the plains below;
Toss'd by the eddies with a giddy round,
Strong youths are in the sucking whirlpools drown'd.
'Tis best with me in safety to abide,
'Till usual bounds restrain the ebbing tide,
And the low waters in their channel glide.

Theseus perswaded, in compliance bow'd:
So kind an offer, and advice so good,
O Achelous, cannot be refus'd;
I'll use them both, said he; and both he us'd.

The grot he enter'd, pumice built the hall,
And tophi made the rustick of the wall;
The floor, soft moss, an humid carpet spread,
And various shells the chequer'd roof inlaid.
'Twas now the hour when the declining sun
Two thirds had of his daily journey run;
At the spread table Theseus took his place,
Next his companions in the daring chace;
Perithous here, there elder Lelex lay,
His locks betraying age with sprinkled grey.
Acharnia's river-God dispos'd the rest,
Grac'd with the equal honour of the feast,
Elate with joy, and proud of such a guest.
The nymphs were waiters, and with naked feet
In order serv'd the courses of the meat.
The banquet done, delicious wine they brought,

Of one transparent gem the cup was wrought.

Then the great heroe of this gallant train,
 Surveying far the prospect of the main:
 What is that land, says he, the waves embrace?
 (And with his finger pointed at the place);
 Is it one parted isle which stands alone?
 How nam'd? and yet methinks it seems not one.
 To whom the watry God made this reply;
 'Tis not one isle, but five; distinct they lye;
 'Tis distance which deceives the cheated eye.
 But that Diana's act may seem less strange,
 These once proud Naiads were, before their change.
 'Twas on a day more solemn than the rest,
 Ten bullocks slain, a sacrificial feast:
 The rural Gods of all the region near
 They bid to dance, and taste the hallow'd cheer.
 Me they forgot: affronted with the slight,
 My rage, and stream swell'd to the greatest height;
 And with the torrent of my flooding store,
 Large woods from woods, and fields from fields I tore.
 The guilty nymphs, oh! then, remembering me,
 I, with their country, wash'd into the sea;
 And joining waters with the social main,
 Rent the gross land, and split the firm champagne.
 Since, the Echinades, remote from shore
 Are view'd as many isles, as nymphs before.

Perimele turn'd into an Island

But yonder far, lo, yonder does appear
 An isle, a part to me for ever dear.
 From that (it sailors Perimele name)
 I doating, forc'd by rape a virgin's fame.
 Hippodamas's passion grew so strong,
 Gall'd with th' abuse, and fretted at the wrong,
 He cast his pregnant daughter from a rock;
 I spread my waves beneath, and broke the shock;
 And as her swimming weight my stream convey'd,
 I su'd for help divine, and thus I pray'd:
 O pow'rful thou, whose trident does command

The realm of waters, which surround the land;
We sacred rivers, wheresoe'er begun,
End in thy lot, and to thy empire run.
With favour hear, and help with present aid;
Her whom I bear 'twas guilty I betray'd.
Yet if her father had been just, or mild,
He would have been less impious to his child;
In her, have pity'd force in the abuse;
In me, admitted love for my excuse.
O let relief for her hard case be found,
Her, whom paternal rage expell'd from ground,
Her, whom paternal rage relentless drown'd.
Grant her some place, or change her to a place,
Which I may ever clasp with my embrace.

His nodding head the sea's great ruler bent,
And all his waters shook with his assent.
The nymph still swam, tho' with the fright distrest,
I felt her heart leap trembling in her breast;
But hardning soon, whilst I her pulse explore,
A crusting Earth cas'd her stiff body o'er;
And as accretions of new-cleaving soil
Inlarg'd the mass, the nymph became an isle.

The Story of Baucis and Philemon

Thus Achelous ends: his audience hear
With admiration, and admiring, fear
The Pow'rs of Heav'n; except Ixion's Son,
Who laugh'd at all the Gods, believ'd in none:
He shook his impious head, and thus replies.
These legends are no more than pious lies:
You attribute too much to heav'nly sway,
To think they give us forms, and take away.

The rest of better minds, their sense declar'd
Against this doctrine, and with horror heard.
Then Lelex rose, an old experienc'd man,
And thus with sober gravity began;
Heav'n's pow'r is infinite: Earth, Air, and Sea,
The manufacture mass, the making Pow'r obey:

By proof to clear your doubt; in Phrygian ground
 Two neighb'ring trees, with walls encompass'd round,
 Stand on a mod'rate rise, with wonder shown,
 One a hard oak, a softer linden one:
 I saw the place, and them, by Pittheus sent
 To Phrygian realms, my grandsire's government.
 Not far from thence is seen a lake, the haunt
 Of coots, and of the fishing cormorant:
 Here Jove with Hermes came; but in disguise
 Of mortal men conceal'd their deities;
 One laid aside his thunder, one his rod;
 And many toilsome steps together trod:
 For harbour at a thousand doors they knock'd,
 Not one of all the thousand but was lock'd.
 At last an hospitable house they found,
 A homely shed; the roof, not far from ground,
 Was thatch'd with reeds, and straw, together bound.
 There Baucis and Philemon liv'd, and there
 Had liv'd long marry'd, and a happy pair:
 Now old in love, though little was their store,
 Inur'd to want, their poverty they bore,
 Nor aim'd at wealth, professing to be poor.
 For master, or for servant here to call,
 Was all alike, where only two were all.
 Command was none, where equal love was paid,
 Or rather both commanded, both obey'd.

From lofty roofs the Gods repuls'd before,
 Now stooping, enter'd through the little door:
 The man (their hearty welcome first express'd)
 A common settle drew for either guest,
 Inviting each his weary limbs to rest.
 But ere they sate, officious Baucis lays
 Two cushions stuff'd with straw, the seat to raise;
 Coarse, but the best she had; then rakes the load
 Of ashes from the hearth, and spreads abroad
 The living coals; and, lest they should expire,
 With leaves, and bark she feeds her infant fire:
 It smoaks; and then with trembling breath she blows,
 'Till in a chearful blaze the flames arose.

With brush-wood, and with chips she strengthens these,
And adds at last the boughs of rotten trees.
The fire thus form'd, she sets the kettle on
(Like burnish'd gold the little seether shone),
Next took the coleworts which her husband got
From his own ground (a small well-water'd spot);
She stripp'd the stalks of all their leaves; the best
She cull'd, and them with handy care she drest.
High o'er the hearth a chine of bacon hung;
Good old Philemon seiz'd it with a prong,
And from the sooty rafter drew it down,
Then cut a slice, but scarce enough for one;
Yet a large portion of a little store,
Which for their sakes alone he wish'd were more.
This in the pot he plung'd without delay,
To tame the flesh, and drain the salt away.
The time between, before the fire they sat,
And shorten'd the delay by pleasing chat.

A beam there was, on which a beechen pail
Hung by the handle, on a driven nail:
This fill'd with water, gently warm'd, they set
Before their guests; in this they bath'd their feet,
And after with clean towels dry'd their sweat.
This done, the host produc'd the genial bed,
Sallow the feet, the borders, and the sted,
Which with no costly coverlet they spread,
But coarse old garments; yet such robes as these
They laid alone, at feasts, on holidays.
The good old housewife, tucking up her gown,
The table sets; th' invited Gods lie down.
The trivet-table of a foot was lame,
A blot which prudent Baucis overcame,
Who thrusts beneath the limping leg a sherd,
So was the mended board exactly rear'd:
Then rubb'd it o'er with newly gather'd mint,
A wholsom herb, that breath'd a grateful scent.
Pallas began the feast, where first was seen
The party-colour'd olive, black, and green:
Autumnal cornels next in order serv'd,

In lees of wine well pickled, and preserv'd.
 A garden-sallad was the third supply,
 Of endive, radishes, and succory:
 Then curds, and cream, the flow'r of country fare,
 And new-laid eggs, which Baucis' busie care
 Turn'd by a gentle fire, and roasted rare.
 All these in earthen ware were serv'd to board;
 And next in place, an earthen pitcher stor'd,
 With liquor of the best the cottage could afford.
 This was the table's ornament and pride,
 With figures wrought: like pages at his side
 Stood beechen bowls; and these were shining clean,
 Varnish'd with wax without, and lin'd within.
 By this the boiling kettle had prepar'd,
 And to the table sent the smoaking lard;
 On which with eager appetite they dine,
 A sav'ry bit, that serv'd to relish wine:
 The wine itself was suiting to the rest,
 Still working in the must, and lately press'd.
 The second course succeeds like that before,
 Plums, apples, nuts, and of their wintry store
 Dry figs, and grapes, and wrinkled dates were set
 In canisters, t' enlarge the little treat:
 All these a milk-white honey-comb surround,
 Which in the midst the country-banquet crown'd:
 But the kind hosts their entertainment grace
 With hearty welcome, and an open face:
 In all they did, you might discern with ease,
 A willing mind, and a desire to please.

Mean-time the beechen bowls went round, and still,
 Though often empty'd, were observ'd to fill;
 Fill'd without hands, and of their own accord
 Ran without feet, and danc'd about the board.
 Devotion seiz'd the pair, to see the feast
 With wine, and of no common grape, increas'd;
 And up they held their hands, and fell to pray'r,
 Excusing, as they could, their country fare.

One goose they had ('twas all they could allow),

A wakeful centry, and on duty now,
Whom to the Gods for sacrifice they vow:
Her with malicious zeal the couple view'd;
She ran for life, and limping they pursu'd:
Full well the fowl perceiv'd their bad intent,
And would not make her master's compliment;
But persecuted, to the Pow'rs she flies,
And close between the legs of Jove she lies:
He with a gracious ear the suppliant heard,
And sav'd her life; then what he has declar'd,
And own'd the God. The neighbourhood, said he,
Shall justly perish for impiety:
You stand alone exempted; but obey
With speed, and follow where we lead the way:
Leave these accurs'd; and to the mountain's height
Ascend; nor once look backward in your flight.

They haste, and what their tardy feet deny'd,
The trusty staff (their better leg) supply'd.
An arrow's flight they wanted to the top,
And there secure, but spent with travel, stop;
Then turn their now no more forbidden eyes;
Lost in a lake the floated level lies:
A watry desert covers all the plains,
Their cot alone, as in an isle, remains.
Wondring, with weeping eyes, while they deplore
Their neighbours' fate, and country now no more,
Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,
Seems, from the ground increas'd, in height and bulk to grow.
A stately temple shoots within the skies,
The crotches of their cot in columns rise:
The pavement polish'd marble they behold,
The gates with sculpture grac'd, the spires and tiles of gold.

Then thus the sire of Gods, with looks serene,
Speak thy desire, thou only just of men;
And thou, o woman, only worthy found
To be with such a man in marriage bound.

A-while they whisper; then, to Jove address'd,

Philemon thus prefers their joint request:
 We crave to serve before your sacred shrine,
 And offer at your altars rites divine:
 And since not any action of our life
 Has been polluted with domestick strife;
 We beg one hour of death, that neither she
 With widow's tears may live to bury me,
 Nor weeping I, with wither'd arms may bear
 My breathless Baucis to the sepulcher.

The Godheads sign their suit. They run their race
 In the same tenour all th' appointed space:
 Then, when their hour was come, while they relate
 These past adventures at the temple gate,
 Old Baucis is by old Philemon seen
 Sprouting with sudden leaves of spritely green:
 Old Baucis look'd where old Philemon stood,
 And saw his lengthen'd arms a sprouting wood:
 New roots their fasten'd feet begin to bind,
 Their bodies stiffen in a rising rind:
 Then, ere the bark above their shoulders grew,
 They give, and take at once their last adieu.
 At once, Farewell, o faithful spouse, they said;
 At once th' incroaching rinds their closing lips invade.
 Ev'n yet, an ancient Tyanaean shows
 A spreading oak, that near a linden grows;
 The neighbourhood confirm the prodigy,
 Grave men, not vain of tongue, or like to lie.
 I saw my self the garlands on their boughs,
 And tablets hung for gifts of granted vows;
 And off'ring fresher up, with pious pray'r,
 The good, said I, are God's peculiar care,
 And such as honour Heav'n, shall heav'nly honour share.

The Changes of Proteus

He ceas'd in his relation to proceed,
 Whilst all admir'd the author, and the deed;
 But Theseus most, inquisitive to know
 From Gods what wondrous alterations grow.
 Whom thus the Calydonian stream address'd,

Rais'd high to speak, the couch his elbow press'd.
Some, when transform'd, fix in the lasting change;
Some with more right, thro' various figures range.
Proteus, thus large thy privilege was found,
Thou inmate of the seas, which Earth surround.
Sometimes a bloming youth you grac'd the shore;
Oft a fierce lion, or a furious boar:
With glist'ning spires now seem'd an hissing snake,
The bold would tremble in his hands to take:
With horns assum'd a bull; sometimes you prov'd
A tree by roots, a stone by weight unmov'd:
Sometimes two wav'ring contraries became,
Flow'd down in water, or aspir'd in flame.

The Story of Erisichthon

In various shapes thus to deceive the eyes,
Without a settled stint of her disguise,
Rash Erisichthon's daughter had the pow'r,
And brought it to Autolicus in dow'r.
Her atheist sire the slighted Gods defy'd,
And ritual honours to their shrines deny'd.
As fame reports, his hand an ax sustain'd,
Which Ceres' consecrated grove prophan'd;
Which durst the venerable gloom invade,
And violate with light the awful shade.
An ancient oak in the dark center stood,
The covert's glory, and itself a wood:
Garlands embrac'd its shaft, and from the boughs
Hung tablets, monuments of prosp'rous vows.
In the cool dusk its unpierc'd verdure spread,
The Dryads oft their hallow'd dances led;
And oft, when round their gaging arms they cast,
Full fifteen ells it measu'rd in the waste:
Its height all under standards did surpass,
As they aspir'd above the humbler grass.

These motives, which would gentler minds restrain,
Could not make Triope's bold son abstain;
He sternly charg'd his slaves with strict decree,
To fell with gashing steel the sacred tree.

But whilst they, lingring, his commands delay'd,
 He snatch'd an Ax, and thus blaspheming said:
 Was this no oak, nor Ceres' favourite care,
 But Ceres' self, this arm, unaw'd, shou'd dare
 Its leafy honours in the dust to spread,
 And level with the earth its airy head.
 He spoke, and as he poiz'd a slanting stroak,
 Sighs heav'd, and tremblings shook the frighted oak;
 Its leaves look'd sickly, pale its acorns grew,
 And its long branches sweat a chilly dew.
 But when his impious hand a wound bestow'd,
 Blood from the mangled bark in currents flow'd.
 When a devoted bull of mighty size,
 A sinning nation's grand atonement, dies;
 With such a plenty from the spouting veins,
 A crimson stream the turfy altars stains.

The wonder all amaz'd; yet one more bold,
 The fact dissuading, strove his ax to hold.
 But the Thessalian, obstinately bent,
 Too proud to change, too harden'd to repent,
 On his kind monitor, his eyes, which burn'd
 With rage, and with his eyes his weapon turn'd;
 Take the reward, says he, of pious dread:
 Then with a blow lopp'd off his parted head.
 No longer check'd, the wretch his crime pursu'd,
 Doubled his strokes, and sacrilege renew'd;
 When from the groaning trunk a voice was heard,
 A Dryad I, by Ceres' love preferr'd,
 Within the circle of this clasping rind
 Coeval grew, and now in ruin join'd;
 But instant vengeance shall thy sin pursue,
 And death is chear'd with this prophetick view.

At last the oak with cords enforc'd to bow,
 Strain'd from the top, and sap'd with wounds below,
 The humbler wood, partaker of its fate,
 Crush'd with its fall, and shiver'd with its weight.

The grove destroy'd, the sister Dryads moan,

Griev'd at its loss, and frighted at their own.
Strait, suppliants for revenge to Ceres go,
In sable weeds, expressive of their woe.

The beauteous Goddess with a graceful air
Bow'd in consent, and nodded to their pray'r.
The awful motion shook the fruitful ground,
And wav'd the fields with golden harvests crown'd.
Soon she contriv'd in her projecting mind
A plague severe, and piteous in its kind
(If plagues for crimes of such presumptuous height
Could pity in the softest breast create).
With pinching want, and hunger's keenest smart,
To tear his vitals, and corrode his heart.
But since her near approach by Fate's deny'd
To famine, and broad climes their pow'rs divide,
A nymph, the mountain's ranger, she address'd,
And thus resolv'd, her high commands express'd.

The Description of Famine

Where frozen Scythia's utmost bound is plac'd,
A desert lies, a melancholy waste:
In yellow crops there Nature never smil'd,
No fruitful tree to shade the barren wild.
There sluggish cold its icy station makes,
There paleness, frights, and aguish trembling shakes,
Of pining famine this the fated seat,
To whom my orders in these words repeat:
Bid her this miscreant with her sharpest pains
Chastise, and sheath herself into his veins;
Be unsubdu'd by plenty's baffled store,
Reject my empire, and defeat my pow'r.
And lest the distance, and the tedious way,
Should with the toil, and long fatigue dismay,
Ascend my chariot, and convey'd on high,
Guide the rein'd dragons thro' the parting sky.

The nymph, accepting of the granted carr,
Sprung to the seat, and posted thro' the air;
Nor stop'd 'till she to a bleak mountain came

Of wondrous height, and Caucasus its name.
 There in a stony field the fiend she found,
 Herbs gnawing, and roots scratching from the ground.
 Her elfelock hair in matted tresses grew,
 Sunk were her eyes, and pale her ghastly hue,
 Wan were her lips, and foul with clammy glew.
 Her throat was furr'd, her guts appear'd within
 With snaky crawlings thro' her parchment skin.
 Her jutting hips seem'd starting from their place,
 And for a belly was a belly's space,
 Her dugs hung dangling from her craggy spine,
 Loose to her breast, and fasten'd to her chine.
 Her joints protuberant by leanness grown,
 Consumption sunk the flesh, and rais'd the bone.
 Her knees large orbits bunch'd to monstrous size,
 And ancles to undue proportion rise.

This plague the nymph, not daring to draw near,
 At distance hail'd, and greeted from afar.
 And tho' she told her charge without delay,
 Tho' her arrival late, and short her stay,
 She felt keen famine, or she seem'd to feel,
 Invade her blood, and on her vitals steal.
 She turn'd, from the infection to remove,
 And back to Thessaly the serpents drove.

The fiend obey'd the Goddess' command
 (Tho' their effects in opposition stand),
 She cut her way, supported by the wind,
 And reach'd the mansion by the nymph assign'd.

'Twas night, when entring Erisichthon's room,
 Dissolv'd in sleep, and thoughtless of his doom,
 She clasp'd his limbs, by impious labour tir'd,
 With battish wings, but her whole self inspir'd;
 Breath'd on his throat and chest a tainting blast,
 And in his veins infus'd an endless fast.

The task dispatch'd, away the Fury flies
 From plenteous regions, and from rip'ning skies;

To her old barren north she wings her speed,
And cottages distress'd with pinching need.

Still slumbers Erisichthon's senses drown,
And sooth his fancy with their softest down.
He dreams of viands delicate to eat,
And revels on imaginary meat,
Chaws with his working mouth, but chaws in vain,
And tires his grinding teeth with fruitless pain;
Deludes his throat with visionary fare,
Feasts on the wind, and banquets on the air.

The morning came, the night, and slumbers past,
But still the furious pangs of hunger last;
The cank'rous rage still gnaws with griping pains,
Stings in his throat, and in his bowels reigns.

Strait he requires, impatient in demand,
Provisions from the air, the seas, the land.
But tho' the land, air, seas, provisions grant,
Starves at full tables, and complains of want.
What to a people might in dole be paid,
Or victual cities for a long blockade,
Could not one wolfish appetite assuage;
For glutting nourishment increas'd its rage.
As rivers pour'd from ev'ry distant shore,
The sea insatiate drinks, and thirsts for more;
Or as the fire, which all materials burns,
And wasted forests into ashes turns,
Grows more voracious, as the more it preys,
Recruits dilate the flame, and spread the blaze:
So impious Erisichthon's hunger raves,
Receives refreshments, and refreshments craves.
Food raises a desire for food, and meat
Is but a new provocative to eat.
He grows more empty, as the more supply'd,
And endless cramming but extends the void.

The Transformations of Erisichthon's Daughter
Now riches hoarded by paternal care

Were sunk, the glutton swallowing up the heir.
 Yet the devouring flame no stores abate,
 Nor less his hunger grew with his estate.
 One daughter left, as left his keen desire,
 A daughter worthy of a better sire:
 Her too he sold, spent Nature to sustain;
 She scorn'd a lord with generous disdain,
 And flying, spread her hand upon the main.
 Then pray'd: Grant, thou, I bondage may escape,
 And with my liberty reward thy rape;
 Repay my virgin treasure with thy aid
 ('Twas Neptune who deflower'd the beauteous maid).

The God was mov'd, at what the fair had su'd,
 When she so lately by her master view'd
 In her known figure, on a sudden took
 A fisher's habit, and a manly look.
 To whom her owner hasted to enquire;
 O thou, said he, whose baits hide treach'rous wire;
 Whose art can manage, and experienc'd skill
 The taper angle, and the bobbing quill,
 So may the sea be ruffled with no storm,
 But smooth with calms, as you the truth inform;
 So your deceit may no shy fishes feel,
 'Till struck, and fasten'd on the bearded steel.
 Did not you standing view upon the strand,
 A wand'ring maid? I'm sure I saw her stand;
 Her hair disorder'd, and her homely dress
 Betray'd her want, and witness'd her distress.

Me heedless, she reply'd, whoe'er you are,
 Excuse, attentive to another care.
 I settled on the deep my steady eye;
 Fix'd on my float, and bent on my employ.
 And that you may not doubt what I impart,
 So may the ocean's God assist my art,
 If on the beach since I my sport pursu'd,
 Or man, or woman but my self I view'd.
 Back o'er the sands, deluded, he withdrew,
 Whilst she for her old form put off her new.

Her sire her shifting pow'r to change perceiv'd;
And various chapmen by her sale deceiv'd.
A fowl with spangled plumes, a brinded steer,
Sometimes a crested mare, or antler'd deer:
Sold for a price, she parted, to maintain
Her starving parent with dishonest gain.

At last all means, as all provisions, fail'd;
For the disease by remedies prevail'd;
His muscles with a furious bite he tore,
Gorg'd his own tatter'd flesh, and gulph'd his gore.
Wounds were his feast, his life to life a prey,
Supporting Nature by its own decay.

But foreign stories why shou'd I relate?
I too my self can to new forms translate,
Tho' the variety's not unconfin'd,
But fix'd, in number, and restrain'd in kind:
For often I this present shape retain,
Oft curl a snake the volumes of my train.
Sometimes my strength into my horns transfer'd,
A bull I march, the captain of the herd.
But whilst I once those goring weapons wore,
Vast wresting force one from my forehead tore.
Lo, my maim'd brows the injury still own;
He ceas'd; his words concluding with a groan.

BOOK THE TENTH

The Story of Orpheus and Eurydice

Thence, in his saffron robe, for distant Thrace,
Hymen departs, thro' air's unmeasur'd space;
By Orpheus call'd, the nuptial Pow'r attends,
But with ill-omen'd augury descends;
Nor chearful look'd the God, nor prosp'rous spoke,
Nor blaz'd his torch, but wept in hissing smoke.
In vain they whirl it round, in vain they shake,
No rapid motion can its flames awake.
With dread these inauspicious signs were view'd,

And soon a more disastrous end ensu'd;
 For as the bride, amid the Naiad train,
 Ran joyful, sporting o'er the flow'ry plain,
 A venom'd viper bit her as she pass'd;
 Instant she fell, and sudden breath'd her last.

When long his loss the Thracian had deplor'd,
 Not by superior Pow'rs to be restor'd;
 Inflam'd by love, and urg'd by deep despair,
 He leaves the realms of light, and upper air;
 Daring to tread the dark Tenarian road,
 And tempt the shades in their obscure abode;
 Thro' gliding spectres of th' interr'd to go,
 And phantom people of the world below:
 Persephone he seeks, and him who reigns
 O'er ghosts, and Hell's uncomfortable plains.
 Arriv'd, he, tuning to his voice his strings,
 Thus to the king and queen of shadows sings.

Ye Pow'rs, who under Earth your realms extend,
 To whom all mortals must one day descend;
 If here 'tis granted sacred truth to tell:
 I come not curious to explore your Hell;
 Nor come to boast (by vain ambition fir'd)
 How Cerberus at my approach retir'd.
 My wife alone I seek; for her lov'd sake
 These terrors I support, this journey take.
 She, luckless wandring, or by fate mis-led,
 Chanc'd on a lurking viper's crest to tread;
 The vengeful beast, inflam'd with fury, starts,
 And thro' her heel his deathful venom darts.
 Thus was she snatch'd untimely to her tomb;
 Her growing years cut short, and springing bloom.
 Long I my loss endeavour'd to sustain,
 And strongly strove, but strove, alas, in vain:
 At length I yielded, won by mighty love;
 Well known is that omnipotence above!
 But here, I doubt, his unfelt influence fails;
 And yet a hope within my heart prevails.
 That here, ev'n here, he has been known of old;

At least if truth be by tradition told;
If fame of former rapes belief may find,
You both by love, and love alone, were join'd.
Now, by the horrors which these realms surround;
By the vast chaos of these depths profound;
By the sad silence which eternal reigns
O'er all the waste of these wide-stretching plains;
Let me again Eurydice receive,
Let Fate her quick-spun thread of life re-weave.
All our possessions are but loans from you,
And soon, or late, you must be paid your due;
Hither we haste to human-kind's last seat,
Your endless empire, and our sure retreat.
She too, when ripen'd years she shall attain,
Must, of avoidless right, be yours again:
I but the transient use of that require,
Which soon, too soon, I must resign entire.
But if the destinies refuse my vow,
And no remission of her doom allow;
Know, I'm determin'd to return no more;
So both retain, or both to life restore.

Thus, while the bard melodiously complains,
And to his lyre accords his vocal strains,
The very bloodless shades attention keep,
And silent, seem compassionate to weep;
Ev'n Tantalus his flood unthirsty views,
Nor flies the stream, nor he the stream pursues;
Ixion's wond'ring wheel its whirl suspends,
And the voracious vulture, charm'd, attends;
No more the Belides their toil bemoan,
And Sisiphus reclin'd, sits list'ning on his stone.

Then first ('tis said) by sacred verse subdu'd,
The Furies felt their cheeks with tears bedew'd:
Nor could the rigid king, or queen of Hell,
Th' impulse of pity in their hearts repell.

Now, from a troop of shades that last arriv'd,
Eurydice was call'd, and stood reviv'd:

Slow she advanc'd, and halting seem to feel
 The fatal wound, yet painful in her heel.
 Thus he obtains the suit so much desir'd,
 On strict observance of the terms requir'd:
 For if, before he reach the realms of air,
 He backward cast his eyes to view the fair,
 The forfeit grant, that instant, void is made,
 And she for ever left a lifeless shade.

Now thro' the noiseless throng their way they bend,
 And both with pain the rugged road ascend;
 Dark was the path, and difficult, and steep,
 And thick with vapours from the smoaky deep.
 They well-nigh now had pass'd the bounds of night,
 And just approach'd the margin of the light,
 When he, mistrusting lest her steps might stray,
 And gladsome of the glympse of dawning day,
 His longing eyes, impatient, backward cast
 To catch a lover's look, but look'd his last;
 For, instant dying, she again descends,
 While he to empty air his arms extends.
 Again she dy'd, nor yet her lord reprov'd;
 What could she say, but that too well he lov'd?
 One last farewell she spoke, which scarce he heard;
 So soon she drop'd, so sudden disappear'd.

All stunn'd he stood, when thus his wife he view'd
 By second Fate, and double death subdu'd:
 Not more amazement by that wretch was shown,
 Whom Cerberus beholding, turn'd to stone;
 Nor Olenus cou'd more astonish'd look,
 When on himself Lethaea's fault he took,
 His beauteous wife, who too secure had dar'd
 Her face to vye with Goddesses compar'd:
 Once join'd by love, they stand united still,
 Turn'd to contiguous rocks on Ida's hill.

Now to repass the Styx in vain he tries,
 Charon averse, his pressing suit denies.
 Sev'n days entire, along th' infernal shores,

Disconsolate, the bard Eurydice deplores;
Defil'd with filth his robe, with tears his cheeks,
No sustenance but grief, and cares, he seeks:
Of rigid Fate incessant he complains,
And Hell's inexorable Gods arraigns.
This ended, to high Rhodope he hastes,
And Haemus' mountain, bleak with northern blasts.

And now his yearly race the circling sun
Had thrice compleat thro' wat'ry Pisces run,
Since Orpheus fled the face of womankind,
And all soft union with the sex declin'd.
Whether his ill success this change had bred,
Or binding vows made to his former bed;
Whate'er the cause, in vain the nymphs contest,
With rival eyes to warm his frozen breast:
For ev'ry nymph with love his lays inspir'd,
But ev'ry nymph repuls'd, with grief retir'd.

A hill there was, and on that hill a mead,
With verdure thick, but destitute of shade.
Where, now, the Muse's son no sooner sings,
No sooner strikes his sweet resounding strings.
But distant groves the flying sounds receive,
And list'ning trees their rooted stations leave;
Themselves transplanting, all around they grow,
And various shades their various kinds bestow.
Here, tall Chaonian oaks their branches spread,
While weeping poplars there erect their head.
The foodful Esculus here shoots his leaves,
That turf soft lime-tree, this, fat beach receives;
Here, brittle hazels, lawrels here advance,
And there tough ash to form the heroe's lance;
Here silver firs with knotless trunks ascend,
There, scarlet oaks beneath their acorns bend.
That spot admits the hospitable plane,
On this, the maple grows with clouded grain;
Here, watry willows are with Lotus seen;
There, tamarisk, and box for ever green.
With double hue here mirtles grace the ground,

And laurestines, with purple berries crown'd.
 With pliant feet, now, ivies this way wind,
 Vines yonder rise, and elms with vines entwin'd.
 Wild Ornus now, the pitch-tree next takes root,
 And Arbutus adorn'd with blushing fruit.
 Then easy-bending palms, the victor's prize,
 And pines erect with bristly tops arise.
 For Rhea grateful still the pine remains,
 For Atys still some favour she retains;
 He once in human shape her breast had warm'd,
 And now is cherish'd, to a tree transform'd.

The Fable of Cyparissus

Amid the throng of this promiscuous wood,
 With pointed top, the taper cypress stood;
 A tree, which once a youth, and heav'nly fair,
 Was of that deity the darling care,
 Whose hand adapts, with equal skill, the strings
 To bows with which he kills, and harps to which he sings.

For heretofore, a mighty stag was bred,
 Which on the fertile fields of Caea fed;
 In shape and size he all his kind excell'd,
 And to Carthaeon nymphs was sacred held.
 His beamy head, with branches high display'd,
 Afforded to itself an ample shade;
 His horns were gilt, and his smooth neck was grac'd
 With silver collars thick with gems enchas'd:
 A silver boss upon his forehead hung,
 And brazen pendants in his ear-rings rung.
 Frequenting houses, he familiar grew,
 And learnt by custom, Nature to subdue;
 'Till by degrees, of fear, and wildness, broke,
 Ev'n stranger hands his proffer'd neck might stroak.

Much was the beast by Caea's youth caress'd,
 But thou, sweet Cyparissus, lov'dst him best:
 By thee, to pastures fresh, he oft was led,
 By thee oft water'd at the fountain's head:
 His horns with garlands, now, by thee were ty'd,

And, now, thou on his back wou'dst wanton ride;
Now here, now there wou'dst bound along the plains,
Ruling his tender mouth with purple reins.

'Twas when the summer sun, at noon of day,
Thro' glowing Cancer shot his burning ray,
'Twas then, the fav'rite stag, in cool retreat,
Had sought a shelter from the scorching heat;
Along the grass his weary limbs he laid,
Inhaling freshness from the breezy shade:
When Cyparissus with his pointed dart,
Unknowing, pierc'd him to the panting heart.
But when the youth, surpriz'd, his error found,
And saw him dying of the cruel wound,
Himself he would have slain thro' desp'rate grief:
What said not Phoebus, that might yield relief!
To cease his mourning, he the boy desir'd,
Or mourn no more than such a loss requir'd.
But he, incessant griev'd: at length address'd
To the superior Pow'rs a last request;
Praying, in expiation of his crime,
Thenceforth to mourn to all succeeding time.

And now, of blood exhausted he appears,
Drain'd by a torrent of continual tears;
The fleshy colour in his body fades,
And a green tincture all his limbs invades;
From his fair head, where curling locks late hung,
A horrid bush with bristled branches sprung,
Which stiffning by degrees, its stem extends,
'Till to the starry skies the spire ascends.

Apollo sad look'd on, and sighing, cry'd,
Then, be for ever, what thy pray'r imply'd:
Bemoan'd by me, in others grief excite;
And still preside at ev'ry fun'ral rite.

Thus the sweet artist in a wondrous shade
Of verdant trees, which harmony had made,
Encircled sate, with his own triumphs crown'd,

Of listning birds, and savages around.
 Again the trembling strings he dext'rous tries,
 Again from discord makes soft musick rise.
 Then tunes his voice: O Muse, from whom I sprung,
 Jove be my theme, and thou inspire my song.
 To Jove my grateful voice I oft have rais'd,
 Oft his almighty pow'r with pleasure prais'd.
 I sung the giants in a solemn strain,
 Blasted, and thunder-struck on Phlegra's plain.
 Now be my lyre in softer accents mov'd,
 To sing of blooming boys by Gods belov'd;
 And to relate what virgins, void of shame,
 Have suffer'd vengeance for a lawless flame.

The King of Gods once felt the burning joy,
 And sigh'd for lovely Ganimede of Troy:
 Long was he puzzled to assume a shape
 Most fit, and expeditious for the rape;
 A bird's was proper, yet he scorns to wear
 Any but that which might his thunder bear.
 Down with his masquerading wings he flies,
 And bears the little Trojan to the skies;
 Where now, in robes of heav'nly purple drest,
 He serves the nectar at th' Almighty's feast,
 To slighted Juno an unwelcome guest.

Hyacinthus transform'd into a Flower

Phoebus for thee too, Hyacinth, design'd
 A place among the Gods, had Fate been kind:
 Yet this he gave; as oft as wintry rains
 Are past, and vernal breezes sooth the plains,
 From the green turf a purple flow'r you rise,
 And with your fragrant breath perfume the skies.

You when alive were Phoebus' darling boy;
 In you he plac'd his Heav'n, and fix'd his joy:
 Their God the Delphic priests consult in vain;
 Eurotas now he loves, and Sparta's plain:
 His hands the use of bow and harp forget,
 And hold the dogs, or bear the corded net;

O'er hanging cliffs swift he pursues the game;
Each hour his pleasure, each augments his flame.

The mid-day sun now shone with equal light
Between the past, and the succeeding night;
They strip, then, smooth'd with suppling oyl, essay
To pitch the rounded quoit, their wonted play:
A well-pois'd disk first hasty Phoebus threw,
It cleft the air, and whistled as it flew;
It reach'd the mark, a most surprizing length;
Which spoke an equal share of art, and strength.
Scarce was it fall'n, when with too eager hand
Young Hyacinth ran to snatch it from the sand;
But the curst orb, which met a stony soil,
Flew in his face with violent recoil.
Both faint, both pale, and breathless now appear,
The boy with pain, the am'rous God with fear.
He ran, and rais'd him bleeding from the ground,
Chafes his cold limbs, and wipes the fatal wound:
Then herbs of noblest juice in vain applies;
The wound is mortal, and his skill defies.

As in a water'd garden's blooming walk,
When some rude hand has bruis'd its tender stalk,
A fading lilly droops its languid head,
And bends to earth, its life, and beauty fled:
So Hyacinth, with head reclin'd, decays,
And, sickning, now no more his charms displays.

O thou art gone, my boy, Apollo cry'd,
Defrauded of thy youth in all its pride!
Thou, once my joy, art all my sorrow now;
And to my guilty hand my grief I owe.
Yet from my self I might the fault remove,
Unless to sport, and play, a fault should prove,
Unless it too were call'd a fault to love.
Oh cou'd I for thee, or but with thee, dye!
But cruel Fates to me that pow'r deny.
Yet on my tongue thou shalt for ever dwell;
Thy name my lyre shall sound, my verse shall tell;

And to a flow'r transform'd, unheard-of yet,
 Stamp'd on thy leaves my cries thou shalt repeat.
 The time shall come, prophetick I foreknow,
 When, joyn'd to thee, a mighty chief shall grow,
 And with my plaints his name thy leaf shall show.

While Phoebus thus the laws of Fate reveal'd,
 Behold, the blood which stain'd the verdant field,
 Is blood no longer; but a flow'r full blown,
 Far brighter than the Tyrian scarlet shone.
 A lilly's form it took; its purple hue
 Was all that made a difference to the view,
 Nor stop'd he here; the God upon its leaves
 The sad expression of his sorrow weaves;
 And to this hour the mournful purple wears
 Ai, Ai, inscrib'd in funeral characters.
 Nor are the Spartans, who so much are fam'd
 For virtue, of their Hyacinth asham'd;
 But still with pompous woe, and solemn state,
 The Hyacinthian feasts they yearly celebrate

The Transformations of the Cerastae and Propoetides
 Enquire of Amathus, whose wealthy ground
 With veins of every metal does abound,
 If she to her Propoetides wou'd show,
 The honour Sparta does to him allow?
 Nor more, she'd say, such wretches wou'd we grace,
 Than those whose crooked horns deform'd their face,
 From thence Cerastae call'd, an impious race:
 Before whose gates a rev'rend altar stood,
 To Jove inscrib'd, the hospitable God:
 This had some stranger seen with gore besmear'd,
 The blood of lambs, and bulls it had appear'd:
 Their slaughter'd guests it was; nor flock nor herd.

Venus these barb'rous sacrifices view'd
 With just abhorrence, and with wrath pursu'd:
 At first, to punish such nefarious crimes,
 Their towns she meant to leave, her once-lov'd climes:
 But why, said she, for their offence shou'd I

My dear delightful plains, and cities fly?
No, let the impious people, who have sinn'd,
A punishment in death, or exile, find:
If death, or exile too severe be thought,
Let them in some vile shape bemoan their fault.
While next her mind a proper form employs,
Admonish'd by their horns, she fix'd her choice.
Their former crest remains upon their heads,
And their strong limbs an ox's shape invades.

The blasphemous Propoetides deny'd
Worship of Venus, and her pow'r defy'd:
But soon that pow'r they felt, the first that sold
Their lewd embraces to the world for gold.
Unknowing how to blush, and shameless grown,
A small transition changes them to stone.

The Story of Pygmalion and the Statue

Pygmalion loathing their lascivious life,
Abhorr'd all womankind, but most a wife:
So single chose to live, and shunn'd to wed,
Well pleas'd to want a consort of his bed.
Yet fearing idleness, the nurse of ill,
In sculpture exercis'd his happy skill;
And carv'd in iv'ry such a maid, so fair,
As Nature could not with his art compare,
Were she to work; but in her own defence
Must take her pattern here, and copy hence.
Pleas'd with his idol, he commends, admires,
Adores; and last, the thing ador'd, desires.
A very virgin in her face was seen,
And had she mov'd, a living maid had been:
One wou'd have thought she cou'd have stirr'd, but strove
With modesty, and was asham'd to move.
Art hid with art, so well perform'd the cheat,
It caught the carver with his own deceit:
He knows 'tis madness, yet he must adore,
And still the more he knows it, loves the more:
The flesh, or what so seems, he touches oft,
Which feels so smooth, that he believes it soft.

Fir'd with this thought, at once he strain'd the breast,
 And on the lips a burning kiss impress'd.
 'Tis true, the harden'd breast resists the gripe,
 And the cold lips return a kiss unripe:
 But when, retiring back, he look'd again,
 To think it iv'ry, was a thought too mean:
 So wou'd believe she kiss'd, and courting more,
 Again embrac'd her naked body o'er;
 And straining hard the statue, was afraid
 His hands had made a dint, and hurt his maid:
 Explor'd her limb by limb, and fear'd to find
 So rude a gripe had left a livid mark behind:
 With flatt'ry now he seeks her mind to move,
 And now with gifts (the pow'rful bribes of love),
 He furnishes her closet first; and fills
 The crowded shelves with rarities of shells;
 Adds orient pearls, which from the conchs he drew,
 And all the sparkling stones of various hue:
 And parrots, imitating human tongue,
 And singing-birds in silver cages hung:
 And ev'ry fragrant flow'r, and od'rous green,
 Were sorted well, with lumps of amber laid between:
 Rich fashionable robes her person deck,
 Pendants her ears, and pearls adorn her neck:
 Her taper'd fingers too with rings are grac'd,
 And an embroider'd zone surrounds her slender waste.
 Thus like a queen array'd, so richly dress'd,
 Beauteous she shew'd, but naked shew'd the best.
 Then, from the floor, he rais'd a royal bed,
 With cov'rings of Sydonian purple spread:
 The solemn rites perform'd, he calls her bride,
 With blandishments invites her to his side;
 And as she were with vital sense possess'd,
 Her head did on a plummy pillow rest.

The feast of Venus came, a solemn day,
 To which the Cypriots due devotion pay;
 With gilded horns the milk-white heifers led,
 Slaughter'd before the sacred altars, bled.

Pygmalion off'ring, first approach'd the shrine,
And then with pray'rs implor'd the Pow'rs divine:
Almighty Gods, if all we mortals want,
If all we can require, be yours to grant;
Make this fair statue mine, he wou'd have said,
But chang'd his words for shame; and only pray'd,
Give me the likeness of my iv'ry maid.

The golden Goddess, present at the pray'r,
Well knew he meant th' inanimated fair,
And gave the sign of granting his desire;
For thrice in chearful flames ascends the fire.
The youth, returning to his mistress, hies,
And impudent in hope, with ardent eyes,
And beating breast, by the dear statue lies.
He kisses her white lips, renews the bliss,
And looks, and thinks they redden at the kiss;
He thought them warm before: nor longer stays,
But next his hand on her hard bosom lays:
Hard as it was, beginning to relent,
It seem'd, the breast beneath his fingers bent;
He felt again, his fingers made a print;
'Twas flesh, but flesh so firm, it rose against the dint:
The pleasing task he fails not to renew;
Soft, and more soft at ev'ry touch it grew;
Like pliant wax, when chasing hands reduce
The former mass to form, and frame for use.
He would believe, but yet is still in pain,
And tries his argument of sense again,
Presses the pulse, and feels the leaping vein.
Convinc'd, o'erjoy'd, his studied thanks, and praise,
To her, who made the miracle, he pays:
Then lips to lips he join'd; now freed from fear,
He found the savour of the kiss sincere:
At this the waken'd image op'd her eyes,
And view'd at once the light, and lover with surprize.
The Goddess, present at the match she made,
So bless'd the bed, such fruitfulness convey'd,
That ere ten months had sharpen'd either horn,
To crown their bliss, a lovely boy was born;

Paphos his name, who grown to manhood, wall'd
The city Paphos, from the founder call'd.

The Story of of Cinyras and Myrrha

Nor him alone produc'd the fruitful queen;
But Cinyras, who like his sire had been
A happy prince, had he not been a sire.
Daughters, and fathers, from my song retire;
I sing of horror; and could I prevail,
You shou'd not hear, or not believe my tale.
Yet if the pleasure of my song be such,
That you will hear, and credit me too much,
Attentive listen to the last event,
And, with the sin, believe the punishment:
Since Nature cou'd behold so dire a crime,
I gratefully at least my native clime,
That such a land, which such a monster bore,
So far is distant from our Thracian shore.
Let Araby extol her happy coast,
Her cinamon, and sweet Amomum boast,
Her fragrant flow'rs, her trees with precious tears,
Her second harvests, and her double years;
How can the land be call'd so bless'd, that Myrrha bears?
Nor all her od'rous tears can cleanse her crime;
Her Plant alone deforms the happy clime:
Cupid denies to have inflam'd thy heart,
Disowns thy love, and vindicates his dart:
Some Fury gave thee those infernal pains,
And shot her venom'd vipers in thy veins.
To hate thy sire, had merited a curse;
But such an impious love deserv'd a worse.
The neighb'ring monarchs, by thy beauty led,
Contend in crowds, ambitious of thy bed:
The world is at thy choice; except but one,
Except but him, thou canst not chuse, alone.
She knew it too, the miserable maid,
Ere impious love her better thoughts betray'd,
And thus within her secret soul she said:
Ah Myrrha! whither wou'd thy wishes tend?
Ye Gods, ye sacred laws, my soul defend

From such a crime as all mankind detest,
And never lodg'd before in human breast!
But is it sin? Or makes my mind alone
Th' imagin'd sin? For Nature makes it none.
What tyrant then these envious laws began,
Made not for any other beast, but Man!
The father-bull his daughter may bestride,
The horse may make his mother-mare a bride;
What piety forbids the lusty ram,
Or more salacious goat, to rut their dam?
The hen is free to wed the chick she bore,
And make a husband, whom she hatch'd before.
All creatures else are of a happier kind,
Whom nor ill-natur'd laws from pleasure bind,
Nor thoughts of sin disturb their peace of mind.
But Man a slave of his own making lives;
The fool denies himself what Nature gives:
Too-busie senates, with an over-care,
To make us better than our kind can bear,
Have dash'd a spice of envy in the laws,
And straining up too high, have spoil'd the cause.
Yet some wise nations break their cruel chains,
And own no laws, but those which love ordains;
Where happy daughters with their sires are join'd,
And piety is doubly paid in kind.
O that I had been born in such a clime,
Not here, where 'tis the country makes the crime!
But whither wou'd my impious fancy stray?
Hence hopes, and ye forbidden thoughts away!
His worth deserves to kindle my desires,
But with the love, that daughters bear to sires.
Then had not Cinyras my father been,
What hinder'd Myrrha's hopes to be his queen?
But the perverseness of my fate is such,
That he's not mine, because he's mine too much:
Our kindred-blood debars a better tie;
He might be nearer, were he not so nigh.
Eyes, and their objects, never must unite;
Some distance is requir'd to help the sight:
Fain wou'd I travel to some foreign shore,

Never to see my native country more,
 So might I to my self my self restore;
 So might my mind these impious thoughts remove,
 And ceasing to behold, might cease to love.
 But stay I must, to feed my famish'd sight,
 To talk, to kiss, and more, if more I might:
 More, impious maid! What more canst thou design?
 To make a monstrous mixture in thy line,
 And break all statutes human and divine!
 Can'st thou be call'd (to save thy wretched life)
 Thy mother's rival, and thy father's wife?
 Confound so many sacred names in one,
 Thy brother's mother! Sister to thy son!
 And fear'st thou not to see th' infernal bands,
 Their heads with snakes; with torches arm'd their hands
 Full at thy face th' avenging brands to bear,
 And shake the serpents from their hissing hair;
 But thou in time th' increasing ill controul,
 Nor first debauch the body by the soul;
 Secure the sacred quiet of thy mind,
 And keep the sanctions Nature has design'd.
 Suppose I shou'd attempt, th' attempt were vain,
 No thoughts like mine, his sinless soul profane;
 Observant of the right: and o that he
 Cou'd cure my madness, or be mad like me!
 Thus she: but Cinyras, who daily sees
 A crowd of noble suitors at his knees,
 Among so many, knew not whom to chuse,
 Irresolute to grant, or to refuse.
 But having told their names, enquir'd of her
 Who pleas'd her best, and whom she would prefer.
 The blushing maid stood silent with surprize,
 And on her father fix'd her ardent eyes,
 And looking sigh'd, and as she sigh'd, began
 Round tears to shed, that scalded as they ran.
 The tender sire, who saw her blush, and cry,
 Ascrib'd it all to maiden modesty,
 And dry'd the falling drops, and yet more kind,
 He stroak'd her cheeks, and holy kisses join'd.
 She felt a secret venom fire her blood,

And found more pleasure, than a daughter shou'd;
And, ask'd again what lover of the crew
She lik'd the best, she answer'd, One like you.
Mistaking what she meant, her pious will
He prais'd, and bid her so continue still:
The word of pious heard, she blush'd with shame
Of secret guilt, and cou'd not bear the name.

'Twas now the mid of night, when slumbers close
Our eyes, and sooth our cares with soft repose;
But no repose cou'd wretched Myrrha find,
Her body rouling, as she rould her mind:
Mad with desire, she ruminates her sin,
And wishes all her wishes o'er again:
Now she despairs, and now resolves to try;
Wou'd not, and wou'd again, she knows not why;
Stops, and returns; makes, and retracts the vow;
Fain wou'd begin, but understands not how.
As when a pine is hew'd upon the plains,
And the last mortal stroke alone remains,
Lab'ring in pangs of death, and threatning all,
This way, and that she nods, consid'ring where to fall:
So Myrrha's mind, impell'd on either side,
Takes ev'ry bent, but cannot long abide;
Irresolute on which she shou'd relie,
At last, unfix'd in all, is only fix'd to die.
On that sad thought she rests, resolv'd on death,
She rises, and prepares to choak her breath:
Then while about the beam her zone she ties,
Dear Cinyras farewell, she softly cries;
For thee I die, and only wish to be
Not hated, when thou know'st die I for thee:
Pardon the crime, in pity to the cause:
This said, about her neck the noose she draws.
The nurse, who lay without, her faithful guard,
Though not the words, the murmurs over-heard;
And sighs, and hollow sounds: surpriz'd with fright,
She starts, and leaves her bed, and springs a light;
Unlocks the door, and entring out of breath,
The dying saw, and instruments of death;

She shrieks, she cuts the zone with trembling haste,
 And in her arms her fainting charge embrac'd:
 Next (for she now had leisure for her tears),
 She weeping ask'd, in these her blooming years,
 What unforeseen misfortune caus'd her care,
 To loath her life, and languish in despair!
 The maid, with down-cast eyes, and mute with grief
 For death unfinish'd, and ill-tim'd relief,
 Stood sullen to her suit: the beldame press'd
 The more to know, and bar'd her wither'd breast,
 Adjur'd her by the kindly food she drew
 From those dry founts, her secret ill to shew.
 Sad Myrrha sigh'd, and turn'd her eyes aside:
 The nurse still urg'd, and wou'd not be deny'd:
 Nor only promis'd secresie, but pray'd
 She might have leave to give her offer'd aid.
 Good-will, she said, my want of strength supplies,
 And diligence shall give what age denies:
 If strong desires thy mind to fury move,
 With charms and med'cines I can cure thy love:
 If envious eyes their hurtful rays have cast,
 More pow'rful verse shall free thee from the blast:
 If Heav'n offended sends thee this disease,
 Offended Heav'n with pray'rs we can appease.
 What then remains, that can these cares procure?
 Thy house is flourishing, thy fortune sure:
 Thy careful mother yet in health survives,
 And, to thy comfort, thy kind father lives.
 The virgin started at her father's name,
 And sigh'd profoundly, conscious of the shame
 Nor yet the nurse her impious love divin'd,
 But yet surmis'd that love disturb'd her mind:
 Thus thinking, she pursu'd her point, and laid,
 And lull'd within her lap the mourning maid;
 Then softly sooth'd her thus; I guess your grief:
 You love, my child; your love shall find relief.
 My long-experienc'd age shall be your guide;
 Rely on that, and lay distrust aside.
 No breath of air shall on the secret blow,
 Nor shall (what most you fear) your father know.

Struck once again, as with a thunder-clap,
The guilty virgin bounded from her lap,
And threw her body prostrate on the bed.
And, to conceal her blushes, hid her head;
There silent lay, and warn'd her with her hand
To go: but she receiv'd not the command;
Remaining still importunate to know:
Then Myrrha thus: Or ask no more, or go;
I pr'ythee go, or staying spare my shame;
What thou would'st hear, is impious ev'n to name.
At this, on high the beldame holds her hands,
And trembling both with age, and terror stands;
Adjures, and falling at her feet intreats,
Sooths her with blandishments, and frights with threats,
To tell the crime intended, or disclose
What part of it she knew, if she no farther knows.
And last, if conscious to her counsel made,
Confirms anew the promise of her aid.
Now Myrrha rais'd her head; but soon oppress'd
With shame, reclin'd it on her nurse's breast;
Bath'd it with tears, and strove to have confess'd:
Twice she began, and stopp'd; again she try'd;
The falt'ring tongue its office still deny'd.
At last her veil before her face she spread,
And drew a long preluding sigh, and said,
O happy mother, in thy marriage-bed!
Then groan'd, and ceas'd. The good old woman shook,
Stiff were her eyes, and ghastly was her look:
Her hoary hair upright with horror stood,
Made (to her grief) more knowing than she wou'd.
Much she reproach'd, and many things she said,
To cure the madness of th' unhappy maid,
In vain: for Myrrha stood convict of ill;
Her reason vanquish'd, but unchang'd her will:
Perverse of mind, unable to reply;
She stood resolv'd, or to possess, or die.
At length the fondness of a nurse prevail'd
Against her better sense, and virtue fail'd:
Enjoy, my child, since such is thy desire,
Thy love, she said; she durst not say, thy sire:

Live, though unhappy, live on any terms;
Then with a second oath her faith confirms.

The solemn feast of Ceres now was near,
When long white linnen stoles the matrons wear;
Rank'd in procession walk the pious train,
Off'ring first-fruits, and spikes of yellow grain:
For nine long nights the nuptial-bed they shun,
And sanctifying harvest, lie alone.

Mix'd with the crowd, the queen forsook her lord,
And Ceres' pow'r with secret rites ador'd:
The royal couch, now vacant for a time,
The crafty crone, officious in her crime,
The first occasion took: the king she found
Easie with wine, and deep in pleasures drown'd,
Prepar'd for love: the beldame blew the flame,
Confess'd the passion, but conceal'd the name.
Her form she prais'd; the monarch ask'd her years;
And she reply'd, The same thy Myrrha bears.
Wine, and commended beauty fir'd his thought;
Impatient, he commands her to be brought.
Pleas'd with her charge perform'd, she hies her home,
And gratulates the nymph, the task was overcome.
Myrrha was joy'd the welcome news to hear;
But clog'd with guilt, the joy was unsincere:
So various, so discordant is the mind,
That in our will a diff'rent will we find.
Ill she presag'd, and yet pursu'd her lust;
For guilty pleasures give a double gust.

'Twas depth of night: Arctophylax had driv'n
His lazy wain half round the northern Heav'n,
When Myrrha hasten'd to the crime desir'd:
The moon beheld her first, and first retir'd:
The stars amaz'd, ran backward from the sight,
And (shrunk within their sockets) lost their light.
Icarus first withdraws his holy flame:
The virgin sign, in Heav'n the second name,
Slides down the belt, and from her station flies,

And night with sable clouds involves the skies.
Bold Myrrha still pursues her black intent;
She stumbled thrice (an omen of th' event);
Thrice shriek'd the fun'ral owl, yet on she went,
Secure of shame, because secure of sight;
Ev'n bashful sins are impudent by night.
Link'd hand in hand, th' accomplice, and the dame,
Their way exploring, to the chamber came:
The door was ope; they blindly grope their way,
Where dark in bed th' expecting monarch lay.
Thus far her courage held, but here forsakes;
Her faint knees knock at ev'ry step she makes.
The nearer to her crime, the more within
She feels remorse, and horror of her sin;
Repents too late her criminal desire,
And wishes, that unknown she could retire.
Her lingring thus, the nurse (who fear'd delay
The fatal secret might at length betray)
Pull'd forward, to compleat the work begun,
And said to Cinyras, Receive thy own.
Thus saying, she deliver'd kind to kind,
Accurs'd, and their devoted bodies join'd.
The sire, unknowing of the crime, admits
His bowels, and prophanes the hallow'd sheets;
He found she trembled, but believ'd she strove
With maiden modesty against her love,
And sought with flatt'ring words vain fancies to remove.
Perhaps he said, My daughter, cease thy fears
(Because the title suited with her years);
And, Father, she might whisper him again,
That names might not be wanting to the sin.

Full of her sire, she left th' incestuous bed,
And carry'd in her womb the crime she bred.
Another, and another night she came;
For frequent sin had left no sense of shame:
'Till Cinyras desir'd to see her face,
Whose body he had held in close embrace,
And brought a taper; the revealer, light,
Expos'd both crime, and criminal to sight.

Grief, rage, amazement, could no speech afford,
 But from the sheath he drew th' avenging sword:
 The guilty fled: the benefit of night,
 That favour'd first the sin, secur'd the flight.
 Long wand'ring thro' the spacious fields, she bent
 Her voyage to th' Arabian continent;
 Then pass'd the region which Panchaea join'd,
 And flying, left the palmy plains behind.
 Nine times the moon had mew'd her horns; at length
 With travel weary, unsupply'd with strength,
 And with the burden of her womb oppress'd,
 Sabaeen fields afford her needful rest:
 There, loathing life, and yet of death afraid,
 In anguish of her spirit, thus she pray'd:
 Ye Pow'rs, if any so propitious are
 T' accept my penitence, and hear my pray'r;
 Your judgments, I confess, are justly sent;
 Great sins deserve as great a punishment:
 Yet since my life the living will profane,
 And since my death the happy dead will stain,
 A middle state your mercy may bestow,
 Betwixt the realms above, and those below:
 Some other form to wretched Myrrha give,
 Nor let her wholly die, nor wholly live.

The pray'rs of penitents are never vain;
 At least she did her last request obtain:
 For while she spoke, the ground began to rise,
 And gather'd round her feet, her legs, and thighs;
 Her toes in roots descend, and spreading wide,
 A firm foundation for the trunk provide:
 Her solid bones convert to solid wood,
 To pith her marrow, and to sap her blood:
 Her arms are boughs, her fingers change their kind,
 Her tender skin is harden'd into rind.
 And now the rising tree her womb invests,
 Now shooting upwards still, invades her breasts,
 And shades the neck; when weary with delay,
 She sunk her head within, and met it half the way.
 And tho' with outward shape she lost her sense,

With bitter tears she wept her last offence;
And still she weeps, nor sheds her tears in vain;
For still the precious drops her name retain.
Mean-time the mis-begotten infant grows,
And ripe for birth, distends with deadly throes
The swelling rind, with unavailing strife,
To leave the wooden womb, and pushes into life.
The mother-tree, as if oppress'd with pain,
Writhes here, and there, to break the bark, in vain;
And, like a lab'ring woman, wou'd have pray'd,
But wants a voice to call Lucina's aid:
The bending bole sends out a hollow sound,
And trickling tears fall thicker on the ground.
The mild Lucina came uncall'd, and stood
Beside the struggling boughs, and heard the groaning wood;
Then reach'd her midwife-hand to speed the throes,
And spoke the pow'rful spells, that babes to birth disclose.
The bark divides, the living load to free,
And safe delivers the convulsive tree.
The ready nymphs receive the crying child,
And wash him in the tears the parent plant distill'd.
They swath'd him with their scarfs; beneath him spread
The ground with herbs; with roses rais'd his head.
The lovely babe was born with ev'ry grace,
Ev'n envy must have prais'd so fair a face:
Such was his form, as painters when they show
Their utmost art, on naked loves bestow:
And that their arms no diff'rence might betray,
Give him a bow, or his from Cupid take away.
Time glides along with undiscover'd haste,
The future but a length behind the past;
So swift are years. The babe, whom just before
His grandsire got, and whom his sister bore;
The drop, the thing, which late the tree inclos'd,
And late the yawning bark to life expos'd;
A babe, a boy, a beauteous youth appears,
And lovelier than himself at riper years.
Now to the queen of love he gave desires,
And, with her pains, reveng'd his mother's fires.

The Story of Venus and Adonis

For Cytherea's lips while Cupid prest,
 He with a heedless arrow raz'd her breast,
 The Goddess felt it, and with fury stung,
 The wanton mischief from her bosom flung:
 Yet thought at first the danger slight, but found
 The dart too faithful, and too deep the wound.
 Fir'd with a mortal beauty, she disdains
 To haunt th' Idalian mount, or Phrygian plains.
 She seeks not Cnidos, nor her Paphian shrines,
 Nor Amathus, that teems with brazen mines:
 Ev'n Heav'n itself with all its sweets unsought,
 Adonis far a sweeter Heav'n is thought.
 On him she hangs, and fonds with ev'ry art,
 And never, never knows from him to part.
 She, whose soft limbs had only been display'd
 On rosie beds beneath the myrtle shade,
 Whose pleasing care was to improve each grace,
 And add more charms to an unrival'd face,
 Now buskin'd, like the virgin huntress, goes
 Thro' woods, and pathless wilds, and mountain-snows
 With her own tuneful voice she joys to cheer
 The panting hounds, that chace the flying deer.
 She runs the labyrinth of fearful hares,
 But fearless beasts, and dang'rous prey forbears,
 Hunts not the grinning wolf, or foamy boar,
 And trembles at the lion's hungry roar.
 Thee too, Adonis, with a lover's care
 She warns, if warn'd thou wou'dst avoid the snare,
 To furious animals advance not nigh,
 Fly those that follow, follow those that fly;
 'Tis chance alone must the survivors save,
 Whene'er brave spirits will attempt the brave.
 O! lovely youth! in harmless sports delight;
 Provoke not beasts, which, arm'd by Nature, fight.
 For me, if not thy self, vouchsafe to fear;
 Let not thy thirst of glory cost me dear.
 Boars know not bow to spare a blooming age;
 No sparkling eyes can sooth the lion's rage.
 Not all thy charms a savage breast can move,

Which have so deeply touch'd the queen of love.
When bristled boars from beaten thickets spring,
In grinded tusks a thunderbolt they bring.
The daring hunters lions rous'd devour,
Vast is their fury, and as vast their pow'r:
Curst be their tawny race! If thou would'st hear
What kindled thus my hate, then lend an ear:
The wond'rous tale I will to thee unfold,
How the fell monsters rose from crimes of old.
But by long toils I faint: see! wide-display'd,
A grateful poplar courts us with a shade.
The grassy turf, beneath, so verdant shows,
We may secure delightfully repose.
With her Adonis here be Venus blest;
And swift at once the grass and him she prest.
Then sweetly smiling, with a raptur'd mind,
On his lov'd bosom she her head reclin'd,
And thus began; but mindful still of bliss,
Seal'd the soft accents with a softer kiss.

Perhaps thou may'st have heard a virgin's name,
Who still in swiftness swiftest youths o'ercame.
Wondrous! that female weakness should outdo
A manly strength; the wonder yet is true.
'Twas doubtful, if her triumphs in the field
Did to her form's triumphant glories yield;
Whether her face could with more ease decoy
A crowd of lovers, or her feet destroy.
For once Apollo she implor'd to show
If courteous Fates a consort would allow:
A consort brings thy ruin, he reply'd;
O! learn to want the pleasures of a bride!
Nor shalt thou want them to thy wretched cost,
And Atalanta living shall be lost.
With such a rueful Fate th' affrighted maid
Sought green recesses in the wood-land glade.
Nor sighing suiters her resolves could move,
She bad them show their speed, to show their love.
He only, who could conquer in the race,
Might hope the conquer'd virgin to embrace;

While he, whose tardy feet had lagg'd behind,
 Was doom'd the sad reward of death to find.
 Tho' great the prize, yet rigid the decree,
 But blind with beauty, who can rigour see?
 Ev'n on these laws the fair they rashly sought,
 And danger in excess of love forgot.

There sat Hippomenes, prepar'd to blame
 In lovers such extravagance of flame.
 And must, he said, the blessing of a wife
 Be dearly purchas'd by a risk of life?
 But when he saw the wonders of her face,
 And her limbs naked, springing to the race,
 Her limbs, as exquisitely turn'd, as mine,
 Or if a woman thou, might vie with thine,
 With lifted hands, he cry'd, forgive the tongue
 Which durst, ye youths, your well-tim'd courage wrong.
 I knew not that the nymph, for whom you strove,
 Deserv'd th' unbounded transports of your love.
 He saw, admir'd, and thus her spotless frame
 He prais'd, and praising, kindled his own flame.
 A rival now to all the youths who run,
 Envious, he fears they should not be undone.
 But why (reflects he) idly thus is shown
 The fate of others, yet untry'd my own?
 The coward must not on love's aid depend;
 The God was ever to the bold a friend.
 Mean-time the virgin flies, or seems to fly,
 Swift as a Scythian arrow cleaves the sky:
 Still more and more the youth her charms admires.
 The race itself t' exalt her charms conspires.
 The golden pinions, which her feet adorn,
 In wanton flutt'rings by the winds are born.
 Down from her head, the long, fair tresses flow,
 And sport with lovely negligence below.
 The waving ribbands, which her buskins tie,
 Her snowy skin with waving purple die;
 As crimson veils in palaces display'd,
 To the white marble lend a blushing shade.
 Nor long he gaz'd, yet while he gaz'd, she gain'd

The goal, and the victorious wreath obtain'd.
The vanquish'd sigh, and, as the law decreed,
Pay the dire forfeit, and prepare to bleed.

Then rose Hippomenes, not yet afraid,
And fix'd his eyes full on the beauteous maid.
Where is (he cry'd) the mighty conquest won,
To distance those, who want the nerves to run?
Here prove superior strength, nor shall it be
Thy loss of glory, if excell'd by me.
High my descent, near Neptune I aspire,
For Neptune was grand-parent to my sire.
From that great God the fourth my self I trace,
Nor sink my virtues yet beneath my race.
Thou from Hippomenes, o'ercome, may'st claim
An envy'd triumph, and a deathless fame.

While thus the youth the virgin pow'r defies,
Silent she views him still with softer eyes.
Thoughts in her breast a doubtful strife begin,
If 'tis not happier now to lose, than win.
What God, a foe to beauty, would destroy
The promis'd ripeness of this blooming boy?
With his life's danger does he seek my bed?
Scarce am I half so greatly worth, she said.
Nor has his beauty mov'd my breast to love,
And yet, I own, such beauty well might move:
'Tis not his charms, 'tis pity would engage
My soul to spare the greenness of his age.
What, that heroick conrage fires his breast,
And shines thro' brave disdain of Fate confest?
What, that his patronage by close degrees
Springs from th' imperial ruler of the seas?
Then add the love, which bids him undertake
The race, and dare to perish for my sake.
Of bloody nuptials, heedless youth, beware!
Fly, timely fly from a too barb'rous fair.
At pleasure chuse; thy love will be repaid
By a less foolish, and more beauteous maid.
But why this tenderness, before unknown?

Why beats, and pants my breast for him alone?
 His eyes have seen his num'rous rivals yield;
 Let him too share the rigour of the field,
 Since, by their fates untaught, his own he courts,
 And thus with ruin insolently sports.
 Yet for what crime shall he his death receive?
 Is it a crime with me to wish to live?
 Shall his kind passion his destruction prove?
 Is this the fatal recompence of love?
 So fair a youth, destroy'd, would conquest shame,
 And nymphs eternally detest my fame.
 Still why should nymphs my guiltless fame upbraid?
 Did I the fond adventurer persuade?
 Alas! I wish thou would'st the course decline,
 Or that my swiftness was excell'd by thine.
 See! what a virgin's bloom adorns the boy!
 Why wilt thou run, and why thy self destroy?
 Hippomenes! O that I ne'er had been
 By those bright eyes unfortunately seen!
 Ah! tempt not thus a swift, untimely Fate;
 Thy life is worthy of the longest date.
 Were I less wretched, did the galling chain
 Of rigid Gods not my free choice restrain,
 By thee alone I could with joy be led
 To taste the raptures of a nuptial bed.

Thus she disclos'd the woman's secret heart,
 Young, innocent, and new to Cupid's dart.
 Her thoughts, her words, her actions wildly rove,
 With love she burns, yet knows not that 'tis love.

Her royal sire now with the murm'ring crowd
 Demands the race impatiently aloud.
 Hippomenes then with true fervour pray'd,
 My bold attempt let Venus kindly aid.
 By her sweet pow'r I felt this am'rous fire,
 Still may she succour, whom she did inspire.
 A soft, unenvious wind, with speedy care,
 Wafted to Heav'n the lover's tender pray'r.
 Pity, I own, soon gain'd the wish'd consent,

And all th' assistance he implor'd I lent.
The Cyprian lands, tho' rich, in richness yield
To that, surnam'd the Tamasenian field.
That field of old was added to my shrine,
And its choice products consecrated mine.
A tree there stands, full glorious to behold,
Gold are the leafs, the crackling branches gold.
It chanc'd, three apples in my hand I bore,
Which newly from the tree I sportive tore;
Seen by the youth alone, to him I brought
The fruit, and when, and how to use it, taught.
The signal sounding by the king's command,
Both start at once, and sweep th' imprinted sand.
So swiftly mov'd their feet, they might with ease,
Scarce moisten'd, skim along the glassy seas;
Or with a wondrous levity be born
O'er yellow harvests of unbending corn.
Now fav'ring peals resound from ev'ry part,
Spirit the youth, and fire his fainting heart.
Hippomenes! (they cry'd) thy life preserve,
Intensely labour, and stretch ev'ry nerve.
Base fear alone can baffle thy design,
Shoot boldly onward, and the goal is thine.
'Tis doubtful whether shouts, like these, convey'd
More pleasures to the youth, or to the maid.
When a long distance oft she could have gain'd,
She check'd her swiftness, and her feet restrain'd:
She sigh'd, and dwelt, and languish'd on his face,
Then with unwilling speed pursu'd the race.
O'er-spent with heat, his breath he faintly drew,
Parch'd was his mouth, nor yet the goal in view,
And the first apple on the plain he threw.
The nymph stop'd sudden at th' unusual sight,
Struck with the fruit so beautifully bright.
Aside she starts, the wonder to behold,
And eager stoops to catch the rousing gold.
Th' observant youth past by, and scour'd along,
While peals of joy rung from th' applauding throng.
Unkindly she corrects the short delay,
And to redeem the time fleets swift away,

Swift, as the lightning, or the northern wind,
 And far she leaves the panting youth behind.
 Again he strives the flying nymph to hold
 With the temptation of the second gold:
 The bright temptation fruitlessly was tost,
 So soon, alas! she won the distance lost.
 Now but a little interval of space
 Remain'd for the decision of the race.
 Fair author of the precious gift, he said,
 Be thou, O Goddess, author of my aid!
 Then of the shining fruit the last he drew,
 And with his full-collected vigour threw:
 The virgin still the longer to detain,
 Threw not directly, but a-cross the plain.
 She seem'd a-while perplex'd in dubious thought,
 If the far-distant apple should be sought:
 I lur'd her backward mind to seize the bait,
 And to the massie gold gave double weight.
 My favour to my votary was show'd,
 Her speed I lessen'd, and encreas'd her load.
 But lest, tho' long, the rapid race be run,
 Before my longer, tedious tale is done,
 The youth the goal, and so the virgin won.

Might I, Adonis, now not hope to see
 His grateful thanks pour'd out for victory?
 His pious incense on my altars laid?
 But he nor grateful thanks, nor incense paid.
 Enrag'd I vow'd, that with the youth the fair,
 For his contempt, should my keen vengeance share;
 That future lovers might my pow'r revere,
 And, from their sad examples, learn to fear.
 The silent fanes, the sanctify'd abodes,
 Of Cybele, great mother of the Gods,
 Rais'd by Echion in a lonely wood,
 And full of brown, religious horror stood.
 By a long painful journey faint, they chose!
 Their weary limbs here secret to repose.
 But soon my pow'r inflam'd the lustful boy,
 Careless of rest he sought untimely joy.

A hallow'd gloomy cave, with moss o'er-grown,
The temple join'd, of native pumice-stone,
Where antique images by priests were kept.
And wooden deities securely slept.
Thither the rash Hippomenes retires,
And gives a loose to all his wild desires,
And the chaste cell pollutes with wanton fires.
The sacred statues trembled with surprize,
The tow'ry Goddess, blushing, veil'd her eyes;
And the lewd pair to Stygian sounds had sent,
But unrevengeful seem'd that punishment,
A heavier doom such black prophaneness draws,
Their taper figures turn to crooked paws.
No more their necks the smoothness can retain,
Now cover'd sudden with a yellow mane.
Arms change to legs: each finds the hard'ning breast
Of rage unknown, and wond'rous strength possest.
Their alter'd looks with fury grim appear,
And on the ground their brushing tails they hear.
They haunt the woods: their voices, which before
Were musically sweet, now hoarsly roar.
Hence lions, dreadful to the lab'ring swains,
Are tam'd by Cybele, and curb'd with reins,
And humbly draw her car along the plains.
But thou, Adonis, my delightful care,
Of these, and beasts, as fierce as these, beware!
The savage, which not shuns thee, timely shun,
For by rash prowess should'st thou be undone,
A double ruin is contain'd in one.
Thus cautious Venus school'd her fav'rite boy;
But youthful heat all cautions will destroy.
His sprightly soul beyond grave counsels flies,
While with yok'd swans the Goddess cuts the skies.
His faithful hounds, led by the tainted wind,
Lodg'd in thick coverts chanc'd a boar to find.
The callow hero show'd a manly heart,
And pierc'd the savage with a side-long dart.
The flying savage, wounded, turn'd again,
Wrench'd out the gory dart, and foam'd with pain.
The trembling boy by flight his safety sought,

And now recall'd the lore, which Venus taught;
 But now too late to fly the boar he strove,
 Who in the groin his tusks impetuous drove,
 On the discolour'd grass Adonis lay,
 The monster trampling o'er his beauteous prey.

Fair Cytherea, Cyprus scarce in view,
 Heard from afar his groans, and own'd them true,
 And turn'd her snowy swans, and backward flew.
 But as she saw him gasp his latest breath,
 And quiv'ring agonize in pangs of death,
 Down with swift flight she plung'd, nor rage forbore,
 At once her garments, and her hair she tore.
 With cruel blows she beat her guiltless breast,
 The Fates upbraided, and her love confest.
 Nor shall they yet (she cry'd) the whole devour
 With uncontroul'd, inexorable pow'r:
 For thee, lost youth, my tears, and restless pain
 Shall in immortal monuments remain,
 With solemn pomp in annual rites return'd,
 Be thou for ever, my Adonis, mourn'd,
 Could Pluto's queen with jealous fury storm,
 And Menthe to a fragrant herb transform?
 Yet dares not Venus with a change surprise,
 And in a flow'r bid her fall'n heroe rise?
 Then on the blood sweet nectar she bestows,
 The scented blood in little bubbles rose:
 Little as rainy drops, which flutt'ring fly,
 Born by the winds, along a low'ring sky.
 Short time ensu'd, 'till where the blood was shed,
 A flow'r began to rear its purple head:
 Such, as on Punick apples is reveal'd,
 Or in the filmy rind but half conceal'd.
 Still here the Fate of lovely forms we see,
 So sudden fades the sweet Anemonie.
 The feeble stems, to stormy blasts a prey,
 Their sickly beauties droop, and pine away.
 The winds forbid the flow'rs to flourish long,
 Which owe to winds their names in Grecian song.

BOOK THE ELEVENTH

The Death of Orpheus

Here, while the Thracian bard's enchanting strain
Sooths beasts, and woods, and all the listn'ing plain,
The female Bacchanals, devoutly mad,
In shaggy skins, like savage creatures, clad,
Warbling in air perceiv'd his lovely lay,
And from a rising ground beheld him play.
When one, the wildest, with dishevel'd hair,
That loosely stream'd, and ruffled in the air;
Soon as her frantick eye the lyrist spy'd,
See, see! the hater of our sex, she cry'd.
Then at his face her missive javelin sent,
Which whiz'd along, and brusht him as it went;
But the soft wreathes of ivy twisted round,
Prevent a deep impression of the wound.
Another, for a weapon, hurls a stone,
Which, by the sound subdu'd as soon as thrown,
Falls at his feet, and with a seeming sense
Implores his pardon for its late offence.
But now their frantick rage unbounded grows,
Turns all to madness, and no measure knows:
Yet this the charms of musick might subdue,
But that, with all its charms, is conquer'd too;
In louder strains their hideous yellings rise,
And squeaking horn-pipes echo thro' the skies,
Which, in hoarse consort with the drum, confound
The moving lyre, and ev'ry gentle sound:
Then 'twas the deafen'd stones flew on with speed,
And saw, unsooth'd, their tuneful poet bleed.
The birds, the beasts, and all the savage crew
Which the sweet lyrist to attention drew,
Now, by the female mob's more furious rage,
Are driv'n, and forc'd to quit the shady stage.
Next their fierce hands the bard himself assail,
Nor can his song against their wrath prevail:
They flock, like birds, when in a clustring flight,
By day they chase the boding fowl of night.
So crowded amphitheatres survey

The stag, to greedy dogs a future prey.
 Their steely javelins, which soft curls entwine
 Of budding tendrils from the leafy vine,
 For sacred rites of mild religion made,
 Are flung promiscuous at the poet's head.
 Those clods of earth or flints discharge, and these
 Hurl prickly branches sliver'd from the trees.
 And, lest their passion shou'd be unsupply'd,
 The rabble crew, by chance, at distance spy'd
 Where oxen, straining at the heavy yoke,
 The fallow'd field with slow advances broke;
 Nigh which the brawny peasants dug the soil,
 Procuring food with long laborious toil.
 These, when they saw the ranting throng draw near,
 Quitted their tools, and fled, possess'd with fear.
 Long spades, and rakes of mighty size were found,
 Carelessly left upon the broken ground.
 With these the furious lunaticks engage,
 And first the lab'ring oxen feel their rage;
 Then to the poet they return with speed,
 Whose fate was, past prevention, now decreed:
 In vain he lifts his suppliant hands, in vain
 He tries, before, his never-failing strain.
 And, from those sacred lips, whose thrilling sound
 Fierce tygers, and insensate rocks cou'd wound,
 Ah Gods! how moving was the mournful sight!
 To see the fleeting soul now take its flight.
 Thee the soft warblers of the feather'd kind
 Bewail'd; for thee thy savage audience pin'd;
 Those rocks and woods that oft thy strain had led,
 Mourn for their charmer, and lament him dead;
 And drooping trees their leafy glories shed.
 Nuids and Dryads with dishevel'd hair
 Promiscuous weep, and scarfs of sable wear;
 Nor cou'd the river-Gods conceal their moan,
 But with new floods of tears augment their own.
 His mangled limbs lay scatter'd all around,
 His head, and harp a better fortune found;
 In Hebrus' streams they gently roul'd along,
 And sooth'd the waters with a mournful song.

Soft deadly notes the lifeless tongue inspire,
A doleful tune sounds from the floating lyre;
The hollows banks in solemn consort mourn,
And the sad strain in echoing groans return.
Now with the current to the sea they glide,
Born by the billows of the briny tide;
And driv'n where waves round rocky Lesbos roar,
They strand, and lodge upon Methymna's shore.

But here, when landed on the foreign soil,
A venom'd snake, the product of the isle
Attempts the head, and sacred locks embu'd
With clotted gore, and still fresh-dropping blood.
Phoebus, at last, his kind protection gives,
And from the fact the greedy monster drives:
Whose marbled jaws his impious crime atone,
Still grinning ghastly, tho' transform'd to stone.

His ghost flies downward to the Stygian shore,
And knows the places it had seen before:
Among the shadows of the pious train
He finds Eurydice, and loves again;
With pleasure views the beauteous phantom's charms,
And clasps her in his unsubstantial arms.
There side by side they unmolested walk,
Or pass their blissful hours in pleasing talk;
Aft or before the bard securely goes,
And, without danger, can review his spouse.

The Thracian Women transform'd to Trees

Bacchus, resolving to revenge the wrong,
Of Orpheus murder'd, on the madding throng,
Decreed that each accomplice dame should stand
Fix'd by the roots along the conscious land.
Their wicked feet, that late so nimbly ran
To wreak their malice on the guiltless man,
Sudden with twisted ligatures were bound,
Like trees, deep planted in the turfy ground.
And, as the fowler with his subtle gins,
His feather'd captives by the feet entwines,

That flutt'ring pant, and struggle to get loose,
 Yet only closer draw the fatal noose;
 So these were caught; and, as they strove in vain
 To quit the place, they but encreas'd their pain.
 They flounce and toil, yet find themselves controul'd;
 The root, tho' pliant, toughly keeps its hold.
 In vain their toes and feet they look to find,
 For ev'n their shapely legs are cloath'd with rind.
 One smites her thighs with a lamenting stroke,
 And finds the flesh transform'd to solid oak;
 Another, with surprize, and grief distrest,
 Lays on above, but beats a wooden breast.
 A rugged bark their softer neck invades,
 Their branching arms shoot up delightful shades;
 At once they seem, and are, a real grove,
 With mossy trunks below, and verdant leaves above.

The Fable of Midas

Nor this suffic'd; the God's disgust remains,
 And he resolves to quit their hated plains;
 The vineyards of Tymole ingross his care,
 And, with a better choir, he fixes there;
 Where the smooth streams of clear Pactolus roll'd,
 Then undistinguish'd for its sands of gold.
 The satyrs with the nymphs, his usual throng,
 Come to salute their God, and jovial danc'd along.
 Silenus only miss'd; for while he reel'd,
 Feeble with age, and wine, about the field,
 The hoary drunkard had forgot his way,
 And to the Phrygian clowns became a prey;
 Who to king Midas drag the captive God,
 While on his totty pate the wreaths of ivy nod.

Midas from Orpheus had been taught his lore,
 And knew the rites of Bacchus long before.
 He, when he saw his venerable guest,
 In honour of the God ordain'd a feast.
 Ten days in course, with each continu'd night,
 Were spent in genial mirth, and brisk delight:
 Then on th' eleventh, when with brighter ray

Phosphor had chac'd the fading stars away,
The king thro' Lydia's fields young Bacchus sought,
And to the God his foster-father brought.
Pleas'd with the welcome sight, he bids him soon
But name his wish, and swears to grant the boon.
A glorious offer! yet but ill bestow'd
On him whose choice so little judgment show'd.
Give me, says he (nor thought he ask'd too much),
That with my body whatsoe'er I touch,
Chang'd from the nature which it held of old,
May be converted into yellow gold.
He had his wish; but yet the God repin'd,
To think the fool no better wish could find.

But the brave king departed from the place,
With smiles of gladness sparkling in his face:
Nor could contain, but, as he took his way,
Impatient longs to make the first essay.
Down from a lowly branch a twig he drew,
The twig strait glitter'd with a golden hue:
He takes a stone, the stone was turn'd to gold;
A clod he touches, and the crumbling mold
Acknowledg'd soon the great transforming pow'r,
In weight and substance like a mass of ore.
He pluck'd the corn, and strait his grasp appears
Fill'd with a bending tuft of golden ears.
An apple next he takes, and seems to hold
The bright Hesperian vegetable gold.
His hand he careless on a pillar lays.
With shining gold the fluted pillars blaze:
And while he washes, as the servants pour,
His touch converts the stream to Danae's show'r.

To see these miracles so finely wrought,
Fires with transporting joy his giddy thought.
The ready slaves prepare a sumptuous board,
Spread with rich dainties for their happy lord;
Whose pow'rful hands the bread no sooner hold,
But its whole substance is transform'd to gold:
Up to his mouth he lifts the sav'ry meat,

Which turns to gold as he attempts to eat:
 His patron's noble juice of purple hue,
 Touch'd by his lips, a gilded cordial grew;
 Unfit for drink, and wondrous to behold,
 It trickles from his jaws a fluid gold.

The rich poor fool, confounded with surprize,
 Starving in all his various plenty lies:
 Sick of his wish, he now detests the pow'r,
 For which he ask'd so earnestly before;
 Amidst his gold with pinching famine curst;
 And justly tortur'd with an equal thirst.
 At last his shining arms to Heav'n he rears,
 And in distress, for refuge, flies to pray'rs.
 O father Bacchus, I have sinn'd, he cry'd,
 And foolishly thy gracious gift apply'd;
 Thy pity now, repenting, I implore;
 Oh! may I feel the golden plague no more.

The hungry wretch, his folly thus confest,
 Touch'd the kind deity's good-natur'd breast;
 The gentle God annull'd his first decree,
 And from the cruel compact set him free.
 But then, to cleanse him quite from further harm,
 And to dilute the relicks of the charm,
 He bids him seek the stream that cuts the land
 Nigh where the tow'rs of Lydian Sardis stand;
 Then trace the river to the fountain head,
 And meet it rising from its rocky bed;
 There, as the bubbling tide pours forth amain,
 To plunge his body in, and wash away the stain.
 The king instructed to the fount retires,
 But with the golden charm the stream inspires:
 For while this quality the man forsakes,
 An equal pow'r the limpid water takes;
 Informs with veins of gold the neighb'ring land,
 And glides along a bed of golden sand.

Now loathing wealth, th' occasion of his woes,
 Far in the woods he sought a calm repose;

In caves and grottos, where the nymphs resort,
And keep with mountain Pan their sylvan court.
Ah! had he left his stupid soul behind!
But his condition alter'd not his mind.

For where high Tmolus rears his shady brow,
And from his cliffs surveys the seas below,
In his descent, by Sardis bounded here,
By the small confines of Hypaepa there,
Pan to the nymphs his frolick ditties play'd,
Tuning his reeds beneath the chequer'd shade.
The nymphs are pleas'd, the boasting sylvan plays,
And speaks with slight of great Apollo's lays.
Tmolus was arbiter; the boaster still
Accepts the tryal with unequal skill.
The venerable judge was seated high
On his own hill, that seem'd to touch the sky.
Above the whip'ring trees his head he rears,
From their encumbring boughs to free his ears;
A wreath of oak alone his temples bound,
The pendant acorns loosely dangled round.
In me your judge, says he, there's no delay:
Then bids the goatherd God begin, and play.
Pan tun'd the pipe, and with his rural song
Pleas'd the low taste of all the vulgar throng;
Such songs a vulgar judgment mostly please,
Midas was there, and Midas judg'd with these.

The mountain sire with grave deportment now
To Phoebus turns his venerable brow:
And, as he turns, with him the listning wood
In the same posture of attention stood.
The God his own Parnassian laurel crown'd,
And in a wreath his golden tresses bound,
Graceful his purple mantle swept the ground.
High on the left his iv'ry lute he rais'd,
The lute, emboss'd with glitt'ring jewels, blaz'd
In his right hand he nicely held the quill,
His easy posture spoke a master's skill.
The strings he touch'd with more than human art,

Which pleas'd the judge's ear, and sooth'd his heart;
 Who soon judiciously the palm decreed,
 And to the lute postpon'd the squeaking reed.

All, with applause, the rightful sentence heard,
 Midas alone dissatisfy'd appear'd;
 To him unjustly giv'n the judgment seems,
 For Pan's barbarick notes he most esteems.
 The lyrick God, who thought his untun'd ear
 Deserv'd but ill a human form to wear,
 Of that deprives him, and supplies the place
 With some more fit, and of an ampler space:
 Fix'd on his noddle an unseemly pair,
 Flagging, and large, and full of whitish hair;
 Without a total change from what he was,
 Still in the man preserves the simple ass.

He, to conceal the scandal of the deed,
 A purple turbant folds about his head;
 Veils the reproach from publick view, and fears
 The laughing world would spy his monstrous ears.
 One trusty barber-slave, that us'd to dress
 His master's hair, when lengthen'd to excess,
 The mighty secret knew, but knew alone,
 And, tho' impatient, durst not make it known.
 Restless, at last, a private place he found,
 Then dug a hole, and told it to the ground;
 In a low whisper he reveal'd the case,
 And cover'd in the earth, and silent left the place.

In time, of trembling reeds a plenteous crop
 From the confided furrow sprouted up;
 Which, high advancing with the ripening year,
 Made known the tiller, and his fruitless care:
 For then the rustling blades, and whisp'ring wind,
 To tell th' important secret, both combin'd.

The Building of Troy

Phoebus, with full revenge, from Tmolus flies,
 Darts thro' the air, and cleaves the liquid skies;

Near Hellespont he lights, and treads the plains
Where great Laomedon sole monarch reigns;
Where, built between the two projecting strands,
To Panomphaean Jove an altar stands.
Here first aspiring thoughts the king employ,
To found the lofty tow'rs of future Troy.
The work, from schemes magnificent begun,
At vast expence was slowly carry'd on:
Which Phoebus seeing, with the trident God
Who rules the swelling surges with his nod,
Assuming each a mortal shape, combine
At a set price to finish his design.
The work was built; the king their price denies,
And his injustice backs with perjuries.
This Neptune cou'd not brook, but drove the main,
A mighty deluge, o'er the Phrygian plain:
'Twas all a sea; the waters of the deep
From ev'ry vale the copious harvest sweep;
The briny billows overflow the soil,
Ravage the fields, and mock the plowman's toil.

Nor this appeas'd the God's revengeful mind,
For still a greater plague remains behind;
A huge sea-monster lodges on the sands,
And the king's daughter for his prey demands.
To him that sav'd the damsel, was decreed
A set of horses of the Sun's fine breed:
But when Alcides from the rock unty'd
The trembling fair, the ransom was deny'd.
He, in revenge, the new-built walls attack'd,
And the twice-perjur'd city bravely sack'd.
Telamon aided, and in justice shar'd
Part of the plunder as his due reward:
The princess, rescu'd late, with all her charms,
Hesione, was yielded to his arms;
For Peleus, with a Goddess-bride, was more
Proud of his spouse, than of his birth before:
Grandsons to Jove there might be more than one,
But he the Goddess had enjoy'd alone.

The Story of Thetis and Peleus

For Proteus thus to virgin Thetis said,
 Fair Goddess of the waves, consent to wed,
 And take some spritely lover to your bed.
 A son you'll have, the terror of the field,
 To whom in fame, and pow'r his sire shall yield.

Jove, who ador'd the nymph with boundless love,
 Did from his breast the dangerous flame remove.
 He knew the Fates, nor car'd to raise up one,
 Whose fame and greatness should eclipse his own,
 On happy Peleus he bestow'd her charms,
 And bless'd his grandson in the Goddess' arms:

A silent creek Thessalia's coast can show;
 Two arms project, and shape it like a bow;
 'Twould make a bay, but the transparent tide
 Does scarce the yellow-gravell'd bottom hide;
 For the quick eye may thro' the liquid wave
 A firm unweedy level beach perceive.
 A grove of fragrant myrtle near it grows,
 Whose boughs, tho' thick, a beauteous grot disclose;
 The well-wrought fabrick, to discerning eyes,
 Rather by art than Nature seems to rise.
 A bridled dolphin oft fair Thetis bore
 To this her lov'd retreat, her fav'rite shore.
 Here Peleus seiz'd her, slumbring while she lay,
 And urg'd his suit with all that love could say:
 But when he found her obstinately coy,
 Resolv'd to force her, and command the joy;
 The nymph, o'erpowr'd, to art for succour flies
 And various shapes the eager youth surprize:
 A bird she seems, but plies her wings in vain,
 His hands the fleeting substance still detain:
 A branchy tree high in the air she grew;
 About its bark his nimble arms he threw:
 A tyger next she glares with flaming eyes;
 The frighten'd lover quits his hold, and flies:
 The sea-Gods he with sacred rites adores,
 Then a libation on the ocean pours;

While the fat entrails crackle in the fire,
And sheets of smoak in sweet perfume aspire;
'Till Proteus rising from his oozy bed,
Thus to the poor desponding lover said:
No more in anxious thoughts your mind employ,
For yet you shall possess the dear expected joy.
You must once more th' unwary nymph surprize,
As in her cooly grot she slumbring lies;
Then bind her fast with unrelenting hands,
And strain her tender limbs with knotted bands.
Still hold her under ev'ry different shape,
'Till tir'd she tries no longer to escape.
Thus he: then sunk beneath the glassy flood,
And broken accents flutter'd, where he stood.

Bright Sol had almost now his journey done,
And down the steepy western convex run;
When the fair Nereid left the briny wave,
And, as she us'd, retreated to her cave.
He scarce had bound her fast, when she arose,
And into various shapes her body throws:
She went to move her arms, and found 'em ty'd;
Then with a sigh, Some God assists ye, cry'd,
And in her proper shape stood blushing by his side.
About her waiste his longing arms he flung,
From which embrace the great Achilles sprung.

The Transformation of Daedalion

Peleus unmix'd felicity enjoy'd
(Blest in a valiant son, and virtuous bride),
'Till Fortune did in blood his hands imbrue,
And his own brother by curst chance he slew:
Then driv'n from Thessaly, his native clime,
Trachinia first gave shelter to his crime;
Where peaceful Ceyx mildly fill'd the throne,
And like his sire, the morning planet, shone;
But now, unlike himself, bedew'd with tears,
Mourning a brother lost, his brow appears.
First to the town with travel spent, and care,
Peleus, and his small company repair:

His herds, and flocks the while at leisure feed,
 On the rich pasture of a neighb'ring mead.
 The prince before the royal presence brought,
 Shew'd by the suppliant olive what he sought;
 Then tells his name, and race, and country right,
 But hides th' unhappy reason of his flight.
 He begs the king some little town to give,
 Where they may safe his faithful vassals live.
 Ceyx reply'd: To all my bounty flows,
 A hospitable realm your suit has chose.
 Your glorious race, and far-resounding fame,
 And grandsire Jove, peculiar favours claim.
 All you can wish, I grant; entreaties spare;
 My kingdom (would 'twere worth the sharing) share.

Tears stop'd his speech: astonish'd Peleus pleads
 To know the cause from whence his grief proceeds.
 The prince reply'd: There's none of ye but deems
 This hawk was ever such as now it seems;
 Know 'twas a heroe once, Daedalion nam'd,
 For warlike deeds, and haughty valour fam'd;
 Like me to that bright luminary born,
 Who wakes Aurora, and brings on the morn.
 His fierceness still remains, and love of blood,
 Now dread of birds, and tyrant of the wood.
 My make was softer, peace my greatest care;
 But this my brother wholly bent on war;
 Late nations fear'd, and routed armies fled
 That force, which now the tim'rous pigeons dread.
 A daughter he possess'd, divinely fair,
 And scarcely yet had seen her fifteenth year;
 Young Chione: a thousand rivals strove
 To win the maid, and teach her how to love.
 Phoebus, and Mercury by chance one day
 From Delphi, and Cyllene past this way;
 Together they the virgin saw: desire
 At once warm'd both their breasts with am'rous fire.
 Phoebus resolv'd to wait 'till close of day;
 But Mercury's hot love brook'd no delay;
 With his entrancing rod the maid he charms,

And unresisted revels in her arms.
'Twas night, and Phoebus in a beldam's dress,
To the late rifled beauty got access.
Her time compleat nine circling moons had run;
To either God she bore a lovely son:
To Mercury Autolykus she brought,
Who turn'd to thefts and tricks his subtle thought;
Possess'd he was of all his father's slight,
At will made white look black, and black look white.
Philammon born to Phoebus, like his sire,
The Muses lov'd, and finely struck the lyre,
And made his voice, and touch in harmony conspire.
In vain, fond maid, you boast this double birth,
The love of Gods, and royal father's worth,
And Jove among your ancestors rehearse!
Could blessings such as these e'er prove a curse?
To her they did, who with audacious pride,
Vain of her own, Diana's charms decry'd.
Her taunts the Goddess with resentment fill;
My face you like not, you shall try my skill.
She said; and strait her vengeful bow she strung,
And sent a shaft that pierc'd her guilty tongue:
The bleeding tongue in vain its accents tries;
In the red stream her soul reluctant flies.
With sorrow wild I ran to her relief,
And try'd to moderate my brother's grief.
He, deaf as rocks by stormy surges beat,
Loudly laments, and hears me not intreat.
When on the fun'ral pile he saw her laid,
Thrice he to rush into the flames assay'd,
Thrice with officious care by us was stay'd.
Now, mad with grief, away he fled amain,
Like a stung heifer that resents the pain,
And bellowing wildly bounds along the plain.
O'er the most rugged ways so fast he ran,
He seem'd a bird already, not a man:
He left us breathless all behind; and now
In quest of death had gain'd Parnassus' brow:
But when from thence headlong himself he threw,
He fell not, but with airy pinions flew.

Phoebus in pity chang'd him to a fowl,
 Whose crooked beak and claws the birds controul,
 Little of bulk, but of a warlike soul.
 A hawk become, the feather'd race's foe,
 He tries to ease his own by other's woe.

A Wolf turn'd into Marble

While they astonish'd heard the king relate
 These wonders of his hapless brother's fate;
 The prince's herdsman at the court arrives,
 And fresh surprize to all the audience gives.
 O Peleus, Peleus! dreadful news I bear,
 He said; and trembled as he spoke for fear.
 The worst, affrighted Peleus bid him tell,
 Whilst Ceyx too grew pale with friendly zeal.
 Thus he began: When Sol mid-heav'n had gain'd,
 And half his way was past, and half remain'd,
 I to the level shore my cattle drove,
 And let them freely in the meadows rove.
 Some stretch'd at length admire the watry plain,
 Some crop'd the herb, some wanton swam the main.
 A temple stands of antique make hard by,
 Where no gilt domes, nor marble lure the eye;
 Unpolish'd rafters bear its lowly height,
 Hid by a grove, as ancient, from the sight.
 Here Nereus, and the Nereids they adore;
 I learnt it from the man who thither bore
 His net, to dry it on the sunny shore.
 Adjoyns a lake, inclos'd with willows round,
 Where swelling waves have overflow'd the mound,
 And, muddy, stagnate on the lower ground.
 From thence a russling noise increasing flies,
 Strikes the still shore; and frights us with surprize,
 Strait a huge wolf rush'd from the marshy wood,
 His jaws besmear'd with mingled foam, and blood,
 Tho' equally by hunger urg'd, and rage,
 His appetite he minds not to asswage;
 Nought that he meets, his rabid fury spares,
 But the whole herd with mad disorder tears.
 Some of our men who strove to drive him thence,

Torn by his teeth, have dy'd in their defence.
The echoing lakes, the sea, and fields, and shore,
Impurpled blush with streams of reeking gore.
Delay is loss, nor have we time for thought;
While yet some few remain alive, we ought
To seize our arms, and with confederate force
Try if we so can stop his bloody course.
But Peleus car'd not for his ruin'd herd;
His crime he call'd to mind, and thence inferr'd,
That Psamathe's revenge this havock made,
In sacrifice to murder'd Phocus' shade.
The king commands his servants to their arms;
Resolv'd to go; but the loud noise alarms
His lovely queen, who from her chamber flew,
And her half-plaited hair behind her threw:
About his neck she hung with loving fears,
And now with words, and now with pleading tears,
Intreated that he'd send his men alone,
And stay himself, to save two lives in one.
Then Peleus: Your just fears, o queen, forget;
Too much the offer leaves me in your debt.
No arms against the monster I shall bear,
But the sea nymphs appease with humble pray'r.

The citadel's high turrets pierce the sky,
Which home-bound vessels, glad, from far descry;
This they ascend, and thence with sorrow ken
The mangled heifers lye, and bleeding men;
Th' inexorable ravager they view,
With blood discolour'd, still the rest pursue:
There Peleus pray'd submissive tow'rds the sea,
And deprecates the ire of injur'd Psamathe.
But deaf to all his pray'rs the nymph remain'd,
'Till Thetis for her spouse the boon obtain'd.
Pleas'd with the luxury, the furious beast,
Unstop'd, continues still his bloody feast:
While yet upon a sturdy bull he flew,
Chang'd by the nymph, a marble block he grew.
No longer dreadful now the wolf appears,
Bury'd in stone, and vanish'd like their fears.

Yet still the Fates unhappy Peleus vex'd;
 To the Magnesian shore he wanders next.
 Acastus there, who rul'd the peaceful clime,
 Grants his request, and expiates his crime.

The Story of Ceyx and Alcyone

These prodigies affect the pious prince,
 But more perplex'd with those that happen'd since,
 He purposes to seek the Clarian God,
 Avoiding Delphi, his more fam'd abode,
 Since Phlegyan robbers made unsafe the road.
 Yet could he not from her he lov'd so well,
 The fatal voyage, he resolv'd, conceal;
 But when she saw her lord prepar'd to part,
 A deadly cold ran shiv'ring to her heart;
 Her faded cheeks are chang'd to boxen hue,
 And in her eyes the tears are ever new.
 She thrice essay'd to speak; her accents hung,
 And falt'ring dy'd unfinish'd on her tongue,
 And vanish'd into sighs: with long delay
 Her voice return'd, and found the wonted way.

Tell me, my lord, she said, what fault unknown
 Thy once belov'd Alcyone has done?
 Whither, ah, whither, is thy kindness gone!
 Can Ceyx then sustain to leave his wife,
 And unconcern'd forsake the sweets of life?
 What can thy mind to this long journey move?
 Or need'st thou absence to renew thy love?
 Yet, if thou go'st by land, tho' grief possess
 My soul ev'n then, my fears will be the less.
 But ah! be warn'd to shun the watry way,
 The face is frightful of the stormy sea:
 For late I saw a-drift disjointed planks,
 And empty tombs erected on the banks.
 Nor let false hopes to trust betray thy mind,
 Because my sire in caves constrains the wind,
 Can with a breath their clam'rous rage appease,
 They fear his whistle, and forsake the seas:
 Not so; for once indulg'd, they sweep the main;

Deaf to the call, or hearing, hear in vain;
But bent on mischief bear the waves before,
And not content with seas, insult the shore,
When ocean, air, and Earth, at once ingage,
And rooted forests fly before their rage:
At once the clashing clouds to battel move,
And lightnings run across the fields above:
I know them well, and mark'd their rude comport,
While yet a child within my father's court:
In times of tempest they command alone,
And he but sits precarious on the throne:
The more I know, the more my fears augment;
And fears are oft prophetick of th' event.
But if not fears, or reasons will prevail,
If Fate has fix'd thee obstinate to sail,
Go not without thy wife, but let me bear
My part of danger with an equal share,
And present, what I suffer only fear:
'Then o'er the bounding billows shall we fly,
Secure to live together, or to die.

These reasons mov'd her warlike husband's heart,
But still he held his purpose to depart:
For as he lov'd her equal to his life,
He would not to the seas expose his wife;
Nor could be wrought his voyage to refrain,
But sought by arguments to sooth her pain:
Nor these avail'd; at length he lights on one,
With which so difficult a cause he won:
My love, so short an absence cease to fear,
For by my father's holy flame I swear,
Before two moons their orb with light adorn,
If Heav'n allow me life, I will return.

This promise of so short a stay prevails;
He soon equips the ship, supplies the sails,
And gives the word to launch; she trembling views
This pomp of death, and parting tears renews:
Last with a kiss, she took a long farewell,
Sigh'd with a sad presage, and swooning fell:

While Ceyx seeks delays, the lusty crew,
 Rais'd on their banks, their oars in order drew
 To their broad breasts, the ship with fury flew.

The queen recover'd, rears her humid eyes,
 And first her husband on the poop espies,
 Shaking his hand at distance on the main;
 She took the sign, and shook her hand again.
 Still as the ground recedes, contracts her view
 With sharpen'd sight, 'till she no longer knew
 The much-lov'd face; that comfort lost supplies
 With less, and with the galley feeds her eyes;
 The galley born from view by rising gales,
 She follow'd with her sight the flying sails:
 When ev'n the flying sails were seen no more,
 Forsaken of all sight she left the shore.

Then on her bridal bed her body throws,
 And sought in sleep her wearied eyes to close:
 Her husband's pillow, and the widow'd part
 Which once he press'd, renew'd the former smart.

And now a breeze from shoar began to blow,
 The sailors ship their oars, and cease to row;
 Then hoist their yards a-trip, and all their sails
 Let fall, to court the wind, and catch the gales:
 By this the vessel half her course had run,
 Both shoars were lost to sight, when at the close
 Of day a stiffer gale at east arose:
 The sea grew white, the rouling waves from far,
 Like heralds, first denounce the watry war.

This seen, the master soon began to cry,
 Strike, strike the top-sail; let the main-sheet fly,
 And furl your sails: the winds repel the sound,
 And in the speaker's mouth the speech is drown'd.
 Yet of their own accord, as danger taught
 Each in his way, officiously they wrought;
 Some stow their oars, or stop the leaky sides,
 Another bolder, yet the yard bestrides,

And folds the sails; a fourth with labour laves
Th' intruding seas, and waves ejects on waves.

In this confusion while their work they ply,
The winds augment the winter of the sky,
And wage intestine wars; the suffering seas
Are toss'd, and mingled, as their tyrants please.
The master would command, but in despair
Of safety, stands amaz'd with stupid care,
Nor what to bid, or what forbid he knows,
Th' ungovern'd tempest to such fury grows:
Vain is his force, and vainer is his skill;
With such a concourse comes the flood of ill;
The cries of men are mix'd with rattling shrowds;
Seas dash on seas, and clouds encounter clouds:
At once from east to west, from pole to pole,
The forky lightnings flash, the roaring thunders roul.

Now waves on waves ascending scale the skies,
And in the fires above the water fries:
When yellow sands are sifted from below,
The glittering billows give a golden show:
And when the fouler bottom spews the black
The Stygian dye the tainted waters take:
Then frothy white appear the flatted seas,
And change their colour, changing their disease,
Like various fits the Trachin vessel finds,
And now sublime, she rides upon the winds;
As from a lofty summit looks from high,
And from the clouds beholds the nether sky;
Now from the depth of Hell they lift their sight,
And at a distance see superior light;
The lashing billows make a loud report,
And beat her sides, as batt'ring rams a fort:
Or as a lion bounding in his way,
With force augmented, bears against his prey,
Sidelong to seize; or unapal'd with fear,
Springs on the toils, and rushes on the spear:
So seas impell'd by winds, with added pow'r
Assault the sides, and o'er the hatches tow'r.

The planks (their pitchy cov'ring wash'd away)
 Now yield; and now a yawning breach display:
 The roaring waters with a hostile tide
 Rush through the ruins of her gaping side.
 Mean-time in sheets of rain the sky descends,
 And ocean swell'd with waters upwards tends;
 One rising, falling one, the Heav'ns and sea
 Meet at their confines, in the middle way:
 The sails are drunk with show'rs, and drop with rain,
 Sweet waters mingle with the briny main.
 No star appears to lend his friendly light;
 Darkness, and tempest make a double night;
 But flashing fires disclose the deep by turns,
 And while the lightnings blaze, the water burns.

Now all the waves their scatter'd force unite,
 And as a soldier foremost in the fight,
 Makes way for others, and an host alone
 Still presses on, and urging gains the town;
 So while th' invading billows come a-breast,
 The hero tenth advanc'd before the rest,
 Sweeps all before him with impetuous sway,
 And from the walls descends upon the prey;
 Part following enter, part remain without,
 With envy hear their fellows' conqu'ring shout,
 And mount on others' backs, in hopes to share
 The city, thus become the seat of war.

An universal cry resounds aloud,
 The sailors run in heaps, a helpless crowd;
 Art fails, and courage falls, no succour near;
 As many waves, as many deaths appear.
 One weeps, and yet despairs of late relief;
 One cannot weep, his fears congeal his grief,
 But stupid, with dry eyes expects his fate:
 One with loud shrieks laments his lost estate,
 And calls those happy whom their fun'ral wait.
 This wretch with pray'rs and vows the Gods implores,
 And ev'n the skies he cannot see, adores.

That other on his friends his thoughts bestows,
His careful father, and his faithful spouse.
The covetous worldling in his anxious mind,
Thinks only on the wealth he left behind.

All Ceyx his Alcione employs,
For her he grieves, yet in her absence joys:
His wife he wishes, and would still be near,
Not her with him, but wishes him with her:
Now with last looks he seeks his native shoar,
Which Fate has destin'd him to see no more;
He sought, but in the dark tempestuous night
He knew not whither to direct his sight.
So whirl the seas, such darkness blinds the sky,
That the black night receives a deeper dye.

The giddy ship ran round; the tempest tore
Her mast, and over-board the rudder bore.
One billow mounts, and with a scornful brow,
Proud of her conquest gain'd, insults the waves below;
Nor lighter falls, than if some giant tore
Pindus and Athos with the freight they bore,
And toss'd on seas; press'd with the pond'rous blow,
Down sinks the ship within th' abyss below:
Down with the vessel sink into the main
The many, never more to rise again.
Some few on scatter'd planks, with fruitless care,
Lay hold, and swim; but while they swim, despair.

Ev'n he who late a scepter did command,
Now grasps a floating fragment in his hand;
And while he struggles on the stormy main,
Invokes his father, and his wife's, in vain.
But yet his consort is his greatest care,
Alcione he names amidst his pray'r;
Names as a charm against the waves and wind;
Most in his mouth, and ever in his mind.
Tir'd with his toil, all hopes of safety past,
From pray'rs to wishes he descends at last;
That his dead body, wafted to the sands,

Might have its burial from her friendly hands,
 As oft as he can catch a gulp of air,
 And peep above the seas, he names the fair;
 And ev'n when plung'd beneath, on her he raves,
 Murm'ring Alcyone below the waves:
 At last a falling billow stops his breath,
 Breaks o'er his head, and whelms him underneath.
 That night, his heav'nly form obscur'd with tears,
 And since he was forbid to leave the skies,
 He muffled with a cloud his mournful eyes.

Mean-time Alcyone (his fate unknown)
 Computes how many nights he had been gone.
 Observes the waning moon with hourly view,
 Numbers her age, and wishes for a new;
 Against the promis'd time provides with care,
 And hastens in the woof the robes he was to wear:
 And for her self employs another loom,
 New-dress'd to meet her lord returning home,
 Flatt'ring her heart with joys, that never were to come:
 She fum'd the temples with an od'rous flame,
 And oft before the sacred altars came,
 To pray for him, who was an empty name.
 All Pow'rs implor'd, but far above the rest
 To Juno she her pious vows address'd,
 Her much-lov'd lord from perils to protect,
 And safe o'er seas his voyage to direct:
 Then pray'd, that she might still possess his heart,
 And no pretending rival share a part;
 This last petition heard of all her pray'r,
 The rest, dispers'd by winds, were lost in air.

But she, the Goddess of the nuptial bed,
 Tir'd with her vain devotions for the dead,
 Resolv'd the tainted hand should be repell'd,
 Which incense offer'd, and her altar held:
 Then Iris thus bespoke: Thou faithful maid,
 By whom thy queen's commands are well convey'd,
 Haste to the house of sleep, and bid the God
 Who rules the night by visions with a nod,

Prepare a dream, in figure, and in form
Resembling him, who perish'd in the storm;
This form before Alcyone present,
To make her certain of the sad event.

Indu'd with robes of various hue she flies,
And flying draws an arch (a segment of the skies):
Then leaves her bending bow, and from the steep
Descends, to search the silent house of sleep.

The House of Sleep

Near the Cymmerians, in his dark abode,
Deep in a cavern, dwells the drowzy God;
Whose gloomy mansion nor the rising sun,
Nor setting, visits, nor the lightsome noon;
But lazy vapours round the region fly,
Perpetual twilight, and a doubtful sky:
No crowing cock does there his wings display,
Nor with his horny bill provoke the day;
Nor watchful dogs, nor the more wakeful geese,
Disturb with nightly noise the sacred peace;
Nor beast of Nature, nor the tame are nigh,
Nor trees with tempests rock'd, nor human cry;
But safe repose without an air of breath
Dwells here, and a dumb quiet next to death.

An arm of Lethe, with a gentle flow
Arising upwards from the rock below,
The palace moats, and o'er the pebbles creeps,
And with soft murmurs calls the coming sleeps.
Around its entry nodding poppies grow,
And all cool simples that sweet rest bestow;
Night from the plants their sleepy virtue drains,
And passing, sheds it on the silent plains:
No door there was th' unguarded house to keep,
On creaking hinges turn'd, to break his sleep.

But in the gloomy court was rais'd a bed,
Stuff'd with black plumes, and on an ebon-sted:
Black was the cov'ring too, where lay the God,

And slept supine, his limbs display'd abroad:
 About his head fantastick visions fly,
 Which various images of things supply,
 And mock their forms; the leaves on trees not more,
 Nor bearded ears in fields, nor sands upon the shore.

The virgin ent'ring bright, indulg'd the day
 To the brown cave, and brush'd the dreams away:
 The God disturb'd with this new glare of light,
 Cast sudden on his face, unseal'd his sight,
 And rais'd his tardy head, which sunk again,
 And sinking, on his bosom knock'd his chin;
 At length shook off himself, and ask'd the dame,
 (And asking yawn'd) for what intent she came.

To whom the Goddess thus: O sacred rest,
 Sweet pleasing sleep, of all the Pow'rs the best!
 O peace of mind, repairer of decay,
 Whose balms renew the limbs to labours of the day,
 Care shuns thy soft approach, and sullen flies away!
 Adorn a dream, expressing human form,
 The shape of him who suffer'd in the storm,
 And send it flitting to the Trachin court,
 The wreck of wretched Ceyx to report:
 Before his queen bid the pale spectre stand,
 Who begs a vain relief at Juno's hand.
 She said, and scarce awake her eyes could keep,
 Unable to support the fumes of sleep;
 But fled, returning by the way she went,
 And swerv'd along her bow with swift ascent.

The God, uneasy 'till he slept again,
 Resolv'd at once to rid himself of pain;
 And, tho' against his custom, call'd aloud,
 Exciting Morpheus from the sleepy crowd:
 Morpheus, of all his numerous train, express'd
 The shape of man, and imitated best;
 The walk, the words, the gesture could supply,
 The habit mimick, and the mein bely;
 Plays well, but all his action is confin'd,

Extending not beyond our human kind.
Another, birds, and beasts, and dragons apes,
And dreadful images, and monster shapes:
This demon, Icelos, in Heav'n's high hall
The Gods have nam'd; but men Phobeter call.
A third is Phantasus, whose actions roul
On meaner thoughts, and things devoid of soul;
Earth, fruits, and flow'rs he represents in dreams,
And solid rocks unmov'd, and running streams.
These three to kings, and chiefs their scenes display,
The rest before th' ignoble commons play.
Of these the chosen Morpheus is dispatch'd;
Which done, the lazy monarch, over-watch'd,
Down from his propping elbow drops his head,
Dissolv'd in sleep, and shrinks within his bed.

Darkling the demon glides, for flight prepar'd,
So soft, that scarce his fanning wings are heard.
To Trachin, swift as thought, the flitting shade,
Thro' air his momentary journey made:
Then lays aside the steerage of his wings,
Forsakes his proper form, assumes the king's;
And pale, as death, despoil'd of his array,
Into the queen's apartment takes his way,
And stands before the bed at dawn of day:
Unmov'd his eyes, and wet his beard appears;
And shedding vain, but seeming real tears;
The briny waters dropping from his hairs.
Then staring on her with a ghastly look,
And hollow voice, he thus the queen bespoke.

Know'st thou not me? Not yet, unhappy wife?
Or are my features perish'd with my life?
Look once again, and for thy husband lost,
Lo all that's left of him, thy husband's ghost!
Thy vows for my return were all in vain,
The stormy south o'ertook us in the main,
And never shalt thou see thy living lord again.
Bear witness, Heav'n, I call'd on thee in death,
And while I call'd, a billow stop'd my breath.

Think not, that flying fame reports my fate;
 I present, I appear, and my own wreck relate.
 Rise, wretched widow, rise; nor undeplor'd
 Permit my soul to pass the Stygian ford;
 But rise, prepar'd in black, to mourn thy perish'd lord.

Thus said the player-God; and adding art
 Of voice and gesture, so perform'd his part,
 She thought (so like her love the shade appears)
 That Ceyx spake the words, and Ceyx shed the tears;
 She groan'd, her inward soul with grief opprest,
 She sigh'd, she wept, and sleeping beat her breast;
 Then stretch'd her arms t' embrace his body bare;
 Her clasping arms inclose but empty air:
 At this, not yet awake, she cry'd, O stay;
 One is our fate, and common is our way!

So dreadful was the dream, so loud she spoke,
 That starting sudden up, the slumber broke:
 Then cast her eyes around, in hope to view
 Her vanish'd lord, and find the vision true:
 For now the maids, who waited her commands,
 Ran in with lighted tapers in their hands.
 Tir'd with the search, not finding what she seeks,
 With cruel blows she pounds her blubber'd cheeks;
 Then from her beaten breast the linnen tare,
 And cut the golden caul that bound her hair.
 Her nurse demands the cause; with louder cries
 She prosecutes her griefs, and thus replies.

No more Alcione; she suffer'd death
 With her lov'd lord, when Ceyx lost his breath:
 No flatt'ry, no false comfort, give me none,
 My shipwreck'd Ceyx is for ever gone:
 I saw, I saw him manifest in view,
 His voice, his figure, and his gestures knew:
 His lustre lost, and ev'ry living grace,
 Yet I retain'd the features of his face;
 Tho' with pale cheeks, wet beard, and dropping hair,
 None but my Ceyx could appear so fair:

I would have strain'd him with a strict embrace,
But thro' my arms he slipt, and vanish'd from the place:
'There, ev'n just there he stood; and as she spoke,
Where last the spectre was she cast her look:
Fain would she hope, and gaz'd upon the ground,
If any printed footsteps might be found.

Then sigh'd, and said: This I too well foreknew,
And my prophetick fears presag'd too true:
'Twas what I begg'd, when with a bleeding heart
I took my leave, and suffer'd thee to part;
Or I to go along, or thou to stay,
Never, ah never to divide our way!
Happier for me, that all our hours assign'd
Together we had liv'd; ev'n not in death disjoin'd!
So had my Ceyx still been living here,
Or with my Ceyx I had perish'd there:
Now I die absent, in the vast profound;
And me, without my self, the seas have drown'd.
The storms were not so cruel: should I strive
To lengthen life, and such a grief survive;
But neither will I strive, nor wretched thee
In death forsake, but keep thee company.
If not one common sepulchre contains
Our bodies, or one urn our last remains,
Yet Ceyx and Alcione shall join,
Their names remember'd in one common line.

No farther voice her mighty grief affords,
For sighs come rushing in betwixt her words,
And stop'd her tongue; but what her tongue deny'd,
Soft tears, and groans, and dumb complaints supply'd.

'Twas morning; to the port she takes her way,
And stands upon the margin of the sea:
That place, that very spot of ground she sought,
Or thither by her destiny was brought,
Where last he stood: and while she sadly said,
'Twas here he left me, lingring here delay'd
His parting kiss, and there his anchors weigh'd.

Thus speaking, while her thoughts past actions trace,
 And call to mind, admonish'd by the place,
 Sharp at her utmost ken she cast her eyes,
 And somewhat floating from afar descries:
 It seems a corps a-drift to distant sight,
 But at a distance who could judge aright?
 It wafted nearer yet, and then she knew,
 That what before she but surmis'd, was true:
 A corps it was, but whose it was, unknown,
 Yet mov'd, howe'er, she made the cause her own.
 Took the bad omen of a shipwreck'd man,
 As for a stranger wept, and thus began.

Poor wretch, on stormy seas to lose thy life,
 Unhappy thou, but more thy widow'd wife;
 At this she paus'd: for now the flowing tide
 Had brought the body nearer to the side:
 The more she looks, the more her fears increase,
 At nearer sight; and she's her self the less:
 Now driv'n ashore, and at her feet it lies,
 She knows too much in knowing whom she sees:
 Her husband's corps; at this she loudly shrieks,
 'Tis he, 'tis he, she cries, and tears her cheeks,
 Her hair, and vest; and stooping to the sands,
 About his neck she cast her trembling hands.

And is it thus, o dearer than my life,
 Thus, thus return'st thou to thy longing wife!
 She said, and to the neighbouring mole she strode,
 (Rais'd there to break th' incursions of the flood).

Headlong from hence to plunge her self she springs,
 But shoots along, supported on her wings;
 A bird new-made, about the banks she plies,
 Not far from shore, and short excursions tries;
 Nor seeks in air her humble flight to raise,
 Content to skim the surface of the seas:
 Her bill tho' slender, sends a creaking noise,
 And imitates a lamentable voice.

Now lighting where the bloodless body lies,
She with a fun'ral note renews her cries:
At all her stretch, her little wings she spread,
And with her feather'd arms embrac'd the dead:
Then flick'ring to his palid lips, she strove
To print a kiss, the last essay of love.
Whether the vital touch reviv'd the dead,
Or that the moving waters rais'd his head
To meet the kiss, the vulgar doubt alone;
For sure a present miracle was shown.
The Gods their shapes to winter-birds translate,
But both obnoxious to their former fate.
Their conjugal affection still is ty'd,
And still the mournful race is multiply'd:
They bill, they tread; Alcyone compress'd,
Sev'n days sits brooding on her floating nest:
A wintry queen: her sire at length is kind,
Calms ev'ry storm, and hushes ev'ry wind;
Prepares his empire for his daughter's ease,
And for his hatching nephews smooths the seas.

Aesacus transform'd into a Cormorant

These some old man sees wanton in the air,
And praises the unhappy constant pair.
Then to his friend the long-neck'd corm'rant shows,
The former tale reviving others' woes:
That sable bird, he cries, which cuts the flood
With slender legs, was once of royal blood;
His ancestors from mighty Tros proceed,
The brave Laomedon, and Ganymede
(Whose beauty tempted Jove to steal the boy),
And Priam, hapless prince! who fell with Troy:
Himself was Hector's brother, and (had Fate
But giv'n this hopeful youth a longer date)
Perhaps had rival'd warlike Hector's worth,
Tho' on the mother's side of meaner birth;
Fair Alyxothoe, a country maid,
Bare Aesacus by stealth in Ida's shade.
He fled the noisy town, and pompous court,
Lov'd the lone hills, and simple rural sport.

And seldom to the city would resort.
 Yet he no rustick clownishness profest,
 Nor was soft love a stranger to his breast:
 The youth had long the nymph Hesperie woo'd,
 Oft thro' the thicket, or the mead pursu'd:
 Her haply on her father's bank he spy'd,
 While fearless she her silver tresses dry'd;
 Away she fled: not stags with half such speed,
 Before the prowling wolf, scud o'er the mead;
 Not ducks, when they the safer flood forsake,
 Pursu'd by hawks, so swift regain the lake.
 As fast he follow'd in the hot career;
 Desire the lover wing'd, the virgin fear.
 A snake unseen now pierc'd her heedless foot;
 Quick thro' the veins the venom'd juices shoot:
 She fell, and 'scap'd by death his fierce pursuit;
 Her lifeless body, frighted, he embrac'd,
 And cry'd, Not this I dreaded, but thy haste:
 O had my love been less, or less thy fear!
 The victory, thus bought, is far too dear.
 Accursed snake! yet I more curs'd than he!
 He gave the wound; the cause was given by me.
 Yet none shall say, that unreveng'd you dy'd.
 He spoke; then climb'd a cliff's o'er-hanging side,
 And, resolute, leap'd on the foaming tide.
 Tethys receiv'd him gently on the wave;
 The death he sought deny'd, and feathers gave.
 Debarr'd the surest remedy of grief,
 And forc'd to live, he curst th' unask'd relief.
 Then on his airy pinions upward flies,
 And at a second fall successless tries;
 The downy plume a quick descent denies.
 Enrag'd, he often dives beneath the wave,
 And there in vain expects to find a grave.
 His ceaseless sorrow for th' unhappy maid,
 Meager'd his look, and on his spirits prey'd.
 Still near the sounding deep he lives; his name
 From frequent diving and emerging came.

BOOK THE FIFTEENTH

A KING is sought to guide the growing state,
One able to support the publick weight
And fill the throne where Romulus had sate.
Renown, which oft bespeaks the publick voice,
Had recommended Numa to their choice:
A peaceful, pious prince; who not content
To know the Sabine rites, his study bent
To cultivate his mind; to learn the laws
Of Nature, and explore their hidden cause.
Urg'd by this care, his country he forsook,
And to Crotona thence his journey took.
Arriv'd, he first enquir'd the founder's name
Of this new colony; and whence he came.
Then thus a senior of the place replies
(Well read, and curious of antiquities):
'Tis said, Alcides hither took his way
From Spain, and drove along his conquer'd prey;
Then, leaving in the fields his grazing cows,
He sought himself some hospitable house:
Good Croton entertain'd his godlike guest;
While he repair'd his weary limbs with rest.
The hero, thence departing, bless'd the place;
And here, he said, in time's revolving race,
A rising town shall take his name from thee.
Revolving time fulfill'd the prophecy:
For Myscelos, the justest man on Earth,
Aemon's son, at Argos had his birth:
Him Hercules, arm'd with his club of oak,
O'ershadow'd in a dream, and thus bespoke:
Go, leave thy native soil, and make abode,
Where Aesaris rowls down his rapid flood:
He said; and sleep forsook him, and the God.
Trembling he wak'd, and rose with anxious heart;
His country laws forbad him to depart:
What shou'd he do? 'Twas death to go away,
And the God menac'd, if he dar'd to stay.
All day he doubted, and when night came on,
Sleep, and the same forewarning dream, begun:
Once more the God stood threatning o'er his head;

With added curses if he disobey'd.
 Twice warn'd, he study'd flight; but wou'd convey,
 At once, his person, and his wealth away:
 Thus while he linger'd, his design was heard;
 A speedy process form'd, and death declar'd.
 Witness there needed none of his offence;
 Against himself the wretch was evidence:
 Condemn'd, and destitute of human aid,
 To him, for whom he suffer'd, thus he pray'd.
 O Pow'r, who hast deserv'd in Heav'n a throne,
 Not giv'n, but by thy labours made thy own,
 Pity thy suppliant, and protect his cause,
 Whom thou hast made obnoxious to the laws.
 A custom was of old, and still remains,
 Which life, or death by suffrages ordains:
 White stones, and black within an urn are cast;
 The first absolve, but Fate is in the last.
 The judges to the common urn bequeath
 Their votes, and drop the sable signs of death;
 The box receives all black, but, pour'd from thence,
 The stones came candid forth; the hue of innocence.
 Thus Alemonides his safety won,
 Preserv'd from death by Alcumena's son:
 Then to his kinsman-God his vows he pays,
 And cuts with prosp'rous gales th' Ionian seas:
 He leaves Tarentum favour'd by the wind,
 And Thurine bays, and Ternises, behind;
 Soft Sybaris, and all the capes that stand
 Along the shore, he makes in sight of land;
 Still doubling, and still coasting, 'till he found
 The mouth of Aesaris, and promis'd ground;
 Then saw, where, on the margin of the flood,
 The tomb, that held the bones of Croton stood:
 Here, by the Gods' command, he built, and wall'd
 The place predicted; and Crotona call'd.
 Thus Fame, from time to time, delivers down
 The sure tradition of th' Italian town.
 Here dwelt the man divine, whom Samos bore,
 But now self-banish'd from his native shore,
 Because he hated tyrants, nor cou'd bear

The chains, which none but servile souls will wear.
He, tho' from Heav'n remote, to Heav'n cou'd move,
With strength of mind, and tread th' abyss above;
And penetrate, with his interior light,
Those upper depths, which Nature hid from sight:
And what he had observ'd, and learnt from thence,
Lov'd in familiar language to dispence.
The crowd with silent admiration stand,
And heard him, as they heard their God's command;
While he discours'd of Heav'n's mysterious laws,
The world's original, and Nature's cause;
And what was God; and why the fleecy snows
In silence fell, and rattling winds arose;
What shook the stedfast Earth, and whence begun
The dance of planets round the radiant sun;
If thunder was the voice of angry Jove,
Or clouds, with nitre pregnant, burst above:
Of these, and things beyond the common reach,
He spoke, and charm'd his audience with his speech.
He first the taste of flesh from tables drove,
And argu'd well, if arguments cou'd move:
O mortals, from your fellows' blood abstain,
Nor taint your bodies with a food profane:
While corn, and pulse by Nature are bestow'd,
And planted orchards bend their willing load;
While labour'd gardens wholesom herbs produce,
And teeming vines afford their gen'rous juice;
Nor tardier fruits of cruder kind are lost,
But tam'd with fire, or mellow'd by the frost;
While kine to pails distended udders bring,
And bees their hony redolent of Spring;
While Earth not only can your needs supply,
But, lavish of her store, provides for luxury;
A guiltless feast administers with ease,
And without blood is prodigal to please.
Wild beasts their maws with their slain brethren fill;
And yet not all, for some refuse to kill;
Sheep, goats, and oxen, and the nobler steed,
On browz, and corn, and flow'ry meadows, feed.
Bears, tygers, wolves, the Lyon's angry brood,

Whom Heav'n endu'd with principles of blood,
 He wisely sundred from the rest, to yell
 In forests, and in lonely caves to dwell;
 Where stronger beasts oppress the weak by might,
 And all in prey, and purple feasts delight.
 O impious use! to Nature's laws oppos'd,
 Where bowels are in other bowels clos'd:
 Where fatten'd by their fellow's fat, they thrive;
 Maintain'd by murder, and by death they live.
 'Tis then for nought, that Mother Earth provides
 The stores of all she shows, and all she hides,
 If men with fleshy morsels must be fed,
 And chew with bloody teeth the breathing bread:
 What else is this, but to devour our guests,
 And barb'rously renew Cyclopean feasts!
 We, by destroying life, our life sustain;
 And gorge th' ungodly maw with meats obscene.
 Not so the Golden Age, who fed on fruit,
 Nor durst with bloody meals their mouths pollute.
 Then birds in airy space might safely move,
 And tim'rous hares on heaths securely rove:
 Nor needed fish the guileful hooks to fear,
 For all was peaceful; and that peace sincere.
 Whoever was the wretch (and curs'd be he)
 That envy'd first our food's simplicity,
 Th' essay of bloody feasts on brutes began,
 And after forg'd the sword to murder Man.
 Had he the sharpen'd steel alone employ'd
 On beasts of prey; that other beasts destroy'd,
 Or Man invaded with their fangs and paws,
 This had been justify'd by Nature's laws,
 And self-defence: but who did feasts begin
 Of flesh, he stretch'd necessity to sin.
 To kill man-killers, Man has lawful pow'r,
 But not th' extended licence, to devour.
 Ill habits gather by unseen degrees,
 As brooks make rivers, rivers run to seas.
 The sow, with her broad snout, for rooting up
 Th' intrusted seed, was judg'd to spoil the crop,
 And intercept the sweating farmer's hope:

The covetous churl, of unforgiving kind,
Th' offender to the bloody priest resign'd:
Her hunger was no plea: for that she dy'd.
The goat came next in order to be try'd:
The goat had cropt the tendrils of the vine:
In vengeance laity, and clergy join,
Where one had lost his profit, one his wine.
Here was, at least, some shadow of offence;
The sheep was sacrific'd on no pretence,
But meek, and unresisting innocence.
A patient, useful creature, born to bear
The warm, and woolly fleece, that cloath'd her murderer;
And daily to give down the milk she bred,
A tribute for the grass on which she fed.
Living, both food and rayment she supplies,
And is of least advantage, when she dies.
How did the toying ox his death deserve,
A downright simple drudge, and born to serve?
O tyrant! with what justice canst thou hope
The promise of the year, a plenteous crop;
When thou destroy'st thy lab'ring steer, who till'd,
And plough'd with pains, thy else ungrateful field?
From his yet reeking neck, to draw the yoke,
That neck, with which the surly clods he broke;
And to the hatchet yield thy husbandman,
Who finish'd Autumn, and the Spring began!
Nor this alone! but Heav'n it self to bribe,
We to the Gods our impious acts ascribe:
First recompence with death their creatures' toil;
Then call the bless'd above to share the spoil:
The fairest victim must the Pow'rs appease
(So fatal 'tis sometimes too much to please!),
A purple fillet his broad brows adorns,
With flow'ry garlands crown'd, and gilded horns:
He hears the murd'rous pray'r the priest prefers,
But understands not, 'tis his doom he hears:
Beholds the meal betwixt his temples cast
(The fruit and product of his labours past);
And in the water views perhaps the knife
Uplifted, to deprive him of his life;

Then broken up alive, his entrails sees
 Torn out, for priests t' inspect the Gods' decrees.
 From whence, o mortal men, this gust of blood
 Have you deriv'd, and interdicted food?
 Be taught by me this dire delight to shun,
 Warn'd by my precepts, by my practice won:
 And when you eat the well-deserving beast,
 Think, on the lab'rour of your field you feast!
 Now since the God inspires me to proceed,
 Be that, whate'er inspiring Pow'r, obey'd.
 For I will sing of mighty mysteries,
 Of truths conceal'd before, from human eyes,
 Dark oracles unveil and open all the skies.
 Pleas'd as I am to walk along the sphere
 Of shining stars, and travel with the year,
 To leave the heavy Earth, and scale the height
 Of Atlas, who supports the heav'nly weight;
 To look from upper light, and thence survey
 Mistaken mortals wand'ring from the way,
 And wanting wisdom, fearful for the state
 Of future things, and trembling at their Fate!
 Those I would teach; and by right reason bring
 To think of death, as but an idle thing.
 Why thus affrighted at an empty name,
 A dream of darkness, and fictitious flame?
 Vain themes of wit, which but in poems pass,
 And fables of a world, that never was!
 What feels the body, when the soul expires,
 By time corrupted, or consum'd by fires?
 Nor dies the spirit, but new life repeats
 In other forms, and only changes seats.
 Ev'n I, who these mysterious truths declare,
 Was once Eupborbus in the Trojan war;
 My name, and lineage I remember well,
 And how in fight by Sparta's king I fell.
 In Argive Juno's fane I late beheld
 My buckler hung on high, and own'd my former shield.
 Then, death, so call'd, is but old matter dress'd
 In some new figure, and a vary'd vest:
 Thus all things are but alter'd, nothing dies;

And here, and there th' unbody'd spirit flies.
By time, or force, or sickness dispossesst,
And lodges, where it lights, in man or beast;
Or hunts without, 'till ready limbs it find,
And actuates those according to their kind;
From tenement to tenement is toss'd,
The soul is still the same, the figure only lost:
And, as the soften'd wax new seals receives,
This face assumes, and that impression leaves;
Now call'd by one, now by another name;
The form is only chang'd, the wax is still the same:
So death, so call'd, can but the form deface;
Th' immortal soul flies out in empty space,
To seek her fortune in some other place.
Then let not piety be put to flight,
To please the taste of glutton appetite;
But suffer inmate souls secure to dwell,
Lest from their seats your parents you expel;
With rabid hunger feed upon your kind,
Or from a beast dislodge a brother's mind.
And since, like Typhis parting from the shore,
In ample seas I sail, and depths untry'd before,
This let me further add, that Nature knows
No stedfast station, but, or ebbs, or flows:
Ever in motion; she destroys her old,
And casts new figures in another mold.
Ev'n times are in perpetual flux, and run,
Like rivers from their fountain, rowling on,
For time, no more than streams, is at a stay;
The flying hour is ever on her way:
And as the fountain still supplies her store,
The wave behind impels the wave before;
Thus in successive course the minutes run,
And urge their predecessor minutes on,
Till moving, ever new: for former things
Are set aside, like abdicated kings:
And every moment alters what is done,
And innovates some act, 'till then unknown.
Darkness we see emerges into light,
And shining suns descend to sable night;

Ev'n Heav'n it self receives another dye,
 When weary'd animals in slumbers lie
 Of midnight ease: another, when the gray
 Of morn preludes the splendor of the day.
 The disk of Phoebus, when he climbs on high,
 Appears at first but as a bloodshot eye;
 And when his chariot downwards drives to bed.
 His ball is with the same suffusion red;
 But mounted high in his meridian race
 All bright he shines, and with a better face:
 For there, pure particles of Aether flow,
 Far from th' infection of the world below.
 Nor equal light th' unequal Moon adorns,
 Or in her waxing, or her waning horns,
 For ev'ry day she wanes, her face is less;
 But gath'ring into globe, she fattens at increase.
 Perceiv'st thou not the process of the year,
 How the four seasons in four forms appear,
 Resembling human life in ev'ry shape they wear?
 Spring first, like infancy, shoots out her head,
 With milky juice requiring to be fed:
 Helpless, tho' fresh, and wanting to be led.
 The green stem grows in stature, and in size,
 But only feeds with hope the farmer's eyes;
 Then laughs the childish year with flowrets crown'd,
 And lavishly perfumes the fields around,
 But no substantial nourishment receives;
 Infirm the stalks, unsolid are the leaves.
 Proceeding onward whence the year began,
 The Summer grows adult, and ripens into Man.
 This season, as in men, is most repleat
 With kindly moisture, and prolifick heat.
 Autumn succeeds, a sober tepid age,
 Not froze with fear, nor boiling into rage;
 More than mature, and tending to decay,
 When our brown locks repine to mix with odious gray.
 Last, Winter creeps along with tardy pace,
 Sour is his front, and furrow'd is his face;
 His scalp if not dishonour'd quite of hair,
 The ragged fleece is thin; and thin is worse than bare.

Ev'n our own bodies daily change receive,
Some part of what was theirs before, they leave;
Nor are to-day, what yesterday they were;
Nor the whole same to-morrow will appear.
Time was, when we were sow'd, and just began,
From some few fruitful drops, the promise of a man:
Then Nature's hand (fermented as it was)
Moulded to shape the soft, coagulated mass;
And when the little man was fully form'd,
The breathless embrio with a spirit warm'd;
But when the mother's throws begin to come,
The creature, pent within the narrow room,
Breaks his blind prison, pushing to repair
His stifled breath, and draw the living air;
Cast on the margin of the world he lies,
A helpless babe, but by instinct he cries.
He next essays to walk, but downward press'd
On four feet imitates his brother beast:
By slow degrees he gathers from the ground
His legs, and to the rowling chair is bound;
Then walks alone; a horseman now become,
He rides a stick, and travels round the room.
In time he vaunts among his youthful peers,
Strong-bon'd, and strung with nerves, in pride of years,
He runs with mettle his first merry stage,
Maintains the next, abated of his rage,
But manages his strength, and spares his age.
Heavy the third, and stiff, he sinks apace,
And tho' tis down hill all, but creeps along the race.
Now sapless on the verge of death he stands,
Contemplating his former feet and hands;
And, Milo-like, his slacken'd sinews sees,
And wither'd arms, once fit to cope with Hercules,
Unable now to shake, much less to tear, the trees.
So Helen wept, when her too faithful glass
Reflected on her eyes the ruins of her face:
Wondring, what charms her ravishers cou'd spy,
To force her twice, or ev'n but once t' enjoy!
Thy teeth, devouring time, thine, envious age,
On things below still exercise your rage:

With venom'd grinders you corrupt your meat,
 And then, at lingring meals, the morsels eat.
 Nor those, which elements we call, abide,
 Nor to this figure, nor to that are ty'd;
 For this eternal world is said, of old,
 But four prolifick principles to hold,
 Four different bodies; two to Heav'n ascend,
 And other two down to the center tend:
 Fire first with wings expanded mounts on high,
 Pure, void of weight, and dwells in upper sky;
 Then air, because unclog'd in empty space,
 Flies after fire, and claims the second place:
 But weighty water, as her nature guides,
 Lies on the lap of Earth; and Mother Earth subsides.
 All things are mix'd of these, which all contain,
 And into these are all resolv'd again:
 Earth rarifies to dew; expanded more,
 The subtil dew in air begins to soar;
 Spreads, as she flies, and weary of her name
 Extenuates still, and changes into flame;
 Thus having by degrees perfection won,
 Restless they soon untwist the web, they spun,
 And fire begins to lose her radiant hue,
 Mix'd with gross air, and air descends to dew;
 And dew condensing, does her form forego,
 And sinks, a heavy lump of Earth below.
 Thus are their figures never at a stand,
 But chang'd by Nature's innovating hand;
 All things are alter'd, nothing is destroy'd,
 The shifted scene for some new show employ'd.
 Then, to be born, is to begin to be
 Some other thing we were not formerly:
 And what we call to die, is not t' appear,
 Or be the thing, that formerly we were.
 Those very elements, which we partake
 Alive, when dead some other bodies make:
 Translated grow, have sense, or can discourse;
 But death on deathless substance has no force.
 That forms are chang'd, I grant; that nothing can
 Continue in the figure it began:

The golden age, to silver was debas'd:
To copper that; our metal came at last.
The face of places, and their forms, decay;
And that is solid Earth, that once was sea:
Seas in their turn retreating from the shore,
Make solid land, what ocean was before;
And far from strands are shells of fishes found,
And rusty anchors fix'd on mountain-ground:
And what were fields before, now wash'd and worn
By falling floods from high, to valleys turn,
And crumbling still descend to level lands;
And lakes, and trembling bogs, are barren sands.
And the parch'd desert floats in streams unknown;
Wondring to drink of waters not her own.
Here Nature living fountains opes; and there
Seals up the wombs, where living fountains were;
Or earthquakes stop their ancient course, and bring
Diverted streams to feed a distant spring.
So Licus, swallow'd up, is seen no more,
But far from thence knocks out another door.
Thus Erasinus dives; and blind in Earth
Runs on, and gropes his way to second birth,
Starts up in Argos' meads, and shakes his locks
Around the fields, and fattens all the flocks.
So Mysus by another way is led,
And, grown a river, now disdains his head:
Forgets his humble birth, his name forsakes,
And the proud title of Cæicus takes.
Large Amenane, impure with yellow sands,
Runs rapid often, and as often stands,
And here he threats the drunken fields to drown;
And there his dugs deny to give their liquor down.
Anigros once did wholesome draughts afford,
But now his deadly waters are abhorr'd:
Since, hurt by Hercules, as Fame resounds,
The centaurs in his current wash'd their wounds.
The streams of Hypanis are sweet no more,
But brackish lose the taste they had before.
Antissa, Pharos, Tyre, in seas were pent,
Once isles, but now increase the continent;

While the Leucadian coast, main land before,
 By rushing seas is sever'd from the shore.
 So Zancle to th' Italian earth was ty'd,
 And men once walk'd, where ships at anchor ride.
 'Till Neptune overlook'd the narrow way,
 And in disdain pour'd in the conqu'ring sea.
 Two cities that adorn'd th' Achaian ground,
 Buris, and Helice, no more are found,
 But whelm'd beneath a lake, are sunk and drown'd;
 And boatsmen through the crystal water show,
 To wond'ring passengers, the walls below.
 Near Traten stands a hill, expos'd in air
 To winter-winds, of leafy shadows bare:
 This once was level ground: but (strange to tell)
 Th' included vapours, that in caverns dwell,
 Lab'ring with cholick pangs; and close confin'd,
 In vain sought issue for the rumbling wind:
 Yet still they heav'd for vent, and heaving still
 Inlarg'd the concave, and shot up the hill;
 As breath extends a bladder, or the skins
 Of goats are blown t' inclose the hoarded wines:
 The mountain yet retains a mountain's face,
 And gather'd rubbish heals the hollow space.
 Of many wonders, which I heard, or knew,
 Retrenching most, I will relate but few:
 What, are not springs with qualities oppos'd,
 Endu'd at seasons, and at seasons lost?
 Thrice in a day thine, Ammon, change their form,
 Cold at high noon, at morn, and evening warm:
 Thine, Athaman, will kindle wood, if thrown
 On the pil'd earth, and in the waning moon.
 The Thracians have a stream, if any try
 The taste, his harden'd bowels petrify;
 Whate'er it touches, it converts to stones,
 And makes a marble pavement, where it runs.
 Crathis, and Sybaris her sister flood,
 That slide through our Calabrian neighbour wood,
 With gold, and amber dye the shining hair,
 And thither youth resort (for who would not be fair?).
 But stranger virtues yet in streams we find,

Some change not only bodies, but the mind:
Who has not heard of Salmacis obscene,
Whose waters into women soften men?
Or Aethiopian lakes, which turn the brain
To madness, or in heavy sleep constrain?
Clytorian streams the love of wine expel
(Such is the virtue of th' abstemious well),
Whether the colder nymph that rules the flood
Extinguishes, and balks the drunken God;
Or that Melampus (so have some assur'd)
When the mad Proetides with charms he cur'd,
And pow'rful herbs, both charms, and simples cast
Into the sober spring, where still their virtues last.
Unlike effects Lyncestis will produce;
Who drinks his waters, tho' with mod'rate use,
Reels as with wine, and sees with double sight:
His heels too heavy, and his head too light.
Ladon, once Pheneos, an Arcadian stream
(Ambiguous in th' effects, as in the name),
By day is wholesome bev'rage; but is thought
By night infected, and a deadly draught.
Thus running rivers, and the standing lake,
Now of these virtues, now of those partake:
Time was (and all things time, and Fate obey)
When fast Ortygia floated on the sea;
Such were Cyanean isles, when Typhis steer'd
Betwixt their streights, and their collision fear'd;
They swam, where now they sit; and firmly join'd
Secure of rooting up, resist the wind.
Nor Aetna vomiting sulphureous fire
Will ever belch; for sulphur will expire
(The veins exhausted of the liquid store):
Time was, she cast no flames; in time will cast no more.
For whether Earth's an animal, and air
Imbibes; her lungs with coolness to repair,
And what she sucks remits; she still requires
Inlets for air, and outlets for her fires;
When tortur'd with convulsive fits she shakes,
That motion choaks the vent, 'till other vent she makes:
Or when the winds in hollow caves are clos'd,

And subtle spirits find that way oppos'd,
 They toss up flints in air; the flints that hide
 The seeds of fire, thus toss'd in air, collide,
 Kindling the sulphur, 'till the fewel spent
 The cave is cool'd, and the fierce winds relent.
 Or whether sulphur, catching fire, feeds on
 Its unctuous parts, 'till all the matter gone
 The flames no more ascend; for Earth supplies
 The fat that feeds them; and when Earth denies
 That food, by length of time consum'd, the fire
 Famish'd for want of fewel must expire.
 A race of men there are, as Fame has told,
 Who shiv'ring suffer Hyperborean cold,
 'Till nine times bathing in Minerva's lake,
 Soft feathers, to defend their naked sides, they take.
 'Tis said, the Scythian wives (believe who will)
 Transform themselves to birds by magick skill;
 Smear'd over with an oil of wond'rous might,
 That adds new pinions to their airy flight.
 But this by sure experiment we know,
 That living creatures from corruption grow:
 Hide in a hollow pit a slaughter'd steer,
 Bees from his putrid bowels will appear;
 Who, like their parents, haunt the fields, and bring
 Their hony-harvest home, and hope another Spring.
 The warlike-steed is multiply'd, we find,
 To wasps, and hornets of the warrior kind.
 Cut from a crab his crooked claws, and hide
 The rest in Earth, a scorpion thence will glide,
 And shoot his sting, his tail in circles toss'd
 Refers the limbs his backward father lost:
 And worms, that stretch on leaves their filmy loom,
 Crawl from their bags, and butterflies become.
 Ev'n slime begets the frog's loquacious race:
 Short of their feet at first, in little space
 With arms, and legs endu'd, long leaps they take
 Rais'd on their hinder part, and swim the lake,
 And waves repel: for Nature gives their kind,
 To that intent, a length of legs behind.
 The cubs of bears a living lump appear,

When whelp'd, and no determin'd figure wear.
Their mother licks 'em into shape, and gives
As much of form, as she her self receives.
The grubs from their sexangular abode
Crawl out unfinish'd, like the maggot's brood:
Trunks without limbs; 'till time at leisure brings
The thighs they wanted, and their tardy wings.
The bird who draws the carr of Juno, vain
Of her crown'd head, and of her starry train;
And he that bears th' Artillery of Jove,
The strong-pounc'd eagle, and the billing dove;
And all the feather'd kind, who cou'd suppose
(But that from sight, the surest sense, he knows)
They from th' included yolk, not ambient white, arose.
There are, who think the marrow of a man,
Which in the spine, while he was living, ran;
When dead, the pith corrupted will become
A snake, and hiss within the hollow tomb.
All these receive their birth from other things;
But from himself the Phoenix only springs:
Self-born, begotten by the parent flame
In which he burn'd, another, and the same;
Who not by corn, or herbs his life sustains,
But the sweet essence of Amomum drains:
And watches the rich gums Arabia bears,
While yet in tender dew they drop their tears.
He (his five centuries of life fulfill'd)
His nest on oaken boughs begins to build,
Or trembling tops of palm, and first he draws
The plan with his broad bill, and crooked claws,
Nature's artificers; on this the pile
Is form'd, and rises round, then with the spoil
Of Casia, Cynamon, and stems of Nard
(For softness strew'd beneath) his fun'ral bed is rear'd:
Fun'ral and bridal both; and all around
The borders with corruptless myrrh are crown'd,
On this incumbent; 'till aetherial flame
First catches, then consumes the costly frame:
Consumes him too, as on the pile he lies;
He liv'd on odours, and in odours dies.

An infant Phoenix from the former springs,
 His father's heir, and from his tender wings
 Shakes off his parent dust, his method he pursues,
 And the same lease of life on the same terms renews.
 When grown to manhood he begins his reign,
 And with stiff pinions can his flight sustain,
 He lightens of its load the tree that bore
 His father's royal sepulcher before,
 And his own cradle: this (with pious care
 Plac'd on his back) he cuts the buxome air,
 Seeks the Sun's city, and his sacred church,
 And decently lays down his burden in the porch.
 A wonder more amazing wou'd we find?
 Th' Hyaena shows it, of a double kind,
 Varying the sexes in alternate years,
 In one begets, and in another bears.
 The thin Camelion fed with air, receives
 The colour of the thing, to which he cleaves.
 India when conquer'd, on the conqu'ring God
 For planted vines the sharp-ey'd Lynx bestow'd,
 Whose urine, shed before it touches Earth,
 Congeals in air, and gives to gems their birth.
 So Coral soft, and white in ocean's bed,
 Comes harden'd up in air, and glows with red.
 All changing species should my song recite;
 Before I ceas'd, wou'd change the day to night.
 Nations, and empires flourish, and decay,
 By turns command, and in their turns obey;
 Time softens hardy people, time again
 Hardens to war a soft, unwarlike train.
 Thus Troy for ten long years her foes withstood,
 And daily bleeding bore th' expence of blood:
 Now for thick streets it shows an empty space,
 Or only fill'd with tombs of her own perish'd race,
 Her self becomes the sepulcher of what she was.
 Mycené, Sparta, Thebes of mighty fame,
 Are vanish'd out of substance into name.
 And Dardan Rome that just begins to rise,
 On Tiber's banks, in time shall mate the skies:
 Widening her bounds, and working on her way;

Ev'n now she meditates imperial sway:
Yet this is change, but she by changing thrives,
Like moons new-born, and in her cradle strives
To fill her infant-horns; an hour shall come,
When the round world shall be contain'd in Rome.
For thus old saws foretel, and Helenus
Anchises' drooping son enliven'd thus:
When Ilium now was in a sinking state;
And he was doubtful of his future fate:
O Goddess-born, with thy hard fortune strive,
Troy never can be lost, and thou alive.
Thy passage thou shalt free through fire, and sword,
And Troy in foreign lands shall be restor'd.
In happier fields a rising town I see
Greater, than what e'er was, or is, or e'er shall be:
And Heav'n yet owes the world a race deriv'd from thee.
Sages, and chiefs, of other lineage born,
The city shall extend, extended shall adorn:
But from lulus he must draw his breath,
By whom thy Rome shall rule the conquer'd Earth:
Whom Heav'n will lend Mankind on Earth to reign,
And late require the precious pledge again.
This Helenus to great Aeneas told,
Which I retain, e'er since in other mould
My soul was cloath'd; and now rejoice to view
My country walls rebuilt, and Troy reviv'd anew,
Rais'd by the fall, decreed by loss to gain;
Enslav'd but to be free, and conquer'd but to reign.
'Tis time my hard-mouth'd coursers to controul,
Apt to run riot, and transgress the goal:
And therefore I conclude, Whatever lies,
In Earth, or flits in air, or fills the skies,
All suffer change; and we, that are of soul
And body mix'd, are members of the whole.
Then when our sires, or grandsires, shall forsake
The forms of men, and brutal figures take,
Thus hous'd, securely let their spirits rest,
Nor violate thy father in the beast,
Thy friend, thy brother, any of thy kin,
If none of these, yet there's a man within:

O spare to make a Thyestean meal,
 T' inclose his body, and his soul expel.
 Ill customs by degrees to habits rise,
 Ill habits soon become exalted vice:
 What more advance can mortals make in sin
 So near perfection, who with blood begin?
 Deaf to the calf, that lyes beneath the knife,
 Looks up, and from her butcher begs her life:
 Deaf to the harmless kid, that ere he dies
 All methods to procure thy mercy tries,
 And imitates in vain thy children's cries.
 Where will he stop, who feeds with household bread,
 Then eats the poultry, which before he fed?
 Let plough thy steers; that when they lose their breath,
 To Nature, not to thee, they may impute their death.
 Let goats for food their loaded udders lend,
 And sheep from winter-cold thy sides defend;
 But neither sprindges, nets, nor snares employ,
 And be no more ingenious to destroy.
 Free as in air, let birds on Earth remain,
 Nor let insidious glue their wings constrain;
 Nor opening hounds the trembling stag affright,
 Nor purple feathers intercept his flight:
 Nor hooks conceal'd in baits for fish prepare,
 Nor lines to heave 'em twinkling up in air.
 Take not away the life you cannot give,
 For all things have an equal right to live.
 Kill noxious creatures, where 'tis sin to save;
 This only just prerogative we have:
 But nourish life with vegetable food,
 And shun the sacrilegious taste of blood.
 These precepts by the Samian sage were taught,
 Which God-like Numa to the Sabines brought,
 And thence transferr'd to Rome, by gift his own:
 A willing people, and an offer'd throne.
 O happy monarch, sent by Heav'n to bless
 A salvage nation with soft arts of peace,
 To teach religion, rapine to restrain,
 Give laws to lust, and sacrifice ordain:
 Himself a saint, a Goddess was his bride,

And all the Muses o'er his acts preside.
Advanc'd in years he dy'd; one common date
His reign concluded, and his mortal state.
Their tears plebeians, and patricians shed,
And pious matrons wept their monarch dead.
His mournful wife, her sorrows to bewail,
Withdrew from Rome, and sought th' Arician vale.
Hid in thick woods, she made incessant moans,
Disturbing Cinthia's sacred rites with groans.
How oft the nymphs, who rul'd the wood and lake,
Reprov'd her tears, and words of comfort spice!
How oft (in vain) the son of Theseus said,
Thy stormy sorrows be with patience laid;
Nor are thy fortunes to be wept alone,
Weigh others' woes, and learn to bear thine own,
Be mine an instance to assuage thy grief:
Would mine were none! — yet mine may bring relief.
You've heard, perhaps, in conversation told,
What once befel Hippolytus of old;
To death by Theseus' easie faith betray'd,
And caught in snares his wicked step-dame laid.
The wondrous tale your credit scarce may claim,
Yet (strange to say) in me behold the same,
Whom lustful Phaedra oft had press'd in vain,
With impious joys, my father's bed to stain;
'Till seiz'd with fear, or by revenge inspir'd,
She charg'd on me the crimes herself desir'd.
Expell'd by Theseus, from his home I fled
With heaps of curses on my guiltless head.
Forlorn, I sought Pitthëan Troezen's land,
And drove my chariot o'er Corinthus' strand;
When from the surface of the level main
A billow rising, heav'd above the plain;
Rolling, and gath'ring, 'till so high it swell'd,
A mountain's height th' enormous mass excell'd;
Then bellowing, burst; when from the summit cleav'd,
A horned bull his ample chest upheav'd.
His mouth, and nostrils, storms of briny rain,
Expiring, blew. Dread horror seiz'd my train.
I stood unmov'd. My father's cruel doom

Claim'd all my soul, nor fear could find a room.
 Amaz'd, awhile my trembling coursers stood
 With prick'd up ears, contemplating the flood;
 Then starting sudden, from the dreadful view,
 At once, like lightning, from the seas they flew,
 And o'er the craggy rocks the rattling chariot drew.
 In vain to stop the hot-mouth'd steeds I try'd,
 And bending backward all my strength apply'd;
 The frothy foam in driving flakes distains
 The bits, and bridles, and bedews the reins.
 But tho', as yet untam'd they run, at length
 Their heady rage had tir'd beneath my strength,
 When in the spokes, a stump intangling, tore
 The shatter'd wheel, and from its axle bore.
 The shock impetuous tost me from the seat,
 Caught in the reins beneath my horse's feet.
 My reeking guts drag'd out alive, around
 The jagged strump, my trembling nerves were wound,
 Then stretch'd the well-knit limbs, in pieces hal'd,
 Part stuck behind, and part the chariot trail'd;
 'Till, midst my cracking joints, and breaking bones,
 I breath'd away my weary'd soul in groans.
 No part distinguish'd from the rest was found,
 But all my parts an universal wound.
 Now say, self-tortur'd nymph, can you compare
 Our griefs as equal, or in justice dare?
 I saw besides the darksome realms of woe,
 And bath'd my wounds in smoking streams below.
 There I had staid, nor second life enjoy'd,
 But Poean's son his wondrous art employ'd.
 To light restor'd, by medicinal skill,
 In spite of Fate, and rigid Pluto's will,
 Th' invidious object to preserve from view,
 A misty cloud around me Cynthia threw;
 And lest my sight should stir my foes to rage,
 She stamp'd my visage with the marks of age.
 My former hue was chang'd, and for it shown
 A set of features, and a face unknown.
 A-while the Goddess stood in doubt, or Crete,
 Or Delos' isle, to chuse for my retreat.

Delos, and Crete refus'd, this wood she chose,
Bad me my former luckless name depose,
Which kept alive the mem'ry of my woes;
Then said, Immortal life be thine; and thou,
Hippolytus once call'd, be Virbius now.
Here then a God, but of th' inferior race,
I serve my Goddess, and attend her chace.
But others' woes were useless to appease
Egeria's grief, or set her mind at ease.
Beneath the hill, all comfortless she laid,
The dropping tears her eyes incessant shed,
'Till pitying Phoebe eas'd her pious woe,
Thaw'd to a spring, whose streams for ever flow.
The nymphs, and Virbius, like amazement fill'd,
As seiz'd the swains, who Tyrrhene furrows till'd;
When heaving up, a clod was seen to roll,
Untouch'd, self-mov'd, and big with human soul.
The spreading mass in former shape depos'd,
Began to shoot, and arms and legs disclos'd,
'Till form'd a perfect man, the living mold
Op'd its new mouth, and future truths foretold;
And Tages nam'd by natives of the place,
Taught arts prophetic to the Tuscan race.
Or such as once by Romulus was shown,
Who saw his lance with sprouting leaves o'er-grown,
When fix'd in Earth the point began to shoot,
And growing downward turn'd a fibrous root;
While spread aloft the branching arms display'd,
O'er wondring crowds, an unexpected shade.
Or as when Cippus in the current view'd
The shooting horns that on his forehead stood,
His temples first he feels, and with surprize
His touch confirms th' assurance of his eyes.
Streight to the skies his horned front he rears,
And to the Gods directs these pious pray'rs.
If this portent be prosp'rous, O decree
To Rome th' event; if otherwise, to me.
An altar then of turf he hastes to raise,
Rich gums in fragrant exhalations blaze;
The panting entrails crackle as they fry,

And boding fumes pronounce a mystery,
 Soon as the augur saw the holy fire,
 And victims with presaging signs expire,
 To Cippus then he turns his eyes with speed,
 And views the horny honours of his head:
 Then cry'd, Hail conqueror! thy call obey,
 Those omens I behold presage thy sway.
 Rome waits thy nod, unwilling to be free,
 And owns thy sov'reign pow'r as Fate's decree.
 He said — and Cippus, starting at th' event,
 Spoke in these words his pious discontent.
 Far hence, ye Gods, this execration send,
 And the great race of Romulus defend.
 Better that I in exile live abhorr'd,
 Than e'er the Capitol shou'd style me lord.
 This spoke, he hides with leaves his omen'd head.
 Then prays, the senate next convenes, and said:
 If augurs can foresee, a wretch is come,
 Design'd by destiny the bane of Rome.
 Two horns (most strange to tell) his temples crown;
 If e'er he pass the walls, and gain the town,
 Your laws are forfeit, that ill-fated hour;
 And liberty must yield to lawless pow'r.
 Your gates he might have enter'd; but this arm
 Seiz'd the usurper, and with-held the harm.
 Haste, find the monster out, and let him be
 Condemn'd to all the senate can decree;
 Or ty'd in chains, or into exile thrown;
 Or by the tyrant's death prevent your own.
 The crowd such murmurs utter as they stand,
 As swelling surges breaking on the strand;
 Or as when gath'ring gales sweep o'er the grove,
 And their tall heads the bending cedars move.
 Each with confusion gaz'd, and then began
 To feel his fellow's brows, and find the man.
 Cippus then shakes his garland off, and cries,
 The wretch you want, I offer to your eyes.
 The anxious throng look'd down, and sad in thought,
 All wish'd they had not found the sign they sought:
 In haste with laurel wreaths his head they bind;

Such honour to such virtue was assign'd.
Then thus the senate — Hear, o Cippus, hear;
So god-like is thy tutelary care,
That since in Rome thy self forbids thy stay,
For thy abode those acres we convey
The plough-share can surround, the labour of a day.
In deathless records thou shalt stand inroll'd,
And Rome's rich posts shall shine with horns of gold.
Melodious maids of Pindus, who inspire
The flowing strains, and tune the vocal lyre;
Tradition's secrets are unlock'd to you,
Old tales revive, and ages past renew;
You, who can hidden causes best expound,
Say, whence the isle, which Tiber flows around,
Its altars with a heav'nly stranger grac'd,
And in our shrines the God of physic plac'd.
A wasting plague infected Latium's skies;
Pale, bloodless looks were seen, with ghastly eyes;
The dire disease's marks each visage wore,
And the pure blood was chang'd to putrid gore:
In vain were human remedies apply'd;
In vain the pow'r of healing herbs was try'd:
Weary'd with death, they seek celestial aid,
And visit Phoebus in his Delphic shade;
In the world's centre sacred Delphos stands,
And gives its oracles to distant lands:
Here they implore the God, with fervent vows,
His salutary pow'r to interpose,
And end a great afflicted city's woes.
The holy temple sudden tremors prov'd;
The laurel grove and all its quivers mov'd;
In hollow sounds the priestess, thus, began,
And thro' each bosom thrilling horrors ran.
“Th' assistance, Roman, which you here implore,
Seek from another, and a nearer shore;
Relief must be implor'd, and succour won,
Not from Apollo, but Apollo's son;
My son, to Latium born, shall bring redress:
Go with good omens, and expect success.”
When these clear oracles the senate knew;

The sacred tripod's counsels they pursue,
 Depute a pious and a chosen band,
 Who sail to Epidaurus' neighb'ring land:
 Before the Graecian elders when they stood,
 They pray 'em to bestow the healing God:
 "Ordain'd was he to save Ausonia's state;
 So promis'd Delphi, and unerring Fate."
 Opinions various their debates enlarge:
 Some plead to yield to Rome the sacred charge;
 Others, tenacious of their country's wealth,
 Refuse to grant the pow'r, who guards its health.
 While dubious they remain'd, the wasting light
 Withdrew before the growing shades of night;
 Now, Roman, clos'd in sleep were mortal eyes,
 When health's auspicious God appears to thee,
 And thy glad dreams his form celestial see:
 In his left hand, a rural staff preferr'd,
 His right is seen to stroke his decent beard.
 "Dismiss," said he, with mildness all divine,
 "Dismiss your fears; I come, and leave my shrine;
 This serpent view, that with ambitious play
 My staff encircles, mark him ev'ry way;
 His form, tho' larger, nobler, I'll assume,
 And chang'd, as Gods should be, bring aid to Rome."
 Here fled the vision, and the vision's flight
 Was follow'd by the chearful dawn of light.
 Now was the morn with blushing streaks o'erspread,
 And all the starry fires of Heav'n were fled;
 The chiefs perplex'd, and fill'd with doubtful care,
 To their protector's sumptuous roofs repair,
 By genuin signs implore him to express,
 What seats he deigns to chuse, what land to bless:
 Scarce their ascending pray'rs had reach'd the sky;
 Lo, the serpentine God, erected high!
 Forerunning hissings his approach confest;
 Bright shone his golden scales, and wav'd his lofty crest;
 The trembling altar his appearance spoke;
 The marble floor, and glittering ceiling shook;
 The doors were rock'd; the statue seem'd to nod;
 And all the fabric own'd the present God:

His radiant chest he taught aloft to rise,
And round the temple cast his flaming eyes:
Struck was th' astonish'd crowd; the holy priest,
His temples with white bands of ribbon drest,
With rev'rent awe the Power divine confest!
The God! the God! he cries; all tongues be still!
Each conscious breast devoutest ardour fill!
O beauteous! O divine! assist our cares,
And be propitious to thy vot'ries prayers!
All with consenting hearts, and pious fear,
The words repeat, the deity revere:
The Romans in their holy worship join'd,
With silent awe, and purity of mind:
Gracious to them, his crest is seen to nod,
And, as an earnest of his care, the God,
Thrice hissing, vibrates thrice his forked tongue;
And now the smooth descent he glides along:
Still on the ancient seats he bends his eyes,
In which his statue breaths, his altars rise;
His long-lov'd shrine with kind concern he leaves,
And to forsake th' accusom'd mansion grieves:
At length, his sweeping bulk in state is born
Thro' the throng'd streets, which scatter'd flowers adorn;
Thro' many a fold he winds his mazy course,
And gains the port and moles, which break the ocean's force.
'Twas here he made a stand, and having view'd
The pious train, who his last steps pursu'd,
Seem'd to dismiss their zeal with gracious eyes,
While gleams of pleasure in his aspect rise.
And now the Latian vessel he ascends;
Beneath the weighty God the vessel bends:
The Latins on the strand great Jove appease,
Their cables loose, and plough the yielding seas:
The high-rear'd serpent from the stern displays
His gorgeous form, and the blue deep surveys;
The ship is wafted on with gentle gales,
And o'er the calm Ionian smoothly sails;
On the sixth morn th' Italian coast they gain,
And touch Lacinia, grac'd with Juno's fane;
Now fair Calabria to the sight is lost,

And all the cities on her fruitful coast;
 They pass at length the rough Sicilian shore,
 The Brutian soil, rich with metallic ore,
 The famous isles, where Aeolus was king,
 And Paestum blooming with eternal Spring:
 Minerva's cape they leave, and Capreae's isle,
 Campania, on whose hills the vineyards smile,
 The city, which Alcides' spoils adorn,
 Naples, for soft delight and pleasure born;
 Fair Stabiae, with Cumean Sibyl's seats,
 And Baia's tepid baths, and green retreats;
 Linternum next they reach, where balmy gums
 Distil from mastic trees, and spread perfumes:
 Caieta, from the nurse so nam'd, for whom
 With pious care Aeneas rais'd a tomb,
 Vulturne, whose whirlpools suck the numerous sands,
 And Trachas, and Minturnea's marshy lands,
 And Formia's coast is left, and Circe's plain,
 Which yet remembers her enchanting reign;
 To Antium, last, his cōurse the pilot guides.
 Here, while the anchor'd vessel safely rides
 (For now the rufled deep portends a storm),
 The spiry God unfolds his spheric form,
 Thro' large indentings draws his lubric train,
 And seeks the refuge of Apollo's fane;
 The fane is situate on the yellow shore:
 When the sea smil'd, and the winds rag'd no more,
 He leaves his father's hospitable lands,
 And furrows, with his rattling scales, the sands
 Along the coast; at length the ship regains,
 And sails to Tibur, and Lavinum's plains.
 Here mingling crowds to meet their patron came,
 Ev'n the chast guardians of the Vestal flame,
 From every part tumultuous they repair,
 And joyful acclamations rend the air:
 Along the flowry banks, on either side,
 Where the tall ship floats on the swelling tide,
 Dispos'd in decent order altars rise,
 And crackling incense, as it mounts the skies,
 The air with sweets refreshes; while the knife,

Warm with the victim's blood, lets out the streaming life.
The world's great mistress, Rome, receives him now;
On the mast's top reclin'd he waves his brow,
And from that height surveys the great abodes,
And mansions, worthy of residing Gods.
The land, a narrow neck, it self extends,
Round which his course the stream divided bends;
The stream's two arms, on either side, are seen,
Stretch'd out in equal length; the land between.
The isle, so call'd from hence derives its name:
'Twas here the salutary serpent came;
Nor sooner has he left the Latian pine,
But he assumes again his form divine,
And now no more the drooping city mourns,
Joy is again restor'd, and health returns.
But Aesculapius was a foreign power:
In his own city Caesar we adore:
Him arms, and arts alike renown'd beheld,
In peace conspicuous, dreadful in the field;
His rapid conquest, and swift-finish'd wars,
The hero justly fix'd among the stars;
Yet is his progeny his greatest fame:
The son immortal makes the father's name.
The sea-girt Britons, by his courage tam'd,
For their high rocky cliffs, and fierceness fam'd;
His dreadful navies, which victorious rode
O'er Nile's affrighted waves and seven-sourc'd flood;
Numidia, and the spacious realms regain'd;
Where Cinyphis or flows, or Juba reign'd;
The powers of titled Mithridates broke,
And Pontus added to the Roman yoke;
Triumphal shows decreed, for conquests won,
For conquests, which the triumphs still outshone;
These are great deeds; yet less, than to have giv'n
The world a lord, in whom, propitious Heav'n,
When you decreed the sov'reign rule to place,
You blest with lavish bounty human race.
Now lest so great a prince might seem to rise
Of mortal stem, his sire much reach the skies;
The beauteous Goddess, that Aeneas bore,

Foresaw it, and foreseeing did deplore;
 For well she knew her hero's fate was nigh,
 Devoted by conspiring arms to die.
 Trembling, and pale, to every God, she cry'd,
 Behold, what deep and subtle arts are try'd,
 To end the last, the only branch that springs
 From my lulus, and the Dardan kings!
 How bent they are! how desp'rate to destroy
 All that is left me of unhappy Troy!
 Am I alone by Fate ordain'd to know
 Uninterrupted care, and endless woe!
 Now from Tydides' spear I feel the wound:
 Now Ilium's tow'rs the hostile flames surround:
 Troy laid in dust, my exil'd son I mourn,
 Thro' angry seas, and raging billows born;
 O'er the wide deep his wandring course he bends;
 Now to the sullen shades of Styx descends,
 With Turnus driv'n at last fierce wars to wage,
 Or rather with un pitying Juno's rage.
 But why record I now my ancient woes?
 Sense of past ills in present fears I lose;
 On me their points the impious daggers throw;
 Forbid it, Gods, repel the direful blow:
 If by curs'd weapons Numa's priest expires,
 No longer shall ye burn, ye Vestal fires.
 While such complainings Cypria's grief disclose;
 In each celestial breast compassion rose:
 Not Gods can alter Fate's resistless will;
 Yet they foretold by signs th' approaching ill.
 Dreadful were heard, among the clouds, alarms
 Of echoing trumpets, and of clashing arms;
 The Sun's pale image gave so faint a light,
 That the sad Earth was almost veil'd in night;
 The Aether's face with fiery meteors glow'd;
 With storms of hail were mingled drops of blood;
 A dusky hue the morning star o'erspread,
 And the Moon's orb was stain'd with spots of red;
 In every place portentous shrieks were heard,
 The fatal warnings of th' infernal bird;
 In ev'ry place the marble melts to tears;

While in the groves, rever'd thro' length of years,
Boding, and awful sounds the ear invade;
And solemn music warbles thro' the shade;
No victim can atone the impious age,
No sacrifice the wrathful Gods assuage;
Dire wars and civil fury threat the state;
And every omen points out Caesar's fate:
Around each hallow'd shrine, and sacred dome,
Night-howling dogs disturb the peaceful gloom;
Their silent seats the wandring shades forsake,
And fearful tremblings the rock'd city shake.
Yet could not, by these prodigies, be broke
The plotted charm, or staid the fatal stroke;
Their swords th' assassins in the temple draw;
Their murth'ring hands nor Gods nor temples awe;
This sacred place their bloody weapons stain,
And Virtue falls, before the altar slain.
'Twas now fair Cypria, with her woes opprest,
In raging anguish smote her heav'nly breast;
Wild with distracting fears, the Goddess try'd
Her hero' in th' ethereal cloud to hide,
The cloud, which youthful Paris did conceal,
When Menelaus urg'd the threatning steel;
The cloud, which once deceiv'd Tydides' sight,
And sav'd Aeneas in th' unequal fight.
When Jove — In vain, fair daughter, you assay
To o'er-rule destiny's unconquer'd sway:
Your doubts to banish, enter Fate's abode;
A privilege to heav'nly powers allow'd;
There shall you see the records grav'd, in length,
On ir'n and solid brass, with mighty strength;
Which Heav'n's and Earth's concussion shall endure,
Maugre all shocks, eternal, and secure:
There, on perennial adamant design'd,
The various fortunes of your race you'll find:
Well I have mark'd 'em, and will now relate
To thee the settled laws of future Fate.
He, Goddess, for whose death the Fates you blame,
Has finish'd his determin'd course with Fame:
To thee 'tis giv'n at length, that he shall shine

Among the Gods, and grace the worship'd shrine:
 His son to all his greatness shall be heir,
 And worthily succeed to empire's care:
 Our self will lead his wars, resolv'd to aid
 The brave avenger of his father's shade:
 To him its freedom Mutina shall owe,
 And Decius his auspicious conduct know;
 His dreadful powers shall shake Pharsalia's plain,
 And drench in gore Philippi's fields again:
 A mighty leader, in Sicilia's flood,
 Great Pompey's warlike son, shall be subdu'd:
 Aegypt's soft queen, adorn'd with fatal charms,
 Shall mourn her soldier's unsuccessful arms:
 Too late shall find her swelling hopes were vain,
 And know, that Rome o'er Memphis still must reign:
 What name I Afric, or Nile's hidden head?
 Far as both oceans roll, his power shall spread:
 All the known Earth to him shall homage pay,
 And the seas own his universal sway:
 When cruel war no more disturbs Mankind;
 To civil studies shall he bend his mind,
 With equal justice guardian laws ordain,
 And by his great example vice restrain:
 Where will his bounty or his goodness end?
 To times unborn his gen'rous views extend;
 The virtues of his heir our praise engage,
 And promise blessings to the coming age:
 Late shall he in his kindred orbs be placed,
 With Pylian years, and crowded honours graced.
 Mean-time, your hero's fleeting spirit bear,
 Fresh from his wounds, and change it to a star:
 So shall great Julius rites divine assume,
 And from the skies eternal smile on Rome.
 This spoke, the Goddess to the senate flew;
 Where, her fair form conceal'd from mortal view,
 Her Caesar's heav'nly part she made her care,
 Nor left the recent soul to waste to air;
 But bore it upwards to its native skies:
 Glowing with new-born fires she saw it rise;
 Forth springing from her bosom up it flew,

And kindling, as it soar'd, a comet grew:
Above the lunar sphere it took its flight,
And shot behind it a long trail of light.
Thus rais'd, his glorious off-spring Julius view'd,
Beneficently great, and scattering good,
Deeds, that his own surpass'd, with joy beheld,
And his large heart dilates to be excell'd.
What tho' this prince refuses to receive
The preference, which his juster subjects give;
Fame uncontroll'd, that no restraint obeys,
The homage, shunn'd by modest virtue, pays,
And proves disloyal only in his praise.
Tho' great his sire, him greater we proclaim:
So Atreus yields to Agamemnon's fame;
Achilles so superior honours won,
And Peleus must submit to Peleus' son;
Examples yet more noble to disclose,
So Saturn was eclips'd, when Jove to empire rose;
Jove rules the Heav'ns, the Earth Augustus sways;
Each claims a monarch's, and a father's praise.
Celestials, who for Rome your cares employ;
Ye Gods, who guarded the remains of Troy;
Ye native Gods, here born, and fix'd by Fate;
Quirinus, founder of the Roman state;
O parent Mars, from whom Quirinus sprung;
Chaste Vesta, Caesar's household Gods among,
Most sacred held; domestic Phoebus, thou,
To whom with Vesta chaste alike we bow;
Great guardian of the high Tarpeian rock;
And all ye Pow'rs, whom poets may invoke;
O grant, that day may claim our sorrows late,
When lov'd Augustus shall submit to Fate,
Visit those seats, where Gods and heroes dwell,
And leave, in tears, the world he rul'd so well!
The work is finish'd, which nor dreads the rage
Of tempests, fire, or war, or wasting age;
Come, soon or late, death's undetermin'd day,
This mortal being only can decay;
My nobler part, my fame, shall reach the skies,
And to late times with blooming honours rise:

Whate'er th' unbounded Roman power obeys,
All climes and nations shall record my praise:
If 'tis allow'd to poets to divine,
One half of round eternity is mine.