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COWPER'S TASK

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LIFE OF COWPER.

WILLIAM COWPER was born November 26th, 1731, and died April 25th, 1800. On both sides he was of gentle blood. His father, the Rev. John Cowper, was Rector of Great Birkhampstead; his mother was Anne Donne, of the same family as the famous Dean of St Paul's. He was a delicate, nervous child, and the death of his mother, which happened when he was only six years old, was to him an irreparable loss. His father was a good but austere man, too much engrossed with the work of his parish to bestow on him all the care and sympathy which his sensitive nature required. When only seven he was sent to a village school in the neighbourhood, where he passed two miserable years, the victim of systematic bullying. Of one bully in particular he tells us in his autobiography, "I had such a dread of him, that I did not dare lift my eyes to his face. I knew him best by his shoe-buckle." At the age of ten he was sent to Westminster, where he seems to have been comparatively happy. Though delicate in body, he was active and vigorous, became a good cricketer and football player, and attained, besides, some reputation as a scholar. For some time the usher of his form was Vincent Bourne, one of the happiest of modern Latin versifiers, many of whose poems he afterwards translated. His chief friend was

Robert Lloyd, son of a Westminster master, and afterwards a master himself, a poet of some reputation in his day ; and among his school-fellows were, Colman the translator of Terence, Churchill the poet, and Warren Hastings. But though not unhappy himself, his life at Westminster left on him a bad impression of public schools in general. He has recorded his opinion in a poem called "Tirocinium, or A Review of Schools," in which he strongly advocates private tuition. In vigorous language he denounces the immorality, the profanity, the brutality of a public school, the licence of play hours, the dry routine of work. Doubtless his charges, though highly coloured, are in the main just. No other English institution has witnessed so great reforms, such advance in culture and refinement, as her public schools. But we are led to mistrust the impartiality of Cowper's judgment by the fact, that in the poems he wholly fails to notice the better side of public school life, the *esprit de corps*, the independence of character it fosters, the generous friendships it encourages.

He left Westminster at eighteen, and was entered as a student of the Middle Temple. For three years he read in chambers, leading, according to his own account, a frivolous and dissipated life. But we must not judge him by his own standard, for by the religious school which he joined, the most innocent amusements, such as chess-playing and dancing, were condemned as sinful dissipation. One of his fellow-pupils was Thurlow, the future Lord Chancellor. It was then for the first and only time that he fell in love. Theodora Cowper was the daughter of his uncle Ashley, Clerk of the Parliaments. His affection was returned, but the father, from prudential motives,

forbade the engagement. They parted, and never met again, but his cousin seems to have remained constant to her death, taking the liveliest interest in his growing fame, and assisting him most generously and delicately when he was in straitened circumstances. In 1754 he was called to the Bar, and took chambers in the Inner Temple. There he experienced the first attack of that terrible malady, which, under various forms, at greater or less intervals, afflicted him for the rest of his life. Even as a boy he had suffered from fits of depression, but before this they had never approached to madness. His prostration and despair were terrible. Several times he attempted his own life. Then he was conscience-stricken at his act, and his despair was if possible greater when he thought of his eternal perdition. It was at this time, under the instruction of his cousin, the chaplain of the Lock Hospital, that he imbibed the strong Calvistic doctrines, in particular those of Election and Reprobation, which he held to the end of his life. In December 1763 his relations placed him in a lunatic asylum, under Dr Cotton, at St Alban's, where he continued for more than a year. Here he recovered more or less thoroughly from his madness, and removed to a quiet lodging at Huntingdon, in order to be near his brother, a fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. The immediate cause of his madness had been his morbid nervousness at having to appear at the bar of the House of Lords to prove his qualifications for an appointment to a clerkship in that House, which had been given him by his cousin, Colonel Cowper. He had only £60 a year of his own, and his friends subscribed to make him a sufficient allowance. At Huntingdon he made a memorable acquaintance. William Unwin, the son of a clergyman of the town,

The Unwins soon after consented to take Cowper as a lodger, and in this simple, amiable, Christian family he found a quiet retreat, and first learned those "domestic joys" which he has described as no poet had before him.

The sudden death of Mr Unwin, by a fall from his horse, broke up this quiet home. Mrs Unwin determined to remove to Olney, a village in Buckinghamshire, on the Ouse, where the Rev. T. Newton, who was curate of the place, found her a home. Thither Cowper accompanied her. These two persons, both of whom exercised such a lasting influence on Cowper's life, require at least a passing notice. Newton, after leading a dissipated life, was shipwrecked on his way home from Sierra Leone. He then experienced a sudden change, and resolved henceforth to alter his manner of living. He took orders, and became one of the leaders of the Evangelical school, which was then becoming prominent among English Church parties. He was a good and zealous clergyman, but his views were narrow and bigoted, and his influence on a susceptible nature like Cowper's was fraught with danger. He was a Calvinist, a firm believer in special providences, and his religion appealed more to the emotions than the reason. The effect of such a creed on a mind like Cowper's may be easily conceived. He was ever examining himself to find the proofs of his conversion, and, failing in this, he was plunged in the depths of despair. Still, Newton's influence was not wholly bad. He was a man of warm feeling and some poetic culture, and it was at his suggestion that Cowper composed with him the Olney Hymns, some of which are among the most beautiful in our English hymnology.

Very different was the influence of Mrs Unwin. How

Cowper himself regarded her may be seen from his sonnet to her, and his Lines to Mary. In a word, she was the sunshine of his life. She was one of those rare women who, though endowed with intellectual gifts and social powers far above the average of women, deliberately prefer the seclusion of domestic life in order to devote themselves to the happiness of others. Cowper, as he tells us himself, looked upon her as a second mother. Indeed, his latest biographer, Mr Benham, has shown that, had it not been for the recurrence of his old malady, they would probably have been connected by a still closer tie. But this was not to be. Soon after his removal to Olney the fatal shadow again overtook him. Mrs Unwin nursed him like a son, and Newton generously helped to bear the expenses of the family, which, since Mr Unwin's death, had exceeded Mrs Unwin's straitened means. Again he gradually recovered, interesting himself in his garden, and renewing his correspondence with Hill and other of his old friends. He built himself a greenhouse, and succeeded in taming the three hares of whom he has given us such a charming account in his letters. Of one of these, his special favourite Puss, he wrote the epitaph, and it is of her that he says in the third book of the Task : " i knew at least one hare who had a friend." For the next six years (1774-1780) he enjoyed almost uninterrupted health of mind, and it was then that he made his first serious essay in poetry. Here, too, Mrs Unwin proved herself his good genius. No poems we know of show such spontaneity as those of Cowper. Like Goethe's bard, " he sings as the linnet sings," and though he often clothes his thoughts in a Latin dress, his are emphatically " native wood-notes wild." Still, the immediate impulse

in all his longer poems was given from without. It was Mrs Unwin who suggested the subject of his first important poem, "The Progress of Error." After this followed in quick succession the other poems mentioned at the beginning of the Task. The Task itself originated in this way. His cousin, Lady Austen, had often begged him to try his hand at blank verse. "I will," he answered one day, "if you will give me a subject." "Oh, you can write on any subject," said she; "write upon this sofa." Hence the title of the poem, and hence the inadequacy of the title to the contents, a defect which is noticed more than once in the notes. It was the same Lady Austen who read him the story of John Gilpin, which Cowper, as he lay awake the night after, turned into verse, producing that inimitably comic ballad which was the beginning of his popularity. Perhaps the happiest year of his life was that during which Lady Austen was his near neighbour. She dissipated his melancholy, stimulated his genius, and added a new charm to his life. To her some of his most perfect letters are addressed. Unfortunately an estrangement arose between them which caused Lady Austen to leave the neighbourhood, but we have not time in this short sketch to investigate its causes.

The publication of the Task at once marked out Cowper as one of the first poets, if not the first poet of the day, and it is by this poem chiefly that his ultimate position in English literature will be determined. But perhaps the most important of the immediate results of his success was the renewal of intimacy with his relations. Among others, his cousin Lady Hesketh wrote to congratulate him; a long and delightful correspondence arose, and Lady Hesketh paid him a long visit at Olney. In 1786

he moved to Weston Underwood, after a residence of nineteen years at Olney. Here he applied himself to the translation of Homer, his only considerable work after the Task. It was published in 1791. It is in blank verse, and has at least the merit of being far more faithful than that of Pope ; but it is tame and dull, without any of the fire and rapidity of the original, and the metre in Cowper's hands is wearisome and monotonous. We cannot help regretting the five years' labour which it cost him.

In 1787 he was again attacked by fits of depression, and in 1793 these turned to confirmed insanity, from which he never again recovered. He fell into the hands of a religious charlatan, a schoolmaster of the name of Teedon, who played upon his morbid imagination, and pretended to interpret supernatural voices which he thought he heard. To add to his misfortunes, Mrs Unwin was seized with paralysis in 1791, and though she partially recovered, she was but a sad wreck of her former self, requiring to be nursed by him whom she had so often nursed. In 1796 this faithful friend of nearly thirty years was taken from him. He himself lingered for four years more, attended by devoted friends, and enjoying short and rare lucid intervals; but it was but a living death, and death itself came as a welcome release from a life out of which all joy had long gone.

It was in 1799, the year before his death, that Cowper wrote his last original poem, the most powerful of all his minor works, and the saddest lyric ever penned—the "Castaway." He had been reading in Anson's voyages the account of a sailor who had been washed overboard, and perished after an hour's struggle with the waves, in

sight of the crew who were unable to help or rescue him. The whole poem, except the last stanza, is a description of the agonies of the drowning man, but we are conscious all along it is himself that Cowper is describing • *he* is the "destined wretch," the hopeless, helpless, friendless cast-away.

INTRODUCTION.

COWPER'S death, we have seen, fell in 1800, and he is not only in time but in genius the forerunner of the present century of English poetry. But in order to estimate aright his position among poets, it is necessary to take a short survey of his contemporaries and immediate predecessors. During the half century before Cowper, Pope had reigned supreme ; his fame was European, and Voltaire had pronounced him " the best poet of England, and perhaps of the world." Nor was this triumph wholly unmerited. Pope's poetry is the perfection of clearness and correctness according to a conventional standard. He is far the wittiest and most epigrammatic of English poets. But he moves within very narrow limits. His versification is monotonous, his constant antithesis palls on us, and his very correctness tires. He is *par excellence* the poet of the town, as Cowper is of the country. In the intrigues of court and the ball-room, the follies and affectations of fashion, he is perfect ; but when he attempts to describe nature he borrows his images from Virgil, and never carries us farther away from town than his trim suburban villa at Twickenham.

Against the conventional school of Pope a slow but sure reaction set in. Goldsmith, Gray, and Collins, each in different ways, by wider human sympathies, more varied melodies, and closer observation of nature, attempted a

return to naturalness. But of all his predecessors, Cowper is most indebted to Thomson. Thomson is often turgid, often vague and indistinct, but he had a true love for nature and a true eye for natural beauties. Cowper himself tells us that he thought Thomson's descriptions admirable, "but," he adds, "it has always seemed to me that there was something of affectation in them, and that his numbers are sometimes not well harmonised."¹

But to Cowper was reserved the supreme merit of a complete return to nature. When he first appeared there was hardly a poet of mark living. Gray was dead, Mason had retired, Crabbe was writing nothing, and his friend and patron Hayley (who now-a-days has read a line of Hayley?) was the favourite poet of the day. One example will suffice to show the low level which popular taste in poetry had reached. Shadwell the Poet Laureate, immediately before Cowper's day, boasted that he had made Timon of Athens into a play. Nahum Tate, his successor, whose memory has survived through his execrable version of the Psalms, adapted Conolanus and King Lear.

Cowper himself was better in practice than in theory. He was, it is true, an admirer of Milton, whose influence we trace occasionally in his rhythm and constantly in his phraseology; but though he mentions Shakspeare more than once, there is but little in his poems or letters to show that he appreciated him. Of recent poets his favourite was Philips, a respectable writer, but wholly wanting in the higher gifts of poetry, melody, and imagination. Prior he also admired. He thought "Solomon" his best poem. To us it seems a second-rate rhetorical sermon on the Preacher's text, "Vanitas Vanitatum," with as

¹ Letter to Mrs King, June 19, 1788.

much true religious feeling as one of Sterne's. But, fortunately for us, though Cowper admired these poetasters, he did not imitate them. In this sense of the word he was one of the most original of English poets. Though we cannot literally apply to him Swift's boast, that he

" To steal a hint was never known,
But what he writ was all his own,"

for he is specially fond of a classical turn, and delights almost as much as Milton in Scripture names and Scripture phraseology, yet in the spirit they are equally true of him—the conception and execution of his poems are "all his own."

This, then, is Cowper's distinctive merit, which makes his name a landmark in the history of English literature : he brought back poetry from conventionalism to nature, from the town to the country. Before him it had been the organ of a literary clique, and addressed itself to the cultivated few ; he made it the expression of the common feelings of humanity, and appealed to the sympathies of the many.

It remains for us to notice very briefly in detail his special characteristics. And, first of all, we may put his simplicity and straightforwardness. To say that a poem is obscure is not to condemn it off-hand. Obscurity may arise from confusion of thought or over subtlety, or from pure carelessness of expression, or, on the other hand, it may be the result of profundity of thought, or of the subject being far removed from ordinary thought and feeling. Virgil, Shelley, Wordsworth, Tennyson, are all, in parts at least, obscure.² But obscurity, though sometimes un-

² Let me suggest as an exercise to trace the different causes of the obscurity of these poets.

avoidable, must be in itself a defect. Cowper always treats of simple subjects, and always in simple, clear, pellucid language. He says himself in a letter³ to Mrs Unwin: "Every one conversant with verse-writing knows, and knows by painful experience, that the familiar style is of all styles the most difficult to succeed in. To make verse speak the language of prose without being prosaic, to marshal the words in such an order as they might naturally take in falling from the lips of an extempore speaker, yet without meanness, harmoniously, elegantly, and without seeming to displace a syllable for the sake of the rhyme, is one of the most arduous tasks a poet can undertake." We could not have a more admirable description than this of his own style. In one point only he falls short of the standard he set himself—his fondness for Latin derivatives. He was never proof against the temptation of using a high-sounding Latin polysyllable. He coins new words from the Latin, he uses old words in their primitive Latin sense; verses like, "The stable yields a stercoraceous heat," where we seem to be reading a translation of the *Georgics* ("Stereoreos tibi sufficiet præsepe vapores," it might be), are not uncommon. A few of these Latmisms have been noticed in the notes, the number might have been indefinitely multiplied.⁴

Of his love of nature in general we have already spoken, but we would specially call attention to his truthfulness, his sensitiveness to sights and sounds, his minuteness and accuracy of description. He boasts himself, and boasts truly,

³ January 17, 1782

⁴ In defence of Cowper's Latinised style a friend suggests: "Did not Cowper's grandiloquent words arise, in part at least, from his playfulness and sense of humour? He often seems to me to be laughing at himself like Lamb as he coins them."

that his descriptions are all from nature and not one of them second-hand.⁵ Hence when he moralises he is often commonplace, never when he describes. True, it is the flat and homely scenery of the eastern counties that he paints; he had never seen a mountain, but he paints it to the life. We seem familiar with Olney, as though it were our native village ; we could find our way about Weston Park, we know every flower in his garden. There is an out-door freshness about his descriptions, as of a poet who loves and lives in the open air. It would be easy to illustrate each of the above remarks from the present volume, but the pupil will do better to verify the truth of them for himself.

The next point we would touch on is his geniality. We have seen in his life that he was one of the kindest and tenderest men who ever breathed, and this character is reflected in all he wrote. He never, we are sure, was guilty of a cruel act himself, and wherever he met with cruelty in others, in whatever form or shape, whether it was the oppression of a continent or the wanton treading on a worm, he boils over with righteous indignation. But we mean more than this when we speak of his geniality. Like Montaigne he takes us into his confidence, while he has none of Montaigne's egotism. His religious experiences, his walks at noon, his brown studies by the fireside, his favourite hares, his cucumber frame, all that interests him, he tells us with a freshness and *naivete* which cannot fail to interest us.

And this carries us on to the next point in his character—his wit and humour. Though he had little of Dryden's splendid rhetoric, and none of Pope's concentrated venom,

⁵ Letter to Mrs Unwin, October 10, 1784.

he ranks very high among English satirists. Of his satire there are many good examples in the Task. But we would, besides, refer the reader to the sketch of the schoolmaster in "Tirocinium," of the clergyman in the "Progress of Error," and of Sir Smug in "Hope." He has the rare art of being pointed without either coarseness or personality. In good-natured banter and sly persiflage he is a consummate master. What true wit there is in his description of schoolmasters, who

"Dismiss their cares when they dismiss their flock,
Machines themselves, and governed by a clock,"

ur again, of the gipsy's

"tawny skin,
The vellum of the pedigree they claim "

But Cowper is above all else a profoundly religious poet. Again and again in his letters he repeats that all he writes must have a religious cast. Speaking of "The Task," he says, "The whole (except the fifth book, which is rather of a political aspect), has one tendency—to discountenance the modern enthusiasm after a town life, and to recommend rural ease and leisure *as friendly to the cause of piety and virtue.*"⁶ It would be quite out of place in a schoolbook of this sort to discuss the particular religious views that he held. The whole subject has been fully and very temperately dealt with by the editor of the Globe edition. For our present purpose it will be enough to know that he belonged to what is now known as the Low-Church party in the Church of England, that he held extreme Calvinistic views, and that these views were exaggerated and almost parodied by him in his madness, which from the first took a religious turn. To this creed we must, in part at least, ascribe his narrow views on art,

on history, and on science. Of these various instances are pointed out in the notes. He had received a fair literary education, but of all science he was profoundly ignorant, and ignorant on principle.

But if religion contracted his views, and ministered to his morbid brain images of horror and despair, it was from religion that he drew his deepest inspiration and his noblest themes. Never does he soar higher than when he sings of Christian liberty or of the final triumph of Christ's kingdom.

" There is much mannerism, much that is unimportant, or of now exhausted interest, in his poems ; but when he is great it is with that elementary greatness which rests on the most universal human feelings. Cowper is our highest master in simple pathos."⁷

He was a gentle spirit, *naturaliter Christianas*, and though it pleased God that his own light should be eclipsed and go out in total darkness, he was a true child of light, and no modern poet shines with so pure and spiritual a ray.

' " Palgrave's Golden Treasury."

THE TASK

BOOK I.

THE SOFA.

I SING the Sofa. I, who lately sang
 Truth, Hope, and Chanty, and touch'd with awe
 The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,
 Escaped with pain from that advent'rous flight,
 Now seek repose upon a humbler theme;
 The theme though humble, yet august and proud
 Th' occasion—for the Fair commands the song.

Time was, when clothing sumptuous or for use,
 Save their own painted skins, our sires had none. 10
 As yet black breeches were not ; satin smooth,
 Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile:
 The hardy chief upon the rugged rock
 Wash'd by the sea, or on the grav'ly bank
 Thrown up by wintry torrents roaring loud,
 Fearless of wrong, reposed his weary strength
 Those barb'rous ages past, succeeded next
 The birthday of invention ; weak at first,
 Dull in design, and clumsy to perform.
 Joint-stools were then created ; on three legs
 Upborne they stood Three legs upholding firm 20
 A massy slab, in fashion square or round.
 On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,
 And sway'd the sceptre of his infant realms ;
 And such in ancient halls and mansions drear
 May still be seen, but perforated sore
 And drill'd in holes the solid oak is found,
 By worms voracious eating through and through.

At length a generation more refined
 Improved the simple plan, made three legs four,
 Gave them a twisted form vermicular, 30
 And o'er the seat, with plenteous wadding stuffed,
 Induced a splendid cover green and blue,
 Yellow and red, of tapestry richly wrought
 And woven close, or needle-work sublime.
 There might ye see the peony spread wide,
 The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his lass,
 Lap-dog and lambkin with black staring eyes,
 And parrots with twin cherries in their beak

Now came the cane from India, smooth and bright
 With Nature's varnish; sever'd into stripes 40
 That interlaced each other, these supplied,
 Of texture firm, a lattice-work that braced
 The new machine, and it became a chair.
 But restless was the chair; the back erect
 Distressed the weary loins that felt no ease;
 The slipp'ry seat betrayed the sliding part
 That press'd it, and the feet hung dangling down,
 Anxious in vain to find the distant floor.
 These for the rich : the rest, whom fate had placed
 In modest mediocrity, content 50
 With base materials, sat on well-tanned hides
 Obdurate and unyielding, glassy smooth,
 With here and there a tuft of crimson yarn,
 Or scarlet crewel in the cushion fixt:
 If cushion might be call'd what harder seem'd
 Than the firm oak, of which the frame was form'd.
 No want of timber then was felt or fear'd
 In Albion's happy isle. The lumber stood
 Pond'rous, and fixt by its own massy weight.
 But elbows still were wanting; these, some say, 60
 An Alderman of Cnpplegate contrived,
 And some ascribe th' invention to a priest
 Burly and big, and studious of his ease.
 But rude at first, and not with easy slope
 Receding wide, they press'd against the ribs,
 And bruised the side, and elevated high
 Taught the raised shoulders to invade the ears
 Long time elapsed or e'er our rugged sires
 Complain'd, though incommodiously pent in.

THE SOFA.

19

And ill at ease behind. The ladies first 70
 'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex.
 Ingenious fancy, never better pleased
 Than when employ'd t' accommodate the fair,
 Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devised
 The soft settee; one elbow at each end,
 And in the midst an elbow, it received
 United yet divided, twain at once
 So sit two Kings of Brentford on one throne ;
 And so two citizens who take the air,
 Close pack'd and smiling in a chaise and one 80
 But relaxation of the languid frame
 By soft recumbency of outstretched limbs,
 Was bliss reserved for happier days ; so slow
 The growth of what is excellent, so hard
 T' attain perfection in this nether world.
 Thus first necessity invented stools,
 Convenience next suggested elbow-chairs,
 And luxury the accomplished Sofa last.

The nurse sleeps sweetly, hired to watch the sick.
 Whom snoring she disturbs. As sweetly he 90
 Who quits the coach-box at the midnight hour
 To sleep within the carriage more secure,
 His legs depending at the open door.
 Sweet sleep enjoys the Curate in his desk,
 The tedious Rector drawing o'er his head,
 And sweet the Clerk below: but neither sleep
 Of lazy Nurse, who snores the sick man dead,
 Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour
 To slumber in the carnage more secure,
 Nor sleep enjoy'd by Curate in his desk, 100
 Nor yet the dozings of the Clerk are sweet,
 Compared with the repose the SOFA yields.

Oh may I live exempted (while I live
 Guiltless of pamper'd appetite obscene)
 From pangs arthritic that infest the toe
 Of libertine excess. The SOFA suits
 The gouty limb, 'tis true; but gouty limb,
 Though on a SOFA, may I never feel.
 For I have loved the rural walk through lanes
 Of grassy swarth, close cropp'd by nibbling sheep, 110

And skirted thick with intertexture firm
 Of thorny boughs : have loved the rural walk
 O'er hills, through valleys, and by river's brink
 E'er since a truant boy I pass'd my bounds
 T' enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames.
 And still remember, nor without regret,
 Of hours that sorrow since has much endea'd,
 How oft, my slice of pocket store consumed,
 Still hung'nng, penniless, and far from home,
 I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws, 120
 Or blushing crabs, or berries that emboss
 The bramble, black as jet, 01 sloes austere.
 Hard fare! but such as boyish appetite
 Disdains not, nor the palate undepraved
 By culinary arts unsav'ry deems
 No SOFA then awaited my return,
 No SOFA then I needed. Youth repairs
 His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil
 Incurring short fatigue ; and though our years,
 As life declines, speed rapidly away, 130
 And not a year but pilfers as he goes
 Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep,
 A tooth or auburn lock, and by degrees
 Their length and colour from the locks they spare:
 Th' elastic spring of an unwearied foot
 That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,
 That play of lungs inhaling and again
 Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes
 Swift pace 01 steep ascent no toil to me,
 Mine have not pilfer'd yet; nor yet impair'd 140
 My relish of fair prospect ; scenes that sooth'd
 Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find
 Still soothing and of power to charm me still.
 And witness, dear companion of my walks,
 Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive
 Fast lock'd in mine, with pleasure such as love,
 Confirm'd by long experience of thy worth
 And well-tried virtues, could alone inspire—
 Witness a joy that thou hast doubled long
 Thou know'st my praise of nature most sincere, 150
 And that my raptures are not conjured up
 To serve occasions of poetic pomp,
 But genuine, and art partner of them all

How oft upon yon eminence, our pace
 Has slackened to a pause, and we have borne
 The ruffling wind scarce conscious that it blew,
 While admiration feeding at the eye,
 And still unsatd, dwelt upon the scene'
 Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd
 The distant plough slow-moving, and beside 160
 His lab'rmg team, that swerved not from the track,
 The sturdy swam dimimsh'd to a boy !
 Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain
 Of spacious meads wi0th cattle sprinkled o'er
 Conducts the eye along his sinuous course—
 Delighted. There, fast rooted in his bank
 Stand, never overlook'd, our fav'nte elms
 That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;
 While far beyond and overthwart the stream
 That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale, 170
 The sloping land recedes into the clouds ;
 Displaying on its varied side the grace
 Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tow'r,
 Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
 Just undulates upon the list'ning ear ;
 Groves, heaths, and smoking villages remote.
 Scenes must be beautiful which daily view 'd
 Please daily, and whose novelty survives
 Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years ;
 Praise justly due to those that I describe. 180

Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds
 Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
 The tone of languid Nature. Mighty winds,
 That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
 Of ancient growth, make music not unlike
 The dash of ocean on his winding shore,
 And lull the spirit while they fill the mind,
 Unnumber'd branches waving in the blast,
 And all their leaves fast flutt'ring, all at once.
 Nor less composure waits upon the roar 190
 Of distant floods, or on the softer voice
 Of neighboring fountain, or of rills that slip
 Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall
 Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length
 , In matted grass, that with a livelier green

Betrays the secret of their silent course.
 Nature inanimate employs sweet sounds,
 But animated Nature sweeter still
 To soothe and satisfy the human ear.
 Ten thousand warblers cheer the day, and one 200
 The livelong night : nor these alone whose notes
 Nice-finger'd art must emulate in vain,
 But cawing rooks, and kites that swim sublime
 In still repeated circles, screaming loud,
 The jay, the pie, and ev'n the boding owl
 That hails the rising moon, have charms for me.
 Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,
 Yet heard in scenes where peace for ever reigns,
 And only there, please highly for their sake.

Peace to the artist, whose ingenious thought 210
 Devised the weather-house, that useful toy !
 Fearless of humid air and gathering rains
 Forth steps the man—an emblem of myself!
 More delicate his tim'rous mate retires.
 When Winter soaks the fields, and female feet,
 Too weak to struggle with tenacious clay,
 Or ford the rivulets, are best at home,
 The task of new discoveries falls on me.
 At such a season and with such a charge
 Once went I forth, and found, till then unknown, 220
 A cottage, whither oft we since repair :
 'Tis perch'd upon the green hill-top, but close
 Environ'd with a ring of branching elms
 That overhang the thatch, itself unseen
 Peeps at the vale below; so thick beset
 With foliage of such dark redundant growth,
 I call'd the low-roof'd lodge the *peasants nest*.
 And hidden as it is, and far remote
 From such displeasing sounds as haunt the ear
 In village or in town, the bay of curs 230
 Incessant, clinking hammers, grinding wheels,
 And infants clam'rous whether pleased or pain'd,
 Oft have I wish'd the peaceful covert mine.
 Here, I have said, at least I should possess
 The poet's treasure, silence, and indulge
 The dreams of fancy, tranquil and secure.
 Vain thought! the dweller in that still retreat

Dearly obtains the refuge it affords.
 Its elevated site forbids the wretch
 To drink sweet waters of the crystal well ; 240
 He dips his bowl into the weedy ditch,
 And heavy-laden brings his bev'rage home,
 Far-fetch'd and little worth : nor seldom waits,
 Dependant on the baker's punctual call,
 To hear his creaking panniers at the door,
 Angry and sad and his last crust consumed.
 So farewell envy of the *peasants nest*.
 If solitude make scant the means of life,
 Society for me ! Thou seeming sweet,
 Be still a pleasing object in my view, 250
 My visit still, but never mine abode.

Not distant far, a length of colonnade
 Invites us ; monument of ancient taste,
 Now scorn'd, but worthy of a better fate.
 Our fathers knew the value of a screen
 From sultry suns, and, in their shaded walks
 And long-protected bow'rs, enjoy'd at noon
 The gloom and coolness of declining day.
 We bear our shades about us ; self-deprived
 Of other screen, the thin umbrella spread, 260
 And range an Indian waste without a tree.
 Thanks to Benevolus—he spares me yet
 These chestnuts ranged in corresponding lines,
 And, though himself so polish'd, still reprieves
 The obsolete prolixity of shade.

Descending now (but cautious, lest too fast)
 A sudden steep, upon a rustic bridge
 We pass a gulf, in which the willows dip
 Their pendent boughs, stooping as if to drink.
 Hence ankle-deep in moss and flow'ry thyme 270
 We mount again, and feel at ev'ry step
 Our foot half sunk in hillocks green and soft,
 Raised by the mole, the miner of the soil.
 He, not unlike the great ones of mankind,
 Disfigures earth, and plotting in the dark
 Toils much to earn a monumental pile,
 That may record the mischiefs he has done.
 The summit gain'd, behold the proud alcove

That crowns it! yet not all its pride secures
 The grand retreat fiain injuries impress'd 280
 By rural carvers, who with knives deface
 The panels, leaving an obscure rude name
 In characters uncouth, and spelt amiss
 So strong the weal t' immortalize himself
 Beats in the breast of man, that ev'n a few
 Few transient years, won from tli'abyss abhorr'd
 Of blank oblivion, seem a glorious prize,
 And even to a clown. Now roves the eye,
 And posted on this speculative height
 Exults in its command The sheepfold here 290
 Pours out its fleecy tenants o'er the glebe
 At first, progressive as a stream, they seek
 The middle field ; but scatter'd by degrees,
 Each to his choice, soon whiten all the land.
 There, from the sunburnt hayfield homeward creeps
 The loaded wain ; while, lighten'd of its charge,
 The wain that meets it passes swiftly by,
 The boorish driver leaning o'er his team,
 Vocif'rous, and impatient ot delay.
 Nor less attractive is the woodland scene 300
 Diversified with trees of ev'ry growth,
 Alike yet various. Here the grey smooth trunks
 Of ash, or lime, or beech, distinctly shine
 Within the twilight of their distant shades ;
 There, lost behind a rising ground, the wood
 Seems sunk, and shorten'd to its topmost boughs.
 No tree in all the grove but has its charms,
 Though each its hue peculiar ; paler some,
 And of a wannish gray ; the willow such,
 And poplar that with silver lines his leaf, 310
 And ash far-stretching his umbrageous arm ;
 Of deeper green the elm ; and deeper still,
 Lord of the woods, the long-surviving oak.
 Some glossy-leaved and shining in the sun,
 The maple, and the beech of oily nuts
 Prolific, and the lime at dewy eve
 Diffusing odours : nor unnoted pass
 The sycamore, capricious in attire,
 Now green, now tawny, and ere autumn yet
 Have changed the woods, in scarlet honours bright 320
 O'er these, but far beyond, (a spacious map

Of hill and valley interposed between,)
 The Ouse, dividing; the well-water'd land,
 Now glitters in the sun, and now retnes,
 As bashful, yet impatient to be seen

Hence the declivity is sharp and short,
 And such the re-ascent; between them weeps
 A little Naiad her impoverished urn
 All summer long, which winter fills again.

The folded gates would bar my progress now, 330
 But that the lord of this enclosed demesne,
 Communicative of the good he owns,
 Admits me to a share : the guiltless eye
 Commits no wrong, nor wastes what it enjoys.

Refreshing change ! where now the blazing sun '
 By short transition we have lost his glare,
 And stepp'd at once into a cooler clime.

Ye fallen avenues ! once more I mourn
 Your fate unmerited, once more rejoice 340
 That yet a remnant of your lace survives.

How airy and how light the graceful arch,
 Yet awful as the consecrated roof
 Re-echoing pious anthems ! while beneath,
 The chequer'd earth seems restless as a flood
 Brush'd by the wind. So sportive is the light
 Shot through the boughs, it dances as they dance,
 Shadow and sunshine intermingling quick,
 And dark'ning and engh't'ning as the leaves
 Play wanton, ev'ry moment, ev'ry spot

And now, with nerves new-braced and spirits cheer'd 350
 We tread the wilderness, whose well-roll'd walks,
 With curvature of slow and easy sweep—

Deception innocent—give ample space
 To narrow bounds. The grove receives us next;
 Between the upright shafts of whose tall elms
 We may discern the thresher at his task.

Thump after thump, resounds the constant flail
 That seems to swing uncertain, and yet falls
 Full on the destined ear. Wide flies the chaff,
 The rustling straw sends up a frequent mist 360
 Of atoms, sparkling in the noonday beam.

Come hither, ye that press your beds of down
 And sleep not: see him sweating o'er his bread

Before he eats it.—'Tis the primal curse,
 But soften'd into mercy ; made the pledge
 Of cheerful days, and nights without a groan.

By ceaseless action, all that is subsists.
 Constant rotation of th' unwearied wheel
 That Nature rides upon, maintains her health,
 Her beauty, her fertility. She dreads 370
 An instant's pause, and lives but while she moves.
 Its own revolvency upholds the world.
 Winds from all quarters agitate the air,
 And fit the limpid element for use,
 Else noxious : oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams
 All feel the fresh'ning impulse, and are cleansed
 By restless undulation : ev'n the oak
 Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm :
 He seems indeed indignant, and to feel
 Th' impression of the blast with proud disdain, 380
 Frowning as if in his unconscious arm
 He held the thunder. But the monarch owes
 His firm stability to what he scorns,
 More fixt below, the more disturb'd above.
 The law, by which all creatures else are bound,
 Binds man the lord of all. Himself derives
 No mean advantage from a kindred cause,
 From strenuous toil his hours of sweetest ease.
 The sedentary stretch their lazy length
 When custom bids, but no refreshment find, 390
 For none they need : the languid eye, the cheek
 Deserted of its bloom, the flaccid, shrunk,
 And wither'd muscle, and the vapid soul,
 Reproach their owner with that love of rest,
 To which he forfeits ev'n the rest he loves.
 Not such th' alert and active. Measure life
 By its true worth, the comforts it affords,
 And theirs alone seems worthy of the name.
 Good health, and, its associate in the most,
 Good temper ; spirits prompt to undertake, 400
 And not soon spent, though in an arduous task ;
 The pow'rs of fancy and strong thought are theirs ;
 Ev'n age itself seems privileged in them
 With clear exemption from its own defects.
 A sparkling eye beneath a wrinkled front

The vet'ran shows, and gracing a gray beard
 With youthful smiles, descends toward the giave
 Sprightly, and old almost without decay

Like a coy maiden, Ease, when courted most,
 Farthest retires—an idol, at whose shrine
 Who oft'nest sacrifice are favour'd least. 410

The love of Nature, and the scenes she draws,
 Is Nature's dictate. Strange ! there should be found
 Who, self-impnson'd in their proud saloons,
 Renounce the odours of the open field
 For the unscented fictions of the loom ;
 Who, satisfied with only pencill'd scenes,
 Prefer to the performance of a God
 Th' inferior wonders of an artist's hand.

Lovely indeed the mimic works of art, 420
 But Nature's works far lovelier. I admire,
 None more admires the painter's magic skill,
 Who shows me that which I shall never see,
 Conveys a distant country into mine,
 And throws Italian light on English walls.
 But imitative strokes can do no more
 Than please the eye, sweet Nature ev'ry sense.

The air salubrious of her lofty hills,
 The cheering fragrance of her dewy vales,
 And music of her woods—no works of man 430
 May rival these ; these all bespeak a power
 Peculiar, and exclusively her own.

Beneath the open sky she spreads the feast;
 'Tis free to all—'tis ev'ry day renew'd,
 Who scorns it, starves deservedly at home.

He does not scorn it, who, impnson'd long
 In some unwholesome dungeon, and a prey
 To sallow sickness, which the vapours dank
 And clammy of his dark abode have bred,
 Escapes at last to liberty and light ; 440

His cheek recovers soon its healthful hue,
 His eye relumines its extinguish'd fires,
 He walks, he leaps, he runs—is wing'd with joy,
 And riots in the sweets of ev'ry breeze.

He does not scorn it, who has long endured
 A fever's agonies, and fed on drugs.
 Nor yet the mariner, his blood inflamed
 With acrid salts ; his very heart athirst

To gaze at Nature in her green array.
 Upon the ship's tall side he stands, possess'd 450
 With visions prompted by intense desire ;
 Fair fields appeal below, such as he left
 Far distant, such as he would die to rind—
 He seeks them headlong, and is seen no more.
 The spleen is seldom felt where Flora reigns ;
 The low'ring eye, the petulance, the frown,
 And sullen sadness that o'ershade, distort,
 And mar the face of beauty, when no cause
 For such immeasurable woe appears,
 These Flora banishes, and gives the fair 460
 Sweet smiles, and bloom less transient than her own.
 It is the constant revolution, stale
 And tasteless, of the same repeated joys,
 That palls and satiates, and makes languid life
 A pedlar's pack, that bows the bearer down.
 Health suffers, and the spirits ebb ; the heart
 Recoils from its own choice—at the full feast
 Is famish'd— finds no music in the song,
 No smartness in the jest, and wonders why.
 Yet thousands still desire to journey on, 470
 Though halt and weary of the path they tread.
 The paralytic, who can hold her cards
 But cannot play them, borrows a friend's hand
 To deal and shuffle, to divide and sort
 Her mingled suits and sequences, and sits
 Spectatress both and spectacle, a sad
 And silent cipher, while her proxy plays.
 Others are dragg'd into the crowded room
 Between supporters , and once seated, sit
 Through downright inability to rise, 480
 Till the stout bearers lift the corpse again.
 These speak a loud memento. Yet ev'n these
 Themselves love life, and cling to it as he,
 That overhangs a torrent, to a twig.
 They love it, and yet loathe it; fear to die,
 Yet scorn the purposes for which they live.
 Then wherefore not renounce them ? No—the dread,
 The slavish dread of solitude, that breeds
 Reflection and remorse, the fear of shame,
 And their invet'rate habits, all forbid. 490

Whom call we gay ? That honour has been long
 The boast of mere pretenders to the name
 The innocent are gay—the lark is gay,
 That dries his feathers saturate with dew
 Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams
 Of day-spring overshoot his humble nest
 The peasant too, a witness of his song,
 Himself a songster, is as gay as he.
 But save me from the gaiety of those
 Whose headaches nail them to a noonday bed , 500
 And save me, too, from theirs whose haggard eyes
 Flash desperation, and betray their pangs
 For property stnpp'd off by cruel chance ;
 From gaiety that fills the bones with pain,
 The mouth with blasphemy, the heart with woe.

The earth was made so various, that the mind
 Of desultory man, studious of change,
 And pleased with novelty, might be indulged
 Prospects however lovely may be seen
 Till half their beauties fade ; the weary sight, 510
 Too well acquainted with their smiles, slides orf
 Fastidious, seeking less familiar scenes
 Then snug enclosures in the shelter'd vale,
 Where frequent hedges intercept the eye,
 Delight us, happy to renounce a while,
 Not senseless of its charms, what still we love,
 That such short absence may endear it more
 Then forests, or the savage rock may please,
 That hides the sea-mew in his hollow (lefts
 Above the reach of man his hoary head 520
 Conspicuous many a league, the manner,
 Bound homeward, and in hope already there,
 Greets with three cheers exulting. At his warst
 A girdle of half-wither'd shrubs he shows,
 And at his feet the baffled billows die.
 The common overgrown with fern, and rough
 With prickly gorse, that, shapeless and deform'd
 And dang'rous to the touch, has yet its bloom,
 And decks itself with ornaments of gold,
 Yields no unpleasmg ramble , there the turf 530
 Smells fresh, and, rich in odorif'rous herbs
 And fungous fruits of earth, regales the sense
 With luxury of unexpected sweets

There often wanders one, whom better days
 Saw better clad, in cloak of satin trimm'd
 With lace, and hat with splendid ribbon bound.
 A serving-maid was she, and fell in love
 With one who left her, went to sea and died.
 Her fancy follow'd him through foaming waves
 To distant shores, and she would sit and weep 540
 At what a sailor suffers ; fancy too,
 Delusive most where warmest wishes are,
 Would oft anticipate his glad return,
 And dream of transports she was not to know.
 She heard the doleful tidings of his death,
 And never smiled again. And now she roams
 The dreary waste ; there spends the livelong day,
 And there, unless when charity forbids,
 The livelong night. A tatter'd apron hides,
 Worn as a cloak, and hardly hides, a gown 550
 More tatter'd still; and both but ill conceal
 A bosom heaved with never-ceasing sighs.
 She begs an idle pin of all she meets,
 And hoards them in her sleeve ; but needful food,
 Though press'd with hunger oft, or come her clothes,
 Though pinch'd with cold, asks never.—Kate is crazed !

I see a column of slow-rising smoke
 O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild.
 A vagabond and useless tribe there eat
 Their miserable meal. A kettle slung 560
 Between two poles upon a stick transverse,
 Receives the morsel; flesh obscene of dog,
 Or vermin, or, at best, of cock purloin'd
 From his accustom'd perch. Hard-faring race '
 They pick their fuel out of ev'ry hedge,
 Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves unquench'd
 The spark of life. The sportive wind blows wide
 Their flutt'ning rags, and shows a tawny skin,
 The vellum of the pedigree they claim.
 Great skill have they in palmistry, and more 570
 To conjure clean away the gold they touch,
 Conveying worthless dross into its place ;
 Loud when they beg, dumb only when they steal.
 Strange that a creature rational, and cast
 In human mould, should brutalize by choice

His nature, and, though capable of arts
 By which the world might profit and himself,
 Self-bamsh'd from society, prefer
 Such squalid sloth to honourable toil.
 Yet even these, though feigning sickness oft 580
 They swathe the forehead, drag the limping limb
 And vex their flesh with artificial sores,
 Can change their whine into a mirthful note
 When safe occasion offers, and with dance,
 And music of the bladder and the bag
 Beguile their woes, and make the woods resound.
 Such health and gaiety of heart enjoy
 The houseless rovers of the sylvan world ;
 And breathing wholesome air, and wand'nng much,
 Need other physic none to heal th' effects 590
 Of loathsome diet, penury, and cold.

Blest he, though undistinguished from the crowd
 By wealth or dignity, who dwells secure
 Where man, by nature fierce, has laid aside
 His fierceness, having learnt, though slow to learn,
 The manners and the arts of civil life.
 His wants, indeed, are many ; but supply
 Is obvious ; placed within the easy reach
 Of temp'rate wishes and industrious hands.
 Here virtue thrives as in her proper soil; 600
 Not rude and surly, and beset with thorns,
 And terrible to sight, as when she springs
 (If e'er she springs spontaneous) in remote
 And barb'rous climes, where violence prevails,
 And strength is lord of all ; but gentle, kind,
 By culture trmed, by liberty refreshed,
 And all her fruits by radiant truth matured.
 War and the chase engross the savage whole ;
 War follow'd for revenge, or to supplant
 The envied tenants of some happier spot; 610
 The chase for sustenance, precarious trust!
 His hard condition with severe constraint
 Binds all his faculties, forbids all growth
 Of wisdom, proves a school in which he learns
 Sly circumvention, unrelenting hate,
 Mean self-attachment, and scarce aught beside
 Thus fare the shiv'nng natives of the north,

And thus the rangers of the western world,
 Where it advances far into the deep,
 Towards th' Antarctic. Ev'n the favour'd isles, 620
 So lately found, although the constant sun
 Cheer all their seasons with a grateful smile,
 Can boast but little virtue, and inert
 Through plenty, lose in morals, what they gain
 In manners, victims of luxurious ease.
 These therefore I can pity, placed remote
 From all that science traces, art invents,
 Or inspiration teaches ; and enclosed
 In boundless oceans, never to be pass'd
 By navigators uninform'd as they, 630
 Or plough'd perhaps by British iDark again.
 But far beyond the rest, and with most cause
 Thee, gentle savage ! whom no love of thee
 Or thine, but curiosity perhaps,
 Or else vain-glory, prompted us to draw
 Forth from thy native bow'rs, to show thee here
 With what superior skill we can abuse
 The gifts of Providence, and squander life.
 The dream is past. And thou hast found again
 Thy cocoas and bananas, palms and yams, 640
 And homes tall thatch'd with leaves But hast thou found
 Their former charms ? And, having seen our state,
 Our palaces, our ladies, and our pomp
 Of equipage, our gardens, and our sports,
 And heard our music ; are thy simple friends,
 Thy simple fare, and all thy plain delights
 As dear to thee as once ? And have thy joys
 Lost nothing by comparison with ours ?
 Rude as thou art (for we returned thee rude
 And ignorant, except of outward show) 650
 I cannot think thee yet so dull of heart
 And spiritless, as never to regret
 Sweets tasted here, and left as soon as known.
 Methmks I see thee straying on the beach,
 And asking of the surge that bathes thy foot
 If ever it has wash'd our distant shore.
 I see thee weep, and thine are honest tears,
 A patriot's for his country. Thou art sad
 At thought of her forlorn and abject state,
 From which no power of thine can raise her up. 660

Thus fancy paints thee, and, though apt to err,
 Perhaps errs little when she paints thee thus.
 She tells me too that duly ev'ry morn
 Thou chmb'st the mountain top, with eager eye
 Exploring far and wide the wat'ry waste,
 For sight of ship from England. Ev'ry speck,
 Seen in the dim horizon, turns thee pale
 With conflict of contending hopes and fears
 But comes at last the dull and dusky eve,
 And sends thee to thy cabin, well prepared 670
 To dream all night of what the day denied
 Alas ' expect it not. We found no bait
 To tempt us in thy country. Doing good,
 Disinterested good, is not our trade.
 We travel far, 'tis true, but not for nought,
 And must be bribed to compass earth again
 By other hopes, and richer fruits than yours.

But though true worth and virtue, in the mild
 And genial soil of cultivated life
 Thrive most, and may perhaps thrive only there, 680
 Yet not in cities oft; in proud and gay
 And gain-devoted cities Thither flow,
 As to a common and most noisome sewer,
 The dregs and feculence of ev'ry land
 In cities, foul example on most minds
 Begets its likeness. Rank abundance breeds
 In gross and pamper'd cities sloth and lust,
 And wantonness and gluttonous excess
 In cities, vice is hidden with most ease,
 Or seen with least reproach ; and vn tue, taught 690
 By frequent lapse, can hope no triumph there,
 Beyond th' achievement of successful flight
 I do confess them nurs'nes of the arts,
 In which they flourish most, where, in the beams
 Of warm encouragement, and in the eye
 Of public note, they reach their perfect size
 Such London is, by taste and wealth proclaimed
 The fairest capital in all the world,
 By riot and incontinence the worst
 There, touch'd by Reynolds, a dull blank becomes 700
 A lucid mirror, in which nature sees
 All her reflected features. Bacon there

Gives more than female beauty to a stone,
 And Chatham's eloquence to marble lips.
 Nor does the chisel occupy alone
 The pow'rs of sculpture, but the style as much ;
 Each province of her art her equal care.
 With nice incision of her guided steel
 She ploughs a brazen field, and clothes a soil
 So sterile with what charms soe'er she will, 710
 The richest scen'ry and the loveliest forms.
 Where finds philosophy her eagle eye,
 With which she gazes at yon burning disk
 Undazzled, and detects and counts his spots ?
 In London. Where her implements exact,
 With which she calculates, computes, and scans
 All distance, motion, magnitude, and now
 Measures an atom, and now girds a world ?
 In London Where has commerce such a mart,
 So rich, so thron'g'd, so drain'd and so supplied, 720
 As London, opulent, enlarged, and still
 Increasing London ? Babylon of old
 Not more the glory of the earth, than she
 A more accomplished world's chief glory now.

She has her praise. Now mark a spot or two
 That so much beauty would do well to purge ,
 And show this queen of cities, that so fair
 May yet be foul; so witty, yet not wise.
 It is not seemly, nor of good icport,
 That she is slack in discipline ; more prompt 730
 T' avenge than to prevent the breach of law :
 That she is rigid in denouncing death
 On petty robbers, and indulges life
 And liberty, and ofttimes honour too,
 To peculators of the public gold :
 That thieves at home must hang ; but he, that puts
 Into his overgorged and bloated purse
 The wealth of Indian provinces, escapes.
 Nor is it well, nor can it come to good,
 That through profane and infidel contempt 740
 Of holy writ, she has presumed t' annul
 And abrogate, as roundly as she may,
 The total ordinance and will of God ;
 Advancing fashion to the post of truth,

And centring all authority in modes
 And customs of her own, till Sabbath rites
 Have dwindled into unrespected forms,
 And knees and hassocks are well-nigh divorced.

God made the country, and man made the town.
 What wonder, then, that health and virtue, gifts 750
 That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
 That life holds out to all, should most abound
 And least be threatened in the fields and groves ?
 Possess ye therefore, ye who, borne about
 In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
 But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
 But such as art contrives, possess ye still
 Your element ; there only ye can shine,
 There only minds like yours can do no harm.
 Our groves were planted to console at noon 760
 The pensive wand'rer in their shades At eve
 The moonbeam, sliding softly in between
 The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
 Birds warbling all the music. We can spare
 The splendour of your lamps, they but eclipse
 Our softer satellite. Your songs confound
 Our more harmonious notes The thrush depaits
 Scared, and th'offended nightingale is mute.
 There is a public mischief in your mirth ,
 it plagues your country, Folly such as yours, 770
 Graced with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
 Has made, which enemies could ne'er have done,
 Our arch of empire, steadfast but for you,
 A mutilated structuie, soon to fall

BOOK II

THE TIME PIECE.

OH for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless continuity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war
Might never reach me more My ear is pain'd,
My soul is sick with ev'ry day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is fill'd
There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
It does not feel for man. The nat'ral bond
Of brotherhood is sever'd as the flax, jo
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
Not colour'd like his own, and having pow'r
T' enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow futh
Abhor each other. Mountains interposed
Make enemies of nations, who had else
Like kindred drops been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys ; 20
And worse than all, and most to be deplored,
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes, that mercy, with a bleeding heart,
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.
Then what is man ? And what man, seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush
And hang his head, to think himself a man ?
I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep, 30
And tremble when I wake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd.
No: dear as freedom is, and in my hcait's
Just estimation prized above all price,
I had much rather be myself the slave
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.

We have no slaves at home -then why abroad ?
 And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
 That parts us, are emancipated and loosed
 Slaves cannot breathe in England ; if their lungs 40
 Receive our air, that moment they are free,
 They touch our country and their shackles fall.
 That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
 And jealous of the blessing Spread it then,
 And let it circulate through ev'ry vein
 Of all your empire ; that where Britain's power
 Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.

Sure there is need of social intercourse,
 Benevolence and peace and mutual aid
 Between the nations, in a world that bcems 50
 To toll the death-bell to its own decease,
 And by the voice of all its elements
 To preach the gen'ral doom. When were the winds
 Let slip with such a warrant to destroy ?
 When did the waves so haughtily o'erlcap
 Their ancient barriers, deluging the dry ?
 Fires from beneath, and meteors from above,
 Portentous, unexampled, unexplam'd,
 Have kindled beacons in the skies, and th' old
 And crazy earth has had her shaking fits 60
 More frequent, and foregone her usual rest.
 Is it a time to wrangle, when the props
 And pillars of our planet seem to fail,
 And Nature with a dim and sickly eye
 To wait the close of all ? But grant her end
 More distant, and that prophecy demands
 A longer respite, unaccomplished yet ;
 Still they are frowning signals, and bespeak
 Displeasure in His breast who smites the earth
 Or heals it, makes it languish or rejoice 70
 And 'tis but seemly, that, where all deserve
 And stand exposed by common peccancy
 To what no few have felt, there should be peace,
 And brethren in calamity should love.

Alas for Sicily ! rude fragments now
 Lie scattered where the shapely column stood.
 Her palaces are dust In all her streets

The voice of singing and the sprightly chord
 Are silent. Revelry and dance and show
 Suffer a syncope and solemn pause, 80
 While God performs, upon the trembling- stage
 Of his own works, his dreadful part alone
 How does the earth receive him?—With what signs
 Of gratulation and delight, her king?
 Pours she not all her choicest fruits abroad,
 Her sweetest flow'rs, her aromatic gums,
 Disclosing paradise where'er he treads?
 She quakes at his approach. Her hollow womb,
 Conceiving thunders, through a thousand deeps
 And fiery caverns roars beneath his foot. 90
 The hills move lightly and the mountains smoke,
 For he has touch'd them. From th' extremest point
 Of elevation down into th' abyss,
 His wrath is busy and his frown is felt.
 The rocks fall headlong and the valleys rise,
 The rivers die into offensive pools,
 And, charged with putrid verdure, breathe a gross
 And mortal nuisance into all the air.
 What solid was, by transformation strange
 Grows fluid, and the fixt and rooted earth 100
 Tormented into billows heaves and swells,
 Or with vertiginous and hideous whirl
 Sucks down its prey insatiable. Immense
 The tumult and the overthrow, the pangs
 And agonies of human and of brute
 Multitudes, fugitive on ev'ry side,
 And fugitive in vain. The sylvan scene
 Migrates uplifted, and, with all its soil
 Alighting in far distant fields, finds out no
 A new possessor, and survives the change.
 Ocean has caught the frenzy, and upwrought
 To an enormous and o'erbearing height,
 Not by a mighty wind, but by that voice
 Which winds and waves obey, invades the shore
 Resistless. Never such a sudden flood,
 Upridged so high, and sent on such a charge,
 Possess'd an inland scene. Where now the throng
 That pressed the beach and hasty to depart
 Look'd to the sea for safety? They are gone,
 Gone with the reflux wave into the deep, 120

A prince with half his people. Ancient tow'rs.
 And roofs embattled high, the gloomy scenes
 Where beauty oft and letter'd worth consume
 Life in the unproductive shades of death,
 Fall prone ; the pale inhabitants come forth,
 And, happy in their unforeseen release
 From all the rigours of restraint, enjoy
 The terrors of the day that sets them free.
 Who then, that has thee, would not hold thee fast,
 Freedom ! whom they that lose thee so regret, 130
 That ev'n a judgment, making way for thee,
 Seems in their eyes a mercy, for thy sake.

Such evil sin hath wrought; and such a flame
 Kindled in heaven, that it burns down to earth,
 And, in the furious inquest that it makes
 On God's behalf, lays waste his fairest works.
 The very elements, though each be meant
 The minister of man, to serve his wants,
 Conspire against him. With his breath he draws
 A plague into his blood ; and cannot use 140
 Life's necessary means, but he must die.
 Storms rise t' o'erwhelm him. or, if stormy winds
 Rise not, the waters of the deep shall rise,
 And needing none assistance of the storm,
 Shall roll themselves ashore, and reach him there.
 The earth shall shake him out of all his holds,
 Or make his house his grave ; nor so content,
 Shall counterfeit the motions of the flood,
 And drown him in her dry and dusty gulfs.
 What then ?—were they the wicked above all, 150
 And we the righteous whose fast-anchor'd isle
 Moved not, while theirs was rock'd like a light skiff
 The sport of ev'ry wave ? No : none are clear,
 And none than we more guilty. But where all
 Stand chargeable with guilt, and to the shafts
 Of wrath obnoxious, God may choose his mark,
 May punish, if he please, the less, to warn
 The more malignant. If he spared not them,
 Tremble and be amazed at thine escape,
 Far guiltier England, lest he spare not thee ! 160

Happy the man who sees a God employ'd

In all the good and ill that chequer life !
 Resolving all events, with their effects
 And manifold results, into the will
 And arbitration wise of the Supreme.
 Did not his eye rule all things, and intend
 The least of our concerns, (since from the least
 The greatest oft originate,) could chance
 Find place in his dominion, or dispose
 One lawless particle to thwart his plan, 170
 Then God might be surprised, and unforeseen
 Contingence might alarm him, and disturb
 The smooth and equal course of his affairs.
 This truth, philosophy, though eagle-eyed
 In nature's tendencies, oft overlooks ;
 And, having found his instrument, forgets
 Or disregards, or more presumptuous still
 Denies the pow'r that wields it. God proclaims
 His hot displeasure against foolish men
 That live an atheist life involves the heav'n 180
 In tempests, quits his grasp upon the winds
 And gives them all their fury , bids a plague
 Kindle a fiery boil upon the skin,
 And putrefy the breath of blooming health.
 He calls for famine, and the meagre fiend
 Blows mildew from between his shrivel'd lips,
 And tams the golden ear. He springs his mines,
 And desolates a nation at a blast.
 Forth steps the spruce philosopher, and tells
 Of homogeneal and discordant springs 190
 And principles ; of causes how they work
 By necessary laws their sure effects;
 Of action and reaction. He has found
 The source of the disease that nature feels,
 And bids the world take heart and banish fear.
 Thou fool! will thy discov'ry of the cause
 Suspend th' effect, or heal it? Has not God
 Still wrought by means since first he made the world,
 And did he not of old employ his means
 To drown it? What is his creation less 200
 Than a capacious reservoir of means
 Form'd for his use, and ready at his will ?
 Go, dress thine eyes with eye-salve, ask of him,
 Or ask of whomsoever he has taught,
 And learn, though late, the genuine cause of all

England, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
 My country ! and while yet a nook is left,
 Where English minds and manners may be found,
 Shall be constraint! to love thee. Though thy clime
 Be fickle, and thy year most part deform'd 210
 With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost,
 I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies
 And fields without a flow'r, for warmer France
 With all her vines , nor for Ausoma's groves
 Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bow'rs
 To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
 Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
 Upon thy foes, was never meant my task ;
 But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
 Thy joys and sorrows with as true a heart 220
 As any thund'rer there. And I can feel
 Thy follies too, and with a just disdain
 Frown at effeminates, whose very looks
 Reflect dishonour on the land I love.
 How, in the name of soldiership and sense,
 Should England prosper, when such things, as smooth
 And tender as a girl, all essenced o'er
 With odours, and as profligate as sweet,
 Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,
 And love when they should fight; when such as these 230
 Presume to lay their hand upon the ark
 Of her magnificent and awful cause ?
 Time was when it was praise and boast enough
 In ev'ry clime, and travel where we might,
 That we were born her children. Praise enough
 To fill th' ambition of a private man,
 That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
 And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.
 Farewell those honours, and farewell with them
 The hope of such hereafter. They have fall'n 240
 Each in his field of glory ; one in arms,
 And one in council;—Wolfe upon the lap
 Of smiling victory that moment won,
 And Chatham, heart-sick of his country's shame.
 They made us many soldiers. Chatham, still
 Consulting England's happiness at home,
 Secured it by an unforgiving frown
 If any wrong'd her. Wolfe, where'er he fought,

Put so much of his heart into his act,
 That his example had a magnet's force, 250
 And all were swift to follow whom all loved.
 Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such !
 Or all that we have left is empty talk
 Of old achievements, and despair of new.

Now hoist the sail, and let the streamcis float
 Upon the wanton breezes. Strew the deck
 With lavender, and sprinkle liquid sweets,
 That no rude savour maritime invade
 The nose of nice nobility. Breathe soft
 Ye clarionets, and softer still ye flutes, 260
 That winds and waters lull'd by magic sounds
 May bear us smoothly to the Gallic shore.
 True, we have lost an empire—let it pass.
 True, we may thank the perfidy of France
 That pick'd the jewel out of England's crown,
 With all the cunning of an envious shrew.
 And let that pass—'twas but a trick of state.
 A brave man knows no malice, but at once
 Forgets in peace the injuries of war,
 And gives his direst foe a friend's embrace 270
 And shamed as we have been, to th' very beard
 Braved and defied, and in our own sea proved
 Too weak for those decisive blows, that once
 Insured us mast'ry there, we yet retain
 Some small pre-eminence, we justly boast
 At least superior jockeyship and claim
 The honours of the turf as all our own.
 Go then, well worthy of the praise ye seek,
 And show the shame ye might conceal at home,
 In foreign eyes !—be grooms, and win the plate, 280
 Where once your nobler fathers won a crown!—
 'Tis generous to communicate your skill
 To those that need it Folly is soon learn'd,
 And, under such preceptors, who can fail?

There is a pleasure in poetic pains
 Which only poets know. The shifts and turns,
 Th' expedients and inventions multiform
 To which the mind resorts, in chase of terms
 Though apt, yet coy, and difficult to win—

T' arrest the fleeting images that fill 290
 The mirror of the mind, and hold them fast,
 And force them sit, till he has pencil'd off
 A faithful likeness of the forms he views ,
 Then to dispose his copies with such art
 That each may find its most propitious light,
 And shine by situation, hardly less
 Than by the labour and the skill it cost,
 Are occupations of the poet's mind
 So pleasing, and that steal away the thought
 With such address from themes of sad imposit, 300
 That, lost in his own musings, happy man '
 He feels th' anxieties of life, denied
 Their wonted entertainment, all icire
 Such joys has he that sings But ah ' not such,
 Or seldom such, the hearers of his song.
 Fastidious, or else listless, or perhaps
 Aware of nothing arduous in a task
 They never undertook, they little note
 flis dangers or escapes, and haply find
 There least amusement where he found the most 310
 But is amusement all? studious of song,
 And yet ambitious not to sing in vain,
 I would not trifle merely, though the world
 Be loudest in their praise who do no more.
 Yet what can satire, whether grave or gay?
 It may correct a foible, may chastise
 The freaks of fashion, regulate the dress,
 Retrench a sword-blade, or displace a patch;
 But where are its subhmer trophies found?
 What vice has it subdued? whose heart reclaim'd 320
 By rigour, or whom laugh'd into reform?
 Alas ' Leviathan is not so tam'd.
 Laugh'd at, he laughs again; and, stricken hard,
 Turns to the stroke his adamantine scales,
 That fear no discipline of human hands.

The pulpit therefore (and I name it, fill'd
 With solemn awe, that bids me well beware
 With what intent I touch that holy thing)—
 The pulpit (when the sat'nst has at last,
 Strutting and vap'ring in an empty school, 330
 Spent all his force, and made no proselyte)—

I say the pulpit (in the sober use
 Of its legitimate peculiar pow'rs)
 Must stand acknowledged, while the world shall stand,
 The most important and effectual guard,
 Support and ornament of virtue's cause
 There stands the messenger of truth: there stands
 The legate of the skies, his theme divine,
 His office sacred, his credentials clear.
 By him, the violated law speaks out 340
 Its thunders, and by him, in strains as sweet
 As angels use, the Gospel whispers peace
 He stablishes the strong, restores the weak,
 Reclaims the wand'rer, binds the broken heart,
 And, arm'd himself in panoply complete
 Of heav'nly temper, furnishes with arms
 Bright as his own, and trains, by ev'ry rule
 Of holy discipline, to glorious war,
 The sacramental host of God's elect
 Are all such teachers? would to heav'n all were ! 350
 But hark—the Doctor's voice—fast wedged between
 Two empirics he stands, and with swoln cheeks
 Inspires the news, his trumpet. Keener far
 Than all invective is his bold harangue,
 While through that public organ of report
 He hails the clergy; and, defying shame,
 Announces to the world his own and theirs
 He teaches those to read, whom schools dibiniss'd,
 And colleges, untaught; sells accent, tone,
 And emphasis in score, and gives to pray'r 360
 Th' *adagio* and *andante* it demands.
 He grinds divinity of other days
 Down into modern use; transforms old print
 To zigzag manuscript, and cheats the eyes
 Of gall'ry critics by a thousand arts.—
 Are there who purchase of the Doctor's ware?
 Oh name it not in Gath !—it cannot be,
 That grave and learned Clerks should need such aid
 He doubtless is in sport, and does but droll,
 Assuming thus a rank unknown before, 370
 Grand caterer and dry-nurse of the church.

I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
 Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,

Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
 That he is honest in the sacred cause.
 To such I render more than mere respect,
 Whose actions say that they respect themselves.
 But, loose in morals, and in manners vain,
 In conversation frivolous, in dress
 Extreme, at once rapacious and profuse, 380
 Frequent in park with lady at his side,
 Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes,
 But rare at home, and never at his books
 Or with his pen, save when he scrawls a caid ,
 Constant at routs, familiar with a round
 Of ladyships, a stranger to the poor ;
 Ambitious of preferment for its gold,
 And well prepared by ignorance and sloth,
 By infidelity and love o' th' world
 To make God's work a sinecure ; a slave 390
 To his own pleasures and his patron's pride —
 From such apostles, O ye mitred heads,
 Preserve the church ' and lay not careless hands
 On skulls that cannot teach, and will not learn

Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
 Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own,
 Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
 His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
 I would express him simple, grave, sincere,
 In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain, 400
 And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
 And natural in gesture, much impressed
 Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
 And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
 May feel it too: affectionate in look
 And tender in address, as well becomes
 A messenger of grace to guilty men
 Behold the picture !—Is it like?—Like whom?
 The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
 And then skip down again; pronounce a text, 410
 Cry Hem! and reading what they never wrote,
 Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
 And with a well-bred whisper close the scene.

In man or woman, but far most in man,

And most of all in man that ministers
 And serves the altar, in my soul I loathe
 All affectation. 'Tis my perfect scorn;
 Object of my implacable disgust.
 What!—will a man play tricks, will he indulge
 A silly fond conceit of his fair form 420
 And just proportion, fashionable mien,
 And pretty face, in presence of his God?
 Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes,
 As with the di'mond on his lily hand,
 And play his brilliant pans before my eyes,
 When I am hungry for the bread of life?
 He mocks his Maker, prostitutes and shames
 His noble office, and, instead of truth,
 Displaying his own beauty, starves his flock '
 Therefore, avaunt' all attitude and stare 430
 And start theatric, practised at the glass.
 I seek divine simplicity in him
 Who handles things divine; and all beside,
 Though learn'd with labour, and though much admired
 By curious eyes and judgments ill-inform'd,
 To me is odious as the nasal twang
 Heard at conventicle, where worthy men,
 Misled by custom, strain celestial themes
 Through the prest nostril, spectacle-bestnd
 Some, decent in demeanour while they preach, 440
 That task perform'd, relapse into themselves,
 And having spoken wisely, at the close
 Grow wanton, and give proof to ev'ry eye—
 Whoe'er was edified themselves weie not.
 Forth comes the pocket mirror. First we stroke
 An eyebrow; next compose a straggling lock;
 Then with an air, most gracefully performed,
 Fall back into our seat; extend an arm,
 And lay it at its ease with gentle care,
 With handkerchief in hand, depending low : 450
 The better hand, more busy, gives the nose
 Its bergamot, or aids th' indebted eye
 With op'ra glass to watch the moving scene,
 And recognise the slow-retiring fair.
 Now this is fulsome, and offends me more
 Than in a churchman slovenly neglect
 And rustic coarseness would. A heav'nly mind

May be indiff'rent to her house of clay,
 And slight the hovel as beneath her care,
 But how a body so fantastic, trim,
 And quaint in its deportment and attire,
 Can lodge a heav'nly mind—demands a doubt. 460

He that negotiates between God and man,
 As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
 Of judgment and of mctcy, should bewaie
 Of lightness in his speech 'Tis pitiful
 To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;
 To break a jest, when pity would inspire
 Pathetic exhortation ; and t' address
 The skittish fancy with facetious tales, 470
 When sent with God's commission to the heart
 So did not Paul. Direct me to a quip
 Or merry turn in all he ever wrote,
 And I consent you take it for your text,
 Your only one, till sides and benches fail.
 No he was serious in a serious cause,
 And understood too well the weighty teims
 That he had ta'en in charge. He would not stoop
 To conquer those by jocular exploits,
 Whom truth and soberness assail'd in vain. 480

Oh, popular applause! what heart of man
 Is proof against thy sweet seducing charms?
 The wisest and the best feel urgent need
 Of all their caution in thy gentlest gales;
 But swell'd into a gust—who then, alas !
 With all his canvas set, and inexpert,
 And therefore heedless, can withstand thy power?
 Praise from the rivel'd lips of toothless, bald
 Decrepitude, and in the looks of lean
 And craving poverty, and in the bow 490
 Respectful of the smutch'd artificer,
 Is oft too welcome, and may much disturb
 The bras of the purpose. How much more,
 Pour'd forth by beauty splendid and polite,
 In language soft as adoration breathes?
 Ah, spare your idol think him human still;
 Charms he may have, but he has frailties too,
 Dote not too much, nor spoil what ye admire.

All truth is from the sempiternal source
 Of light divine. But Egypt, Greece, and Rome 500
 Drew from the stream below. More favour'd, we
 Drink, when we choose it, at the fountain head.
 To them it flow'd much mingled and defiled
 With hurtful error, prejudice, and dreams
 Illusive of philosophy, so call'd,
 But falsely. Sages after sages strove,
 In vain, to filter off a crystal draught,
 Pure from the lees, which often more enhanced
 The thirst than slaked it, and not seldom bred
 Intoxication and delirium wild. 510
 In vain they pushed inquiry to the birth
 And spring-time of the world ; ask'd, Whence is man ?
 Why form'd at all? and wherefore as he is ?
 Where must he find his Maker? With what rites
 Adore him? Will he hear, accept, and bless?
 Or does he sit regardless of his works?
 Has man within him an immortal seed?
 Or does the tomb take all? If he survive
 His ashes, where? and in what weal or woe?
 Knots worthy of solution, which alone 520
 A Deity could solve. Their answers vague,
 And all at random, fabulous and dark,
 Left them as dark themselves. Their rules of life,
 Defective and unsanction'd, proved too weak
 To bind the roving appetite, and lead
 Blind nature to a God not yet reveal'd.
 'Tis Revelation satisfies all doubts,
 Explains all mysteries, except her own,
 And so illuminates the path of life,
 That fools discover it, and stray no more. 530
 Now tell me, dignified and sapient sir,
 My man of morals, nurtured in the shades
 Of Acaclemus, is this false or true?
 Is Christ the abler teacher, or the schools?
 If Christ, then why resort at ev'ry turn
 To Athens, or to Rome, for wisdom short
 Of man's occasions, when in him reside
 Grace, knowledge, comfort, an unfathom'd store?
 How oft when Paul has served us with a text,
 Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully, preach'd ? 540
 Men that, if now alive, would sit content

And humble learners of a Saviour's worth,
 Preach it who might. Such was their love of truth,
 Their thirst of knowledge, and their candour too.

And thus it is. The pastor, either vain
 By nature, or by flattery made so, taught
 To gaze at his own splendour, and t' exalt
 Absurdly, not his office, but himself;
 Or unenlighten'd, and too proud to learn,
 Or vicious, and not therefore apt to teach, 550
 Perverting often, by the stress of lewd
 And loose example, whom he should instruct,
 Exposes and holds up to broad disgrace
 The noblest function, and discredits much
 The brightest truths that man has ever seen.
 For ghostly counsel, if it either fall
 Below the exigence, or be not back'd
 With show of love, at least with hopeful proof
 Of some sincerity on the giver's part;
 Or be dishonour'd in th' exterior form 560
 And mode of its conveyance, by such tricks
 As move derision, or by foppish airs
 And histrionic mum'm'ry, that let down
 The pulpit to the level of the stage ;
 Drops from the lips a disregarded thing.
 The weak perhaps are moved, but are not taught,
 While prejudice in men of stronger minds
 Takes deeper root, confirm'd by what they see
 A relaxation of religion's hold
 Upon the roving and untutor'd heart 570
 Soon follows, and the curb of conscience snapt,
 The laity run wild.—But do they now?
 Note their extravagance, and be convinced.

As nations, ignorant of God, contrive
 A wooden one, so we, no longer taught
 By monitors that mother church supplies,
 Now make our own. Posterity will ask
 (If e'er posterity sees verse of mine),
 Some fifty or a hundred lustrums hence,
 What was a monitor in George's days ? 580
 My very gentle reader, yet unborn,
 Of whom I needs must augur better things,

Since Heav'n would sure grow weary of a world
 Productive only of a race like us,
 A monitor is wood—plank shaven thin.
 We wear it at our backs. There, closely braced
 And neatly fitted, it compresses hard
 The prominent and most unsightly bones,
 And binds the shoulders flat. We prove its use
 Sov'reign and most effectual to secure 590
 A form, not now gymnastic as of yore,
 From rickets and distortion, else, our lot
 But thus admonish'd we can walk erect,
 One proof at least of manhood ; while the friend
 Sticks close, a Mentor worthy of his charge.
 Our habits costlier than Lucullus wore,
 And by caprice as multiplied as his,
 Just please us while the fashion is at full,
 But change with ev'ry moon. The sycophant,
 That waits to dress us, arbitrates their date, 600
 Surveys his fair reversion with keen eye ;
 Finds one ill made, another obsolete,
 This fits not nicely, that is ill conceived ;
 And, making prize of all that he condemns,
 With our expenditure defrays his own.
 Variety's the very spice of life,
 That gives it all its flavour. We have run
 Through ev'ry change that fancy, at the loom
 Exhausted, has had genius to supply,
 And, studious of mutation still, discard 610
 A real elegance, a little used,
 For monstrous novelty and strange disguise
 We sacrifice to dress, till household joys
 And comforts cease. Dress drains our cellai dry,
 And keeps our larder lean; puts out our fires,
 And introduces hunger, frost, and woe,
 Where peace and hospitality might reign.
 What man that lives, and that knows how to live,
 Would fail t' exhibit at the public shows
 A form as splendid as the proudest there, 620
 Though appetite raise outcries at the cost ?
 A man o' th' town dines late, but soon enough
 With reasonable forecast and despatch,
 'T ensure a side-box station at half-price.
 You think, perhaps, so delicate his dress

His daily fare as delicate. Alas '
 He picks clean teeth, and, busy as he seems
 With an old tavern quill, is hungry yet.
 The rout is folly's circle which she draws
 With magic wand. So potent is the spell, 630
 That none decoy'd into that fatal ring,
 Unless by Heaven's peculiar grace, escape.
 There we grow early gray, but never wise ;
 There form connexions, and acquire no friend ;
 Solicit pleasure hopeless of success ;
 Waste youth in occupations only fit
 For second childhood, and devote old age
 To sports which only childhood could excuse
 There they are happiest who dissemble best
 Their weariness ; and they the most polite, 640
 Who squander time and treasure with a smile,
 Though at their own destruction She that asks
 Her dear five hundred friends, contemns them all,
 And hates their coming. They (what can they less ?)
 Make just reprisals, and, with cringe and shrug
 And bow obsequious, hide their hate of her.
 All catch the frenzy, downward from her Grace,
 Whose flambeaux flash against the morning skies,
 And gild our chamber ceilings as they pass,
 To her who, frugal only that her thrift, 650
 May feed excesses she can ill afford,
 Is hackney'd home unlackey'd, who, in haste
 Alighting, turns the key in her own door,
 And, at the watchman's lantern bonowing light,
 Finds a cold bed her only comfort left.
 Wives beggar husbands, husbands stave their wives,
 On Fortune's velvet altar off'nng up
 Their last poor pittance—Fortune, most severe
 Of goddesses yet known, and costlier far
 Than all that held their routs in Juno's heav'n.— 660
 So fare we in this prison-house the world
 And 'tis a fearful spectacle to see
 So many maniacs dancing in their chains.
 They gaze upon the links that hold them fast
 With eyes of anguish, execrate their lot,
 Then shake them in despair, and dance again.

Now basket up the family of plagues

That waste our vitals. Peculation, sale
 Of honour, perjury, corruption, frauds
 By forgery, by subterfuge of law, 670
 By tricks and lies, as num'rous and as keen
 As the necessities their authors feel;
 Then cast them, closely bundled, ev'ry brat
 At the right door. Profusion is its sue
 Profusion unrcstram'd, with all that's base
 In character, has litter'd all the land,
 And bred within the mem'ry of no few
 A priesthood such as I foal's was of old,
 A people such as never was till now.
 It is a hungry vice.—it eats up all 68c
 That gives society its beauty, strength,
 Convenience, and security, and use,
 Makes men mere vermin, worthy to be trapp'd
 And gibbeted, as fast as catchpole claws
 Can seize the shpp'ry prey; unties the knot
 Of union, and converts the sacred band
 That holds mankind together to a scourge.
 Profusion, deluging a state with lusts
 Of grossest nature and of worst effects,
 Prepares it for its ruin ; hardens, blinds, 690
 And warps the consciences of public men
 Till they can laugh at virtue; mock the fools
 That trust them; and, in th' end, disclose a face
 That would have shock'd credulity herself,
 Unmask'd, vouchsafing this their sole excuse;—
 Since all alike are selfish, why not they?
 This does Profusion, and th' accursed cause
 Of such deep mischief has itself a cause.

In colleges and halls, in ancient days,
 When learning, virtue, piety, and truth 700
 Were precious, and inculcated with care,
 There dwelt a sage call'd Discipline. His head,
 Not yet by time completely silver'd o'er,
 Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,
 But strong for service still, and unimpair'd.
 His eye was meek and gentle, and a smile
 Play'd on his lips, and in his speech was heard
 Paternal sweetness, dignity, and love.
 The occupation dearest to his heart

Was to encourage goodness. He would stroke 710
 The head of modest and ingenuous worth,
 That blush'd at its own praise, and press the youth
 Close to his side that pleased him. Learning grew
 Beneath his care, a thiving, vig'rous pLint;
 The mind was well inform'd, the passions held
 Subordinate, and diligence was choice.
 If e'er it chanced, as sometimes chance it must,
 That one among so many overleap'd
 The limits of control, his gentle eye
 Grew stern, and darted a severe rebuke; 720
 His frown was full of terror, and his voice
 Shook the delinquent with such fits of awe
 As left him not, till penitence had won
 Lost favour back again, and closed the breach.
 But Discipline, a faithful servant long,
 Declined at length into the vale of years;
 A palsy struck his arm, his sparkling eye
 Was quench'd in rheums of age, his voice unstrung
 Grew tremulous, and moved dension more
 Than rev'rence in perverse, rebellious youth. 730
 So colleges and halls neglected much
 Their good old friend, and Discipline at length,
 O'erlook'd and unemploy'd, fell sick and died.
 Then study languish'd, emulation slept,
 And virtue fled. The schools became a scene
 Of solemn farce, where ignorance in stilts,
 His cap well lined with logic not his own,
 With parrot tongue performed the scholar's part,
 Proceeding soon a graduated dunce.
 Then compromise had place, and scrutiny 740
 Became stone-blind, precedence went in truck,
 And he was competent whose purse was so.
 A dissolution of all bonds ensued,
 The curbs invented for the mulish mouth
 Of headstrong youth were broken; bars and bolts
 Grew rusty by disuse, and massy gates
 Forgot their office, op'ning with a touch;
 Till gowns at length are found mere masquerade
 The tassell'd cap and the spruce band a jest,
 A mock'ry of the world. What need of these 750
 For gamesters, jockeys, brothellers impure,
 Spendthrifts and booted sportsmen, oft'ner seen

With belted waist, and pointers at their heels,
 Than in the bounds of duty? What was learn'd,
 If aught was learn'd in childhood, is forgot,
 And such expense, as pinches parents blue,
 And mortifies the lib'ral hand of love,
 Is squandered in pursuit of idle sports
 And vicious pleasures; buys the boy a name
 That sits a stigma on his father's house, 760
 And cleaves through life inseparably close
 To him that wears it. What can after-games
 Of riper joys, and commerce with the world,
 The lewd vain world that must receive him soon,
 Add to such erudition thus acquired,
 Where science and where virtue are profess'd?
 They may confirm his habits, rivet fast
 His folly, but to spoil him is a task
 That bids defiance to th' united pow'rs
 Of fashion, dissipation, taverns, stews. 770
 Now, blame we most the nurselings or the nurse?
 The children crook'd and twisted and deform'd,
 Through want of care, or her whose winking eye
 And slumbering oscitancy mars the brood?
 The nurse no doubt. Regardless of her charge
 She needs herself correction, needs to learn
 That it is dang'rous sporting with the world,
 With things so sacred as a nation's trust,
 The nurture of her youth, her dearest pledge.

All are not such. I had a brother once— 780
 Peace to the mem'ry of a man of worth,
 A man of letters and of manners too—
 Of manners sweet as virtue always wears,
 When gay good nature dresses her in smiles.
 He graced a college, in which order yet
 Was sacred, and was honour'd, loved, and wept,
 By more than one, themselves conspicuous there.
 Some minds are temper'd happily, and mixt
 With such ingredients of good sense and taste
 Of what is excellent in man, they thirst 790
 With such a zeal to be what they approve,
 That no restraints can circumscribe them more
 Than they themselves by choice, for wisdom's sake,
 Nor can example hurt them. What they see

THE TIMEPIECE.

Of vice in others but enhancing more
The charms of virtue in their just esteem.
If such escape contagion, and emerge
Pure, from so foul a pool, to shine abroad,
And give the world their talents and themselves
Small thanks to those whose negligence or slot!
Exposed their inexperience to the snare,
And left them to an undirected choice.

See then ' the quiver broken and decayed,
In winch are kept our arrows Rusting there
In wild disorder and unfit for use,
What wonder if discharged into the world
They shame their shooters with a random flight,
Their points obtuse, and feathers drunk with wine
Well may the church wage unsuccessful war
With such artill'ry arm'd. Vice parries wide 810
Th' undreaded volley with a sword of straw,
And stands an impudent and fearless mark.

Have we not tracked the felon home, and found
His birthplace and his dam? The country mourns—
Mourns, because ev'ry plague that can infest
Society, and that saps and worms the base
Of th' edifice that Policy has raised,
Swarms in all quarters ; meets the eye, the ear,
And suffocates the breath at ev'ry turn.
Profusion breeds them. And the cause itself 820
Of that calamitous mischief has been found,
Found too where most offensive, in the skirts
Of the robed pedagogue ! Else, let th' arraigned
Stand up unconscious and refute the charge.
So, when the Jewish Leader stretch'd his arm
And waved his rod divine, a race obscene,
Spawn'd in the muddy beds of Nile, came forth
Polluting Egypt. Gardens, fields, and plains
Were cover'd with the pest. The streets were fill'd;
The croaking nuisance lurk'd in ev'ry nook, 830
Nor palaces nor even chambers 'scaped,
And the land stank, so num'rous was the fry.

NOTES

BOOK I.—THE SOFA.

THE title of the Sofa has been already explained in the Life. We may here add the Author's Introduction •—

"The history of the following production is briefly this :—A lady, fond of blank verse, demanded a poem of that kind from the author, and gave him the SOFA for a subject. He obeyed ; and having much leisure, connected another subject with it ; and pursuing the train of thought to which his situation and turn of mind led him, brought forth, at length, instead of the trifle which he at first intended, a serious affair—a Volume "

He thus defends the title against Newton's criticism (Letter 184) :—

"As to the title, I take it to be the best that is to be had. It is not possible that a book including such a variety of subjects, and in which no particular one is predominant, should find a title adapted to them all. In such a case, it seemed almost necessary to accommodate the name to the incident that gave birth to the poem ; nor does it appear to me that because I performed more than my task, therefore the Task is not a suitable title. A house would still be a house, though the builder of it should make it ten times as big as he at first intended. I might, indeed, following the example of the Sunday newspaper, call it the Olio ; but I should do myself wrong ; for though it have much variety, it has, I trust, no confusion "

As to the scope and purpose of the poem, we cannot do better than quote his own words (Letter 181) •—

"My principal purpose is to allure the reader, by character, by scenery, by imagery, and such poetical embellishments, to the reading of what may profit him. Subordmately to this, to combat that predilection in favour of a metropolis that beggars and exhausts the country by evacuating it of all its principal inhabitants ; and collaterally, and as far as is consistent with this double intention, to have a stroke at vice, vanity, and folly, wherever I find them. I have not spared the universities "

On the style and plan of the poem, he writes to the Rev. W. Unwin (Letter 175).—

" My descriptions are all from nature, not one of them second-hand. My delineations of the heart are from my own experience. Not one of them borrowed from hooks, or in the least degree conjectural in my numbers, which I have varied as much as I could (for blank verse without variety of numbers is no better than bladder and string, I have imitated nobody, though sometimes perhaps there may be an apparent resemblance ; because at the same time that I would not imitate, I have not effectually differed. If the work cannot boast a regular plan (in which respect, however, I do not think it altogether indefensible), it may yet boast that the reflections are naturally suggested always by the preceding passage, and that, except the fifth book, which is rather of a political aspect, the whole has one tendency,—to discountenance the modern enthusiasm after a London life, and to recommend rural ease and leisure, as friendly to the cause of piety and virtue."

1-7 *Introduction.* Modelled after introduction to *Æneid*.

2 *Truth.* Poem begun December 1780, at the same time as *Table Talk* and *Expostulation*; finished following March. *Hope*, and *Chanty* written between then and the middle of July. All three religious poems treating of man's fall and the need of a Saviour, interspersed with satire on the world and its ways, largely personal.

4 An echo of *Paradise Lost*, i. 13, 14

7 *The occasion* The occasion on which I write, my motive for writing ; *the Fair*—la belle, often used as a substantive by Pope, Addison, &c. (see Introduction).

7-88 *The origin of the Sofa.* A piece of pure burlesque, which accords ill with the tone of the rest of the poem. *The ancient Britons had no seats, in Alfred's reign three-legged stools were invented, next four-legged stools with cushions, then the chair with upright back, then a priest or alderman invented elbows, then came settees for ladies, last the perfect sofa.*

9 *Painted*—how ?

10 *Breeches.* Called by Vngil "barbara tegmina crurum." Latin, "bracæ," probably a Gallic word Latinised. *Satin smooth*—what is the construction ?

11 *Plush.* Formerly worn by gentlemen, now confined to footmen. Cf. *Memoirs of Mr James Yellow-Plush.* Fr., "peluche," from which Ger. has formed "plusch;" Lat., "pilus," so that "plush with pile" is etymologically a piece of tautology.

15 *Wrong.* Used in its objective sense, injury.

19 *Joint-stools.* Cf. *Henry IV.* 2, 4.

Falstaff—"This chair shall be my state."

Prince—"Thy state is taken for a joined-stool."

Alluding to the proverb, "Cry you mercy, I took you for a joint-stool," an odd proverb intended as a ridiculous instance of making an offence worse by a foolish and improbable joke —NARE'S *Glossary*. Wright, in his *Domestic Manners and Sentiments*, gives pictures of "joynyd stools," at pp 375, 472.

24. *Drear*—carrying on the notion of discomfort "Drear" is properly the substantive, "dreary" the adjective So Spenser, "ghastly drere"

25 *Sore*. A.-S *sar* "wounded." Cf. German "sehr"

30 *Vermicular*. Notice Cowper's fondness for Latin derivatives, quote instances. What other English authors show a similar taste

31 *Wadding*. German, "watte;" Fr, "ouate" (cf Fr, "ouest;" En, "west") What language is the termination -ing

32 *Induced* A sense of the word not noticed by the dictionaries, but cf Philips's *Lider*.

" There are who fondly studious of increase,
Rich foreign mould in their matured land
Induce laborious "

Philips was a favourite author of Cowper These, or similar Latinsms, were plentifully introduced into English at the time of the Renaissance, or revival of learning Cf Dryden's "inform the breathing brass;" Shakespeare's "to aggravate thy store;" Ben Jonson's "frost-fearing myrtle shall impale my head."

34 *Sublime*. Latin, "sublevimis." Justify the epithet.

37 *Lambkin* -kin —German "-chen," a diminutive termination Compare mannikm, firkin, from the German "vier," four; Shakespeare's "lakin" for "ladikin" What other diminutive termination have we in English?

40 *Varnish*. Fr., "verms," from the Low Latin *vilrinus* "glossy."

44 *Restless*. Notice the unusual meaning.

52 *Obdurate*. Notice the accent So Milton always—

" Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate."—*P* Z. i. 58. The general tendency of languages is to slur the last syllables of words, and so throw the accent farther from the end. Give other instances.

53 *Yarn* German, "garn." For the change of letters, cf. yellow, "gelb;" yawn, "gahren"

54 *Scarlet*. Fr., "ecarlate;" cf "ecrire," scribe; "epouse," spouse. The initial *e* was prefixed to facilitate the pronunciation of the harsh sounds *sc*, *sp*, &c. After the 16th century the *s* was dropped, and the suppression was marked by the acute accent of the initial *e*. In the 5th century Latin we find "spintus" written "ispiritus," &c. See Brachet's *Historical French Grammar*, 78

Crewel. German, "knauel." Yarn twisted on a knot or ball.
55 A parody of Milton, *P. L.* 11 664

"The other shape,

If shape it might be called which shape had none "

58 *The lumber.* The Langobardes or Lombards were the bankers and pawnbrokers of Europe in the middle ages. Hence, Lombard Street, still the sheet of bankers; lumber loom, originally the room where pawned articles were stored; "to lumber" in old English, to "pawn." Hence, furniture stowed away, and consequently out of date and clumsy, was called lumber. A lumberer in America is a man who fells heavy timber.

60 *Elbows* A.-S., "elnboga;" German, "Ellenbogen," the bow or bending of the arm

61 *Cripplegate* Remains of the old wall of London may still be seen in the churchyard of St Odes'. Cripplegate Cripplegate was the gate in the wall between Aldersgate and Newgate

63 *Burly and big* Notice the fondness, not of poetry only, but of all language, for alliterative repetitions: safe and sound, spick and span, kith and kin. They are specially frequent in German: Stock und Stem, Schirtt und Tritt, &c. Often one-half of the word or phrase is meaningless. pell mell, helter skelter, hurly burly, hugger mugger, &c.

68 *Or eer* Or is an old form of A.-S. "aer;" English, "ere." The origin of this "or" was forgotten, and e'er or ere (both forms are common)* was added, just as we find "dies" twice in "aujourd'hui." In Psalm Iviii. 9, Prayer-book version, "Or ever your pots be made hot with thorns," "ever" is probably a corruption; but some philologists, on the other hand, explain the "ere" in "or ere" as a corruption for "ever."

71 "Gin" The apostrophe is not etymologically justifiable. "Gin" is the older form of "begin," and the prepositional prefix "be-" only strengthens the meaning. Shakespeare is specially fond of thus clipping the prefixes of verbs.

72 *Fancy.* Phantasy is another form of the same word. Can you distinguish or account for the two forms? Cf. priest and presbyter.

"New presbyter is but old priest writ large"—MILTON.

78 *Two Kings of Brentford.* "It is said that a Saxon king conferred the distinction of royalty upon the two chief magistrates of this ancient town, who were originally elected from the two principal crafts, viz., millers and tanners. The first notice of them in literature is in the Duke of Buckingham's play of the *Rehearsal*"—*Note to Globe Edition*

88 *Sofa.* Arabic, "sofah." What other words have we borrowed from the Arabic?

* "Or ere" is the reading in *Table Talk*, 711

88-102 A parody of (Milton, *P. L.* iv. 641, seq. "Sweet is the breath of mom, her using sweet," &c, or perhaps of Virgil, *Eclogue*, vi. 60-68, from which Milton took the hint which he has so wonderfully improved upon.

95 Cf. Tennyson's *Northern Farmer*.

"An I'eerd un a bummm' awaay loike a buzzard clock over my head "

97 *Snores the sick man dead.* Snores so as to kill ; a pregnant construction.

103-180 *May I not be con fined to the sofa by gout, for I am a lover of the country, and have been so from the tune when I played truant to enjoy a country ramble Then / needed no sofa on my return. Age robs us of our bodily powers, but it has not robbed me of my enjoyment of nature or my bodily vigour. I appeal to the constant companion of my walks to attest the sincerity of my love of nature. I recall the scene we have often gazed at together from a hill at Olney.*

104 *Pampered appetite obscene.* A favourite order of Milton's : 'A univeisal hubbub dire,' *P. L.* 11. 9151 ; "human face divine," *P. L.* iii. 44, &c What does the epithet "obscene" qualify? *Pampered*, "Pamp" is a nasalised form of "pap," and the -er is frequentative. "The devil stirieth hem to pappe and pampe her fleisch."—WEDGWOOD.

Obscene. Used in its proper sense by Milton,

"Chemos the obscene dread of Moab's sons"—*P. L.* \. 406.

103 *Arthritic.* Gouty; Greek, a joint.

106 Notice the forced transition See Introduction.

no *Swarth.* "A line of glass or coin cut by the scythe," so the dictionaries; Cowper seems to have confuted it with, or at any late used it as synonymous with sward. "Sward," German, "Schwarte," properly the thick skin of bacon or pork, so applied to a coating of turf.

113 *By rivers brink.* Poets have always been lovers of **livers** :—

"The muse nae poet ever fand her,
Till by himself he learned to wander,
Adown some hotting burn's meander,
An' no think lang;
Oh, sweet to stray an' pensive ponder,
Aheartfeltsang."—BURNS.

Quote Wordsworth, or other instances.

114 *Truant.* French, "truand," vagabond. A Celtic word.

115 As a Westminster boy.

117 *Of hours.* Concerning hours, if the stopping is right; but this is not like Cowper's easy style. May not the comma after "re-

gret" be a misprint' "Regiet of hours" would be perfectly allowable in poetry

120 *Hip*. Kerry of dog-rose. *Haw* Fruit of common hawthorn or may.

121 *Emboss*. Fr., "bosse," "a bunch or humpe, any round swelling, a wen, botch, knob, knot, knurre"—COTGRAVE.

122 *Austere* Latin, "austerus," auster is the dry south wind Notice the humour which consists in using in its literal sense a word which we only use figuratively See Introduction, p 12

133 Compare Horace's "reddes nigros angusta fronte capillos"—*Ep* vii 26.

Auburn It, "alberno," the white or sapwood of timber, hence originally it meant what we now call flaxen hair Now applied to a rich reddish gold hair, similarly defined by "the most ingenious of the ancients."

" Nee tamen ater erat, nee erat tamen amens illis ;

Sed quamvis neuter mistus uterque color :

Qualem, clivosae madidis in vallibus Idæ,

Ardua direpta cortice cedrus habet "

—OVID (quoted by Ste Beuvé).

When past fifty, Cowper tells us himself in his letters, he was younger looking than his years, he was more bald than grey, but a well-trained lock half concealed the baldness and fell in a curl over one ear

140 &c. Compare Wordsworth *passim*;

" My heart leaps up when I behold a rainbow in the sky ,"

and in particular the lines composed a few miles above Tmtein Abbey, containing the still more touching address to the companion of his walks, his sister Dorothy. Who was Cowper's companion?

145 *This twentieth winter*. 1765-1785.

151 *Conjured up*. Cf.—

" What black magician conjures up this fiend ?"

—*Rich III* I, 2.

Shakespeare always uses " conjure" with the accent on the first syllable, except in two passages, *R and Juliet*, 11 I, 26, and *Othello*, 1. 3, 105 ; in both of which we should say conjure. Trace the connection of the two meanings

152 Cf. *Juv. Sat*, 1, 8.

154 *Yon eminence* "A hill on the grounds of Weston House, two or three fields west of Cowper's residence"—*Globe Edition*

157. The eye is the organ through which admiration, i.e., the admiring mind, draws in its nourishment.

" They flash upon that inward eye

Which is the bliss of solitude."

—WORDSWORTH, *Daffodils*

162 *Sturdy*. Fr., "etourdr," stunned, so, stubborn, resolute
Diminished to a boy, ci. *Lear*, 4, 6, 13.

163 *Ouse* Sec line 323

167 *Never overlooked*—does this mean the highest, or the most prominent object of the landscape ?

169 *Overthwart*. Across, beyond. A S. "thweorh," connected with whirl, Fr., "virer "

177-180 The truth rather seems to be that no landscape is so flat and tame (and the scenery of the eastern counties of which Cowper writes is flat and tame), as not to possess a peculiar beauty of its own, and this beauty will ever grow upon a true lover of nature.

181-209 *From rural sights he passes to rural sounds—ike wind in the forest, the distant Owater fall or near fountain on rill, the sounds of birds which, even when harsh, please by contrast with the peaceful scene*

183 *The tone*—the healthy state or action Whence the metaphor? *Mighty winds*, &c , particularly true of the southing of a pine forest.

187 *The spirit—the mind*—distinguish What would be the more exact word for " the spirit "?

188 *Unnumbered branches* An absolute construction; "un-numbered," innumerable. — MILTON, *P L* || 903.

190 *Waits upon* Attends, results from

202 *Nice-fingered* Point out the appropriateness of the epithet

203 *Kites that swim sublime*. Cf *P. L* || 528 —

" Part on the plain or in the air sublime."

205 *The boding owl*.

" It was the owl that shriek'd, the fatal bellman

Which gives the stern'st good-night "—*Macbeth*, ii. 2, 3.

" Goblins, owls, and elvish spirits."

— *Comedy of Errors*, ii. 2.

The kite, magpie, jay, and rook, except when heard at a distance, have harsh notes; but the screech-owl, despite his ill-name, is, according to Lowell, no ill judge in such matters, one of the sweetest sounds in nature.

210—251 *Description of a sequestered cottage discovered by the poet in a solitary winter ramble. Reflections thereupon ; the charms of silence and retirement counterbalanced by the want of comfort; a spot to visit, not to dwell in.*

211 *The weather-house*. Contrived by means of a piece of catgut, which expands with the damp and contracts with the dry
Toy Abbreviation for play-toy, play-thing, German " zeug "
 Compare mob, a "tar" for a sailor, shorter form of tarpauline, chaise and one, 1. 80, &c.

215 In an old history of Sussex I have seen the splay feet of the women accounted for by the badness of the roads; a curious anticipation of Daiwimsn

222 But though itself unseen, from being close environed, it peeps at the vale below

244 *Dependant on the baker's punctual call*—perhaps may mean on the punctuality of the baker's call, implying that the baker's visits are unpunctual This interpretation agrees better with the "angry and tad" of the next line

245 *Panniers* French, "pamier" Point out the appropriateness of the word here

249 *Seeming sweet* Seeming is here used as an adverb Cf "shows of seeming pure."—*P. L.* iv 316

251 *Visit* What is there peculiar in this use of the word?

220-251 There is something *bourgeois* in these reflections of Cowper on the *Peasant's Nest* All that the cottage suggests to him is, that it would be a delightful abode if it was not so uncomfortable There is a sonnet of Wordsworth so apposite, the occasion the same, the thoughts it suggests so far deeper and truer, that it is worth while to quote it in *extent*.

ADMONITION TO A TRAVELLER.

"Yes, there is holy pleasure in thine eye '
The lovely cottage in the guardian nook
Hath stirred thee deeply : with its own dear brook,
Its own small pasture, almost its own sky!

"But covet not the abode—O do not sigh
As many do repining while they look ;
Intruders who would tear from Nature's book
This precious loaf with harsh impiety :

"Think what the home would be if it were thine,
Even thine, though few thy wants ' Roof, window, door,
The very flowers are sacred to the poor

"The roses to the porch which they entwine :
Yea, all that now enchants thee, from the day
On which it should be touch'd would melt away '"

252-325 *From the cottage he passes along a chestnut avenue, descends a gorge through which a brook runs, and mounting the opposite siae, from "the alcove" views the wide landscape, the sheep-fold, the hay carts, and the various foliage of the sylvan scene.*

252 *The colonnade.* "A fine avenue of chestnuts in Weston Park ending at the rustic bridge"—*Globe Edition*.

258 *The gloom and coolness of declining day.* An exquisitely musical line, illustrating Pope's canon, "The sound should be an echo of the sense."

260 *Umbrella*. The invention at least as old as the Greeks and Romans ; *erxieituov*, umbrella. Umbrellas were not common in England before 1700. For a full account of umbrellas see Chambers's *Book of Days*, vol i., p 1750.

262 *Benevolus*. John Courtenay Throckmorton, Esq., of Westor Underwood This affectation of classical pseudonyms is common to most of the poetry of the 18th century. Every page of Young has a Philander, Maicus, Codrus, &c.

264, 265 Point out the antithesis

265 *Prolixity*. Prohxus for proluxus, stretched out. I know of no parallel to this use of the word.

267 Desynonymise "rustic," "rural," "country," used as an adjective. Compare "woody" and "silvan." Can you discover any rule for the different shades of meaning as adjectives are derived from Saxon or Latin roots? See Note on *Timepiece*, 1.107.

269 *Stooping as if to drink*. Is this an instance of pathetic fallacy? For meaning of "pathetic fallacy," see Ruskm's *Modern Painters*, vol. in.

272 *Hillock*. What is paddock, what is hummock the diminutive of? See *Student's Manual of the English Language*, p 218

274 What character in Shakespeare moralises thus on sights of nature?

278 *The proud alcove*. "' The Alcove ' is beyond the rustic bridge, a view seat of six sides, three of them open Only a visit to the place can enable the reader to realise the wonderful truthfulness of the whole description"—*Globe Edition*. I suppose a sort of summer-house, half covered, half open, but I confess the note fails to give me a clear idea of the building "Alcove," Spanish, " Alcoba," a space in a room railed off to hold a bed of state , Arabic, " Alcobba," a cabinet or small chamber.

287 Show how the different meanings, "blank oblivion," "to draw a blank," " blank cartridge," " blank verse," all come from French " blanc "

289 *And posted*, &c. Express this in prose

291 *Glebe* What is the common moaning of "glebe" With the use of the word here cf Milton, " Fertile of corn the glebe "

293 *The middle field*. A Latnism Paiaphiasis.

298 *Boorish*. German, "bauer," peasant. Compare " pagan," "knave," "carl" and "churlish," "villain." The epithet here seems to hover between its original and derived meaning.

309 *Wannish*. Wan, A -S " wana," wanting. " An thing the is wana " Latin, " vanus," properly empty ; -ish, A.-S. "isc," is still a living termination, *i e* , may be added to any adjective with the force of a diminutive.

310 *The poplar*, &c. A true touch of nature, but notice in Shakespeafe the superior "charm of indirectness :"—

" There is a willow grows athwart the flood,
That shows his *hoar* leaves in the glassy stream "

300-320 Compare with this the description of "a woodland scene" by Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, book i., canto i., stanzas viii., ix. Cowper paints the trees as he sees them, Spenser by the associations they suggest; Cowper is picturesque, Spenser literary. In the description of the oak they agree

" The builder Oake sole king of forrests all "

319 *Ere Autumn yet have changed the woods* Notice the disuse of the subjunctive in modern English

320 *Honours* " *Silvae* deceitip honorem "—VIRGIL Hence a common-place in 18th century poets

323 *The Ouse* A Celtic woid Names of rivers survive longest. Why? The Gaelic and Erse name for water is "uisge;" whisky is a corruption of "uisge-boy," yellow water; hence the Esk, Axe, Ux, Usk, Ock's-ford The Ouse is Cowper's favourite river, and he is specially happy in his descriptions, cf 1 163, and *The Dog and the Water-hly*. " The Ouse flows with a lazy and consequently silent progress, its whole descent to the sea being very trifling It is remarkable for the wildest sinuosities and a singularly tortuous course from its very source at Ouse Well, near the manor house of Steane, in Northamptonshire, to the sea.

' Est quidam fluvius vano sinuamine lentus,
Tractibus obliquus, quosdam relegens comitatus ;
Ast alio de fonte satus dat abunde meatus
Ileblus et Ousa surpriser dixere colony ' "

Leonine verses from an ancient life of St Neots, quoted by Southey.

See alsodescupion in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, song xxii.

" Ouse leaving Oulney past as she were waxed mad,
From her first stayder course immediately doth gad,
And in meandered gyres doth whirl herself about,
That, this way, here and there, back, forward, in and out;
And like a wayward girl, oft doubling in her gait
In labyrinth-like tuins and twmings intricate
Through those rich fields doth run."

The distance from Olney to St Neots is twenty miles by land, more than seventy by stream.

" But this proverb may better be verified of Ouse itself in this shire more maendrous than Maender, which runneth above eighty miles in eighteen by land."—FULLER'S *Worthies*, *Bedfordshire*.

326-366 *Crossing another gully the poet enters the park, and*

passing beneath a second avenue, describes the effects of light and shade; thence through "the Wilderness" to "the Grove" He sees through the foliage in "the distance threshers at work, and reflects on the sweet sleep of the labourer.

328 A little naiad, &c Translate into prose. Naiad, river nymph, from, to flow:—

" Or canst thou guess how far away
Some sister nymph, beside her urn
Reclining night and day,
'Mid reeds and mountain fern
Nurses her store."

— *Christian Year, Monday in Raster Week*

330 SteBeuve aptly contrasts Cowper and Rousseau Rousseau would doubtless have refused to enter the park, and gone all the way round in the sun, rather than be beholden for anything to the rich and powerful.

331 *Demesne* The same word as demam, domain; though in time they became desynonymised, demesne being restricted to the strict legal sense of the manor-house and the lands held therewith in the immediate possession of the lord. Most of our law terms have come to us from the old Roman law through the French, Illustrate

337 *Clime* The Greek geographers draw imaginary parallel lines to the equator, and the or "slopes" were the spaces between these lines Hence, in old English, "climate" meant the region itself. Holland translates "hanc Galharum plagam" by "this climate of Gaul"—TRENCH, *Glossary*

341 Gothic architecture with its aspiring tendency, its grove-like range of clustered columns and rich foliated ornaments, seems clearly borrowed from the vegetable world. "The often remarked analogy between a gabled nave and an avenue of trees with interlacing branches, shows that the fact has forced itself on men's observation."—HERBERT SPENSER'S *Essays*, vol. i., p 436.

344 *Chequered*.

" To many a youth and many a maid
Dancing in the chequer'd shade "—*L' Allegro*, 95.

Properly like a chess-board, French, "echec;" Persian, "schach mat," the king is dead Hence the sign-board of "the Chequers," and in Kent a service tree is called a chequer tree.

351 *The Wilderness* So called, it would seem, from the description on the "lucus a non lucendo" principle. Thus the seat of the Marquis of Camden, near Sevenoaks, has the same name

356 *Thresher*. German, "drescher" (ct. three, drei, &c.),

probably onomatopoeic, as thump undoubtedly is ; cf. Greek, *θρυγγίζω*;

359 *The destined ear.* The ears on which the thresher intends it to fall.

361 *Atoms.* What is meant by "the atomic theory" ?

362 An echo of Horace, "lenis agrestium somnus vivorum" Quote Shakespeare.

364 Genesis in. 17. An ancient poet (Stc Beuve remarks) would have stopped at v 361 ; but Cowper is profoundly Christian ; even amid "places of nestling green for poets made" he hears the primeval curse pronounced, and reflects on the fall of man

367-408 *As nature lives by the law of constant change, so by change man's powers are kept in health and activity*

367 The constant ebb and flow of nature was one of the first generalisations of philosophy Heraclitus and his school were hence called Lucretius repeats in a bundled forms the same principle, "omnia mutantur, nihil interit"

368 *The unwearied wheel.* A wheel is the symbol of endless motion.

"Look Nature through, 'tis revolution all"

—YOUNG'S *Night Thoughts*.

But the simile here is not a very happy one, for Nature is herself the wheel

372 *Revolvency.* Seems a word of Cowper's coinage Distinguish revolvency and revolution.

377 *The oak, &c.* Cf *Æn* 4, 442. The superstition, though ancient, can have no foundation in fact.

381 *Unconscious.* Is, as it were, a corrective epithet of the poet.

385 *Else.* Properly an adverb, but used as an adjective ; a genitive form of *el*, same root as Latin "alms."

396 *Measure life . . . and, &c.* What sort of sentence?

403 *Privileged.* "Many things are by our laws privileged from tithes, which by the common law are chargeable"—HALE.

406 *The veteran, i.e.,* the veteran whose quiet old age has been won by an active youth.

409-454 *The secret of happiness is not to seek happiness Nature suffice for happiness How perverse are those who prefer the town and art to the country and Nature I admire pictures as showing me foreign scenes I cannot hope to visit myself, but Nature is superior to any picture. Nature pleases all our senses, a picture only one ; a picture is for the privileged few, Nature is free for all. A forced absence from natural scenes weals their true worth, as in the case of the prisoner, the invalid, or the sailor.*

409 *Coy.* French, "coi ;" Latin, "qaretus."

311 *Who.* With antecedent omitted, poetical and somewhat

archaic: "Who steals my purse steals trash " "Who" was originally interrogative; show how this will account for omission of antecedent.

412 Nature herself commands us to love Nature and the sights of Nature. " Repeat a position after an intervening conjunction, especially if a verb and an object also intervene."—ABBOTT'S *How to Write Clearly* Nature is here used in two distinct senses—I The world of phenomena, the outward form of things unmodified by man 2 The constitution of man, the law of his being " To live conformably to Nature " was the chief tenet of the Stoics They looked upon Nature as the result of some primitive element or law, and to live according to Nature meant to conform to this law, and break through the conventionalities of society by which it had been obscured Compare Maine's *Ancient Law*, p 53, and Bishop Butler, the first part of whose *Analogy* is a development and expansion of the idea. For the personification, compare *Persius Satire*, v. 96, " Stat contra ratio et secretam gannit in aurem."

416 *Fictions*. See note on 1. 32. Again the dictionaries are found wanting.

417-427 "Art is human, Nature is divine; therefore Nature must be better and greater than art." Point out the fallacy in Cowper's argument No one has put the truth more forcibly than Browning in *Fra Lippo Lippi* •—

" Don't object, ' His works
Are here already ; Nature is complete :
Suppose you lepiduce her (which you can't),
There's no advantage ! you must beat her then.'
For, don't you mark, we're made so that we love
When first we see them painted, things we have passed
Perhaps a hundred times nor cared to see;
And so they are better painted--better to us,
Which is the same thing. Art was given for that ;
God uses us to help each other so,
Lending our minds out."

426-427 The greater part of Ruskin's *Modern Painters* might have been written as a refutation of these lines. See in particular *M, P.* I, sec. I, ch. 11, sec. 2, 3, 4 Painting is a language, but, as language, only valuable as a vehicle of thought.

435 *Starves*. German, " sterben," to die.

436 Compare Milton's *Paradise Lost*, ix. 445, "As one who long in populous cities pent," &c

437 *Dungeon*.. Fr, "donjon," Latin, "dominium," originally meant a fort or castle commanding the district. For inserted guttural, compare "songer," from "sommare."

443 What figure in rhetoric is this ?

447 The sailor appears to me somewhat of a mythical personage, and the larger half of his love of nature resolves itself into a craving for fresh vegetables. Wordsworth again (see 1. 220) when he comes into direct competition with Cowper easily bears off the palm:—

" lie, thus by feverish passion overcome,
Even with the organs of his bodily eye,
Below him, in the bosom of the deep,
Saw mountains; saw the forms of sheep that grazed
On verdant hills—with dwellings among trees,
And shepherds clad in the same country grey •
Which he himself had worn "—*The brothers.*

455-506 *Ennui* is generally confined to town life. An example of *ennui* in an inveterate lard-playet; a definition of *gaiety*.

455 *The spleen* The supposed scat of ill humour and melancholy. The word is almost obsolete in English, but it has survived in French, and *le spleen* is in French novels the invariable characteristic of an Englishman. "Our country must be confessed to be what a great foreign physician called it, the legion of the spleen."—SIR W. TEMPLE

456 *Lowering* The word is not connected with low; *lour* is the older form; "*luren*," Low German, to keep back in a shy way; "*lauern*," modern German, to listen.

460 *The fair*. See note on 1. 7

465 *A pedlars pack* For metaphor, cf *Pers* 4, 24: "*Sed præcedenti spectatur mantica tergo*;" and *Pilgrim's Progress*, *ad in.*

472 *Cards*. Cowper, as an Evangelical, had a horror of card-playing. See *Life*, p. 2.

474-478 Notice excessive alliteration in these lines.

477 *Cipher*. Arabic, "sift," originally meaning zero (also an Arabic word), then any numerical figure; *numerus* and ' are both used in the same sense.

Proxy. A contraction of *procuracy*, as *proctor* is of *procurator*.

481 Cf. "And be wheeled in a bath-chair down to the grave."
—C LOUGH.

482 *Memento*. Perhaps with special reference to the "*memento mori*" of the Trappists

491 *Gay*. The original meaning of "*gay*" seems to have been varied in colour (*jay*, the bird, is the same word). From lively in colours to lively in disposition, the transition is easy; hence the false use of the word against which Cowper here protests.

493 *The lark is gay*. Quote Shelley or Wordsworth

497 Cowper lets it be seen too clearly that he is holding a brief for the country. The townsman would be far more likely to be musical himself, and to notice the song of the lark, than the peasant. See notes on 1. 678, *sec*]

501 *Haggard*. Originally confined to a badly-trained wild hawk. Diez says the word was coined by the Norman-French from the English hawk For the French termination, which is both adjectival and substantival, cf buzzard, laggard, &c. On gambling, see note on *Timepiece*, 1 657.

506-533 *The pleasures of variety of scenery- - the cultured valley, the wild sea-cliff, the common.*

506 *So various that the mind*, &c. Is this the whole truth ?

509 *Seen till* Gazed at so long that, &c

511 *Slides off* The metaphor seems taken from a screw or some piece of machinery, which from long wear no longer bites. If so, *fastidious* is not a well-chosen epithet, as it confuses the conscious and unconscious effects of familiarity

513 *Then* corresponds to *then* of 518 = *nunc*, *nunc*

520 *Hoary* A chalk cliff.

524 *Why half-withered?*

527 Distinguish the force of the four epithets of gorse.

532 *Fungous*. Of the fungus order Mushrooms and many fungi have a not unpleasant smell The fragrant and luscious chanterelle has, according to Berkeley, " a smell like that of ripe apricots."

533 *Why unexpected ?*

534-558 *The story of crazed Kate*. The tale is life-like, and, as we might have guessed, taken from the life; but its connection with what precedes and follows is very slight The pupil may compare Wordsworth's *Affliction of Margaret*, and the history of the other Margaret in the first book of the *Excursion*.

540 *Would* See Bacon's *Essays*, 38, note 10

542 The explanation of the fact is to be found in the proverb " *populus vult decipi et decipiatur* "

549 *Apron*. A corruption of "napron" from French, and "naperon," "nape," a cloth

"And therewith to wepe

She made, and with her napron feir and white ywash

She wyped soft her eyen."

—CHAUCER, quoted by Wedgwood.

For the misplaced *n* of the indefinite article cf "nonpeir," the old form of umpire (French, " nonpair "), and "nadder," a bye-form of adder.

Idle Useless.

557 *Crazed*. Closely connected with cracked. "Earthenware at the present day is said to be crazed when the glaze is disfigured with a network of small cracks."—WLDGWOOD. Notice the artistic way in which the climax is kept to the end. The symptoms are given one by one, and at last we arrive at the only possible explanation of them.

557-591 *A description of a gipsy encampment—their fare, their looks) their habits. Fortune-tellers, beggars and impostors, strangely preferring their squalor to honest comfort, they can yet on occasion be merry, and their outdoor life secures them health* Read Wordsworth's poem on the same subject. Cowper here seems to me to bear the palm. His description is more graphic (what can be happier than

" A tawny skin,
The vellum of the pedigree they claim" ?);

his sympathy is more genial. Wordsworth is strictly just to them and no more, and there is here none of that obtrusive self-consciousness which distiguers Wordsworth's otherwise fine poem. See a criticism of the poem in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*

562 *Flesh* Originally restricted to pig's flesh ; compare flitch; contrast the history of the word "meat."

Obscene. See note on v. 104 Is the word used in the same sense here ? Cf Virgil's " obscenecque canes "

563 *Vermin.* See Trench's *Glossary*

568 *A tawny skin, &c* A play on words of the nature of a pun, but to be distinguished from a pun because it suggests no ludicrous associations. See Lowell *Among my Books*, p 184. What "the pedigree they claim" is, seems doubtful. Cowper must either refer to the popular belief that they were the lost ten tribes of Israel, or else to the more common error preserved in their name, that they were Egyptians. " Their complexion, their language, and many of their customs, prove them to be a Turanian tribe which has wandered from the hill-country of India. Their own name for themselves, ROMANI, indicates their temporary residence in the ' Roman' colony of Wallachia. The Germans and Italians call them Zigeuner or Zingari, that is, the wanderers." —I. TAYLOR'S *Words and Places*.

570 *Palmistry.* The science of fortune-telling by means of the lines of the hand.

" A frantic gipsy now the house he haunts
And in wild phrases speaks dissembled wants
With the fond maids in palmistry he deals .
They tell the secret first which he reveals."

—PRIOR'S *Henry and Emma*.

571 To cross the gipsy's hand with gold or silver is a necessary preliminary to his exercising his art. The " dross " is his worthless prediction.

585 *The bladder and the bag.* A sort of hendiadys; the bag-pipes, an instrument not, as is often supposed, peculiar to Scotland, but common throughout Europe.

592-678 *The advantages of civilised over savage life, illustrated by the story of Omai.* Two opposite views prevailed in Cowper's

time as to the original condition of society—I. That it was a state of primitive simplicity and innocence. Tins was the view supported by Rousseau in his famous *Contract Social*; and by Pope (though Pope is not consistent) in his *Essay on Man*, Epistle 3, l. 147, seq. 2. The view that Cowper here adopts, viz., that man has raised himself, by means of his instinct of gregariousness, and his experience of utility, from a state of misery and degradation, such as at the priesent day prevails universally among all known savage tribes. The pupil should refer to the *locus classicus* on the subject, Horace *Sat.*, 1, 3, 99, seq. See also Lucretius, 5, 788, seq.

596 *Civil. Civilised* "The times of Augustus Cæsar were civil times"—BACON'S *Essays*, 17.

599 *Temperate wishes* Cf Horace, *Odes*, 2, 2, 10

Surly. Sir-like, magisterial, in which sense Spenser uses *syrlie* "The meaning has probably been modified in modern times in accordance with a supposed derivation from *sour*."—WEDGWOOD.

608 *The savage whole.* The entire savage; but what parts of speech are whole and savage?

618 *Rangers, &c.* Name the countries to which Cowper refers

620 *The favoured isles.* An allusion to the recent discoveries (or rather rediscoveries*) of Captain Cook. The Society Islands were named by him after the Royal Society of London in 1769; the Friendly Islands in 1773. The Sandwich Islands were named after the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Sandwich.

624 *Morals and Manners*, here contrasted, often used as synonyms. The easy and graceful manners which they owe to the climate, are more than counterbalanced by their loose morals. The natives of these islands, and of Tahiti in particular, have been remarkable for their soft voluptuousness. Cook says of the inhabitants of the Friendly Islands, that they are of graceful form, mild and peaceful, and that thieving is their only vice. For a recent account of them, see *The Earl and the Doctor*.

630 *Uninformed as they.* This is ambiguous. Cowper means "by navigators in this particular (the situation of these islands) as ignorant as the natives are generally."

631 Cowper's prophecy has been completely falsified by the event. In 1820, Kamchameha, the king of the Sandwich Islands, was converted to Christianity by the Methodist missionaries. The islands subsequently made rapid progress in civilisation; trade flourished, and even printing presses were set up. The king was, however, not long after, expelled, and the islands have since been under a representative government. Taiti and the Society Islands, in 1842, put themselves under the protection of the French, and have since then continued possessions of France.

But the general observation of Cowper is most just. *Civilisa-*

* Most of these Islands had been visited by the Spaniard Quiros in 1606.

tion has, as a rule, flourished best where nature has been neither too luxuriant, so as to do away with all motives for exertion, nor, on the other hand, too niggard, so as to absorb man wholly in providing for his bodily wants

633 *Gentle savage* Omai, a native of the Friendly Islands, acted as interpreter to Cook in his third voyage, and accompanied him to England in 1775. He was made a lion in London society. Dr Johnson admired him, and SH Joshua painted him

638 *The dream*. Such his visit would appeal to Omai

640 *Bananas*. The *Musa sapientum* supplies the principal food of a large portion of tropical countries; its fibre is used for clothing, &c. *Yams*, the *Dioscorea sativa*, produces edible tubers resembling potatoes

650 Of, seems to mean in respect of

654 *Methinks*. See note on *Winter Evening*, 1 245.

661 "Cowper was correct in supposing that he pined for English refinement after his return home, though it was only a guess introduced as a vehicle for satire on our own frivolity. It was afterwards related that he entreated pathetically to be carried back to England again."—*Note of Globe Edition*

673 *Doing good*. True as Cowper's satire was then, the exertions and accesses of English missionaries since his day have nobly falsified his words.

678-748 *Towns are centres of vice, luxury, and extravagance. Their only redeeming met it is that they encourage art, natural philosophy, and commerce. Examples: Reynolds, Bacon, copper-plate engraving, scientific instruments, increase of wealth and numbers of London. The reverse of the shield shows faulty police; faulty legislation, by which petty offenders are punished too severely and great offenders escape, neglect of the Sunday.*

678 *Worth and virtue*. Can you distinguish? See *Winter Walk at Noon*, 1. 724, note. Worth is the A.-S. "weorth," puce, from "weorthan," Germ, "werden" to be, literally that which makes a thing what it is.

680 Define "cultivation." Distinguish refinement, civilisation. Cowper at the outset half concedes the point for which he is fighting. For his argument implies that towns are cultivated. Show how. *Genial*—what does the Latin "genius" mean? Compare "gemahs lectus" and Virgil's "gemalis hrempis."

682 *Gain-devoted*. What period in English literature are these compound adjectives characteristic of? See Abbott's *Shakespearean Grammar*, p. 316.

Thither flow, &c. Compare Juvenal's tirade against Rome. "Jampridem Syrus in Tiberim defluxit Orontes," &c.—*Sat. iii.* 62.

683 *Common*, paraphrase. *Noisome*, derive.

684 *Dregs and feculence*. Show what advantages English has by deriving its vocabulary from different sources.

685 In *cities*, &c. Is this equally true of the country? if not, why not?

686 *Rank*. For different meanings of the word see Wedgwood

689 In *cities vice*, &c. Hue Cowper makes a point Pans, New York, modern London, will beai out the truth of the observation

690 "Quosopimus fallere et effugereestnumphus"—HORACE. But such "virtus fugitiva" is a very poor sort of virtue at the best.

693, 694 Point out the awkwardness of the construction in these two lines What is the antecedent to "which"?

694 What other reasons besides these two can you assign for art taking its origin in towns? Is it as true now as it was in Cowper's day?

697 By *taste and wealth*. What two meanings will the words bear?

699 *Incontinence* The Latin equivalent of the Greek ἀκρασία.

700 Reynolds, *b.* 1723, *d.* 1792. President of the "Royal Academy in 1769 The pinice of English portrait painters. "Four years after this was written, Reynolds had to give up painting, owing to failing eyesight"—*Globe Edition*. Name any of his portraits you have seen or heard of

701 In what sense is "Nature" used here? Cf "To show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure."—*Hamlet*, in 2.

702 *Baton*. A sculptor of promise, whose statue of the great Chatham, m Westminster Abbey, Cowper greatly admired Bacon, a friend of Newton, had sent Cowper a punt of Lord Chatham's monument, and Cowper returned the compliment by sending Bacon *The Task*.

703 *Gives more*, &c. If we take Nature in the wider sense of the word, this is inconsistent with what was said above, 1 420. Doubtless Cowper was thinking of the famous passage in the *Georgics*—

"Excudent alii spirantia mollius sera,

Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus."

706 *The style*. The technical names for the engraver's tools are the graver for the thicker strokes, and the etching needle for the finer Most engraving is done, not on the metal itself, but on a coating of wax, over which aquafortis is poured.

707 *Each province*, being &c. An absolute construction.

712 Turn this metaphor into a simile, Show the appropriateness of the epithet "eagle."

714 What are the spots m the sun now believed to be? Consult Proctor's *Astronomy* or Herbert Spencer's *Essays*, I 241, *seq.*

718 *Mensuration*, &c. What scientific instruments are referred to?

720 *So drained and so supplied*. Paraphrase.

722 *Babylon*. Even in the times of Herodotus was the first city of the world. It formed a square, each side of which was 12 geographical miles in length. Its hanging gardens were one of the seven wonders of the world. Taken by Cyrus, B. c. 538. Destined by Alexander as the capital of his empire in Asia. Now an uninhabited mass of ruins.

725 *She has her praise*. "Sunt hic etiam sua præmia laudi" — VIRGIL

727 *Spot . . . to purge*. Is this a correct expression?

727 *So fair*. Abstract use of adjective τὸ οὐτὼ καλόν, or perhaps one so fair ἡ οὐτὼ καλή.

728 *Witty, yet not wise*. These two words were originally synonyms, or, as Marsh (*Lectures on English Language*) calls them, "conjugates." They both come from A-S "witan," Germ. "wissen," to know. From the Indo-European root VID, we get in Sanscrit the Vedas, in Greek, εἶδον, I saw; εἶδα, I know; in Latin, "video;" in Gothic, "vait," I know. It is the old love of alliteration which has piccived such constant pairs as wit and wisdom, weal and woe, rhyme or leason, cark and care.

What traces has modern English preserved of the old meaning of "wit"?

729 *Not seemly nor of good report*.—Phil. iv. 8.

732 To cut down a tree in an orchard; to pick a person's pocket of property to the amount of 5s; to steal goods from a shop or house to the same amount; and even to rob a shop, &c., of articles worth more than 12d., on a second conviction, were crimes for which persons were liable to death. In 1785, 97 persons were executed for shop-lifting; 20 suffered together on one occasion. Even children under ten were sentenced to death for this offence.

During the first twenty years of this century, the average number of persons executed in England and Wales was 84; during the eight years ending with 1857, the average was 9.—CURTIS' *History of England*

The agitation against capital punishment for stealing from the person and petty offences generally was begun by Sir Samuel Romilly, 1808, who in that and the three succeeding years introduced a number of bills on the subject; but those which passed the Commons were all rejected by the Lords. Sir James Mackintosh earned a partial measure in 1823, but it was not till 1837 that Lord John Russell earned a bill by which the number of crimes for which death is inflicted was reduced to seven. Capital punishment is now virtually abolished except for murder.

734 *Indulges*

"The virgin ent'ring bright indulged the day

To the brown cave, and brushed the dreams away."

—DRYDEN.

735 *Peculators*. Lat, "peculor," to make of public monies one's own peculium.

736 A hit at Clive. See Macaulay's *Essays*. "Writers the most unlike in sentiment and style, Methodists and libertines, philosophers and buffoons, were for once on the same side" (against the Nabobs).

Cowper was what would now be called a Sabbatarian, yet even he rebelled against the ultra-Sabbatananism of his friend the Rev. J. Newton, who took him to task for taking walks on the Sunday. See *Correspondence*, 1786

748 *Hassocks*. Originally a tuft of sedges ; in Scotch it means a besom

749-774 *The town is human, the country divine; what wonder then that health and virtue should haunt the country? We country folk envy not you citizens your riches and luxuries, which are at variance with native, and threaten the ruin of the nation.*

749 Show the fallacy of this often-quoted line. See above, on 1. 420.

751 "She took the cup of life to drink,
Too bitter 'twas to drain ;
Meekly she put it from her lips,
And went to sleep again "

Is it true that health and virtue flourish most in the country'

755 *Chariot* A lighter kind of coach with only front seats, a now almost obsolete vehicle Coaches were introduced into England from Hungary by the Earl of Arundel, 1580.

Sedans. So called from the town of the same name, made famous by the war of 1870-71 Sedans were introduced into England from Naples, by Sir Sanders Duncomb, in the year 1684 Give other names derived from places. See Trench's *Words and /*. Taylor, ch. xvi

No fatigue, &c. An oxymoron, "strenua nos exercet meitia." —Cf *Garden*, 1 361.

757 *Possess your element*. Paraphrase.

762 *Sliding softly in between the sleeping leaves*. Cf.

"He settles next upon the sloping mount,
Whose sharp declivity shoots off secure
From the dashed pane the deluge as it falls."

—*Garden*, 486.

771 A sword was then part of the full dress of a gentleman, as it still is of a court dress. See note on *Timepiece*, 1. 318.

773 Put down, as Bacon does at the end of his *Essays*, the anti-theta of town *versus* country Compare *In Memoriam*, lxxxviii.

This was written just at the time that the American colonies were achieving their independence. Cowper, like many wiser men than he, looks on this as a fatal blow to the British Empire.

BOOK II.—THE TIMEPIECE.

THE title of the second book of the Task is a quaint conceit after the manner of Quarles or George Herbert. Cowper explains the meaning in a letter to Newton—"The book to which it belongs is intended to strike the hour that gives notice of appicaching judgment " Translated into modern phrasology, the title would run—"Signs of the Times " In it he dwells on all the public calamities and convulsions of nature which happened during the years 1781-83 : the hurricane which ravaged Jamaica and the Barbadoes; the earthquake in Sicily; which seem to him the Precursors of the end of the world It is to this part of the poem that Macaulay specially refers in his admirable description of Cowper as the "vates sœer " "Cowper, in that lofty expostulation which glows with the very spirit of the Hebrew prophets, placed the oppression of India foremost in the list of those national crimes for which God had punished England with years of disastrous wai, with discomfituie in her own seas, and with the loss of her Transatlantic Empire"—*Assays*, vol. 111 p 83.

The remainder of the book is taken up with a tirade against the clergy and the university. Much of the satire is as happy as it is true, but the mistake Cowper makes is to exaggerate out of all proportion the influence of these two agencies on the country. It is absurd to attribute to the universities alone, as Cowper does, the general degradation of manners For tins part of the poem the whole of Mr Pattison's admirable *Essay on Tendencies of Religious Thought in England, 1688-1751*, should be consulted. We have only space to quote two short passages, which are specially pertinent.

" It was an age destitute of depth or earnestness; an age whose poetry was without romance, whose philosophy was without insight, and whose public men were without character ; an age of light without love, whose very merits were of the earth, earthy."

" Again came a change. As the Methodist movement gradually leavened the mass beneath, zeal came again into credit. The old Wickliffite or Puritan distinction is revived between the 'gospel preachers' and the 'dumb dogs.' The antipathy to priests was no longer promiscuous. Popular indignation was reserved for the fox-hunter and the pluralist—the llophm-and-Phineas generation—the men who are described as 'caieless of dispensing the bread of life to their flocks, preaching a carnal and soul-benumbing morality, and trafficking in the souls of men by receiving money for discharging the pastoral office in parishes

where they did not so much as look on the faces of the people more than once a year.' In the well-known satire of Cowper, it is no longer irreligious mocking at sacred things under pretence of a virtuous indignation. It becomes again what it was before the Reformation—an earnest feeling, a religious sentiment, the moral sense of man; HUSS or Savonarola appealing to the written morality of the Gospel against the practical immorality consecrated by the Church "

1—47 *The poet sighs for the solitude of the country, in order to escape from the sight of human oppression and wrong—more than all from the wrongs of the slave, who is worse treated than a beast. He would rather be a slave than own slaves. There can be no slaves in England, why should there be anywhere in the British Empire* 9

1 Never was Cowper greater than in this prelude; he rises with his subject, and seems to catch the inspiration of an Isaiah.

2 What force the many-syllabled Latin word gives to the verse. Compare Macbeth, "The multitudinous sea incarnadine." Lowell suggests the explanation "It is as much the charm of poetry that it suggests a certain remoteness and strangeness as familiarity; and it is essential not only that we feel at once the meaning of the words in themselves, but also their melodic meaning in relation to each other, and to the sympathetic variety of the verse. A word once vulgarised can never be rehabilitated." And again, "because Lcai's 'oak-cleaving thunderbolts' and 'the all-dreadrd thunderstorm' in *Cymbeline* are so fine, we would not give up Milton's Virgilian 'fulmined over Greece,' where the verb in English conveys at once the idea of flash and leveibeia-tion, but avoids that of riving and shattering"—*Among my Books*, P 155

7 Scan. This is the first instance we have had of a resolved foot, i e, a trisyllabic foot, in Cowper. Compare Shakespeare's versification. See Crark's *Julius Cæsar* or Abbott's *S. Grammar*, p. 328

8 *Obdurate*. See note on *Sofa*, 1. 62.

For the language Compare Ezekiel xxxvi 26.

9 *The natural bond of brotherhood*. When was this great principle of morals first enunciated? does it depend on the physical unity of the human race, i.e. their descent from a single pair?

15 "I fly thos-wicked tents devoted."—MILION, *P L v* 890.

16 The words "rival" and "hostis" are illustrations of this.

24 *That mercy*. Parse "that." What is the object of *inflicted*?

26 *Then*. In this case, if this is so.

28 "And much it grieved my heart to think

What man has made of man."—WORDSWORTH.

35 As genuine as St Paul's wish, that he himself might be a castaway if so he might save his brethren.

35 *I had much rather be* Landor, in his *Imaginary Conversations*, makes Home Tooke explain *had* as a corruption of *would*. But *rather* is really an adjective, not an adverb, the comparative of "*rathe*," early, a word used by Milton and Tennyson among others. Shakespeare uses "*I had as lief*," and it is still a common provincialism. This exactly corresponds to the German "*lieb haben*."

40 *Slaves cannot breathe in England* "The decision that 'slaves cannot breathe in England' was given by the Judges, June 22, 1772, on the case of Somerset. A poor slave of that name was brought to England, but on account of ill-health was turned adrift by his master. By the chanty of Granville Sharp he was restored to health, on which his brutal master reclaimed him. The claim was resisted; a trial ensued in the Queen's Bench, and the decision was given as stated here. In 1736, the year after these lines were written, England was employing 130 ships, which carried 42,000 slaves, but in the following year the Society for the Suppression of the Slave Trade was instituted. In April 1791 Wilberforce made a direct motion for abolition, which was lost by 88 to 83. Lord Grenville and Fox took up the question as Ministers in 1806, and the slave trade was abolished in 1807."—*Globe Edition*

The emancipation of slaves cost the country twenty millions.

It was not till August 1834 that, by the exertions of Mr Buxton, negro slavery ceased in our colonies.

48-74 *We ought to be taught the lesson of charity and peace by the natural portents which have happened of late—the hurricane in Jamaica, the meteor of 1783; earthquakes in Surly and elsewhere, the fog which overspread Europe in the same year. Even if these portents do not point to the end of the world, they are at least signs of God's wrath.*

48 *Social intercourse.* Is this used in the ordinary sense of the words?

53 *To preach the general doom.* "Alluding to the late calamities in Jamaica." *Note by Cowper.* Jamaica was swept by violent hurricanes in January 1780 and the six following years.

Doom. Why is *Doomsday Book* so called?

54 *Warrant.* The same word as *guarantee*. But "*warrant*" is German, "*guarantee*" French. What is a magistrate's warrant?

56 *The dry* ~~το ξηρό~~ *.* This use of adjectives for nouns is almost entirely confined to words expressing moral or intellectual qualities—"the good," "the beautiful." Some by-form as well as meaning have become substantives, as "*goods*," "*comestibles*."

57 *Meteors from above.* "August 18, 1783."—*Author's Note.*

"On the 18th August a singular and very beautiful meteor was seen to traverse the sky from N.N.W. to S.S.E. It consisted of two brilliant balls of fire, of the apparent diameter of about two

feet, side by side, followed by a tram of eight others of smaller dimensions The intervals between the balls were filled up by a luminous substance of irregular shape, and the whole was terminated by a blaze of light The balls were not of a pure white colour, but delicately tinted with prismatic hues."—MASON'S *Notes*.

Derive "meteor." Compare Virgil on Caesar's death, "Nee dm toties arsere cometae."

60 *Crazy*. Craze is another form of crack. " And some said the pot was crazed"—*Yeoman's Tale*. Fr. "ecraser," cf. "cracked," crack-brained. For a similar personification of the earth, cf. Hen. IV. in. I. *Glendower*—"I say the earth did shake when I was born," &c. ; and Psalms xviii 7, "Then the earth shook and trembled ; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth "

62 *The props and pillars* Job ix 6, " Which shaketh the earth out of her place, and the pillars therof tremble "

64 *And Nature*. "Alluding to the fog which covered both Europe and Asia during the whole summer of 1783."—*Author's Note*.

66 " All things must be fulfilled " before the end of the world come

72 *Peccancy* Else only employed as a medical term, "peccancy of the humours."

It is only in the last generation that physical science, by enabling it's to trace to secondary causes even what seems most irregular in the course of nature, has wholly dispelled the superstition that earthquakes or other disturbances of nature are signs of the wrath of heaven. Cowper, though he speaks as an old Hebrew prophet might, was only reflecting the general belief of his age.

75-132 *A description of the earthquake in Sicily* It happened in February and March 1782 The most violent shock was on February 5th, when a large portion of the inhabitants of Messina perished, and among the rest the Prince, who with a number of his subjects had put to sea, hoping to escape its effects. See *Cowper's Letters*, 155.

78 Isaiah xxiv. 8

80 *Syncope*. A fainting fit, a medical term from the Greek.

82 *Of his own works*. An explanatory genitive.

85 *Pours she not forth*, &c —Probably a reminiscence of Pope's *Messiah*.

" See spicy clouds from lowly Saron rise,
And Carmel's ilowery top perfumes the skies !
Prepare the way ! a God, a God appears."

91 Psalm cxlv. 5, "Kow thy heavens, O Lord, and comedown; touch the mountains, and they shall smoke." And Jeremiah iv. 24

96 *Into*. Cf. the Latin *in* with ace. = so as to form.

98 *Mortal*. From the late Latin sense of the word, cf. *Par. Lost*, I. 1. 2 So Bacon uses "mortallest poisons "

Nuisance. For the French form cf. "pursance " The word had become vulgarised even in Cowper's day. Swift talks of men being "perfect nuisances "

100 *Fixed and rooted earth*. The Hebrew idea of the "world established so that it cannot be moved "

102 *Vertiginous*. One of Cowper's "sesquipedalia verba," which are a blot on his style.

Sylvan scene. "In our Latin adjectives we often obtain new shades of meaning and tinges of association, which our language could not possess if it were less heterogeneous Thus, when Milton says—

' Cedar and pine and fir and branching palm,
A *sylvan scene*,'

we feel that the epithet implies a picturesqueness in the combination of the trees, while *woody* would merely have repeated the assertion that they were there "—*Philological Museum*, vol. i., p. 367

107-110 "Near Laurcana, in Calabria Ultra, a singular phenomenon had been produced; the surface of two whole tenements, with large olive and mulberry trees therein, situated in a valley perfectly level, had been detached by the earthquake and transplanted, the trees still remaining in their places, to the distance of a mile from their former situations. "—*Letter of Sir W. Hamilton to Sir Joseph Banks*.

Miraculous as this circumstance appears, it was paralleled in the great earthquake of 1571 A hill, called Marclay Hill, near Kinaston in Herefordshire, was conveyed bodily to a considerable distance, trees, flocks, and all —BURTON'S *General History of Earthquakes*.

114 Matt, viii 27.

121 *Ancient towers*. "The superb palace called the Palazzata, which gave the port a more magnificent appearance than any port in Europe can boast of, had been entirely ruined." (From same Letter.)

122 *Embattled*. Furnished with battlements, *i e*, openings in a wall or tower for hostile purposes

123 *Lettered worth* Cf *inter alios* Silvio Pellico, who has so touchingly told the story of his imprisonment in *Le mie Prigione*, translated by Roscoe

133-160 *Moral reflections on the above* Cowper sees the truth that the Sicilians were not specially guilty, but he could not rise to the higher truth that plagues and earthquakes are not indications of God's wrath. See Introduction to *Timepiece*

135 *Inquest*. The heaven-sent fire makes as it were a judicial
COWP F

inquiry; but the word is not happily chosen, for the essence of an inquest is that it should be "calm," not "furious."

144 *Needing none assistance.* An obsolete use which comes to us from the A.-S. So "Ne geseah næfre nan man God," is the A.-S. for "no saw never none man God," to translate word for word.

150 Luke xiii. 4.

157 *The less, i.e., the less malignant.*

Malignant. The word implies wilful wickedness. Malignants was the term of abuse given to the upholders of the church and monarchy at the beginning of the civil war. See *Clarendons Rebellion*, p. 135 (Oxford Edition).

161-206 *God the universal cause. The folly of the atheist who tries to explain everything apart from God.*

161 *Sees a God employed.* Recognises the hand of God.

162 *Chequer.* See note on *Sofa*, 1 344

Arbitration. Used like the Latin *arbitrium*. "Jovis cujus nutu et arbitrio cselum terra manaque reguntur"—Cic. *Rose. Amer.* 45, 131.

166 *Intend.* Preordain.

171 *Then God.* The *reductio ad absurdum*.

173 *Though eagle-eyed, &c.* Though (as it deems) it can penetrate the final causes of everything.

176 *And having found, &c.* Is content to rest in secondary causes. "It is true that a little philosophy inclineth men's mind to atheism; but depth in philosophy bungeth men's minds about to religion; for while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest in them and go no further; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."—BACON, *Essay* 16.

178 *God proclaims.* This is the Hebrew notion of a jealous God, who rewards his servants and takes vengeance on his enemies in this life.

181 *Quits his grasp.* Cowper is thinking of Æolus and his cave.

185 *The meagre fiend.* Justify the epithet. Cf. Virgil's "Malesuada Fames et turpis Egestas"

Spruce. Means first, smart in action, then, smart in dress. Cf. provincial, "spry," "sprig."

190 *Homogeneal.* "The light whose rays are all refrangible, I call simple, *homogeneal*, and similar; and that whose rays are some more refrangible than others, I call compound *heterogeneal*, and dissimilar."—NEWTON'S *Optics*.

196 *Will thy discovery, &c.* Vaccination, Davy's safety-lamp, the lightning-conductor, &c., are the best answer to Cowper's question.

200 *What is his creation.* All Cowper means is that, no matter how many second causes we may interpose, we must ultimately ascend to the first cause, God; but to call the creation a reservoir of means is something very much like nonsense.

203 *Go dress thine eyes.* Cf. Hor. *Ep* i. I, 28

"Non tamen idcirco contemnas lippus mungi."

206-285 *The present profligacy of England contrasted with her former statesmen and warriors. A satirical account of the English attending the ;aces at Fontainbleau*

209 *Though thy clime.* Cowper, like a true Englishman that he is, cannot refrain from abusing the English climate, unjustly as we think. There is no climate in the world where a man can, the year round, in comfort pass so large a poition of his time out of doors, as indeed Cowper himself elsewhere allows—*Winter Walk at Noon*, 1. 295. Cf. *Winter Morning Walk*, 1. 462.

214 A poetical name of Italy.—VIRG *Æn* in 171.

215 "Know ye the land where the cypress and myrtle, &c." Byron's adaptation of Goethe. The ongmal has "where the orange trees bloom."

216 The origin of this poetical commonplace is—

“Ἐν τεύθειν ὄργῃ Περικλῆς οὐλύμπιος
ἥσσαντα τ’ ἰβρόντα ξυγκύκα σὴν Ἑλλάδα”

—ARISTOPHANES, *Ach* 530

Cf. Milton's "fulmmed over Greece." So Lord Chancellor Thurlow's nickname was the "Thunderer"

225 Notice how Cowper gives a fresh turn to a commonplace phrase. Explain "in the name."

226 *Things.* Cf. *Hamlet*, 4, 2 * "Hamlet—The king is a thing. *Guilderstein*—A thing, my lord"

And with the general description, cf. Hotspur's account of the Courtier. / *Hen* IV., A. i. sc 3

227 *All-essenced* ὁ'ερ. Fssenced all over, but the hyphen is right. So Shakespeare "all-disgraced" For essenced, see note, *Winter E.*, 1. 29 Derive "essence," in the han-dresser's sense of the word.

229 *Myrtle wreath.* To be worn at feasts.

"Simplier myrto nihil allabores."—HORACE, *Odes*, i 38, 5.

231 I *Chronicles*, xiii. 9

237 William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, *b* 1708, *d* 1778

"The situation which Pitt occupied at the close of the reign of George the Second was the most enviable ever occupied by any public man in English history He was admired by all Europe. He was the first Englishman of his time; and he had made England the first country in the world"—MACAULAY'S *Essays*, vol. d. p. 198. "His name had till now acted like a spell

at Versailles and Saint Ildefonso English travellers on the continent had remarked that nothing more was necessary to silence a whole room full of boasting Frenchmen, than to drop a hint of the probability that Mr Pitt would return to powerⁿ—*Do.* vol iii p 609

238 General Wolfe fell at the storming of Quebec, Sept. 12, 1759-

242 *And one in council* The Duke of Richmond was moving an address to the Crown against the further prosecution of the war with America. "When the Duke of Richmond had spoken, Chatham rose. For some time his voice was inaudible, at length his tones became distinct, and his action animated. Here and there his hearers caught an expression which reminded them of William Pitt. But it was clear that he was not himself. . . The House listened in solemn silence, and with the aspect of profound respect and compassion. The Duke of Richmond replied with great tenderness and courtesy; but while he spoke, the old man was observed to be restless and irritable. The Duke sat down. Chatham stood up again, pressed his hand on his breast, and sank down in an apoplectic fit. . . At Hayes, after lingering a few weeks, he expired in his seventieth year."—MACAULAY'S *Essays*, in p 623

260 *Clarionet.* *Et,* a French diminutive termination

263 *Let it pass* Impersonal

264 *True, we may thank, &c* Hostilities between England and America commenced 18th April 1775. After the capitulation of General Burgoyne at Saratoga, Louis XVI openly espoused the cause of the States, 6th Feb 1778. The war was decided by Lord Cornwallis surrendering to Washington and Lafayette at Yorktown, 29th Oct. 1781. The peace of Paris with America was signed 30th Nov 1782, and the peace of Versailles with France 20th Jan 1783.

266 *With all the cunning.* Cowper's indignation makes him careless in the choice of his terms of abuse. A shrew (such as Kate in the *Taming of the Shrew*) may be envious, but hardly cunning

271 *To the very beard.* Cf. the Greek $\rho\ \alpha\ \xi\acute{\upsilon}\rho\eta\iota\varsigma\ \lambda\acute{\iota}\omega\eta\kappa\alpha\ \alpha$ beard a lion.

279 *Jockeyship* Jockey is a corruption, "jock" or "jack," a name appropriated first to grooms, and then to the riders of race-horses, just as "Jack*" has been to sailors, "James" to footmen. The French, with the thing, have borrowed most of the names connected with horses and racing from the English—jockey, groom, tandem, steeplechase, turf, &c

280 *Be grooms, &c.*

"The peers grew proud in hoisanship to excel,
Newmarket's glory rose as Britain's fell."—POPE.

Cf. also a similar strain of satire in Lord Byron's *Isles of Greece*.

"You have the Pyrihic dance as yet,
Where is the Pynhic phalanx gone !
Of two such lessons, why forget,
The nobler and the manlier one "

285-326 *The pains and pleasure of poetic authorship described. These are little understood by the reader; who is often least amused when the poet has made most effort to amuse him Yet amusement is not the sole aim of my satire But however grave, satire is only fitted to chastise foibles, not vices.*

The logical connection of this passage is very slight, and the transition at verses 310, 311, is specially forced and unnatural

285 *Poetic pains* The following quotation from Sydney Smith is not relevant:—"When our friend is delivered of a couplet, with infinite labour and pain, he takes to his bed, has stiaw laid down, the knocker tied up, expects his friends to call and make inquiries, and the answer at the door invariably is, * Mr Rogers and his little couplet are as well as can be expected.' When he produces an Alexandrine, he keeps his bed a day longer "

286 *Shift*. Propcily a division, especially of tune or labour ; then, a turn or change, lastly, a lever turn or trick.

289 *Though apt*. The more natural expression would have been "apt though coy," &c. Cowper, speaking as though the terms were already found, says of them that "though apt," &c.

290 *To arrest*—depends on "to which the mind resorts," and is co-ordinate with "in chase of terms."

290-293 "Ut pictura poesis," and, therefore one ait naturally resoits to the other for terms and illustrations. Quote piallells.

"True wit is nature to advantage dress'd,
What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed
Something whose truth convinced at sight we find,
That gives us back the image of our mind "

—POPE'S *Essay on Criticism*

294-297 With these lines compare Iloiace's *Ars Poetica*, ad tmt. The beauties of the poem must not be "purple patches."

"Make what you will in short, so when 'tis done,
'Tis but consistent, homogeneous, one."

And Pope, *loc. cit*.

"In wit as nature what affects our hearts,
Is not the exactness of peculiar parts ,
'Tis not a lip, or eye, we beauty call,
But the joint force and full result of all."

301 *Musings*. The word is often derived from "musa," and this derivation would seem specially to suit the present passage. But the words have really **no** connection. Musa, *flavor**, is she who thinks or reflects from loot *man*. To muse is from the French "muser," to dream; Latin "**musso**," to mutter to one's self, to be dumb. It was already in Latin, acquiring the sense of to muse.

" Muscat rexipse Latinus,
Quos generos vocet."—VIRG. *æn.* xii. 657.

302 *Denied their wonted entertainment*. Cares can find no lodging in a mind pieoccupied and absorbed.

306-309 Cf. "Depictioe, sculptore, fictore, nisi artifex judicare nemo potest."—PLINY.

309 *Haply*. By chance; hence, as may by chance happen—perhaps. So "forte" in Latin, but only in causal and conditional sentences.

310 See above, 1. 285.

313 *Trifle* So "nugan," "nugæ," arc specially used of poetry and the fine arts.—HOR *Ep* n i, 93; *Sat.* i. 9, 2.

314 Observe the grammar of poetry in this line

315 *Can*. A survival of the older meaning of "can" before it had become solely an auxiliary verb. Cf.

" What can man's wisdom
In the restoring his bereaved sense?"

—SHAKESPEARE, *Lear*, iv 4, 8.

316 *Foible* Points to the older French spelling, as feeble to the newer. Foible is for "floible" (old French), Latin, "flebilis" The substitution of "ai".for "01" in French words is due to, and dates from Voltane

318 *Sword-blade* Swords were not obsolete in Cowper's day as part of a gentleman's full dress Scott, in *Guy Mannemng*, speaking of English fashions about the end of the American war, writes, " Though the custom of wearing swords by persons out of umfoim had been gradually becoming obsolete, it was not yet so totally forgotten as to occasion any particular remark towards those who chose to adhere to it."

" Where wigs with wigs, with sword-knots sword-knots strive."
—POPE, *Rape of the Lock*.

Patch. Patches are as old at least as Martial's day. " Talia lunata splenia fronte sedent."—*Ep.* vin. 33, 22. On Belinda's dressing-table were—

" Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux."

lii *Leviathan*. From Job Ixi. : " Canst thou draw out leviathan with a hook? or his tongue with a cord which thou **lettest** Lettest down ? . . . His scales are his pride, shut up to-

gether as with a close seal. . . . The flakes of his flesh are joined together: they are firm in themselves; they cannot be moved."

Hobbes, in his famous book to which he gave the title *Leviathan*, symbolised thereby the force of civil society, which he made the foundation of all right.

315-325 Cowper's limitation of the province of satire—that it is fitted to laugh at foibles, not to subdue vices—is on the whole well-founded. But we cannot forget Juvenal's famous "facit indignatio versum," or Pope's no less famous—

"Yes, I am proud : I must be proud to see
Men not afraid of God, afraid of me :
Safe from the bar, the pulpit, and the throne,
Yet touched and shamed by ridicule alone."

326-372 The *pulpit, not satire, is the proper corrector of sin. A description of the true preacher and his office, followed by one of the false preacher, "the reverend adviser of engraved sermons."*

330 *Strutting and vapouring.* Cf. *Macbeth*, v. 5

"Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player,
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more ; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing."

"And what in real value's wanting,
Supply with vapouring and ranting."—HUDIBRAS.

331 *Proselyte*, a new comer, a convert to Judaism.

338 *His theme divine.* Nominative absolute

343 *Stabshes.* Notice the complete revolution the word has made—*stabilire, etabhr, establish, stablish*; cf. *state*, &c.

346 *Of heavenly temper.* Cf. *Par. Lost*, i 284, "his ponderous shield ethereal temper." See note on *Winter Morning Walk*, I. 664.

349 *Sacramental.* Used in the Latin sense. *Sacramentum* was the oath of allegiance of a Roman soldier. The word in its Christian sense was first applied to baptism—the vow to serve faithfully under the banner of the cross. See *Browne on the Thirty nine Articles*, p. 576.

350 *Would to heaven.* A confusion between "would God" and "I pray to heaven."

351 A picture from the life of a certain Dr Trusler, who seems to have combined the trades of preacher, teacher of elocution, writer of sermons, and literary hack.

352 *Empirics.* , one who trusts solely to experience or practice instead of rule, hence a quack. The accent is the same as in *Milton* (an exception to the rule. See note on *Sofa*, 1. 52).

"If by fire
Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold"—*P. L.* v. 439

The doctoi's advertisement appears in "the news" (some newspaper or other) between those of two quacks.

360 *Émphasis in score*. A technical term of music. A musical composition is written in score when the parts are arranged in successive bars, one beneath the other. Steele wrote a work, called *Prosodia Ratwnahs*, or, *An Essay towards Establishing the Melody and Measuie of Spech, to be expressed and perpetuated by peculiar Symbols* London, 1779 "His (Dr Johnson's) mode of speaking was indeed very impressive, and I wish it could be preserved, as musick is written according to the very ingenious method of Mr Steele, who has shown how the recitations of Mr Garrick and other eminent speakers might be transmitted to posterity in score"—*BosWELL's Life*.

361 *Adagio and Andante*. Slow and moderately slow, musical terms from the Italian.

362 *He grinds*, &c. He takes old sermons and refurbishes them for modern use, lithographing them, in order that the congregation in the gallery may imagine the sermon to be an original composition

364 *Zigzag*. An onomatopoeic word, *i e*, an attempt to imitate the thing signified by the sound. The lines of manuscript are zigzag compared with the evenness of printed matter.

367 I *Sam.* i. 20 What was the original application of the word *clerks*? Latin "clencus," from Greek "a lot," from Matthias having been chosen an apostle by lot. First used of any ecclesiastical person; then, as the learning of the Middle Ages was almost the monopoly of the clergy, of a learned person.

"The greatest clerks are not the wisest men."

369 *Droll*. To droll is to trifle, we only retain the adjective. Butler, in his *Hudibras*, uses "a droll," for a tom-fool. *Caterer*, provisioner, from the French "acheter:" "cates" are dainties; "the eatery," the store-room, in old English. *Caterer* refers to his trade in sermons, dry-nurse to his "cramming," and lessons in elocution

372-463 *Two pendants, the fashionable parson, and the good parson, such as St Paul drew him. Affectation most hateful in a preacher.*

With these two pictures the pupil may compare Chaucer's "pore Persoun of a toun," Prologue to *Canterbury Tales*, l. 479; and Macaulay's "Sermon in a Church-yard," *Miscellaneous Writings*, vol. ii.

378 *But loose in morals* Such a one as George Selwyn's chap-lam and parasite, Dr Warner. "In letter after letter he (Dr Warner) adds fresh strokes to the portrait of himself, not a little curious to look at now that the man has passed away; all the foul pleasures and gambols in which he revelled, played out; all the rouged faces into which he leered, worms or skulls; all the fine gentlemen whose shoebuckles he kissed, laid in their coffins."—THACKERAY'S *George III.* See also Goldsmith's *Citizen of the World*, Q 58, "A Visitation Dinner," Knight's *History of England*, vol. vii, p. 109.

384 *Scrawls a card.* Writes his name on a visiting card. Visiting cards in the last century were not the plain bits of paste-board which we see now-a-days, they had geneially some vignette or ingenious device engraved on them. Specimens may be seen at Dresden which Raphael Mengs drew and Raphael Morghen engraved

385 *Rout.* A crowd or crush, the fashionable term in the last century for what is now called an "at home." For an amusing account of a rout to which Person was inveigled, see Landor's *Imaginary Conversations*, Southey and Porson.

"Southey—Why do you repeat the word *rout* so often?

"Porson—Not because the expression is new and barbarous, I do assure you, nor because the thing itself is equally the bane of domestic and polite society."

389 *By infidelity.* "This worthy clergyman takes care to tell us that he does not believe in his religion."—THACKERAY, *loc. cit.*

390 *A sinecure.* Especially applied to a benefice without the cure of souls.

397-408 A free paraphrase and amplification of I Tim. iii. 1—II, and Titus i. 7-9.

409 *Rostrum.* More correctly "rostra," the stage or pulpit for speakers in the Roman forum, so called from being ornamented with the beaks of ships taken from the Antians, A.U.C, 416.

410-414 See remarks on Cowper's wit and humour, in Introduction.

420 *Conceit of.* Vanity on account of.

423 *Tropes.* Trope, Greek properly a word turned from its natural sense, then applied more geneially to any rhetorical ornament.

430 *Avaunt.* French "avant," Latin "ab ante," move on, begone.

431 *Theatric;* -u is from the French -tque. The additional adjectival termination -al in the modern theatrical arose from the adjectives in -ic (logic, mathematics, or more correctly mathematic, domestic, &c.) acquiring the force of substantives.

435 *Curious.* Inquisitive.

436 *Nasal twang.* A relic of Puritanism, and generally supposed,

whether rightly or wrongly, to be a note of dissent. So Macaulay, *History of England*, vol. i., p. 165, notices among the signs of Puritanism, "the sad coloured dress, the sour look, the straight hair, the nasal whine." It has been conjectured that Americans retain it from their Puritan ancestors.

437 Cowper in the first edition wrote "At conventicle heard," preserving the older pronunciation of the word.

"He used to lay about and stickle

Like lam or bull at conventicle."—*Hudibras*.

"Who far from steeples and their sacred sound,

In fields their sullen conventicle found."—DRYDEN,

Conventicle. Any assembly, generally used as a term of reproach of a dissenters' meeting.

447 *Air most gracefully performed*. A piece of slipshod English; we assume an air, or perform a part

451 *The better hand*. Latin "dextera," Greek , both mean the better, i.e. the light hand.

452 *Bergamot*. A perfume obtained from the bergamot pear.

Indebted. A proleptic epithet. "The Norman set his foot upon the conquered shore."

455 *Fulsome*. Satiating, and so nauseous, disgusting.

456 *In a churchman*. Connected with which words in the sentence? Is "churchman" here used in the ordinary sense?

458 *House of clay*. 2 Cor. v. 1.

460 *Fantastic*. The "shows that we get the woid through the French, not the Greek.

463-499 *Severity in the pulpit is unseemly*. Many preachers art ruined by popular applause.

464 *Ambassador*. 2 Cor. v. 20.

465 Fuller had been quaint, South jocular, but dull propriety was the general characteristic of the sermons of the Hanoverian period.

468 *To break a jest*; or as we say, to crack a joke. Suddenness seems the idea which underlies both phrases.

470 *Skittish*. From the Italian "schizzare," to spirt and leap as wine poured out.

472 *Quip*. One of the very few words we have got from the Celtic: Welsh "chwip," a sharp turn or stroke

475 *Till sides and benches fail*. Till the congregation die with laughter. Sides and benches is seemingly a sort of hendiadys = the sides of the benches, i.e. of the sitters.

484 *Gentlest gales*. Cf. aura popularis.

486 *Canvas set*. To catch the breeze.

Inexpert. What is the force of the epithet

488 *Rivelled*. Wrinkled, possibly connected with ravelled.

491 *Smutched*. Smutch is a corruption of "smuts."

493 *Bias*. Metaphoi from the game of bowls.

499—545- *Ancient philosophy sought in vain to solve the problem of existence, why then should the preacher in the age of Christian revelation resort to the sages of Greece and Rome instead of simply preaching the Gospel?*

501 *The stream below*. The stream of truth further from its source.

505 I Tim. vi 20.

506 Cowper does recognise, but very imperfectly, the truth that "every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights"—the truth which inspired Bunsen's great work, *God in History*.

508 *Which*. The antecedent to "which" is "a draught," to be understood from "a crystal draught"

Enhanced. From "anz," the Provencal form of "ante ;" generally means, increased the value of, here simply, increased.

511 Philosophy began with the abstrusest and most insoluble questions. For instance, the first Greek philosophers sought to solve the riddle of the universe by finding some or first principle, the cause and origin of everything.

516 The Epicurean god.

517 The doctrine of the immortality of the soul was already hinted at by the Egyptians, and by Pythagoras in his metempsychosis, and clearly enunciated by Plato.

526 *Nature* Here the natural man

527, 528 If Revelation does not attempt to explain the mystery of mysteries, it can hardly be said to "satisfy all doubt." Cowper is speaking of the internal conviction of the confirmed believer. But Tennyson's lines are at least equally true—

" There lies more faith in honest doubt.
Believe me, than in half the creeds "

530 Isaiah xxxv. 8, "Wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein "

533 *Academis*. A garden or pleasure ground to the north of Athens, where Plato taught, and whence the Academic school of philosophy took its name.

534 *The schools* Philosophy. The schoolmen was a term especially applied to the Aristotelian philosophers of the middle ages. See note on l. 735. They were so called because they were formed in the schools which Charlemagne and his successors founded.

536 *Short*. Which falls short of.

540 *Epictetus*. A stoic philosopher, a slave of Epaphroditas at Rome, in Nero's reign. His philosophy, which we know from the *Enchiridion* or *Manual* drawn up by his disciple Arrian, may be

summed up in two words,—abstinence, resignation See Farrar's *Seekers after God*.

545 -667 *The effects of this vanity and insincerity of our preachers seen in the extravagance of the larty They torture their bodies into shape, they starve themselves in order to run not in dress, or to cut a figure in society*

576 *Mother Church*. A favourite Roman Catholic phrase, the Church who is the mother of us all.

579 *Lustrum*. A period of five years, so called because at Rome certain purifying sacrifices were held every fifth year.

580 Cowper's prediction has come true. But perhaps some "gentle reader" may have heard of that not quite obsolete instrument of torture, a back-board

591 *Not now gymnastic*. Cowper himself excelled in games — See *Life*

592 *Rickets* Greek , disease of the spine.

596 "Lucullus was requested once, they say,
A hundred scarves to furnish for the play;
'A hundred,' he replied, 'tis monstious, still
I'll look and send you what I have, I will.'
Ere long he writes, Five hundred robes I find,
Take part of them, or all, if you're inclined."

HOR. *Epist* \ 6, 40.

599 *Sycophant*. , an informer, hence a toady.

600 *Arbitrate their date*, bettles whether they are too old or out of fashion.

600 *That waits*. Cowper had been taken to task by Unwin for his use of the relative. His reply was, Aug. 27, 1785: "This last sentence put me in mind of your reference to Blair in a former letter, whom you there permitted to be your arbiter, to adjust the respective claims of *who* or *that*. . . . Upon solemn occasions, as in prayer or preaching, for instance, I would be strictly correct; and upon stately ones, for instance were I writing an epic poem, I would be so likewise, but not upon familiar occasions. God *who* heareth prayer is right; Hector *who* slew Patrochus is right; and the man *that* dresses me every day is in my mind right also, because the contrary would give an air of stiffness and pedantry to an expression that, in respect of the matter of it, cannot be too negligently made up."

Neither Cowper nor Blair, who says that *that* ought not to be used of persons, understood the rule of relative. To state it in its shortest form it is this: *who* and *which* introduce a co-ordinate, *that* a subordinate sentence; or, to avoid grammatical terms, *who* and *which* introduce a new fact about the antecedent, *that* qualifies

or modifies the antecedent, *e.g.*, "The man who told me this said also," but "the man that said so is a liar." But the rule has varied much at different periods of English, and admits of numerous exceptions. See Abbot's *Shakespearian Grammar*, p. 175

601 *Reversion*. A legal term, the right to future possession or enjoyment of an estate or office after the death of the owner or occupier now living. Here put for the property itself.

603 *This fits, &c.* What is the constiuction?

608 *Fancy at the loom exhausted*. Paraphrase.

618 *The man who lives*. Cf the French "savour vivre."

622 *A man o' the town*. Railways, by connecting country and town, have made the phrase obsolete, though we have in exchange the slang expression "a man about town."

624 *A side-box station*. A place in a side-box at the theatre, which he chooses as the most conspicuous in the house.

The Rout. See note on l. 185.

629 Cf. Milton's *Comus*.

633 *But*. Explain the opposition.

638 *Whose flambeaux* Carried by the footmen.

" Afar they mark the flambeau's blight appioach,
And shun the shining train and golden coach "

—JOHNSON'S *London*.

652 *Is hackneyed*. Colloquial in this sense of the verb. A hackney coach is the French "coche a hacqucm'e," hacquenee is the English hack. Hackneyed, in the sense of much used, vulgar, comes from the idea of letting out for common use

Unlatkeyed. Notice the participle from the noun lackey, French, "laquais," a word of uncertain origin

657 *Fortuned velvet altar*. The gaming-table On gambling, cf *Sofa*, l. 503, seq ; *Garden*, l. 760.

Legislation attempted to interfere, but with little success. Basset and hazard having been declared illegal, the famous game of E O. was invented, and was for some time the rage in London, and especially at Bath, under the patronage of Beau Nash It too was interdicted by Act of Parliament 1782, but the statute was evaded. We read of ladies losing ,5000 in a night; Fox lost £ 11,000 once at a sitting

660 *Juno's heaven*. Why Juno's, and not Jupiter's ?

661 Wordsworth uses the same common metaphors, but with a very different, and, we think, truer application —

" Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy."

667-699 *Profusion is breaking up the bonds of society*. Public

men, the clergy; the laity, all, from the highest to the lowest, are tainted by it.

667 *Basket up.* The unusual phrase is explained by what follows. *Basket* is the Welsh "basgawd." See note on line 472. For list of English words of Celtic origin, see Maish's *Lectures on English Language*, sect. 2, note B.

673 *Closely bundled*—like foundlings. The Foundling Hospital was endowed by Corara, 1739

Brat. A.-S. "brat," a rag, a bundle of rags. The word once conveyed no contemptuous meaning Gascoigne writes—

" Oh Israel, oh household of the Lord,
Oh Abraham's brats, oh brood of blessed seed "

See Trench, *English, Past and Present*, p. 267, though the Archbishop is wrong in saying that "blood " is another form of the same word.

676 */n character.* Stamped with the brand of baseness
Has littered. Covered with his litter or blood, but the metaphors will not bear pressing, as profusion is the sire

678 We know nothing specially heinous of the priests of Baal, but as the worship of Baal was licentious and bloody, so must the priests have been —Jeremiah xix 5 ; I Kings xviii 26

683 *Profusion*, or rather the love of greed which springs from profusion, reduces men to a state of internecine war, such as prevails among wild beasts.

" For why? because the good old rule
Sufficed! them, the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can "—*Rob Roy's Grave.*

684 *Catch-poll* A slang name for a bum-bailiff or sheriff's officer.

686 The sacred bond that unites mankind in their sense of mutual dependence, the knowledge that they are members one of another,—in a single word, their solidarity.

693 *Disclose a face, &c.* A face which if unmasked would have surprised the most credulous ; but " shocked " implies the further notion that it would have horrified those who took the lowest view of human nature.

Cowper's tirade applies rather to Sir Robert Walpole and the politicians of the previous generation than to his own times.

699-780 *Profusion traced to its ultimate cause, the want of discipline in Universities.* The discipline of olden times described under a personification, and contrasted with the undergraduate of the present day.

716 *Diligence was choice.* Either chosen by preference or perfect, but probably " choice " is a substantive.

726 *The vale of years.* "The downhill of life."

734 *Study.* For these personifications see note on bk. iii. 1. 41.

735 *The schools.* Used in a different sense from 1. 534; the place of examination, or the examination itself.

736 *Solemn farce.* The Rev. V. Knox, Fellow of St John's College, Cambridge, thus describes an examination for degrees as conducted at Cambridge at this time :—"The greatest dunce gets his testimomum signed with as much care and credit as the first genius The exammeis and candidates often converse on the last drinking bout, or read the newspaper, or a novel, or divert themselves as well as they can in any way, till the clock strikes eleven, when all parties descend, and the testimomum is signed by the masters."—*Works*, vol. i. p. 377.

For the state of Oxford at this period, see Gibbon, *Mem. of my Life*, p. 70

In stilts. Stilted, pompous

His cap. Covvper is piobably thinking both of the students' trencher-cap, and the fool's-cap

739 *Proceeding* To proceed to a degree is a technical phrase for to take a degree.

Dunce. See Trench on the *Study of Words*, p. 83 ; *Select Glossary*, p. 64.

740 *Compromise hadplace.* A compromise between ignorance and the college authorities ; wealth or brith proemed degrees or indemnity from punishment.

Scrutiny Examination ; that is, the examiners What is the technical sense of the word ?

741 *Went in truck.* Was bought and sold. The phiasie is strange, and I know of no parallel To truck is to baiter ; the truck system is the system by which miners or other workmen are compelled to accept goods in exchange for then labour.

747 Cf., "Every door is barr'd with gold, and opens but to golden keys."—*Locksley Hall*.

749 *Band.* Formerly part of the academical diess of a student, now worn only by clergymen and banisters.

754 *Bounds*—the domain. Latin "fines "

756 *Pinches parents blue.* Almost a pun. Illustrate the force of the adjective.

*

757 Cf., Mancus et *exinctcc* corpus minus utile dextre.

763 *After-games.* All his life is playtime

766 *Where* Introduces a distinct idea, "and yet this in a place where," &c.

774 *Oscitancy.* Nodding, sleepiness. "It might proceed from the oscitancy of transcriber."—*Spcdalar*.

777 *That it is dangerous,* &c. That it is dangerous when she has the education of youth intrusted to her to let herself be tempted by worldliness. The sentence is awkward from "with"

being used in two different senses. What part of speech is "sporting"?

779 *Her dearest pledge*, "Pledge," like the Latin "pignus," is used especially of children as pledges of the mutual love of father and mother. *Nunc tibi commendo communia pignora natos.*—*Propert. iv.* 11, 73.

780-832 *A tribute of affection to his brother; who shone the more by contrast with other collegians.* A resume of lines 699-780 His brother, John Cowper, was Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. He died 1770. See *Life*.

789 *Taste.* Appreciation of.

792 793 Cf. Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*

"There are who ask not if thine eye
Be on them ; who, in love and truth,
Where no misgiving is, rely
Upon the genial sense of youth :
Glad hearts ! without reproach or blot,
Who do thy work, and know it not."

803 *The quiver.* The Univeisity.

807 Who are "their shooters" ?

810 *Artillery.* Cf I Samuel xx 40: "Jonathan gave his artillery to the lad."

810 *Parries wide.* Clear away from herself.

811 *With a sword of straw.* The metaphor will not bear examination. We can conceive of an arrow being parried with a sword, and a parallel might be quoted from Lord Lytton's "Harold:" "As if in disdain, Harold met not the shaft with nib shield, but swinging high the mighty axe, he advanced a step and clove the rushing arrow in twain." But to parry arrows with a sword of straw is pure nonsense.

813 The felon is vice, his dam the university.

817 *Policy.* Civil government, or, in a wider sense, civilisation.

824 *Unconscious.* Nil consciens sibi.

BOOK III.
THE GARDEN.

AS one who, long in thickets and in brakes
Entangled, winds now this way and now that
His devious course uncertain, seeking home;
Or, having long in miry ways been foil'd
And sore discomfited, from slough to slough
Plunging, and half despairing of escape,
If chance at length he find a greensward smooth
And faithful to the foot, his spirits rise,
He chirrupps brisk his ear-erecting steed,
And winds his way with pleasure and with ease, 10
So I, designing other themes, and call'd
T' adorn the Sofa with eulogmm due,
To tell its slumbers and to paint its dreams,
Have rambl'd wide. In country, city, seat
Of academic fame (howe'er deserved)
Long held, and scarcely disengaged at last.
But now with pleasant pace, a cleanlier road
I mean to tread. I feel myself at large,
Courageous, and refreshed for future toil,
If toil await me, or if dangers new. • 20

Since pulpits fail, and sounding-boards reflect
Most part an empty ineffectual sound,
What chance that I, to fame so little known
Nor conversant with men or manners much,
Should speak to purpose, or with better hope
Crack the satiric thong? 'Twere wiser far
For me, enamour'd of sequester'd scenes,

And charm'd with rural beauty, to repose,
 Where chance may throw me, beneath elm or vine
 My languid limbs, when summer sears the plains; 30
 Or when rough winter rages, on the soft
 And sheltered Sofa, while the nitrous air
 Feeds a blue flame and makes a cheerful hearth,
 There, undisturb'd by folly, and apprized
 How great the danger of disturbing her,
 To muse in silence, or at least confine
 Remarks that gall so many to the few,
 My partners in retreat. Disgust conceaFd
 Is ofttimes proof of wisdom, when the fault
 Is obstinate, and cure beyond our reach. 40

Domestic happiness, thou only bliss
 Of Paradise that hast survived the fall!
 Though few now taste thee unimpaired and pure,
 Or, tasting, long enjoy thee, too infirm
 Or too incautious to preserve thy sweets
 Unmixt with drops of bitter, which neglect
 Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup:
 Thou art the nurse of virtue. In thine arms
 She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,
 Heav'n-born and destined to the skies again. fc
 Thou art not known where pleasure is adored,
 That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist
 And wand'ring eyes, still leaning on the arm
 Of Novelty, her fickle frail support;
 For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
 And finding in the calm of truth-tried love
 Joys that her stormy raptures never yield
 Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made
 Of honour, dignity, and fair renown.
 Till prostitution elbows us aside 60
 In all our crowded streets, and senates seem
 Convened for purposes of empire less,
 Than to release th' adultress from her bond.
 Th' adultress ! what a theme for angry verse,
 What provocation to th' indignant heart
 That feels for injured love! but I disdain
 The nauseous task to paint her as she is,
 Cruel, abandon'd, gloiying in her shame,
 No: let her pass, and charioted along

In guilty splendour shake the public ways; 70
 The frequency of crimes has wash'd them white,
 And verse of mine shall never brand the wretch,
 Whom matrons now, of character unsmirch'd,
 And chaste themselves, are not ashamed to own.
 Virtue and vice had boundaries in old time
 Not to be pass'd; and she that had renounced
 Her sex's honour, was renounced herself
 By all that prized it; not for prud'ry's sake,
 But dignity's, resentful of the wrong.
 'Twas hard, perhaps, on here and there a waif 80
 Desirous to return, and not received;
 But was an wholesome rigour in the main.
 And taught th' unblemish'd to preserve with care
 That purity, whose loss was loss of all.
 Men too were nice in honour in those days,
 And judged offenders well. Then he that sharp'd,
 And pocketed a prize by fraud obtain'd,
 Was mark'd and shunn'd as odious. He that sold
 His country, or was slack when she required 90
 His ev'ry nerve in action and at stretch,
 Paid with the blood that he had basely spared
 The price of his default. But now,—yes, now,
 We are become so candid and so fair,
 So lib'ral in construction and so rich
 In Christian charity, (good-natured age!)
 That they are safe, sinners of either sex,
 Transgress what Uws they may. Well dress'd, well bred,
 Well equipaged, is ticket good enough
 To pass us readily through ev'ry door.
 Hypocrisy, detest her as we may, 100
 (And no man's hatred ever wrong'd her yet)
 May claim this merit still—that she admits
 The worth of what she mimics with such care,
 And thus gives virtue indirect applause;
 But she has burnt her mask, not needed here,
 Where vice has such allowance, that her shifts
 And specious semblances have lost their use.

I was a stricken deer that left the herd
 Long since ; with many an arrow deep infixt
 My panting side was charged, when I withdrew 110
 To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.

There was I found by one who had himself
Been hurt by th' archers. In his side he bore,
And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts
He drew them forth, and heal'd and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene,
With few associates, and not wishing more. 120
Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
With other views of men and manners now
Than once, and others of a life to come.
I see that all are wand'rers, gone astray
Each in his own delusions; they are lost
In chase of fancied happiness, still woo'd
And never won. Dream after dream ensues,
And still they dream that they shall still succeed,
And still are disappointed; rings the world 130
With the vain stir. I sum up half mankind
And add two-thirds of the remaining half
And find the total of their hopes and fears
Dreams, empty dreams. The million flit as gay,
As if created only like the fly
That spreads his motley wings in th' eye of noon,
To sport their season and be seen no more.
The rest are sober dreamers, grave and wise,
And pregnant with discoveries new and rare.
Some write a narrative of wars, and feats 140
Of heroes little known, and call the rant
A history; describe the man, of whom
His own coevals took but little note,
And paint his person, character, and views,
As they had known him from his mother's womb.
They disentangle from the puzzled skein,
In which obscurity has wrapp'd them up,
The threads of politic and shrewd design
That ran through all his purposes, and charge
His mind with meanings that he never had,
Or having, kept conceal'd. Some drill and bore 150
The solid earth, and from the strata there
Extract a register, by which we learn
That He, who made it and reveal'd its date
To Moses, was mistaken in its age,

Some, more acute and more industrious still,
 Contrive creation ; travel nature up
 To the sharp peak of her sublimest height,
 And tell us whence the stars; why some are fixt,
 And planetary some; what gave them first
 Rotation, from what fountain flow'd their light 160
 Great contest follows, and much learned dust
 Involves the combatants, each claiming truth,
 And truth disclaiming both. And thus they spend
 The little wick of life's poor shallow lamp
 In playing tricks with nature, giving laws
 To distant worlds, and trifling in their own.
 Is't not a pity now, that tickling rheums
 Should ever tease the lungs, and blear the sight
 Of oracles like these? Great pity too,
 That having wielded th'elements, and built 170
 A thousand systems, each in his own way,
 They should go out in fume and be forgot?
 Ah! what is life thus spent? and what are they
 But frantic who thus spend it? all for smoke—
 Eternity for bubbles proves at last
 A senseless bargain. When I see such games
 Play'd by the creatures of a Pow'r who swears
 That he will judge the earth, and call the fool
 To a sharp reck'ning that has lived in vain,
 And when I weigh this seeming wisdom well, 180
 And prove it in th' infallible result
 So hollow and so false—I feel my heart
 Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,
 If this be learning, most of all deceived.
 Great crimes alarm the conscience, but it sleeps
 While thoughtful man is plausibly amused.
 Defend me therefore common sense, say I,
 From reveries so airy, from the toil
 Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
 And growing old in drawing nothing up! 190

'Twere well says one sage erudite, profound,
 Terribly arch'd and aquiline his nose,
 And overbuilt with most impending brows,
 'Twere well could you permit the world to live
 As the world pleases. What's the world to you?—
 Much. I was born born of woman, and drew milk

As sweet as charity from human breasts.
 I think, articulate, I laugh and weep
 And exercise all functions of a man.
 How then should I and any man that lives 200
 Be strangers to each other? Pierce my vein,
 Take of the crimson stream meandering there,
 And catechise it well. Apply your glass,
 Search it, and prove now if it be not blood
 Congenial with thine own; and if it be,
 What edge of subtlety canst thou suppose
 Keen enough, wise and skilful as thou art,
 To cut the link of brotherhood, by which
 One common Maker bound me to the kind?
 True; I am no proficient, I confess, 210
 In arts like yours. I cannot call the swift
 And perilous lightnings from the angry clouds,
 And bid them hide themselves in th' earth beneath ;
 I cannot analyse the air, nor catch
 The parallax of yonder luminous point
 That seems half quench'd in the immense abyss:
 Such pow'rs I boast not—neither can I rest
 A silent witness of the headlong rage,
 Or heedless folly by which thousands die,
 Bone of my bone, and kindred souls to mine. 220

God never meant that man should scale the heav'ns
 By strides of human wisdom. In his works,
 Though wondrous, he commands us in his word
 To seek him rather where his mercy shines.
 The mind indeed, enlighten'd from above,
 Views him in all; ascribes to the grand cause
 The grand effect; acknowledges with joy
 His manner, and with rapture tastes his style.
 But never yet did philosophic tube,
 That brings the planets home into the cye 230
 Of observation, and discovers, else
 Not visible, his family of worlds,
 Discover him that rules them; such a veil
 Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
 And dark in things divine. Full often too
 Our wayward intellect, the more we learn
 Of nature, overlooks her Author more;
 From instrumental causes proud to draw

Conclusions retrograde, and mad mistake.
 But if his word once teach us, shoot a ray 240
 Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal
 Truths undiscern'd but by that holy light,
 Then all is plain. Philosophy, baptised
 In the pure fountain of eternal love,
 Has eyes indeed; and, viewing all she sees
 As meant to indicate a God to man,
 Gives *him* his praise, and forfeits not her own.
 Learning has borne such fruit m other days
 On all her branches. Piety has found
 Friends in the friends of science, and true pray'r 250
 Has flowed from lips wet with Castalian dews.
 Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage!
 Sagacious reader of the works of God,
 And in his word sagacious. Such too thine,
 Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,
 And fed on manna. And such thine, in whom
 Our British Themis gloried with just cause,
 Immortal Hale! for deep discernment praised,
 And sound integrity not more, than famed
 For sanctity of manners undefiled. 260

All flesh is grass, and all its glory fades
 Like the fair flower dishevell'd in the wind;
 Riches have wings, and grandeur is a dream;
 The man we celebrate must find a tomb,
 And we that worship him, ignoble graves.
 Nothing is proof against the gen'ral curse
 Of vanity, that seizes all below.
 The only amaranthine flow'r on earth
 Is virtue; th' only lasting treasure, truth.
 But what is truth? 'twas Pilate's question put 270
 To truth itself, that deign'd him no reply.
 And wherefore? will not God impart his light
 To them that ask it?—Freely—'tis his joy,
 His glory, and his nature to impart.
 But to the proud, uncandid, insincere,
 Or negligent inquirer, not a spark.
 What's that which brings contempt upon a book
 And him that writes it, though the style be neat,
 The method clear, and argument exact?
 That makes a minister in holy things 280

The joy of many, and the dread of more,
 His name a theme for praise and for reproach?—
 That, while it gives us worth in God's account,
 Depreciates and undoes us in our own?
 What pearl is it that rich men cannot buy,
 That learning is too proud to gather up,
 But which the poor and the despised of all
 Seek and obtain, and often find unsought?
 Tell me, and I will tell thee what is truth.

Oh, friendly to the best pursuits of man, 290
 Friendly to thought, to virtue, and to peace,
 Domestic life in rural leisure pass'd!
 Few know thy value, and few taste thy sweets,
 Though many boast thy favours, and affect
 To understand and choose thee for their own.
 But foolish man foregoes his proper bliss,
 Ev'n as his first progenitor, and quits,
 Though placed in paradise (for earth has still
 Some traces of her youthful beauty left),
 Substantial happiness for transient joy. 300
 Scenes form'd for contemplation, and to nurse
 The growing seeds of wisdom; that suggest,
 By ev'ry pleasing image they present.
 Reflections such as meliorate the heart,
 Compose the passions, and exalt the mind;
 Scenes such as these, 'tis his supreme delight
 To fill with riot and defile with blood.
 Should some contagion, kind to the poor brutes
 We persecute, annihilate the tribes
 That draw the sportsman over hill and dale 310
 Fearless, and rapt away from all his cares;
 Should never game-fowl hatch her eggs again,
 Nor baited hook deceive the fish's eye;
 Could pageantry, and dance, and feast, and song
 Be quell'd in all our summer-months' retreats;
 How many self-deluded nymphs and swains,
 Who dream they have a taste for fields and groves,
 Would find them hideous nurs'ries of the spleen,
 And crowd the roads, impatient for the town!
 They love the country, and none else, who seek 320
 For their own sake its silence and its shade;
 Delights which who would leave, that has a heart

Susceptible of pity, or a mind
 Cultured and capable of sober thought,
 For all the savage dm of the swift pack,
 And clamours of the field? Detested sport,
 That owes its pleasures to another's pain,
 That feeds upon the sobs and dying shrieks
 Of harmless nature, dumb, but yet endued
 With eloquence, that agonies inspire, 330
 Of silent tears and heart-distending sighs !
 Vain tears, alas ! and sighs that never find
 A corresponding tone in jovial souls.
 Well—one at least is safe. One sheltered haie
 Has never heard the sanguinary yell
 Of cruel man, exulting in her woes.
 Innocent partner of my peaceful home,
 Whom ten long years' experience of my caie
 Has made at last familiar, she has lost
 Much of her vigilant instinctive dread, 340
 Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine.
 Yes—thou may'st eat thy bread, and lick the hand
 That feeds thee; thou mayst frolic on the floor
 At evening, and at night retire secure
 To thy straw-couch, and slumber unalarm'd;
 For I have gained thy confidence, have pledged
 All that is human in me, to protect
 Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love.
 If I survive thee I will dig thy grave,
 And when I place thee in it, sighing say, 350
 I knew at least one hare that had a friend.

How various his employments, whom the world
 Calls idle, and who justly in return
 Esteems that busy world an idler, too
 Friends, books, a garden, and perhaps his pen,
 Delightful industry enjoy'd at home,
 And nature in her cultivated trim
 Lhess'd to his taste, inviting him abroad—
 Can he want occupation who has these?
 Will he be idle who has much t' enjoy ? 360
 Me, therefore, studious of laborious ease,
 Not slothful; happy to deceive the time,
 Not waste it; and aware that human life
 Is but a loan to be repaid with use,

When He shall call his debtors to account,
 From whom are all our blessings; business finds
 Ev'n here: while sedulous I seek t' improve,
 At least neglect not, or leave unemploy'd
 The mind he gave me; driving it, though slack,
 Too oft, and much impeded in its work, 370
 By causes not to be divulged in vain,
 To its just point—the service of mankind.
 He that attends to his interior self,
 That has a heart and keeps it; has a mind
 That hungers and supplies it; and who seeks
 A social, not a dissipated life,
 Has business; feels himself engaged t' achieve
 No unimportant, though a silent task.
 A life, all turbulence and noise, may seem
 To him that leads it, wise and to be praised; 380
 But wisdom is a pearl with most success
 Sought in still water, and beneath clear skies.
 He that is ever occupied in storms,
 Or dives not for it, or brings up instead,
 Vainly industrious, a disgraceful prize.

The morning finds the self-sequester'd man
 Fresh for his task, intend what task he may
 Whether inclement seasons recommend
 His warm but simple home, where he enjoys,
 With her who shares his pleasures and his heart, 390
 Sweet converse, sipping calm the fragrant lymph
 Which neatly she prepares; then to his book
 Well chosen, and not sullenly perused
 In selfish silence, but imparted oft
 As aught occurs that she may smile to hear,
 Or turn to nourishment digested well.
 Or if the garden with its many cares,
 All well repaid, demand him, he attends
 The welcome call, conscious how much the hand
 Of lubbard labour needs his watchful eye, 400
 Oft loifring lazily if not o'erseen,
 Or misapplying his unskilful strength.
 Nor does he govern only or direct,
 But much performs himself; no works indeed
 That ask robust tough sinews, bred to toil,
 Servile employ—but such as may amuse.

Not tire, demanding rather skill than force.
 Proud of his well-spread walls, he views his trees
 That meet (no barren interval between)
 With pleasure more than ev'n their fruits afford, 410
 Which, save himself who trains them, none can feel.
 These therefore are his own peculiar charge,
 No meaner hand may discipline the shoots,
 None but his steel approach them. What is weak,
 Distempered, or has lost prolific pow'rs,
 Impaired by age, his unrelenting hand
 Dooms to the knife. Nor does he spare the soft
 And succulent that feeds its giant growth,
 But barren, at th' expense of neighboring twigs
 Less ostentatious, and yet studded thick 420
 With hopeful gems. The rest, no portion left
 That may disgrace his art, or disappoint
 Large expectation, he disposes neat
 At measured distances, that air and sun
 Admitted freely may afford their aid,
 And ventilate and warm the swelling buds.
 Hence Summer has her riches, Autumn hence,
 And hence ev'n Winter fills his wither'd hand
 With blushing fruits, and plenty not his own.
 Fair recompense of labour well bestow'd 430
 And wise precaution, which a clime so rude
 Makes needful still, whose spring is but the child
 Of churlish Winter, in her froward moods
 Discovering much the temper of her sire.
 For oft, as if in her the stream of mild
 Maternal nature had reversed its course,
 She brings her infants forth with many smiles,
 But, once deliver'd, kills them with a frown.
 He therefore, timely warn'd, himself supplies
 Her want of care, screening and keeping warm 440
 The plenteous bloom, that no rough blast may sweep
 His garlands from the boughs. Again, as oft
 As the sun peeps and vernal airs breathe mild,
 The fence withdrawn, he gives them ev'ry beam,
 And spreads his hopes before the blaze of day.

To raise the prickly and green-coated gourd
 So grateful to the palate, and when rare
 So coveted, else base and disesteem'd—

Food for the vulgar merely—is an art
 That toiling ages have but just matured, 450
 And at this moment unessay'd in song.
 Yet gnats have had, and frogs and mice long since,
 Their eulogy; those sang the Mantuan bard,
 And these the Grecian in ennobling strains;
 And in thy numbers, Phillips, shines for aye
 The solitary Shilling. Pardon then,
 Ye sage dispensers of poetic fame!
 Th' ambition of one meaner far, whose pow'rs
 Presuming an attempt not less sublime,
 Pant for the praise of dressing to the taste 460
 Of critic appetite, no sordid fare,
 A cucumber, while costly yet and scarce

The stable yields a stercoraceous heap
 Impregnated with quick fermenting salts,
 And potent to resist the freezing blast.
 For ere the beech and elm have cast their leaf
 Deciduous, and when now November dark
 Checks vegetation in the torpid plant
 Exposed to his cold breath, the task begins.
 Warily therefore, and with prudent heed 470
 He seeks a favoured spot, that where he builds
 Th' agglomerated pile, his frame may front
 The sun's meridian disk, and at the back
 Enjoy close shelter, wall, or reeds, or hedge
 Impervious to the wind. First he bids spread
 Dry fern or litter'd hay, that may imbibe
 Th' ascending damps; then leisurely impose,
 And lightly, shaking it with agile hand
 From the full fork, the saturated straw.
 What longest binds the closest, forms secure 480
 The shapely side, that as it rises takes
 By just degrees an overhanging breadth,
 Sheltering the base with its projected eaves.
 Th' uplifted frame compact at ev'ry joint,
 And overlaid with clear translucent glass,
 He settles next upon the sloping mount,
 Whose sharp declivity shoots off secure
 From the dash'd pane the deluge as it falls.
 He shuts it close, and the first labour ends.
 Thrice must the voluble and restless earth 490

Spin round upon her axle ere the warmth
 Slow gathering in the midst, through the square mass
 Diffused, attain the surface. When behold !
 A pestilent and most corrosive steam,
 Like a gross fog Boeotian, rising fast,
 And fast condensed upon the dewy sash,
 Asks egress; which obtam'd, the overcharged
 And drench'd conservatory breathes abroad,
 In volumes wheeling slow, the vapour dank,
 And purified, rejoices to have lost 500
 Its foul inhabitant. But to assuage
 Th' impatient fervour which it first conceives
 Within its reeking bosom, threat'ning death
 To his young hopes, requires discreet delay.
 Experience, slow preceptress, teaching oft
 The way to glory by miscarriage foul,
 Must prompt him, and admonish how to catch
 Th' auspicious moment, when the tempered heat
 Friendly to vital motion, may afford
 Soft fermentation, and invite the seed. 510
 The seed selected wisely, plump and smooth
 And glossy, he commits to pots of size
 Diminutive, well fill'd with well-prepared
 And fruitful soil, that has been treasured long,
 And drunk no moisture from the dripping clouds:
 These on the warm and genial earth that hides
 The smoking manure, and o'erspreads it all,
 He places lightly, and, as time subdues
 The rage of fermentation, plunges deep
 In the soft medium, till they stand immersed. 520
 Then rise the tender germs up starting quick
 And spreading wide their spongy lobes; at first
 Pale, wan, and livid; but assuming soon,
 If fanned by balmy and nutritious air
 Strain'd through the friendly mats, a vivid green.
 Two leaves produced, two rough indented leaves,
 Cautious he pinches from the second stalk
 A pimple, that portends a future sprout,
 And interdicts its growth. Thence straight succeed
 The branches, sturdy to his utmost wish, 530
 Prolific all, and harbingers of more.
 The crowded roots demand enlargement now
 And transplantation in an ampler space.

Indulged in what they wish, they soon supply
 Large foliage, overshadowing golden flow'rs,
 Blown on the summit of th' apparent fruit
 These have their sexes, and when summer shines
 The bee transports the fertilising meal
 From flow'r to flow'r, and ev'n the breathing air
 Wafts the rich prize to its appointed use. 540
 Not so when winter scowls. Assistant art
 Then acts in nature's office, brings to pass
 The glad espousals and ensures the crop.

Grudge not, ye rich (since luxury must have
 His dainties, and the world's more numerous half
 Lives by contriving delicates for you),
 Grudge not the cost. Ye little know the cares,
 The vigilance, the labour, and the skill
 That day and night are exercised, and hang
 Upon the ticklish balance of suspense, 550
 That ye may garnish your profuse regales
 With summer fruits, brought forth by wintry suns.
 Ten thousand dangers lie in wait to thwart
 The process. Heat and cold, and wind and steam,
 Moisture and drought, mice, worms, and swarming flies
 Minute as dust and numberless, oft work
 Dire disappointment that admits no cure,
 And which no care can obviate. It were long,
 Too long to tell th'expedients and the shifts
 Which he, that fights a season so severe, 560
 Devises, while he guards his tender trust,
 And oft, at last, in vain. The learn'd and wise
 Sarcastic would exclaim, and judge the song
 Cold as its theme, and, like its theme, the fruit
 Of too much labour, worthless when produced.

Who loves a garden, loves a greenhouse too.
 Unconscious of a less propitious clime
 There blooms exotic beauty, warm and snug,
 While the winds whistle and the snows descend.
 The spiry myrtle with unwith'ring leaf
 Shines there and flourishes. The golden boast 570
 Of Portugal and Western India there,
 The ruddier orange and the paler lime,
 Peep through their polish'd foliage at the storm,

And seem to smile at what they need not fear.
 Th' amomum there with intermingling flow'rs
 And cherries hangs her twigs. Geranium boasts
 Her crimson honours, and the spangled beau,
 Ficoides, glitters bright the winter long.
 All plants, of ev'ry leaf, that can endure 580
 The winter's frown if screen'd from his shrewd bite,
 Live there and prosper. Those Ausonia claims,
 Levantine regions these; th' Azores send
 Their jessamine; her jessamine remote
 Caffraria: foreigners from many lands,
 They form one social shade, as if convened
 By magic summons of th' Orphean lyre.
 Yet just arrangement, rarely brought to pass
 But by a master's hand, disposing well
 The gay diversities of leaf and flow'r, 590
 Must lend its aid t'illustrate all their charms,
 And dress the regular yet various scene.
 Plant behind plant aspiring, in the van
 The dwarfish, in the rear retired, but still
 Sublime above the rest, the statelier stand.
 So once were ranged the sons of ancient Rome,
 A noble show ! while Roscius trod the stage;
 And so, while Garrick as renown'd as he,
 The sons of Albion, fearing each to lose
 Some note of Nature's music from his lips, 600
 And covetous of Shakspeare's beauty, seen
 In ev'ry flash of his far-beaming eye.
 Nor taste alone and well-contrived display
 Suffice to give the marshall'd ranks the grace
 Of their complete effect. Much yet remains
 Unsung, and many cares are yet behind
 And more laborious. Cares on which depends
 Their vigour, injured soon, not soon restored.
 The soil must be renew'd, which often wash'd
 Loses its treasure of salubrious salts, 610
 And disappoints the roots; the slender roots,
 Close interwoven where they meet the vase,
 Must smooth be shorn away ; the sapless branch
 Must fly before the knife; the withered leaf
 Must be detach'd, ana where it strews the floor
 Swept with a woman's neatness, breeding else
 Contagion, and disseminating death.

Discharge but these kind offices, (and who
 Would spare, that loves them, offices like these?)
 Well they reward the toil. The sight is pleased, 620
 The scent regaled, each odonfrous leaf,
 Each op'ning blossom freely breathes abroad
 Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweets.

So manifold, all pleasing in their kind,
 All healthful, are th' employs of rural life,
 Reiterated as the wheel of time
 Runs round, still ending, and beginning still.
 Nor are these all. To deck the shapely knoll
 That, softly swell'd and gaily dress'd, appears 630
 A flow'ry island from the dark green lawn
 Emerging, must be deem'd a labour due
 To no mean hand, and asks the touch of taste.
 Here also grateful mixture of well match'd
 And sorted hues (each giving each relief,
 And by contrasted beauty shining more)
 Is needful. Strength may wield the pond'rous spade,
 May turn the clod, and wheel the compost home,
 But elegance, chief grace the garden shows
 And most attractive, is the fair result
 Of thought, the creature of a polish'd mind. 640
 Without it, all is Gothic as the scene
 To which th' insipid citizen resorts
 Near yonder heath; where industry misspent,
 But proud of his uncouth, ill-chosen task,
 Has made a heaven on earth; with suns and moons
 Of close-ramm'd stones has charged th' encumber'd soil,
 And fairly laid the zodiac in the dust.
 He, therefore, who would see his flow'rs disposed
 Slightly and in just order, ere he gives
 The beds the trusted treasure of their seeds, 650
 Forecasts the future whole; that when the scene
 Shall break into its preconceived display,
 Each for itself, and all as with one voice
 Conspiring, may attest his bright design.
 Nor even then, dismissing as perform'd
 His pleasant work may he suppose it done,
 Few self-supported flow'rs endure the wind
 Uninjured, but expect th' upholding aid
 Of the smooth-shaven prop, and neatly tied

Are wedded thus, like beauty to old age, 660
 For interest sake, the living to the dead.
 Some clothe the soil that feeds them, far diffused
 And lowly creeping, modest and yet fair,
 Like virtue, thriving most where little seen
 Some, more aspiring, catch the neighbour shrub
 With clasping tendrils, and invest his branch,
 Else unadorn'd, with many a gay festoon
 And fragrant chaplet, recompensing well
 The strength they borrow with the grace they lend
 All hate the rank society of weeds, 670
 Noisome, and ever greedy to exhaust
 Th' impoverished earth; an overbearing race,
 That, like the multitude made faction-mad,
 Disturb good order, and degrade true worth.

Oh blest seclusion from a jarring world,
 Which he, thus occupied, enjoys ! Retreat
 Cannot, indeed, to guilty man restore
 Lost innocence, or cancel follies past;
 But it has peace, and much secures the mind 680
 From all assaults of evil; proving still
 A faithful barrier, not o'erleap'd with ease
 By vicious custom, raging uncontrolld
 Abroad, and desolating public life.
 When fierce temptation, seconded within
 By traitor appetite, and arm'd with darts
 Tempered in hell, invades the throbbing breast,
 To combat may be glorious, and success
 Perhaps may crown us, but to fly is safe.
 Had I the choice of sublunary good,
 What could I wish that I possess not here ? 690
 Health, leisure, means t' improve it, friendship, peace,
 No loose or wanton, though a wand'ring muse
 And constant occupation without care
 Thus blest, I draw a picture of that bliss;
 Hopeless, indeed, that dissipated minds,
 And profligate abusers of a world
 Created fair so much in vain for them,
 Should seek the guiltless joys that I describe,
 Allured by my report; but sure no less
 That, self-condemned, they must neglect the prize, 700
 And what they will not taste, must yet approve.

What we admire we praise; and when we praise
 Advance it into notice, that, its worth
 Acknowledged, others may admire it too.
 I therefore recommend, though at the risk
 Of popular disgust, yet boldly still
 The cause of piety and sacred truth
 And virtue, and those scenes which God ordain'd,
 Should best secure them and promote them most;
 Scenes that I love, and with regret perceive 710
 Forsaken, or through folly not enjoy'd.
 Pure is the nymph, though lib'ral of her smiles,
 And chaste, though unconfm'd, whom I extol.
 Not as the prince in Shushan, when he calPd,
 Vain-glorious of her charms, his Vashti forth,
 To grace the full pavilion. His design
 Was but to boast his own peculiar good,
 Which all might view with envy, none partake.
 My charmer is not mine alone; my sweets,
 And she that sweetens all my bitters, too, 720
 Nature, enchanting Nature, in whose form
 And lineaments divine I trace a hand
 That errs not, and find raptures still renew'd
 Is free to all men,—universal prize.
 Strange that so fair a creature should yet want
 Admirers, and be destined to divide
 With meaner objects ev'n the few she finds.
 Stript of her ornaments, her leaves and flow'rs,
 She loses all her influence. Cities then
 Attract us, and neglected Nature pines 730
 Abandon'd, as unworthy of our love.
 But are not wholesome airs though unperfumed
 By roses, and clear suns, though scarcely felt,
 And groves, if unharmonious, yet secure
 From clamour, and whose very silence charms,
 To be preferred to smoke,—to the eclipse
 That metropolitan volcanoes make,
 Whose Stygian throats breathe darkness all day long,
 And to the stir of commerce, driving slow,
 And thund'rmg loud, with his ten thousand wheels? 740
 They would be, were not madness in the head
 And folly in the heart; were England now
 What England was, plain, hospitable, kind,
 And undebauch'd. But we have bid farewell

To all the virtues of those better days,
 And all their honest pleasures. Mansions once
 Knew their own masters, and laborious hands
 That had survived the father, served the son.
 Now the legitimate and rightful lord
 Is but a transient guest, newly arrived 750
 And soon to be supplanted. He that saw
 His patrimonial timber cast its leaf,
 Sells the last scantling, and transfers the price
 To some shrewd sharper, ere it buds again.
 Estates are landscapes, gazed upon awhile,
 Then advertised, and auctioneer'd away.
 The country starves, and they that feed th' o'ercharged
 And surfeited lewd town with her fair dues,
 By a just judgment strip and starve themselves.
 The wings that waft our riches out of sight 760
 Grow on the gamester's elbows, and th' alert
 And nimble motion of those restless joints,
 That never tire, soon fans them all away.
 Improvement too, the idol of the age,
 Is fed with many a victim. Lo ! he comes—
 The omnipotent magician, Brown, appears.
 Down falls the venerable pile, th' abode
 Of our forefathers, a grave whisker'd race,
 But tasteless. Springs a palace in its stead,
 But in a distant spot; where more exposed 770
 It may enjoy th' advantage of the North
 And aguish East, till time shall have transform'd
 Those naked acres to a shelt'ring grove.
 He speaks. The lake in front becomes a lawn,
 Woods vanish, hills subside, and valleys rise,
 And streams, as if created for his use,
 Pursue the track of his directing wand,
 Sinuous or straight, now rapid and now slow,
 Now murmur'ing soft, now roaring in cascades,
 Ev'n as he bids. Th'enraptured owner smiles. 780
 'Tis finish'd. And yet, finished as it seems,
 Still wants a grace, the loveliest it could show,
 A mine to satisfy the enormous cost
 Drain'd to the last poor item of his wealth,
 He sighs, departs, and leaves the accomplished plan
 That he has touch'd, retouch'd, many a day
 Labour'd, and many a night pursued in dreams,

Just when it meets his hopes, and proves the heaven
 He wanted, for a wealthier to enjoy.
 And now perhaps the glorious hour is come, 790
 When having no stake left, no pledge t'endear
 Her interests, or that gives her sacred cause
 A moment's operation on his love,
 He burns with most intense and flagrant zeal
 To serve his country. Ministerial grace
 Deals him out money from the public chest,
 Or, if that mine be shut, some private purse
 Supplies his need with an usurious loan,
 To be refunded duly, when his vote,
 Well-managed, shall have earn'd its worthy price. 800
 Oh, innocent compared with arts like these,
 Crape and cock'd pistol and the whistling ball
 Sent through the traveler's temples ! He that finds
 One drop of heav'n's sweet mercy in his cup,
 Can dig, beg, rot, and perish well content,
 So he may wrap himself in honest rags
 At his last gasp ; but could not for a world
 Fish up his dirty and dependent bread
 From pools and ditches of the commonwealth,
 Sordid and sick'ning at his own success. 810

Ambition, av'rice, penury incurr'd
 By endless riot, vanity, the lust
 Of pleasure and variety, despatch,
 As duly as the swallows disappear,
 The world of wand'ring knights and squires to town;
 London ingulfs them all. The shark is there,
 And the shark's prey; the spendthrift, and the leech
 That sucks him. There the sycophant, and he
 That with bare-headed and obsequious bows
 Begs a warm office, doom'd to a cold jail 820
 And groat per diem if his patron frown.
 The levee swarms, as if in golden pomp
 Were character'd on ev'ry statesman's door,
 "BATTER'D AND BANKRUPT FORTUNES MENDED
 HERE."

These are the charms that sully and eclipse
 The charms of nature. 'Tis the cruel gripe
 That lean hard-handed poverty inflicts,
 The hope of better things, the chance to win,

The wish to shine, the thirst to be amused,
That, at the sound of Winter's hoary wing, 830
Unpeople all our counties of such herds
Of flutt'ring, loit'ring, cringing, begging, loose
And wanton vagrants, as make London, vast
And boundless as it is, a crowded coop.

Oh thou resort and mart of all the earth,
Chequered with all complexions of mankind,
And spotted with all crimes; in whom I see
Much that I love, and more that I admire,
And all that I abhor; thou freckled fair, 840
That pleases and yet shocks me, I can laugh
And I can weep, can hope, and can despond,
Feel wrath and pity when I think on thee
Ten righteous would have saved a city once,
And thou hast many righteous.—Well for thee—
That salt preserves thee; more corrupted else,
And therefore more obnoxious at this hour,
Than Sodom in her day had pow'r to be,
For whom God heard his Abr'am plead in vain

BOOK IV.

THE WINTER EVENING.

HARK ! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwnnkled face reflected bright;—
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks,
News from all nations lumb'nng at his back.
True to his charge the close-pack'd load behind,
Yet careless what he brings; his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn, 10
And, having dropp'd th' expected bag—pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful: messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;
To him indiffrent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears that trickled down the writer's cheeks,
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with am'rous sighs of absent swains, 20
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But oh th' important budget! usher'd in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say
What are its tidings? have our troops awaked?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave?
Is India free? and does she wear her plumed

And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
 Or do we grind her still? The grand debate, 30
 The popular harangue, the tart reply,
 The logic and the wisdom and the wit,
 And the loud laugh—I long to know them all;
 I burn to set th' impnson'd wranglers free,
 And give them voice and utt'rance once again.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast
 Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
 And while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
 Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
 That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each, 40
 So let us welcome peaceful evening in.
 Not such his evening, who with shining face
 Sweats in the crowded theatre, and squeez'd
 And bored with elbow-points through both his sides,
 Out-scolds the ranting actor on the stage;
 Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb
 And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
 Of patriots bursting with heroic rage,
 Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles.
 This folio of four pages, happy work ' 50
 Which not ev'n critics criticise, that holds
 Inquisitive attention while I read
 Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
 Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break,
 What is but a map of busy life,
 Its fluctuations and its vast concerns?
 Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
 That tempts ambition. On the summit, see,
 The seals of office glitter in his eyes;
 He climbs, he pants, he grasps them. At his heels, 60
 Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,
 And with a dextrous jerk soon twists him down
 And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.
 Here rills of oily eloquence, in soft
 Meanders, lubricate the course they take;
 The modest speaker is ashamed and grieved
 T' engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,
 Begg a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,
 However trivial all that he conceives.
 Sweet bashfulness! it claims, at least, this praise, 70

The dearth of information and good sense,
 That it foretells us, always comes to pass.
 Cat'racts of declamation thunder here,
 There forests of no meaning spread the page
 In which all comprehension wanders lost,
 While fields of pleasantry amuse us there
 With merry descants on a nation's woes,
 The rest appears a wilderness of strange
 But gay confusion; roses for the cheeks, 80
 And lilies for the brows of faded age,
 Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
 Heav'n, earth, and ocean plunder'd of their sweets,
 Nectareous essences, Olympian dews
 Sermons and city feasts and fav'nte airs,
 Ethereal journeys, submarine exploits,
 And Katterfelto with his hair on end,
 At his own wonders, wond'rmg for his bread.

'Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat
 To peep at such a world; to see the stir
 Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd; 90
 To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
 At a safe distance, where the dying sound
 Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjured ear.
 Thus sitting and surveying thus at ease
 The globe and its concerns, I seem advanced
 To some secure and more than mortal height,
 That lib'rates and exempts me from them all
 It turns submitted to my view, turns round
 With all its generations; I behold
 The tumult and am still. The sound of war 100
 Has lost its terrors ere it reaches me;
 Grieves, but alarms me not. I mourn the pride
 And av'rice that makes man a wolf to man;
 Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats
 By which he speaks the language of his heart,
 And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.
 He travels and expatiates, as the bee
 From flow'r to flow'r, so he from land to land;
 The manners, customs, policy of all
 Pay contribution to the store he gleanes, 110
 He sucks intelligence in ev'ry clime,
 And spreads the honey of his deep research

At his return—a rich repast for me.
 He travels and I too. I tread his deck,
 Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
 Discover countries, with a kindred heart
 Suffer his woes and share in his escapes,
 While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
 Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.

Oh Winter ' ruler of th' inverted year, 120
 Thy scatter'd hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,
 Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
 Fringed with a beard made white with other snows
 Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
 A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
 A sliding car indebted to no wheels,
 But urged by storms along its slipp'ry way,
 I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,
 And dreaded as thou art. Thou hold'st the sun
 A pris'ner in the yet undawning East, 130
 Shortening his journey between morn and noon,
 And hurrying him impatient of his stay
 Down to the rosy West; but kindly still
 Compensating his loss with added hours
 Of social converse and instructive ease,
 And gathering at short notice in one group
 The family dispersed, and fixing thought
 Not less dispersed by daylight and its cares.
 I crown thee king of intimate delights,
 Fire-side enjoyments, home-born happiness, 140
 And all the comforts that the lowly roof
 Of undisturb'd retirement, and the hours
 Of long uninterrupted evening know.
 No ratt'ling wheels stop short before these gates;
 No powde'd pert proficient in the art
 Of sounding an alarm, assaults these doors
 Till the street rings; no stationary steeds
 Cough their own knell, while heedless of the sound
 The silent circle fan themselves, and quake:
 But here the needle plies its busy task, 150
 The pattern grows, the well-depicted flow'r,
 Wrought patiently into the snowy lawn,
 Unfolds its bosom; buds and leaves and sprigs
 And curly tendrils, gracefully disposed,

Follow the nimble ringer of the fair,
 A wreath that cannot fade, of flow'rs that blow
 With most success when all besides decay.
 The poet's or historian's page, by one
 Made vocal for th' amusement of the rest;
 The sprightly lyre, whose treasure of sweet sounds 160
 The touch from many a trembling chord shakes out;
 And the clear voice symphonious, yet distinct,
 And in the charming strife triumphant still,
 Beguile the night, and set a keener edge
 On female industry; the threaded steel
 Flies swiftly, and unfelt the task proceeds.
 The volume closed, the customary rites
 Of the last meal commence. A Roman meal,
 Such as the mistress of the world once found
 Delicious, when her patriots of high note, 170
 Perhaps by moonlight, at their humble doors,
 And under an old oak's domestic shade,
 Enjoy'd—spare feast '—a radish and an egg.
 Discourse ensues, not trivial, yet not dull,
 Nor such as with a frown forbids the play
 Of fancy, or proscribes the sound of mirth;
 Nor do we madly, like an impious world,
 Who deem religion frenzy, and the God
 That made them an intruder on their joys,
 Start at his awful name, or deem his praise 180
 A jarring note; themes of a graver tone
 Exciting oft our gratitude and love,
 While we retrace with memory's pointing wand
 That calls the past to our exact review,
 The dangers we have 'scaped, the broken snare,
 The disappointed foe, deliv'rance found
 Unlook'd for, life preserved and peace restored,
 Fruits of omnipotent eternal love:—
 Oh evenings worthy of the gods! exclaim'd
 The Sabine bard Oh evenings, I reply, 190
 More to be prized and coveted than yours,
 As more illumined and with nobler truths,
 That I, and mine, and those we love, enjoy.

Is winter hideous in a garb like this ?
 Needs he the tragic fur, the smoke of lamps,
 The pent-up breath of an unsav'ry throng

To thaw him into feeling, or the smart
 And snappish dialogue that flippant wits
 Call comedy, to prompt him with a smile ?
 The self-complacent actor, when he views 200
 (Stealing a sidelong glance at a full house)
 The slope of faces from the floor to th' roof,
 (As if one master-spring controlled them all)
 Relax'd into an universal grin,
 Sees not a countenance there that speaks a joy
 Half so refined or so sincere as ours.
 Cards were superfluous here, with all the tricks
 That idleness has ever yet contrived
 To fill the void of an unfurnish'd brain,
 To palliate dulness and give time a shove. 210
 Time, as he passes us, has a dove's wing,
 Unsoil'd and swift and of a silken sound.
 But the world's time is time in masquerade.
 Theirs, should I paint him, has his pinions fledged
 With motley plumes, and, where the peacock shows
 His azure eyes, is tintured black and red
 With spots quadrangular of di'mond form,
 Ensanguined hearts, clubs typical of strife,
 And spades, the emblem of untimely graves.
 What should be, and what was an hour-glass once, 220
 Becomes a dice-box, and a billiard mast
 Well does the work of his destructive scythe.
 Thus deck'd he charms a world whom fashion blinds
 To his true worth, most pleased when idle most,
 Whose only happy are their wasted hours.
 Ev'n misses, at whose age their mothers wore
 The back-string and the bib, assume the dress
 Of womanhood, sit pupils in the school
 Of card-devoted time, and night by night,
 Placed at some vacant corner of the board, 230
 Learn ev'ry trick, and soon play all the game.
 But truce with censure. Roving as I rove,
 Where shall I find an end, or how proceed?
 As he that travels far, oft turns aside
 To view some rugged rock, or mouldering tow'r,
 Which seen delights him not; then coming home,
 Describes and prints it, that the world may know
 How far he went for what was nothing worth;
 So I, with brush in hand and pallet spread

With colours mixt for a far different use, 240
 Paint cards and dolls, and ev'ry idle thing
 That fancy finds in her excursive flights.

Come, Evening, once again, season of peace,
 Return, sweet Evening, and continue long!
 Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
 With matron-step slow-moving, while the night
 Treads on thy sweeping tram; one hand employed
 In letting fall the curtain of repose
 On bird and beast, the other charged for man
 With sweet oblivion of the cares of day; 250
 Not sumptuously adorn'd, nor needing aid,
 Like homely-featured night, of clustering gems,
 A star or two just twinkling on thy brow
 Suffices thee; save that the moon is thine,
 No less than hers, not worn indeed on high
 With ostentatious pageantry, but set
 With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
 Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.
 Come then, and thou shalt find thy vot'ry calm,
 Or make me so. Composure is thy gift; 260
 And whether I devote thy gentle hours
 To books, to music, or the poet's toil,
 To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit,
 Or twining silken threads round iv'ry reels,
 When they command whom man was born to please,
 I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.

Just when our drawing-rooms begin to blaze
 With lights, by clear reflection multiplied
 From many a mirror, in which he of Gath,
 Goliath, might have seen his giant bulk 270
 Whole without stooping, tow'ring crest and all
 'My pleasures too begin. But me perhaps
 The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile
 With faint illumination, that uplifts
 The shadow to the ceiling, there by fits
 Dancing uncouthly to the quiv'ring flame.
 Not undehghtful is an hour to me
 So spent in parlour twilight; such a gloom
 Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,
 The mind contemplative, with some new-theme 280

Pregnant, or indisposed alike to all
 Laugh ye, who boast your more mercurial pow'rs
 That never feel a stupor, know no pause,
 Nor need one; I am conscious, and confess,
 Fearless, a soul that does not always think
 Me oft has fancy ludicrous and wild
 Sooth'd with a waking dream of houses, tow'rs,
 Trees, churches, and strange visages expressed
 In the red cinders, while with poring eye
 I gazed, myself creating what I saw. 290
 Nor less amused have I quiescent watch'd
 The sooty films that play upon the bars
 Pendulous, and foreboding in the view
 Of superstition, prophesying still,
 Though still deceived, some stranger's near approach.
 'Tis thus the understanding takes repose
 In indolent vacuity of thought,
 And sleeps and is refreshed. Meanwhile the face
 Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask
 Of deep deliberation, as the man 300
 Were tasked to his full strength, absorbed and lost.
 Thus oft reclined at ease, I lose an hour
 At evening, till at length the freezing blast
 That sweeps the bolted shutter, summons home
 The recollected pow'rs, and, snapping short
 The glassy threads with which the fancy weaves
 Her brittle toys, restores me to myself.
 How calm is my recess ! and how the frost
 Raging abroad, and the rough wind, endear
 The silence and the warmth enjoy'd within ! 310
 I saw the woods and fields at close of day
 A variegated show; the meadows green
 Though faded, and the lands, where lately waved
 The golden harvest, of a mellow brown,
 Upturned so lately by the forceful share;
 I saw far off the weedy fallows smile
 With verdure not unprofitable, grazed
 By flocks fast feeding, and selecting each
 His fav'rite herb; while all the leafless groves
 That skirt th' horizon wore a sable hue, 320
 Scarce noticed in the kindred dusk of eve.
 To-morrow brings a change, a total change,
 Which even now, though silently perform'd

And slowly, and by most unfelt, the face
 Of universal nature undergoes.
 Fast falls a fleecy show'r; the downy flakes,
 Descending and with never-ceasing lapse
 Softly alighting upon all below,
 Assimilate all objects. Earth receives
 Gladly the thick'ning mantle, and the green 330
 And tender blade that feared the chilling blast,
 Escapes unhurt beneath so warm a veil.

In such a world, so thorny, and where none
 Finds happiness unblighted, or if found,
 Without some thistly sorrow at its side,
 It seems the part of wisdom, and no sin
 Against the law of love, to measure lots
 With less distinguished than ourselves, that thus
 We may with patience bear our mod'rate ills,
 And sympathise with others, suffering more. 340

Ill fares the traveller now, and he that stalks
 In pondrous boots beside his reeking team;
 The wain goes heavily, impeded sore
 By congregated loads adhering close
 To the clogg'd wheels, and, in its sluggish pace,
 Noiseless appears a moving hill of snow.
 The tolling steeds expand the nostril wide,
 While every breath, by respiration strong
 Forced downward, is consolidated soon
 Upon their jutting chests. He, form'd to bear 350

The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
 With half-shut eyes, and pucker'd cheeks, and teeth
 Presented bare against the storm, plods on;
 One hand secures his hat, save when with both
 He brandishes his pliant length of whip,
 Resounding oft, and never heard in vain.
 Oh happy! and, in my account, denied
 That sensibility of pain with which
 Refinement is endued, thrice happy thou.
 Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed 360
 The piercing cold, but feels it unimpaired;
 The learned finger never need explore
 Thy vigorous pulse, and the unhealthful East,
 That breathes the spleen, and searches ev'ry bone
 Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee.
 Thy days roll on exempt from household care,

Thy waggon is thy wife; and the poor beasts,
 That drag the dull companion to and fro,
 Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy care.
 Ah, treat them kindly! rude as thou appear'st, 370
 Yet show that thou hast mercy, which the great,
 With needless hurry whirl'd from place to place,
 Humane as they would seem, not always show.

Poor, yet industrious, modest, quiet, neat,
 Such claim compassion in a night like this,
 And have a friend in every feeling heart.
 Warm'd while it lasts, by labour, all day long
 They brave the season, and yet find at eve,
 Ill clad and fed but sparely, time to cool.
 The frugal housewife trembles when she lights 380
 Her scanty stock of brushwood, blazing clear,
 But dying soon, like all terrestrial joys;
 The few small embers left she nurses well.
 And while her infant race with outspread hands
 And crowded knees sit cowering o'er the sparks,
 Retires, content to quake, so they be warm'd.
 The man feels least, as more inur'd than she
 To winter, and the current in his veins
 More briskly moved by his severer toil;
 Yet he too finds his own distress in theirs. 390
 The taper soon extinguished, which I saw
 Dangled along at the cold finger's end
 Just when the day declined, and the brown loaf
 Lodged on the shelf, half-eaten, without sauce
 Of sav'ry cheese, or butter costlier still,
 Sleep seems their only refuge. For, alas !
 Where penury is felt the thought is chain'd,
 And sweet colloquial pleasures are but few.
 With all this thrift they thrive not. All the care
 Ingenious parsimony takes, but just 403
 Saves the small inventory, bed and stool,
 Skillet and old carved chest from public sale.
 They live, and live without extorted alms
 From grudging hands, but other boast have none
 To soothe their honest pride that scorns to beg,
 Nor comfort else, but in their mutual love.
 I praise you much, ye meek and patient pair,
 For ye are worthy; choosing rather far

A dry but independent crust, hard-earned
 And eaten with a sigh, than to endure 410
 The rugged frowns and insolent rebuffs
 Of knaves in office, partial in their woik
 Of distribution; lib'ral of their aid
 To clam'rous importunity in rags,
 But ofttimes deaf to suppliants, who would blush
 To wear a tattered garb however coarse,
 Whom famine cannot reconcile to filth;
 These ask with painful shyness, and, refused
 Because deserving, silently retire.
 But be ye of good courage ! Time itself 420
 Shall much befriend you. Time shall give increase,
 And all your num'rous progeny, well trained,
 But helpless, in few years shall find their hands,
 And labour too. Meanwhile ye shall not want
 What, conscious of your virtues, we can spare,
 Nor what a wealthier than ourselves may send.
 I mean the man, who when the distant poor
 Need help, denies them nothing but his name.

But poverty with most, who whimper forth
 Their long complaints, is self-inflicted woe, 430
 Th' effect of laziness or sottish waste.
 Now goes the nightly thief prowling abroad
 For plunder; much solicitous how best
 He may compensate for a day of sloth,
 By works of daikness and nocturnal wrong.
 Woe to the gard'ner's pale, the farmer's hedge
 Plash'd neatly and secured with driven stakes
 Deep in the loamy bank Uptorn by strength
 Resistless in so bad a cause, but lame
 To better deeds, he bundles up the spoil— 440
 An ass's burden,—and when laden most
 And heaviest, light of foot steals fast away.
 Nor does the boarded hovel better guard
 The well-stack'd pile of riven logs and roots,
 From his pernicious force. Nor will he leave
 Unwrench'd the door, however well secured,
 Where chancicleer amidst his harem sleeps
 In unsuspecting pomp, twitch'd from the perch
 He gives the princely bird with all his wives
 To his voracious bag, struggling in vain, 450

And loudly wond'ring at the sudden change.
 Nor this to feed his own. 'Twere some excuse
 Did pity of their sufferings warp aside
 His principle, and tempt him into sin
 For their support, so destitute; but they
 Neglected pine at home, themselves, as more
 Exposed than others, with less scruple made
 His victims, robb'd of their defenceless all.
 Cruel is all he does. 'Tis quenchless thirst
 Of ruinous ebriety that prompts 460
 His ev'ry action, and imbrutes the man.
 Oh for a law to noose the villain's neck
 Who starves his own; who persecutes the blood
 He gave them in his children's veins, and hates
 And wrongs the woman he has sworn to love

Pass where we may, through city or through town,
 Village or hamlet of this merry land,
 Though lean and beggar'd, every twentieth pace
 Conducts th' unguarded nose to such a whiff
 Of stale debauch, forth-issuing from the styes 470
 That law has licensed, as makes temp'rance reel
 There sit involved and lost in curling clouds
 Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,
 The lackey, and the groom. The craftsman there
 Takes a Lethean leave of all his toil;
 Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,
 And he that kneads the dough; all loud alike,
 All learned, and all drunk. The riddle screams
 Plaintive and piteous, as it wept and wail'd
 Its wasted tones and harmony unheard; 480
 Fierce the dispute, whatever the theme; while she,
 Fell Discord, arbitress of such debate,
 Perch'd on the sign-post, holds with even hand
 Her undecisive scales. In this she lays
 A weight of ignorance, in that, of pride,
 And smiles delighted with th' eternal poise.
 Dire is the frequent curse and its twin sound
 The cheek-distending oath, not to be praised
 As ornamental, musical, polite,
 Like those which modern senators employ, 490
 Whose oath is rhet'ric, and who swear for fame.
 Behold the schools in which plebeian minds,

Once simple, are initiated in arts
 Which some may practise with politer grace,
 But none with readier skill! 'tis here they learn
 The road that leads from competence and peace
 To indigence and rapine; till at last
 Society, grown weary of the load,
 Shakes her encumbered lap, and casts them out.
 But censure profits little. Vain th' attempt 500
 To advertise in verse a public pest,
 That, like the filth with which the peasant feeds
 His hungry acres, stinks and is of use.
 Th' excise is fattened with the rich result
 Of all this not; and ten thousand casks,
 For ever dribbling out their base contents,
 Touch'd by the Midas finger of the state,
 Bleed gold for Ministers to sport away.
 Drink and be mad then; 'tis your country bids !
 Gloriously drunk, obey th' important call, 510
 Her cause demands th' assistance of your throats;
 Ye all can swallow, and she asks no more.

Would I had fall'n upon those happier days
 That poets celebrate; those golden times
 And those Arcadian scenes that Maro sings,
 And Sidney, warbler of poetic prose.
 Nymphs were Dianas then, and swains had hearts
 That felt their virtues. Innocence it seems,
 From courts dismissed, found shelter in the groves;
 The footsteps of simplicity, impressed 520
 Upon the yielding herbage (so they sing),
 Then were not all effaced. Then speech profane
 And manners profligate were rarely found,
 Observed as prodigies, and soon reclaim'd.
 Vain wish ! those days were never: airy dreams
 Sat for the picture; and the poet's hand,
 Imparting substance to an empty shade,
 Imposed a gay delirium for a truth.
 Grant it: I still must envy them an age
 That favoured such a dream, in days like these 530
 Impossible, when virtue is so scarce,
 That to suppose a scene where she presides
 Is tramontane, and stumbles all belief.
 No. We are polish'd now. The rural lass,

Whom once her virgin modesty and grace,
 Her artless manners and her neat attire,
 So dignified, that she was hardly less
 Than the fair shepherdess of old romance,
 Is seen no more. The character is lost.
 Her head adorn'd with lappets pinn'd aloft 540
 And ribbons streaming gay, superbly raised
 And magnified beyond all human size,
 Indebted to some smart wig-weaver's hand
 For more than half the tresses it sustains;
 Her elbows ruffled, and her tott'ring form
 Ill propp'd upon French heels; she might be deem'd
 (But that the basket dangling on her arm
 Interprets her more truly) of a rank
 Too proud for dairy-work, or sale of eggs;
 Expect her soon with foot-boy at her heels, 550
 No longer blushing for her awkward load,
 Her train and her umbrella all her care

The town has tinged the country; and the stain
 Appears a spot upon a vestal's robe,
 The worse for what it soils The fashion runs
 Down into scenes still rural, but, alas!
 Scenes rarely graced with rural manners now.
 Time was when in the pastoral retreat
 Th'unguarded door was safe; men did not watch
 T'invade another's right, or guard their own. 560
 Then sleep was undisturbed by fear, unscared
 By drunken howlings; and the chilling tale
 Of midnight murder was a wonder heard
 With doubtful credit, told to frighten babes.
 But farewell now to unsuspecting nights,
 And slumbers unalarm'd. Now, ere you sleep,
 See that your polish'd arms be primed with care,
 And drop the night-bolt Ruffians are abroad,
 And the first larum of the cock's shrill throat
 May prove a trumpet, summoning your ear 570
 To horrid sounds of hostile feet within.
 Ev'n daylight has its dangers; and the walk
 Through pathless wastes and woods, unconscious once
 Of other tenants than melodious birds,
 Or harmless flocks, is hazardous and bold.
 Lamented change! to which full many a cause

Inveterate, hopeless of a cure, conspires.
 The course of human things from good to ill,
 From ill to worse, is fatal, never fails.
 Increase of pow'r begets increase of wealth; 580
 Wealth luxury, and luxury excess;
 Excess, the scrofulous and itchy plague
 That seizes first the opulent, descends
 To the next rank contagious, and in time
 Taints downward all the graduated scale
 Of order, from the chariot to the plough.
 The rich, and they that have an arm to check
 The licence of the lowest in degree,
 Desert their office; and themselves, intent
 On pleasure, haunt the capital, and thus, 590
 To all the violence of lawless hands,
 Resign the scenes their presence might protect.
 Authority itself not seldom sleeps,
 Though resident, and witness of the wrong.
 The plump convivial parson often bears
 The magisterial sword in vain, and lays
 His rev'rence and his worship both to rest,
 On the same cushion of habitual sloth.
 Perhaps timidity restrains his arm,
 When he should strike he trembles, and sets free, 600
 Himself enslaved by terror of the band,
 Th' audacious convict whom he dares not bind.
 Perhaps, though by profession ghostly pure,
 He, too, may have his vice, and sometimes prove
 Less dainty than becomes his grave outside
 In lucrative concerns. Examine well
 His milk-white hand. The palm is hardly clean—
 But here and there an ugly smutch appears.
 Foh! 'twas a bribe that left it He has touch'd
 Corruption. Whoso seeks an audit here 610
 Propitious, pays his tribute, game or fish,
 Wildfowl or ven'son, and his errand speeds.

But faster far and more than all the rest
 A noble cause, which none who bears a spark
 Of public virtue ever wish'd removed,
 Works the deplored and mischievous effect
 'Tis universal soldiership has stabb'd
 The heart of merit in the meaner class.

Arms, through the vanity and brainless rage
 Of those that bear them, in whatever cause, 620
 Seem most at variance with all moral good,
 And incompatible with serious thought.
 The clown, the child of nature, without guile,
 Blest with an infant's ignorance of all
 But his own simple pleasures, now and then
 A wrestling match, a foot-race, or a fair,
 Is balloted, and trembles at the news.
 Sheepish he doffs his hat, and mumblinsr swears
 A Bible-oath to be whatever they please,
 To do he knows not what. The task perform'd, 630
 That instant he becomes the sergeant's care,
 His pupil, and his torment, and his jest;
 His awkward gait, his introverted toes,
 Bent knees, round shoulders, and dejected looks,
 Procure him many a curse. By slow degrees,
 Unapt to learn and form'd of stubborn stuff,
 He yet by slow degrees puts off himself,
 Grows conscious of a change, and likes it well
 He stands erect, his slouch becomes a walk,
 He steps right onward, martial in his air, 640
 His form and movement; is as smart above
 As meal and larded locks can make him; wears
 His hat or his plumed helmet with a grace,
 And, his three years of heroship expired,
 Returns indignant to the slighted plough.
 He hates the field in which no fife or drum
 Attends him, drives his cattle to a march,
 And sighs for the smart comrades he has left
 'Twere well if his exterior change were all—
 But with his clumsy port the wretch has lost 650
 His ignorance and harmless manners too.
 To swear, to game, to drink, to show at home
 By lewdness, idleness, and sabbath-breach,
 The great proficiency he made abroad,
 T' astonish and to grieve his gazing friends,
 To break some maiden's and his mother's heart,
 To be a pest where he was useful once,
 Are his sole aim, and all his glory now !

Man in society is like a flow'r
 Blown in its native bed 'Tis there alone 660

His faculties expanded in full bloom
 Shine out, there only reach their proper use.
 But man associated and leagued with man
 By regal warrant, or self-joined by bond
 For interest sake, or swarming into clans
 Beneath one head for purposes of war,
 Like flow'rs selected from the rest, and bound
 And bundled close to fill some crowded vase,
 Fades rapidly, and by compression marr'd
 Contracts defilement not to be endured. 670
 Hence chartered boroughs are such public plagues.
 And burghers, men immaculate perhaps
 In all their private functions, once combined,
 Become a loathsome body, only fit
 For dissolution, hurtful to the main.
 Hence merchants, unimpeachable of sin
 Against the chanties of domestic life,
 Incorporated, seem at once to lose
 Their nature, and, disclaiming all regard
 For mercy and the common rights of man, 680
 Build factories with blood, conducting trade
 At the sword's point, and dyeing the white robe
 Of innocent commercial justice red.
 Hence too the field of glory, as the world
 Misdeems it, dazzled by its bright array,
 With all the majesty of thundering pomp,
 Enchanting music and immortal wreaths,
 Is but a school where thoughtlessness is taught
 On principle, where foppery atones
 For folly, gallantry for ev'ry vice. 690

But slighted as it is, and by the great
 Abandon'd, and, which still I more regret,
 Infected with the manners and the modes
 It knew not once, the country wins me still.
 I never framed a wish, or form'd a plan
 That flattered me with hopes of earthly bliss,
 But there I laid the scene. There early stray'd
 My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice
 Had found me, or the hope of being free.
 My very dreams were rural, rural too 700
 The first-born efforts of my youthful muse,
 Sportive, and jingling her poetic bells

Ere yet her ear was mistress of their pow'rs.
 No bard could please me but whose lyre was tuned
 To Nature's praises. Heroes and their feats
 Fatigued me, never weary of the pipe
 Of Tityrus, assembling as he sang
 The rustic throng beneath his fav'nte beech.
 Then Milton had indeed a poet's charms:
 New to my taste, his Paradise surpassed 710
 The struggling efforts of my boyish tongue
 To speak its excellence; I danced for joy.
 I marvell'd much that, at so ripe an age
 As twice seven years, his beauties had then firsst
 Engaged my wonder, and admiring still,
 And still admiring, with regret supposed
 The joy half lost because not sooner found.
 Thee, too, enamour'd of the life I loved,
 Pathetic in its praise, in its pursuit
 Determined, and possessing it at last 720
 With transports such as favour'd lovers feel,
 I studied, prized, and wish'd that I had known,
 Ingenious Cowley! and though now, reclaimed
 By modern lights from an erroneous taste,
 I cannot but lament thy splendid wit
 Entangled in the cobwebs of the schools.
 I still revere thee, courtly though retired,
 Though stretch'd at ease in Chertsey's silent bow'rs
 Not unemploy'd, and finding rich amends
 For a lost world in solitude and verse 730
 'Tis born with all. The love of Nature's works
 Is an ingredient in the compound, man,
 Infused at the creation of the kind.
 And though th' Almighty Maker has throughout
 Discriminated each from each, by strokes
 And touches of his hand, with so much art
 Diversified, that two were never found
 Twins at all points—yet this obtains in all,
 That all discern a beauty in his works,
 And all can taste them: minds that have been form'd 740
 And tutor'd, with a relish more exact,
 But none without some relish, none unmoved.
 It is a flame that dies not even there,
 Where nothing feeds it. Neither business, crowds,
 Nor habits of luxurious city life,

Whatever else they smother of true worth
 In human bosoms, quench it or abate.
 The villas, with which London stands begirt
 Like a swarth Indian with his belt of beads,
 Prove it. A breath of unadult'rate air, 750
 The glimpse of a green pasture, how they cheer
 The citizen, and brace his languid frame !
 Ev'n in the stifling bosom of the town,
 A garden in which nothing thrives, has charms
 That soothe the rich possessor; much consoled
 That here and there some sprigs of mournful mint,
 Of nightshade, or valerian, grace the well
 He cultivates. These serve him with a hint
 That Nature lives; that sight-refreshing green
 Is still the livery she delights to wear, 760
 Though sickly samples of th' exuberant whole.
 What are the casements lined with creeping herbs,
 The prouder sashes fronted with a range
 Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,
 The Frenchman's darling? are they not all proofs
 That man, immured in cities, still retains
 His inborn inextinguishable thirst
 Of rural scenes, compensating his loss
 By supplemental shifts, the best he may?
 The most unfurnish'd with the means of life, 770
 And they that never pass their brick-wall bounds
 To range the fields, and treat their lungs with air,
 Yet feel the burning instinct: over-head
 Suspend their crazy boxes planted thick
 And water'd duly. There the pitcher stands
 A fragment, and the spoutless tea-pot there;
 Sad witnesses how close-pent man regrets
 The country, with what ardour he contrives
 A peep at nature, when he can no more.

Hail, therefore, patroness of health and ease 780
 And contemplation, heart-consoling joys
 And harmless pleasures, in the throng'd abode
 Of multitudes unknown, hail rural life!
 Address himself who will to the pursuit
 Of honours, or emolument, or fame,
 I shall not add myself to such a chase,
 Thwart his attempts, or envy his success.

Some must be great. Great offices will have
Great talents. And God gives to ev'ry man
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste, 790
That lifts him into life, and lets him fall
Just in the niche he was ordam'd to fill
To the deliverer of an injured land
He gives a tongue t' enlarge upon, a heart
To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs;
To monarchs dignity, to judges sense;
To artists ingenuity and skill;
To me an unambitious mind, content
In the low vale of life, that early felt
A wish for ease and leisure, and ere long 800
Found here that leisure and that ease I wish'd

NOTES

BOOK III.—THE GARDEN.

AFTER the digression of the second book, Cowper returns to softer and more familiar scenes better fitting the poet of the Sofa. He begins by an invocation of domestic happiness. Next to the Country his favourite theme is Home. With a charming ingenuousness, an egotism which is wholly unselfish, he gives us a chapter of his religious autobiography. From his own retreat he moralises on the stir and turmoil of the world that he has left, the idle dreams of the philosopher, the vain aspirations of the crowd. He then passes, by a natural transition, to the pleasures of the solitary man—the cultivation of a garden. He shows us the brighter side of his life, he speaks as a man who has handled a spade and wheeled a barrow himself, and enjoyed the true luxury of making plants grow and watching their growth. Parts of the book, such as the directions for raising cucumbers, labour under the unavoidable defect of a didactic poem; in proportion as they are minute and precise enough to be useful, they cease to be poetical. The Book ends as it began, with a tirade against the follies and extravagances of town life.

1-40 *As a traveller; after losing his way, rejoices -when he regains the high road, so after my long digression on political evils and social vices, I rejoice to return to my original theme, the Sofa (or rather to the themes which it has suggested, the quiet pleasures of the country). And it is but wise that I should do so, for when preachers who know the world fail to convince, what chance is there that a recluse like me should be heard? Better to take my ease in summer under shady trees, or in winter on the sofa, and, if I must vent my spleen, do so in the ears of two or three trusty friends alone.*

1 *Brakes.* Properly broken branches, then a thicket or under-wood. Used metaphorically in *My Mother's Picture*, 1. 66.

" Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and brakes,
That humour interposed too often makes."

2 *Entangled.* " Tang " or " tangle " means properly seaweed ;

hence it was applied to any intertwined confused mass What is the force of the prefix en-?

Winds. The ideas of turning and going are connected in most languages. What is "went" the past. mdef. of?

3 What does "*uncertain*" qualify?

5 What is the "slough of despond"?

8 *Faithful to the foot.* Express this in prose, Cf. Shakespeare, "stubborn to justice," "a will most incorrect to heaven."

9 *Cherups.* The same word as "chirp," now more commonly spelt "chirrup." Properly a neuter verb, but used here in a transitive sense, just as "to bay the moon," and colloquially, "to whistle a dog off,"

Brisk. Parse. "'Busk" is connected with the French "brusque."

Ear-erecting. A proleptic epithet, See note on book ii. 452.

10 Point out any fault of style in this line.

i-10 This sentence is an instance of what is called in Greek an anacoluthon. Show where the sentence is irregular, and point out the reason for this irregularity. See Abbott's *Sh. Gr.*, p. 303.

13 *Its slumbers.* What is meant by "the Sofa's slumbers"? Cf. *Sofa*, l. 44, "but restless was the chair." Is this a proper use of the possessive genitive? What is the history of the word "*its*"? Ought it properly to be written with an apostrophe? See Marsh's *Students' Manual of the English Language*, p. 278.

14 *Wide.* Parse.

15 *Academic.* Derive.

17 *Cleanlier.* The suffix -ly both of adjectives and adverbs is the A.S. -lice, the dative or ablative of -he = like, -lie was at the same time a noun meaning "body;" German "leich," a corpse

18 *At large.* "At" has the force of the French "a," *compaïc at odds, at friend.* *Winters Tale*, v. I, 140.

21 *Reflect.* The figure called in Greek "catachresis." Words properly relating to one sense are used in reference to another Cf. Milton's "Far off their coming shone."

22 *Most part.* Cf. the Latin "maximam partem."

25 *To purpose.* Notice the common omission of the article in prepositional and adverbial phrases, "in season," "at heart," "to relief."—Henry V., i. I.

26 *Crack the satiric thong.* A common metaphor for satire.

"Nee scutica dignum horribili sectere flagello."

—HOR. *Sat.* i. 3, 129.

' *Twere wiser far.* Cf. Milton's *Lycidas*, l. 67.

"Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?"

How does Milton answer the question? How far is Cowper in earnest in this statement?

27 *Sequestered*. "Sequester" in Latin is an indifferent person who holds a deposit. "Sequestro," to put into the hands of such a person, and so to lay aside. What does "to sequestrate" mean in English?

29 An echo of Horace.—*Odes* \l. 3, 9.

32 *Nitrons air*. "The name given by Priestley to oxygen gas, whose researches into its nature were nearly contemporaneous with the writing of these lines." Note of *Globe Edition*. Cf. Thomson's *Winter*, 1. 692

"The joyous Winter days,
Frosty, succeed; and through the blue serene,
For sight too fine the ethereal nitre flies."

37 *Gall*. French "galler," to gall, fret, itch.

38 *Disgust concealed*. A Latin construction; the epithet has a predicative force. 801.97. "Well dressed, well bred, well equipaged is ticket good enough." The construction, as we should expect, is common in Milton: "after his charge received." —*P. Z.*, v. 248.

41-108 An invocation to domestic happiness, the last blessing left to fallen man, the mother of virtue, the constant foe of vicious pleasures. Vice nowadays stalks unblushingly in our streets. Even hypocrisy is better than effrontery.

Notice the personification of abstract substantives, a distinguishing mark of the poetry of the 18th century, from which even Wordsworth only gradually freed himself. Cf. bk. ii. 1. 734 seq

44 *Tasting*. What sort of participle? Turn it into a dependent sentence.

46 *Drops of bitter*. "Medio de fonte leporum surgit aman aliquid."—LUCRETIUS

Neglecti i.e., neglect of one another, want of sympathy.

52 *Zoneless*. Latin "discinctus." Cf. Horace "et zonam metuens solvere gratia."

80 *A waif*. A legal term for unclaimed property, or an animal wandering without an owner. "Waif" in Scotch means to blow. Cf. English "waft."

85 *Nice*. Scrupulous

86 *Sharped*. The verb is almost obsolete, but we keep the substantive, a sharper.

91 Possibly Cowper is thinking of Admiral Byng, who was most unjustly shot in 1757, in consequence of his defeat by the French Admiral La Galissonnière, "pour mieux encourager les autres," according to Voltaire's witty epigram.

94 *In construction*. In the interpretation we put on one Another's conduct.

97 *Well-dressed*. The fact of being well dressed. Compare the

Latin idiom, "Diu non perlitatum tenuerat dictatorem."—LIVY. See note on 1. 38.

100 Hypocrisy is the tribute that virtue pays to vice. So Swift says wisely : " Hypocrisy is much more eligible than open infidelity or vice ; it wears the livery of religion, and is cautious of giving scandal; nay, continued disguises are too great a restraint; men would leave off their vices rather than undergo the toil of practising them in private."

105 The metaphor will not bear examination. Hypocrisy is herself the mask.

108-190. *Cowper compares himself to a wounded deer which has left the herd to die alone. The arrows with which he is pierced are sins of the world. Christ has found him and healed him by his grace. From his retreat he moralises on the world he has left. All is vanity. One half of mankind are careless, the other visionaries ; historians who evolve history from their own consciousness; geologists who contradict revelation ; natural philosophers who try to explain the laws of the universe, but cannot agree among themselves. Notwithstanding all this learning, they suffer from the common ills of humanity and die like other men. He feels nothing but pity for these creatures who defy their Creator and spend their days in cobwebs of the brain.*

For Cowper's personal history see *Introduction*. In his invocation to domestic happiness we see Cowper at his best, here we see him at his worst. He is narrow and bigoted, and his narrowness and bigotry, as usual, proceed from ignorance. Cowper had never studied history or geology. The latter science was still in its infancy; and though from Thucydides downwards there have been philosophical historians, history is only now gradually asserting its rank as a science.

108 *A stricken deer*. Compare and contrast the soliloquy of Jacques in *As you Like it*, and Hamlet's song, iii. 2, "Why, let the stricken deer go weep."

112 Isaiah lni. 4, "Surely he hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem him stucken, smitten of God, and afflicted."

115 *Soliciting*. A Latinsm, imitated from Virgil, *Æn.* xii. 404.

" Nequidquam trepidat, nequidquam spicula dextra
Sollicitat, prensatque tenaci forcipe terrain."

120 *With few associates*. A repetition common with poets from Homer downwards.

121 *Ruminate*. French " rummer," " to ruminate or chew the cud ; also to ponder, weigh, examine."—COTGRAVE.

124 Isaiah liii. 6.

129 *Rings the world*. Justify the order of the words.

133 *The million flit as gay*. Cf. Gray's *Ode on the Spring*.

" To contemplation's sober eye
 Such is the race of Man,
 And they that creep and they that fly
 Shall end where they began.
 Alike the busy and the gay
 But flutter through life's little day,
 In Fortune's varying colours drest:
 Orushed by the hand of rude Mischance
 Or chill'd by age, their airy dance
 They leave, in dust to rest."

135 *Motley*. 'From French "matted," curded, curd-like, from "mattes," curds. So Shakespeare uses motley as a substantive for a fool from his party-coloured dress.

139 See Macaulay's *History of England*, ch. i. ad. in. for the proper subjects and scope of history.

140 *Rant*. Old Dutch "ranten," to rave Shakespeare speaks of "my rantin host of the Garter."

Puzzled. "Puzzle" is an abbreviated form of "apposaile," a thing opposed, as we say now "a poser."

154 *Revealed its date to Moses*. Point out Cowper's mistake in thus opposing revelation to geology. How far is it true that the date of the creation was revealed to Moses?

156 *Contrive creation*. Invent a scheme according to which they conceive the creation of the world to have taken place.

Travel nature up. Nature, i.e., the world of phenomena, is looked upon as a mountain to be explored; he who gains the summit is the perfect philosopher.

158 What is the difference between the fixed stars and the planets?

What is meant by the Nebular theory?

159 *Them*. To what does *them* refer?

161 *Learned dust*. So Quintilian talks of "forensis pulvis,"

164 *Life's lamp*. So Lucretius, "Et quasi cursores vital lampada tradunt."

165 *Playing tricks with nature*. They look on nature as *A* child on a toy which he pulls to pieces. Compare *Measure for measure*, ii. 2.

"But man, proud man,
 Drest in a little brief authority :
 Most ignorant of what he's most assured,
 His glassy essence,—like an angry ape,
 Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven,
 As make the angels weep."

167 Is't *not a pity now*. So Horace says of the Stoic's wise man,—

"Liber, honoratus, pulcher, rex denique regum,
Praecipue sanus, nisi cum pituita molesta est."

—*Ep i i*, 103

"A king an a' that, save when he 's got a cold in his head."

169 *Oracles*. The abstract for the concrete. *Merchant of Venice*, i. i:—

"As who should say, I am Sir Oracle,
And, when I ope my lips, let no clog bark!"

174 *Frantic*. Fr. "frenetique," cf. fancy and phantasy.

175 What is the nominative to "proves"? The lines seem suggested by Shakespeare's *Lucrece*, 213.

"Who buys a minute's mirth to wail a week,
Or sells eternity to get a toy?"

185-186 The irreligious philosopher is sinning against God no less than the open malefactor; but the philosopher is so absorbed by his "strenua inertia," his active idleness, that he is unconscious that he is sinning.

Plausibly amused. Amused in a way which commands approbation without deserving it. Derive "amused." See note on *Timepiece*, l. 301

187 *Common sense*. "Gommon sense, as it is generally understood, is nearly synonymous with mother-wit"—DUGALD STEWART. Can you make any distinction? Notice the admirable point and polish of the last two lines.

191-261. *The sage would bid me mind my own affairs, but "homo sum nihil humania me alienum puto."* True, I am no natural philosopher, but it is not philosophy, biit God? s word that can teach us about God. Besides, Newton, Milton, and Hales are examples that learning and piety may be combined.

193 Cf. "He dragged his eyebrow bushes down, and made
A snowy penthouse for his hollow eyes."

—TENNYSON, *Merlm and Vivien*.

198-205 Borrowed from Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice*, iii. i: "Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, wanned and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian is? If you prick us do we not bleed?" &c. But point out the different application that Cowper and Shylock make of the same sentiment.

209 *The kind*. Cf—

"Farewell, farewell, the heart that lives alone,
Housed in a dream, at distance from the kind."

—WORDSWORTH.

211 *I cannot call*, &c. Like Benjamin Franklin, who discovered the identity of lightning and electricity.

214 *Analyse the air*. Like Priestley. See note on 1. 32.

215 *The parallax*. The difference between the apparent position of a heavenly body as seen by an observer from any station, and its true position as supposed to be seen from the centre of the earth or the centre of the sun.

217 *Neither can I rest*. Implying that I, as a moralist, have as just a *raison d'être* in the world as you men of science.

221 *Scale the heavens*. Alluding to the Titans, or perhaps to the tower of Babel. The phrase involves a fallacy. Astronomy tries to scale the heavens in the sense of trying to find out its laws and nature, but there is no presumption or impiety in so doing.

222 *In His works*. To be taken with which part of the sentence! For the awkward use of the preposition in two different senses, see note on the *Timepiece*, 1. 777.

228 *Style*. The word jars on our ears, but it had not then acquired the vulgar associations it now has. Young could write, "A Christian is the highest style of man!"

229 *Philosophic tube*. Galileo was the real discoverer of the telescope, 1609. Milton, alluding to his then recent discovery, calls the telescope, "glazed optic tube." The discovery of the satellites of Jupiter was the almost immediate reward of his activity.

230 *Instrumental causes*. Second causes.

239 *Conclusions retrograde*. To refer all to matter instead of the Creator. See note on bk. ii. L 176.

251 Cf.

"delicious draughts
Of inspiration, from a purer stream
And fuller of the God, than that which burst
From famed Castalia."

—YOUNG'S *Night Thoughts*, v. 106.

252 Newton, *b.* 1642, *d.* 1727, besides his famous *Principia* and *Fluxions*, published *Observations on Prophecy*, especially on Daniel and the Apocalypse, a work which has become a byword for perverse ingenuity and forced interpretations. This does not detract from Newton's piety, which is the point of Cowper's argument: it only shows that a giant may become a dwarf if he leaves his own proper province. See "Barrow and Newton" in Landor's *Imaginary Conversations*, where the young student is good humouredly bantered by the great master.

255 Psalm Ixxviii. 24, 25.

257 Sir Matthew Hale, *b.* 1609, *d.* 1676. Called to the bar 1633, made one of the judges of the Common Bench 1653, Chief Baron of the Exchequer 1660, and knighted; Chief-Justice of the King's Bench 1671. He studiously avoided politics, and was employed as an advocate both by the Court and the Parliament. As a sound lawyer his reputation is high, and notwithstanding the corruption of the times, his integrity unimpeached. He wrote voluminously on religious as well as on professional subjects.

261-290 *Virtue alone is eternal. The question, What is truth? answered by other questions.* The lines themselves are good, but they do not fulfil Cowper's own canon, and "shine by situation."—*Timepiece*, 1 296,

261 Psalm cm. 15, 16; Isaiah xl. 6.

Dishevelled. French, "decheviller;" old French, "descheveller." *Ch* in French represents the Latin *c*, *eu* (of cheveu) *i//*.

263 Proverbs xxiii. 5

264 Notice the distinction between "tomb" and "graves"

268 *Amaranthine*, *a*, privative, and ~~παρά~~ to fade.

270 See Bacon's *Essays*, i., note I.

271 John xiv. 6.

277 Answer each of these questions.

282 *Reproach.* Hebrews xi. 26.

283-284 The answer is truth used subjectively = faithfulness, honesty which makes us acknowledge our own shortcomings.

285 Matt. xiii. 46.

290-353 *Domestic happiness again invoked (as in 1. 46). Fervid love the country for its own sake, most love it because it enables them to enjoy the barbarous pleasures of the chase. My tame hare proves me a genuine lover and no sportsman*

301 Notice what is gained by the inverted order of the sentence.

304 *Meliorate.* Notice the prepositional prefix dropped, a note of Elizabethan English.

311 *Fearless.* Careless, or perhaps the word suggests as well the unequal contest between the sportsman and his quarry

Rapt. Carried. Cf. "the rapt bard."

312 *Game-fowl.* Cock-fighting was then a universal sport. We learn from Aristophanes that it was introduced at Athens from Persia at the time of the Persian wars. It was made illegal early in the present century. Even Christopher North, the author of *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, was passionately fond of it—"the last infirmity of a noble mind." Shakespeare is full of references to it, and we still preserve traces of it in the phrases, "cock of the walk," "cock-a-hoop" (a corruption of cock on the hoop), "crest-fallen." "that cock won't fight," "that beats cock-fighting."

314 *Could*, instead of *should*. because they might be stopped
cow? K

by an exercise of authority. Masquerades were suppressed by law 1724, but soon revived again.

316 *Self-deluded nymphs and swains*. Who imagine themselves nymphs and swains, i.e., real rustics. Cf. note on *Winter Evening*, 1 20

318 *The spleen*. See note on *Sofa*, I. 455

322 *Delights which) who, &c.* In modern English a relative sentence must be a relative sentence pure and simple, i.e., it cannot, as in Latin, have another relative interrogative or conditional sentence depending on it. In older English we often find "the which" used in such cases.

333 *Jovial*. A relic of astrological beliefs. Name others.

334 *One sheltered hare*. See *Life*, p. 5.

346 *Have pledged, &c.* I agree to forfeit all right to the name of man if I fail, &c.

351 Southey calls attention to the utterly different spirit in which Byron's epitaph on his dog was written, though the words are almost the same :—

" To mark a friend's remains, these stones arise,
I never knew but one, and here he lies."

353-446 *A life of retirement need not be an idle life. Cowpers various occupations, social converse, gardening, pruning and protecting fruit trees against the winter.*

355-360 The construction is " who has friends. . . . and his pen, a delightful industry (in apposition to 'pen') and who has nature inviting him abroad." " Industry " may refer to the whole of the previous line, but " a garden " would seem to show that it ought to be restricted to his pen, else the contrast of "naturedressed to his taste abroad " is lost " Has nature inviting him " is a harsh construction, but Cowper wrote "Nature inviting" as a nominative absolute, and then altered the construction of the sentence.

357 *Trim* is used as a substantive adjective and verb.

" Nature, in awe to him,
Had doff'd her gaudy trim."

—*Ode on the Nativity*.

Trim, A.-S., " trymian," as a verb, to make firm, to set in order. A trimmer is one who always keeps his balance by shifting to *ἡ ἀριστερὰ τοῦ πλοῦ*, the snug side of the vessel.

361 *Laborious ease*. An oxymoron: " Strenua nos exercet inertia."—HORACE. See *Sofa*, I. 755; *Garden*, 1. 361.

362 *To deceive the time*. Cf. " to wile away the time," to let the time fly unheeded.

363 *Human life*. "Vitaque mancipio nulli datur omnibus usu."—Lucretius. " Life is a usufruct or loan, not an absolute possession."

371 A touching allusion to his fits of depression and insanity.

372 *Its just point.* Notice the latent metaphors in "driving," "slack," "point " Can you justify the confusion?

386 *Sequestered.* See note on *Garden*, 1. 27.

387 *Intend.* Confined in prose to a verbal construction, but in "I intend going," "going" is really a substantive.

390 *With her, &c* Cowper makes the description of the country gentleman general, but every trait is personal. "Her" is, of course, Mis Unwin See *Life*.

391 *The fragrant lymph* A weak perphrasis, a characteristic trick of the artificial school which preceded Cowper. Cf. "confectionary plum," "stercoraceous heat," &c. *Lymph* (lympa, nympha) is *clear* water. Cowper was a confirmed tea-drinker See *Winter Evening*, 1. 38. "Tea was known in England in the time of the Protector. It was sold at from six to ten guineas the pound Thomas Garraway, the founder of Gariaway's Coffee-House, first offered it at a more reasonable puce, and in 1657 he advertised it at fifty shillings a pound"—*Our English Home*

392 *Neatly.* Not a happy word for tea making. Is Cowper thinking of the dinner

" Of herbs and other country messes
Which the neat handed Phillis dresses" ?

400 *Lubbard.* Lob, looby, lubber, lubbard, all convey the image of something dangling, too big to support itself, hence gawky, ungainly. So Milton in *L'Allegro* speaks of the "Lubber fiend," who thrashes in one night the corn of ten day-labourers.

416 *Impaired.* What is the force of the participle?

418 *Feeds* Justify the singular verb

421 *Gems.* So Latin "gemma," a bud.

No portion left, &c. Absolute construction

423 *Neat.* So as to be neat = neatly, secondary predicate.

429 "Miratuique novos fructus et non sua poma."—VIRGIL.
Author's note.

430 *Recompense* is in apposition to "fruits;" *precaution* in the next line to "he disposes," &c

433 *Churlish.* Churl is A.-S., "ceorl," a husbandman; "carl" is old Norse "karl." For change of meaning see note on *Sofa*, 1. 298. *Froward*, from-ward, the opposite of to-ward = un-toward or perverse.

445 *His hopes.* Virgil's "spes agnolce "

446-544 *A poetical description of the process of forcing cue umbers, a task yet unessayed in rhyme.* "In his pages the taming of three tame hares, or the building of a frame for cucumbers, excites a warrer interest than many accounts compiled by other authors of great battles deciding the fates of continents."—LORD MALLON'S *History of England*.

446 *Gourd.* Cucurbitacea, or the gourd order, is the generic

name for the Order to which the *Cucumis satnns*, or common cucumber, belongs. The common bryony is the only English wild-flower which belongs to this Order.

447 *And when rare, &c.* A hit at those who never care for fruit except when out of season,

452 *Gnats.* The *Cttlex*, an early poem of Virgil.

Frogs and mice. The *Batiachomachia*, a poem attributed to Homer

456 *The solitary shilling.* " *The Splendid Shilling*" a burlesque poem of John Philips, b. 1676, d. 1708. This and a didactic poem on *Cider* were both favourites of Cowper.

459 *Presuming.* I know no other instance of "presume," with a direct object depending on it. Cf. *intend*, 1. 387.

460 *Of dressing.* How can Cowper be said to dress a cucumber?

462 *Cucumber.* Fr. "concombre;" the *b* is parasitic, it facilitates the pronunciation of *mr.* See *Winter Evening*, 1. 499

403 See *Introduction*, p. 12.

464 *Salts.* Specify.

477 *Leisurely*, implying care.

480 *What longest.* That which is longest. What is the neuter of "who," and, like the interrogative "who," used for a relative.

483 *Eaves.* Properly a singular noun, A.-S. "yfes," "efese," margin, edge. As in "riches," "alms," the final *s* has caused it to be mistaken for a plural. The real plural was "esen = efesen," e.g., "esen-droppers."

Projected. Projecting, but the past participle shows the purpose

480 *Dashed.* Dashed upon, ram-beaten.

490 *Voluble.* "Volubilis," revolving.

Corrosive. Eating away, consuming; especially applied to the action of gases on metals.

495 *Boeotian.* *Bæotia* famed for its fogs, with which the ancients connected the stupidity of its inhabitants. " *Bæotum in crasso jurares aere natum*" of a dullard.

494-501 "Above all things as much air as possible ought to be given; for there is always a steam or reek in a hot bed; and if this be not let out, it destroys the stems of the plants, and they very quickly perish."—COBBETT'S *English Gardener*, p. 112.

496 *Sash.* French "chassis," the sliding frame of a window. *Sash* of a girl's dress is a Persian word.

498 *Conservatory.* Now used only of a greenhouse. Bacon uses it of an ice-house.

498, 499 Notice how keen observation and truth to nature redeem a most prosaic subject.

501 *To assuage, &c.* To moderate the quickly generated heat which will not be kept in.

504 *Hopes.* See 1. 445.

505 From Virg., *Georgics*, i. 133.—

" Ut varias usus meditando extunderet artes,
Paulatim "

Invite the seed. Be favourable for planting. Notice all through this description how Cowper avoids common-place language by a liberal use of personal metaphors, *i.e.*, by attributing personal relations to inanimate objects. In each case the pupil should first turn the metaphor into a simile, and then divest the language of all metaphor, and turn it into simple prose.

512 *Pots of size diminutive.* Vulgo, thumb pots.

515 Why this precaution?

Manure. From the French "manoeuvre," retaining in this passage the French accent. To manure is, first, to work with the hand, then to till the ground, this being the principal hand-work of the earlier stages of society. In this sense Milton (*Paradise Lost*, iv. 626) writes, "Yonder alleys green with branches overgrown that mock our scant manuring." Lastly, it was confined to one particular branch of tillage. For further examples see Trench's *Select Glossary*, p. 131.

522 *Spongy lobes.* The cotyledons, the first lobes or leaves of a seed. By the absence or number of these leaves the vegetable kingdom is divided into the three classes, Acotyledonous, Mono cotyledonous, Dicotyledonous

526 *Tkvo leaves.* The primordial or first pair of leaves would differ generally from those subsequently produced.

527 *The second stalk.* The part of the stalk above the primordial leaves, the first stalk would be that between them and the cotyledons.

528 *A pimple.* The plumule, or rather what was the plumule expanding into the stem. " From between the seed-leaves there will come out a shoot, which will presently have one rough leaf on each side of it ; then between these rough leaves you will see a shoot rising The moment this is clearly distinguishable, pinch it clean out with your fore-finger and thumb, and this will cause shoots to come out on both sides from the socket of the two rough leaves which have been left "—COBBETT, E. G., p. 114.

Harbinger. In Chaucer "heibergeour." Harbour, heribeiga (German, "heer," army, "bergen," to shelter). The duty of giving shelter to soldiers or state officers.

536 In botanical language, the ovary is inferior.

Apparent, already visible.

537 *These have their sexes.* The flowers are unisexual *t.t.*, some have stamens (the male flowers), some pistils (the female).

538 *Fertilizing meal.* The pollen Pollen is the Latin for meal.

543 By rubbing the pistillate flowers with the staminate. Cowper probably learnt his physiological botany from Dr Darwin, who had popularised these facts in his *Botanical Garden*, pub.

lished in 1781. The poem, famous in its day, was divided into two parts ; the second, entitled *Loves of the Plants*, has survived (or at least the name) from Canning's witty parody, *The Loves of the Triangles*.

544-566 'Tis a hard and often thankless labour, and such I feat my poem will bejudged by some.

544 Since luxury must have his dainties Show the connection of ideas.

His dainties. The gender of abstract substantives personified is somewhat arbitrary, but seems principally determined : 1, by the gender of the word from which they are derived , 2, by their significations; sterner, manlier qualities are masculine, and the opposite feminine, eg. i Those in -y, -ion, -ance, -ence, -ing, -ness, are feminine , those m -our (French -eur), -ment, feminine 2. Industry, tyranny, knavery, famine, are masculine; faith is feminine Apply the rule heie

546 *Delicates* An adjective used as a substantive, cf. comestibles. Give other instances

550 *Regales*. Usually a verb. Italian, "gala;" English, "galaday."

556 *As dust*. To be taken with both adjectives, a favourite or *do verborum* with Cowper.

560 *Fights a season*. " Fight " is properly a neuter verb, and "season" a soit of cognate accusative particularising the sort of fight. Cf. Latin and Greek.

563 *Would exclaim*. *Would* — may perhaps, not a proper use. *Exclaim*, used absolutely = protest.

566-624 *The pleasures and cares of a greenhouse*.

573 *Lime*. The fruit of the *Citrus limetta*.

576 *Amomum* Gr *ἀμώμον*, a large genus of the Ginger Order Its seeds are aromatic The Romans made from it a fiagiant and costly balsam

577 *Geranium*. All our garden geraniums (more properly pelargoniums) come from the Cape

579 *Ficoides* Probably *Mesembryanthemum crystallium*, or the ice-plant What does the termination -ordes mean

582 *Ausonia*. See note on *Timepiece*, 1. 314.

591. Scan.

597 Roscius, b. 129 B C , d 60 E C., perhaps the most famous of Roman actors. He was a master of pantomime or dumb show. He gave Cicero lessons in elocution, and Cicero pleaded his cause against C. Fannms in a speech still extant

598 Garrick. See note, *Garden*, 1. 664 An English theatre does not help the simile, for it is much less like a greenhouse than a Roman theatre with its sloping tiers of benches, but the further illustration is evidently introduced for the sake of the compliment to Garrick.

610 *Salubrious salts.* Ammoniacal salts, phosphates, &c.

611 *The slender roots, &c.* A plant is said to be pot-bound when the roots being stopped by the pot form a matted mass.

616 *Breeding* What is the force of the participle?

624-675 *The flower-garden ; taste and forethought required for sowing seeds, a cockney's garden; tying up flowers; creepers, climbers, weeds*

626 See note on *Sofa*, ¶ 368

629 *Swelled, swelling* Cf. projected, 1. 483.

637 *Compost.* Any mixture for fertilising land

Home Straight to where it is wanted Cf Shakespeare's use of "home" for thoroughly, "satisfy me home," "I will pay thy graces home "

640 *Creation.* Creation. So Bacon commonly.

641 *Gothic.* The name "Gothic," as a synonym for savage, must have arisen from the fear which the Goths struck into the Roman empire, for the Goths seem to have been the most civilised of the barbarians who invaded Rome; they readily embraced Christianity, and the laws of the Visigoths are remarkable for their mildness and wisdom.

643 *Yonder heath.* Probably Hampstead Heath, but it may be any of the numerous places of amusement in the suburbs of London

647 *A double entente,* as above, "a heaven on earth."

The zodiac. Meaning the signs of the zodiac, "the ram, the bull, &c."

654 *Conspiring.* Uniting with one voice An instance of catachresis—

"He spake, and straightway the celestial choir,
In hymns of joy, unknown before, conspire."

His bright design. The brilliancy of his design, in both senses of the word.

661 *For interest' sake.* Interest is a genitive, "The absolute serveth sometimes instead of a genitive."—BEN JONSON This is generally the case where a noun ends in a sibilant, "And by chaste Lucrece' soul"—SHAKESPEARE, *Rape of L.* But also in other cases for euphony, "And for his makers image' sake exempt."—MILTON, *P. L.* 11 514 "For manhood' sake."—BEAUMONT and FLETCHER Compare Shakespeare's use of it for its: "It lifted up it head."—*Hamlet*, i 2. See Earle's *English Philology*, p. 443. For the meaning of "sake" see note on *Winter Motning Walk*, 1 502.

667 *festoon.* French, "feston"; L. Lat. "festonem," a garland.

675-847 *Such are the peaceful pleasures of the country. They are open to all, and even in winter preferable to the town, where all flock, many to gamble away their estates; others ruin themselves with costly improvements, who then fry to recoup themselves*

by cringing for office or selling their votes. London is the common sewer of the nation, into 'which every vice flows.

675 *Jarring*, Jar, an onomatopoeic word. Cf. "garrire," "chirp," "cherup," 1 9.

688 *To fly is safe*, but at the same time inglorious. There may be men who, like Cowper, from constitutional weakness or nervousness, are unfitted for public life, but in a free country like England each man has public as well as private duties, and it is a sign of weakness to shirk them.

689 *Sublunary good*. All the blessings of this world.

700, 701 The logical order is inverted; they are self-condemned by being forced to approve, &c., *the?* they neglect the prize.

Cf. Juvenal's "Virtutem videant intabescantque relicta."

705-710 Notice Cowper's special pleading: he puts piety and virtue first, and then under the shadow of these august names introduces the country, or rather country life, as inseparable from them.

713 *Unconfined*.—

"When love with unconfined wings

Hovers within my gates."—LOVELACE.

714 See *Book of Esther*. Who was the prince? Where is Shushan?

716 *Pavilion*. Tent or banqueting hall. Fr., "pavilion;" Latin, "papilio."

737 An Act of Parliament compelling all manufactories in London to consume their own smoke was passed only a few years ago 16 and 17 Victoria, c. 128.

746 *Mansions once*, &c. Compare the account of Sir Roger de Coverley's household.

751 *He that saw*, &c. Implying that he only sees it once, and sells it before he has enjoyed his estate a whole year. In one of Lord Lytton's novels, timber is wittily defined as a providential excrescence of nature designed for the relief of encumbered estates.¹

753 *Scantling*; -ing, diminutive, as in farthing = fourth-ing. Other diminutive suffixes are -ock, -kin, -ling, -et, -let.

755 *Estates are landscapes*. Like pictures seen once and then forgotten.

756 *Auctioneered*. Cowper is fond of turning substantives into verbs. So we have had "hackneyed" (*Timepiece*, 1. 652), "cherups" (*Garden*, 1. 9), "equipped" (1. 88).

758 *Lewd*. See Trench on the *Study of Words*, p. 13.

Fair dues. Fair not in respect of the town, but of the spendthrifts, who deserve to pay for their luxuries.

760-763 The metaphor is confused, or at least confusing. In 1. 263 Cowper has said "riches have wings," and the word

¹ Borrowed from Lord Carnarvon, according to Pepys' *Diary*.

"waft," would seem as tho' he had begun with the same metaphor, but, as he continues, we see that it is the gamester's wings that waft our riches out of sight, *i e*, puff them away. Possibly the metaphor may have been suggested by the vampire bat. On gambling, see note on *Timepiece*, 1. 657.

766 *Brown*. Lancelot, generally known by the nickname of Capability Brown, the great landscape gardener of Cowper's day, died 1773. He laid out Lord Cobham's gardens at Stowe, Lord Coventry's at Croome, and Lord Exeter's at Burleigh.

768 *Whiskered race*. "Unus aliquis ex barbatus illis imago antiquitatis."—CICERO, *pro Sett.* viii. 19. Beards in England declined with the Commonwealth, and the court of Charles was the last in which even a small one was grown. After the Restoration mustachios or whiskers continued, but the rest of the face was shaven; in a short time the custom of shaving the whole face became universal. It was not till the Crimean war that beards again grew fashionable.

771 // *may enjoy*. As if this was the object of placing it there.

772 *Aguish*. The-ish, diminutive; *ague*, Fr., "aigu;" Latin, "acutum," from the *fits* of cold and shivering which accompany it.

784 *Item*. Derive.

791 *Having no stake left*. According to the popular phrase, by which a man of property is said to have a stake in the country. The phrase is objectionable, as implying that the poor man has no interest in his country's welfare, and therefore is unfit to be trusted with a share in the government. Cowper doubtless would have repudiated this inference notwithstanding the present passage.

795 *Grace*. Favour, favouritism.

802 *Crape*. Forming the highwayman's mask.

Pistol. From *Pistoja* in Tuscany. A pistoyer meant first a dagger, then was used for small concealed fire-arms. The first half of the 18th century was the golden age of highwaymen. Horace Walpole, writing at the close of the American war, complains that he cannot stir a mile from his house at Strawberry Hill after sunset without two servants armed with blunderbusses. Jack Shepherd was hanged in 1724, Jonathan Wild in 1725, Dick Turpin in 1739. As late as 1761 the Flying Highwayman was the chief topic of conversation in most towns within twenty miles of London; the newspapers of the day tell us that he had leaped over Colnbrook turnpike twelve times within the fortnight.

803 *He that finds*, &c. He that by Heaven's mercy has ought of grace in his nature, is not utterly reprobate.

805 Notice the force of monosyllables. Cf. Milton's famous line—

"Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death."

806 So. In this way, on these conditions, if so be that. Cf the Latin use of *ita*, restrictive, followed by *ut*.

Wrap himself in honest rags. Cf. Horace, *Odes*, iii. 29, 54; "Mea virtute me involvo," with Dryden's noble translation,—

"Content with poverty my soul I aim;
And virtue, though in rags, will keep me warm."

814 Swallows usually depart about the beginning of October, though some few stragglers may appear on at times till the first week in November. See White's *Melbourne*, pp. 178, 326.

814, 815 Notice the change of fashion since Cowper's time.

820 *A cold jail.* In the Fleet as a prisoner for debt. The Fleet is mentioned as a prison for debtors as early as 1290.

Groat. A silver coin of Edward III. What was it worth *

822 *Levee.* Noblemen still held their levees in Cowper's day. See *Spectator**, No, 193. What is a levee now-a-days?

824 *Bankrupt.* Italian, "banco rotto," bank broken.

826 *The chance to win.* We must have used the verbal substantive.

835 Compare with these last lines Johnson's *London*.

836 "The common sewer of Pans and of Rome
Sucks in the dregs of each corrupted state."—i. c. 94.

BOOK IV.—THE WINTER EVENING.

This and the following book contain some of the most admirable descriptions that Cowper ever wrote, or, we may add, that have ever been written in the English language. Such, among others, is the description of the village post coming in, with which this book begins; not less admirable is that which follows—a winter evening spent round the fire in a quiet country home—worthy to be compared with *The Cottar's Saturday Night* of Burns. Next comes an address to Winter, in which Cowper attempts a bolder flight than usual, generalising, instead of painting, some particular landscape. The style, and even the language in parts, recall Thomson, a poet whom Cowper much admired. He then contrasts an evening spent as he has described with one wasted in fashionable frivolities. The invocation to Evening which follows reminds us of Collins' *Ode to Evening*. Collins, indeed, is lyrical, Cowper descriptive, but there is the same delicate imagination in both. The "blown study" and the unexpected fall of snow are equally charming pictures. The sufferings of the poor are told with that genuine sympathy and intimate knowledge which lend

such an interest to Wordsworth's poems. lie returns to his favourite theme, the conuption of the town, which has infected even the country, and ends by showing how the love of the country cannot be extinguished even by a town life. (Cf. Wordsworth's *Reverie of Poor Susan*.)

I-120 *The post comes in; the postman and his budget, the news is read by the snug fireside; the world as it appears to a recluse through the medium of newspapers and books.*

I *Yonder bridge*. The bridge o'er the Ouse at Olney. "This bridge bestrides the whole valley between Olney and Embeiton, this being needful in consequence of winter-floods, which frequently lay the whole ground under water — *Globe Edition*."

3 *Bestrides*. "Be-" an English affix, gives a transitive force to neuter verbs, or a sense of more immediate relation, sometimes of surrounding or embracing, to transitive verbs, as to bestrew, bedizen, begird. The preposition "be" meant around.

6 The postman was mounted. Mail coaches were staid in 1784 by Palmer, who accomplished the journey from London to Bath in the then miraculously short time of sixteen hours.

7 *Lumbering*. See note on *The So/a*, 1. 58.

12 Cf. "And whistled as he went, for want of thought."

Wietch. Here used sportively. —GOLDSMITH.

14 Cowper's ickligious views made him a pessimist, but by temperament he was inclined to optimism, save during his terrible fits of oppression and madness. See note on 1. 578.

15 What does "indiffeient" agree with?

16 *Stocks*. Humorously defined by Richardson, "The public funds, where the money of (unhappy) people is now *fixed* (thence never to return)."

17 *Births, Deaths, and Marriages*. Can you account for this older of the woids?

20 *Swains*. Old Norse, "sveinn," a boy, a serving man; the use of the word for a lover probably comes from the pastoral poetry of the 18th century. So "nymphs and swains."—*Garden*, 1. 316.

23 *Budget*. From French "bougette," diminutive of "bouge," a bag or wallet.

Ushered. French, "huissier;" Latin, "ostiarus"

In the sense of the annual statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer the word is quite modern. A satirical pamphlet, *The Budget Opened*, published in 1733, compared Sir R. Walpole to a conjuror opening his wonderful bag.

25 *Have our troops awaked*. General Cornwallis had capitulated at York Town to Washington and La Fayette, Oct. 19, 1781. This capitulation virtually terminated the war, though it was not till Nov. 30, 1782, that the articles were signed recognising the independence of the United States. *The Task* was begun in the

summer of 1783, so that Cowper, it would seem, is somewhat behindhand with his news.

27 *Snore to the murmurs.* Cf. —

"Until he heard the mountains round,
Ring to the baying of a hound."

—SCOTT'S *Lay of Last Minstrel*.

Cf "ad citharam saltare," "danser au violon," "6,,17705."

28 *Is India free.* It was in November 1783, that Fox brought in a bill to regulate the affairs of India, which passed the Commons, but was rejected by the Lords. About the same time, Hastings concluded a peace with Tippoo, on the basis of mutual restitution.

Or does she -wear. A fine personification, recalling "the wealth of Ormus, or of Ind."

29 *Jewelled.* A participle, formed from a substantive, like "honied," "flowered."

Jewel. Fr., "joyau," "jouel;" Latin, "gaudium," diminutive of "gaudium."

30 *The grand debate* on Fox's East India Bills, introduced November 1783. See *English History*.

31 *Tart.* A.-S., "teart," sharp, biting, pungent.

38 See note on *The Garden*, 391.

40 *But not inebriate.* This order of words is now almost obsolete, even in poetry, the rule now being that either the negative must follow the verb, or come between the verb and the auxiliary. For a full explanation see Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar*, p. 216.

41 *So.* Correlative to "while."

48 *Patriots.* Used ironically. So Dryden in his translation of the *Georgics*,—

"Some patriot fools to popular praise aspire,
Of public speeches which worse fools admire "

"Patriot" was the political cant term of the day for the Opposition, "the extreme left."

49 *Placemen.* Hunters for place or office.

All tranquillity. "All" is here an adverb, and "tranquillity" (the abstract for the concrete) is a quasi-adjective.

50 *Folio.* An abbreviation for *in folio*. A book is said to be *in folio* when a sheet makes but two leaves without further folding, *Folio of four pages.* A sort of oxymoron.

51 *Holds.* Commands.

59 *Seals of office.* So of Wolsey,—

"The king commands you
To render up the great seal."

—SHAKESPEARE, *Hen. VIII.*

63 *But to lose.* The infinitive is here consecutive = so as to.

65 *Meanders*. "Intricate turnings, by a transumptive and metonymical kind of speech, are called 'meanders:' 'for this river did so strangely path itself that the foot seemed to touch the head.'"—SELDEN'S *Illustrations of Draytoris Polyolbion*.

Lubricate the course they take. Take a lubricous, or smooth oily course. Turn tins metaphor into a simile

73 *Cataracts of declamation*. So Juvenal, x. 128, of Demosthenes, "Quern mirabantur Athenae torrentem."

74 *Spread the page*. An uncommon use of "spread" for "overspread."

"Her cheeks their freshness lose and wonted grace,
And an unusual paleness spreads her face."

—GRANVILLE.

75 *Comprehension*. Comprehensibihty, intelligibility.

77 *Descants*.

"And look you get a prayer-book in your hand,
And stand betwixt two churchmen, good my lord:
For on that ground I'll build a holy descant."

—Rich. III. in. 7, 47.

79 Advertisements of cosmetics and elixirs were as common in Cowper's days as in those of Rowland and Madame Rachel.

83 *Nectareous*. Milton only uses "nectarous." Pope both "nectarous" and "nectareous."

85 *Ethereal journeys*. The first aeronauts were the brothers Montgolfier, who made their first ascent at Annonay, June 5th, 1783. Their balloon was filled with air heated by lighted straw. The first ascent in England was made by Lunardi, September 5th, 1784. Horace Walpole, writing at the end of 1783, says, "Balloons occupy senators, philosophers, ladies, everybody."*

Submarine exploits. The diving bell was not invented till after Cowper's day, by an American, William Philipps.

86 *Katerfelto*. Katerfelto was a quack who sold nostrums for the influenza, which afflicted London in 1782. He performed electrical experiments with two black cats, whom he called his devils, and exhibited a solar microscope, then a novelty. His advertisements began with "' Wonders I Wonders!" See *Book of Days*, i. 510.

57-87 Notice the good-natured satire and sly humour of these lines. Cowper is the Horace of English satirists.

88 *Loopholes of retreat*. "Retreat," i.e., the place of retreat is the castle pierced with loopholes, through which Cowper looks.

91 Compare *Lucretius*, ii. 6.

"Sed nil dulcius est, bene quam munita tenere
Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena,
Despicere unde queas alips passimque videre
Errare atque viam palantis quserere vita."

103 Compare Wordsworth,—

" And much it grieved my heart to think,
What man has made of man."

104 *Brazen throats.* Homer's

105 *Language of his heart.* His heart is as hard and as harsh
as his voice.

107 *Expatriates.* Common in this sense in Pope,—

" Expatriate free o'er all this scene of man,
A mighty maze, but not without a plan."

Now almost confined to the metaphorical sense

Who is *he* in this and the following lines ?

109 *Policy.* Mode of government.

in Why does Cowper say "sucks," instead of "gleans" or
"draws."

8 *Whilefancy, &c.* Contrast Keats'—

" Ever let the Fancy roam,
Pleasure *never is at home.*"

Is the opposition real, or merely verbal ?

119 *The great circuit.* The definite article has here the force of
a possessive pronoun: "the great circuit which it runs," "its
great circuit."

Still—constantly, as often in Shakespeare, Bacon, &c.—

" Thou still hast been the author of good tidings."

—*Hamlet*, ii. 2, 42

" Flies that are still buzzing upon anything that is raw."—B.,
Essay 13.

120 *Seq.* Personifications like this of winter are common in
poets of all times and all nations; nay, more, they are inextricably
inwoven in language. When a Greek said, "Zeus snows," he, at
least at one time in Greek history, believed that there was a per-
sonal being somewhere in the clouds sending down snow. But he
continued to say "Zeus snows" long after he had ceased to
believe in the existence of Zeus. So now, when we say, "Fear
blanches the face," "Winter rules the year," we merely make use
of convenient abbreviations without attributing any reality to such
abstractions as Fear or Winter. You may learn how much
Cowper gains in condensation and vividness by an expanded
personification such as this, if you try to describe the same picture
without the help of metaphor.

120 A recollection of Thomson's.

" 'Tis done ! dread Winter spreads his latest glooms,
And reigns tremendous o'er the conquered year."

" And fierce Aquarius stains the inverted year."

—*Win*

Which last line of Thomson's, again, is a direct translation of Horace, *Sat. i. I, 36*,—

"Simul mversum contristat Aquarius annum."

The inverted year. The year over turned by winter, as if summer were the natural season, and winter a perversion of the order of things. But Orelli, *loc at.*, interprets somewhat differently, translating "des Jahies Umschwung," the revolution of the year.

"But I cannot help interrupting him (Cowper) to say how pleasant it is to track poets through the gardens of their predecessors, and find out their likings by a flower snapped off here and there, to garnish their own nosebags. Cowper had been reading Thomson, and "the inverted year" pleased his fancy with its suggestion of that starry wheel of the zodiac moving round through its spaces infinite. He could not help loving a handy Latmism (especially with elision beauty added), any more than Gray, any more than Wordsworth—on the sly."—LOWELL, *My Study Windows*, p. 29

120-243 *d. personification of Winter: the simple amusements of a Winter evening at Olney compared with the fashionable ones of London; reading aloud, music, religious converse, versus routs, cards, the theatre.*

121 Psalm cxlvii. 16, "He giveth snow like wool: he scattereth the hoar-frost like ashes."

126 *A sliding car.* A sledge.

130 *Undawning.* A word coined by Cowper.

139 *Intimate.* Inward, heart-felt; like German "innig."

145 *Pert.* An adjective used as a substantive; compare "an ancient "

148 *Cough their own knell.* A pathetic fallacy. See *Sofa*, 1. 269

149 *Silent.* Because they bore one another.

Quake. Shiver, as below, 1. 386. "Retires, content to quake so they be wanned." They fan themselves, though they are cold, from pure affectation.

152 *Lawn.* French, "linon;" Latin, "linum," probably a fine white material,

"Lawn as white as driven snow,
Cyprus black as e'er was crow."

—*Winter's Tale*, iv. 4, 220

Though Milton has—

"And sable stole of Cipres lawn."

—*Penseroso*, 35.

158 For the social picture compare Tennyson's *In Memonam*, lxxxviii.

Cowper himself was the reader. He is constantly asking his correspondents to lend or buy him books to read aloud. Lady Austen was the lyricist.

161 *Shakes out*. What is the metaphor?

162 *Symphonious*. "The sound

Symphonious of ten thousand harps "

—MILTON, *P. l.*, vii.

163 *Charming strife*. An oxymoron. Cf. Horace, "concordia discors." Cf. *Sofa*, 1. 755

164 *Beguile*. Take away or conceal its tediousness. See *Garden*, 1. 262, "deceive the time;" and Horace, "Studio fallente laborem."

168 Compare Wordsworth's complaint, "Plain living and high thinking are no more."

170 *Patriots*. Such as Cincinnatus, Fabricius, &c. See *Classical Dictionary*.

181 *Themes*. 'Themes exciting' seems used as a nominative absolute, though, if the stopping be right, it must be a *nominativus pendens*.

183 *Pointing wand*. Like the divining wand, with which it was imagined that certain persons could discover springs of water.

189 "O noctes caenaeque deum."—HORACE, *Sat.* ii. 6, 65. See rest of the passage.

190 *The Sabine bard*. So called from his Sabine farm.

195 *Tragic fur*. The fur which kings and queens of tragedy wear, so Milton talks of the "Storck fur."

198 *Flippant*. Flip or fillip is a word formed to represent the sharp blow with something thin and flexible. Hence flippant, nimble-tongued, pert, saucy. Cowper is thinking probably of Sheridan, who brought out *The Rivals* in 1757, *The School for Scandal* in 1777, *The Critic* in 1779.

203 *Master spring*. The principal spring on which the rest of the mechanism depends; so "master-key."

207 *Cards*. Said to have been invented to amuse the madness of Charles VI.

211 Compare W. R. Spencer—

" Ah, who to sober measurement
Time's happy fleetness brings,
When birds of paradise have lent
Their plumage for his wings."

212 Notice the alliteration.

213 *Masquerade*. From Italian "maschera," from low Latin "masca," allied to "macula," a spot; seemingly a different word from mask, which comes from low Latin "maschia," a sorceress.

214 The world's time, *i.e.*, time as spent by ungodly men, is pictured as a bird of variegated plumage with a tail like a peacock, but coloured with marks like the four suits of cards.

217 The real allegorical meaning of the four suits is said to be

as follows : hearts represent bravery, spades and diamonds (French, "carreau"), aims, and clubs, food.

221 *Billiard mace*. Billiards, a game invented in England, became fashionable in France under Louis XIV., who was ordered by his physicians to play billiards after meals.

227 *The backstring*. The pinafore.

243-333 *An address to evening*. *A brown study*. *Seeing faces in the fire, while the snow is silently falling outside*.

Compare Wordsworth's *Personal Talk*.

245 *Methinks*. Me is a dative ; "' it thinks me, " "es diinkt mir." So Shakespeare —

"When it thinks best unto your royal self."

— *Richard III.* iii. I, 63.

256 *Pageantry*. Pageant, originally the scaffolding erected for a pageant ; derivation uncertain.

258 *Of an ampler round*. The moon when seen just above the horizon appears larger, partly because it is often seen through mist, partly because it is easier to compare it with terrestrial objects.

267 *Drawing-rooms*. Withdrawing-rooms. For clipped prefix, ci. "'gan. *Sofa*, 1. 71, with note.

276 *Uncouthly*. Uncouth, properly unknown. A.-S., "cuth," **cunnan," to know.

277 *Not undelightful*. *Meiosis*, the figure by which more is intended than is expressed.

282 *Mercurial*. A peison born when the planet Mercury was in the ascendant was thought to share the character of that planet, to be lighthearted and gay. Cf. jovial, saturnine.

284 *I am conscious*. *'Of" is omitted because of the *'confess" which governs "soul" as a direct object.

300 *As* = *as* if. See below, 1. 499.

310 Cf. Sophocles, fragment,

ἰσθὺς ἄνθρωπος.

315' *Forceful*. Common in Dryden and Pope.

"Through Pans' shield the forceful weapon went."

—POPE.

333 How can snow form a warm covering for the grass ?

333-374 *The waggoner in winter*.

335 "Spinosa Erycina serens in pectore curas."—CATULLUS.

343 *Sore*. See *Sofa*, 1. 25.

351 *Brunt*, properly *burning*, so a swift or furious onset. Hudibras has "the heavy brunt of cannon-ball."

Tempestuous night. Cf. Virgil, *Æn*, iii. 194 : Imber noctem hiememque ferens."

352 *Puckered*. Wrinkled like the top of a tied-up poke or bag. *And in my account*, &c. Thrice happy, for so I account you, because denied, &c. How far do you agree with Cowper's
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estimate of the ploughman's happiness? A higher organism involves a greater sensitiveness both to pleasures and pains. Can you suggest any criterion by which to judge which is the happier, the more or the less refined nature? Consult Mill's *Utilitarianism*, *ad init.*

364. *That breathes the spleen.* Paraphrase. See *Sofa*, 1. 455-

Searches. Like a surgeon probing a wound.

367 *Waggon.* Wagon is etymologically the more correct spelling. A.-S., "waegen;" German, "wagen"

369 *Thine helpless charge.* Thine instead of thy, because separated from its substantive by the adjective, and preceding the aspirate. Thy is the corruption of thine. The two forms are interchangeable in early English both before vowels and consonants. What is the rule in modern English for the use of "mine" and "thine"?

Thine helpless charge. Pursuing the metaphor of the wife.

374-429 *The waggoner's family, as it appears on the father's return at night. A poor but honest household, too proud to beg, though others less worthy, but more importunate, obtain relief. Hopes in store for the future.* Compare with the picture *The Cotters Saturday Night* of Burns.

374 *Yet.* Applies to each of the following adjectives.

386 *So.* See note on *Garden*, 1. 806.

391 *Taper.* Show the connection between the verb and the noun.

392 *Dangled along, &c.* A vivid description of the long-wicked dips carried home from the shop.

394. *Sauce.* Used for any relish, like the Scotch word "kitchen.* So in the proverb, "hunger is the best sauce."

397, 398 As an illustration of this truth we may quote the statement of the Rev. A. D'Orsey, that the average Dorsetshire labourer has not 300 words in his vocabulary.

399 *With all this thrift they thrive not.* Paronymous or conjugate words (*i.e.*, different parts of speech from the same root) often acquire widely different significations, *e.g.*, sorrow and sorry, import and important. Give other instances.

401 *Inventory.* Is the word used in its proper sense here *

Skillet. From Old French *escuellette*, dim. of *escuelle*, Latin *scutella*, a dish. In the *Rambler* Dr Johnson thus describes Lady Bartle, the country housewife:—"It is indeed the great business of her life to watch the skillet on the fire, to see it simmer with the due degree of heat, and to snatch it off at the moment of projection."

411 How can a frown be called rough?

Insolent rebuffs of knaves in office. Quote from Hamlet's soliloquy. Who are here meant by knaves in office?

The first Poor-Law dates from the forty-third year of Queen Elizabeth. From the indiscriminate system of out-door relief, and from the administrators of relief being appointed by others than the ratepayers, the country was gradually brought to the verge of ruin, large tracts of land being left uncultivated because the poor-rates more than swallowed up the produce. In the fifth and sixth years of William IV. it was enacted that guardians of the poor should be elected by the ratepayers in each parish, and that no relief should be given to any person except in the workhouse. Our present system is a compromise between that of Elizabeth and William IV. For its working see Professor Fawcett's *Pauperism*.

427 / *mean the man*. Mr Smith, a rich banker, afterwards created Lord Carrington. "How I love and honour that man ! For many reasons I dare not tell him how much. That line of Horace, '*Di tibi divitias dederunt artemque fruendi*,' was never half so applicable to the poet's friend as to Mr Smith. My bosom burns to immortalise him."—COWPER'S letter to Unwin quoted by Mr Benham. Cf. Pope's *Man of Ross*, who "did good by stealth, and blushed to find it fame."

429-466 *A pendant to the last picture, the robber of hen-roosts and gardens*.

431 *Sottish*. Fr. "sot," Give other derivations conveying a moral lesson. For suffix see note on *Garden*, 1. 772.

434 *Compensate*. Notice the accent. Less than fifty years ago Rogers in his *Table Table* wrote "Balcony is bad enough, but cdntemplate makes me sick."

437 *Plashed*. Formed by half-breaking the branches or quick-sets, and interweaving them with the unbroken branches. To "plash" or "plush" are ultimately from the Latin *pluttre*.

439 *Lame to*. So Shakespeare, "vulgar to sense," "incorrect to heaven."

441 *Laden most and heaviest*. As much and as heavily as possible. *Laden heaviest*. On the analogy of heavy-laden.

447 *Chanticleer*. It is not clear whether it comes direct from the Latin "canticularius," or through the French "chanfre d'air." Dame Partlet (Madame Pertelot, as Chaucer calls her), is from "partlet" a woman's ruff. *Harem*, from Arabic "harama," to forbid, to deny access.

449 *The princely bird*. Cf.

"Thus real as a prince is in his hall,
Leve I this chaunteclere in his pasture."
—CHAUCER.

456 Themselves being made, &c., because they are more exposed.

462 *Oh for a law*. A natural wish prompted by indignation ; but could such a law as Cowper wishes be made or carried out ?

466-513 *Intoxication is at the root of half the crime of England*.

A description of a public-house. The Government is to blame, for it reaps the benefits of drunkenness.

467 *Merry land.* It still deserves its constant epithet though lean and beggared. Cf. *Timepiece*, 1. 206.

"England, with all thy faults I love thee still."

472 *There sit, &c.*

¹¹ The pipe, with solemn interposing puff,
Makes half a sentence at a time enough :
The dozing sages drop the drowsy strain,
And pause and puff—and speak and pause again."

—*Conversation*, 245.

He proceeds in the same passage to call it a pernicious weed as banishing the fair, its only justifiable use according to Cowper being to kill vermin. On the other side of the question consult Charles Lamb's *Ode to Tobacco*. When and by whom was tobacco introduced into England? Explain "Indian."

475 "Lethaeos latices et longa obhvia potat."—VIRGIL.

476 Compare George Eliot's famous description of the Rain-bow Inn and its company in *Silas Marner*.

479 *As it wept.* ** If ' is not understood, but the condition is implied in the verb.

481-488 Express these lines in plain prose.

481 *She.* An anticipatory use of the pronoun. Cf.

482 *fell Discord arbitress.* A combination of two passages of Milton:—

"Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray."

—*P.L.*, li. 908, and *P.L.*, iv. 996-1004.

484 *Undecisive.* Can you find any rule for the use of un- and in-?

486 *Poise.* Equipoise. What is *avoirduois*?

489 *As ornamental.* Compare Dean Ramsay's *Scottish Life and Character*:—"A sister had been speaking of her brother as much addicted to this habit. * Our John swears awfu', and we try to correct him; but,' she added in a candid and apologetic tone, 'nae doot it is a great set-off to conversation.'"

490 *Modern senators.* Cowper's *ci-devant* fellow-clerk, Lord Thurlow, was notorious even in that day for his powers of swearing, whence partly he got his nickname of "the Thunderer."

499 *Encumbered.* Old French "combrer," Latin "cumulus.* Give other instances of parasitic *b*. See *Garden*, 1. 462.

"Casts them out. Explain.

503 *Stinks, and is of use.* Are the two verbs logically co-ordinate!

504 *The Excise,* A corruption of *assise*, the tax imposed

by Sessions. Johnson's definition of Excise in his *Dictionary* is well known: "A hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged, not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom the excise is paid."

507 *Midas*. A mythical king of Phrygia, to whom Dionysus, in return for his hospitality, granted that all he touched should turn to gold. Praying to be freed from the baneful gift, he was told to bathe in the Pactolus. He bathed, and the river ever after ran gold.

509-512 The inference is most illogical. The Government does not encourage or sanction drunkenness by taxing spintuous drinks.

511 *Gloriously drunk*. Notice the *double entente*.

"Kings maybe blest, but Tarn was glorious,
O'er all the ills of life victorious."—*Tarn d Shanier*.

513-553 *A sigh for the pastoral simplicity of old times. Now even our dairy-maids imitate French fashions.*

515 Virgil's *Eclogues* or *Bucolics*. Arcadia, the Switzerland of Greece, was celebrated in classical times for its primitive simplicity; hence the name, ("orta prior luna gens."—OVID).

516 Sir Philip Sydney, *b.* 1554, *d.* 1586, wrote *The Arcadia of the Countess of Pembroke*, a pastoral romance in prose dedicated to his sister. He thus describes the Arcadia of dreamland: "There were hills which garnished their proud heights with stately trees; humble vallies whose bare estate seemed comforted with the refreshing of silver rivers; meadows enamelled with all sorts of eye pleasing flowers. . . . each pasture stored with sheep feeding with sober security, while the pretty lambs with bleating oratory craved the dammes' comfort: here a shepherd's boy piping as though he should never be old; there a young shepherdess knitting and withall singing, and it seemed that her voice comforted her hands to work, and her hands kept time to her voice music."

517 *Dianas*.

"You seem to me as Dian in her orb,
As chaste," &c.

—SHAKESPEARE, *Much Ado*, iv. i, 58.

520 Borrowed from Virgil, *Georgic* ii. 473.

"extrema per illos

Justitia excedens terris vestigia pressit."

Virgil is speaking of the country.

Is "yielding" an ornamental or essential epithet?

524 In what sense can speech be said to be "reclaimed"?

525-529 A supposed objection.

528 *A gay delirium*. "Non philosophorum indicia sed delirantium somma."—CICERO. "Deliro," from "de," and "lira," a furrow.

533 *Tramontane*. Beyond the mountains; the word is Italian. "La tramontane" is the north wind coming beyond the Alps. "Ultramontane," on the other hand, is French, and is used of strict adherence to Papacy as opposed to the Gallican or national Church. "La tramontane" in French is the pole-star; "perdre la tramontane," is to lose one's bearings, to be all at sea. The only example the dictionaries give analogous to the meaning in the present passage is from the *Tatter*, where Steel speaks of "triamontane lovers," in the sense, of strange, fantastic.

Stumbles. So Shakespeare uses, "to fall an axe," "to remember," "for to remind," &c. So Pope—

"Lely on animated canvas stole
The sleepy eye, that spoke the melting soul."

540 *Lappet*. A little loose flap, the lace hanging of a lady's hat or bonnet. For suffix, see note on *Garden*, 1. 753.

541 *Superbly raised*. The fashion which prevailed in the last half of the 18th century. "I remember several ladies who were once near seven feet high that at present want some inches of five." "I very much admire that those female architects who raise such wonderful structures out of ribands, lace, and wire, have not been recorded for their respective inventions.—*Spectator*, No. 98.

See also Wright's *History of Caricature*, p. 451. "A disaster."

543 *Wig-weaver*. "Wig" is an abbreviation of "periwig." "Peruke" is the French "perruque," ultimately from Latin *pilus*, a hair. Cowper himself wore a wig, and made no secret of it. "There was more hair in the world," he writes to Lady Hesketh, "than ever had the honour to belong to me."

545 *Elbows ruffled*. With short sleeves ending in a ruffle or frill. Show the connection of a *ruffled* temper.

546 Fashion has reproduced in our own day the "head magnified beyond all human size," and the high-heeled French shoes.

In illustration of the latter fashion, Lord Mahon relates that Governor Pitt (William Pitt's grandfather) was enabled, in travelling, to conceal in one of his heels the great diamond which he had brought from the East Indies.

553 *The town has corrupted the country; hence housebreakers and highwaymen abound. The rich who ought to act as magistrates flock to town, those who stay slumber at their post or take bribes.*

554 The vestal's robe was a stola, over which was an upper vestment made of white linen.

555 *The fashion*. Just as we speak of the market, the times.

566 Cowper would probably not have written, "slumbers un-

alarmed," if he had remembered that "alarm "and "'larum" are really the same word. The original form of the word is seen in Holland's *Pliny* (quoted by Richardson). " This said, he rum down with as great a noise and shouting as he could, crying, * Al' arme ! help ! help ! citizens, the castle is taken by the enemy, come away to defence.' "

The "u" of "alarum"* is meaningless representing the tolled"r."

579 *Fatal*. Fated.

578, 579- Pessimism, in which Cowper happily is not consistent. See note on 1. 14.

The expression seems borrowed from Horace :—

" ~~Ætas~~ parentum pejor avis tulit
Nos nequiores mox daturos
Progenem vitiosorem."

580 *Power*. Imperial power, referring especially to our Indian Empire.

581 Show that "excess" is really a climax. We can speak of culpable luxury, but we cannot speak of culpable excess.

582 *Scrofulous and itchy plague*. Scrofula taints the whole system, and is hereditary. Shakespeare, *Julius Casar*, iv. 3, says—

" Cassius, you yourself
Are much condemned to have an *itching* palm
To sell and mart your offices for gold."

585 *Scale of order*. What does "order" mean?

583 *From the chariot to the plough*. The ploughman may be said to feel the evil effects of excess, but he cannot be said to be tainted by excess in the same sense as the nobleman in his chariot. For *chariot*, see *Sofa* 1. 755.

595 *Bears the sword*. Romans xiii. 4.

597 *His worship*. Himself in his character as magistrate. Derive.

603 *Ghostly*. " Save and defend us from our ghostly enemies. "

Adjectives are rarely placed after their nouns, except — (i), in legal phrases borrowed from the French ; (2), when they have a participial force. Give instances.

605 *Dainty*. Delicate, nice, scrupulous. Old French, " dam-tie ;" Latin, " dignitatem."

607 *Milk-white hand*. Cf. "Dilettante, delicate-handed priest." — Tennyson, *Maud*.

Palm. See quotation, 1. 582.

609 *Foh*. Faugh, fob, fie, phew, all express the sound we make in driving air through our lips when stopping our nose at a disagreeable smell.

610 *Audit*. Audience. What is "audit-day"?

611. *Propiti'nts.* What part of the sentence ?

612 *His en and speeds.* Speeds may be here intransitive 01 transitive, but the first seems the most natural sense.

613-59 *But most of all the militia has wrought the ruin of the country. The innocent rustic is taken from his home, corrupted by his three years' service, and returned discontented and demoralized.*

In 1756, when the country was apprehending a French invasion, considerable bodies of Hanoverian and Hessian troops were brought over; but the country showed indignation at being indebted for its defence to foreign mercenaries, and a national militia was again raised (as at the beginning of Charles II.'s reign), under an Act of Parliament, 30 George II. The Act was found to answer well, and we may notice that the greater part of the 16,000 British troops who won the battle of Talavera had been recently draughted from the militia. Balloting for the militia ceased in 1830. The last change in this branch of the service is that introduced by Mr Cardwell's Army Regulation Bill, the general effect of which has been to amalgamate moie closely the militia and the army.

614 Patriotism, or national defence.

619-623 Cowper does not do justice to a noble profession which has furnished its full share of English worthies. For the ideal soldier see Wordsworth's *Happy Warrior*. Prussia has shown what compulsory military service may do for the education of a nation,

623 *The clown, &c.* A creature of the poet's brain, to be found in Arcadia, not in England.

627 Comp ire Erkmann Chatrian's *Le Conscript*.

631 *Serjtant.* French, "sergent;" Latin, "servientem," "Servant" is a doublet of the same word.

642 *Meat.* Hair-powder.

645 Cowper forgets or ignores the fact that he may if he prefers stay in the r militia, or enlist in the regular army.

647 *To a narch.* Cf. Latin, "ad citharam." Seenote on *Winter Evening*, 1. 27.

659-691 *The vices of corporate bodies illustrated by boroughs merchants, and soldiers.*

659 *Man in society.* Notice that the contrast is not between man in society and man m solitude, but between natural and artificial societies.

664 The subsequent lines fully explain "regal warrant" and "bond for interest sake."

665 *For interesf sake.* See note on *Garden*, 1. 661.

Swarming into clans. The phrase is not an apt one, as it suggests voluntary combination, whereas Cowper has just been dwelling on the hardships of compulsory enlistment

Clan. The word and the thing are both Gaelic.

671 *Chartered boroughs.* A borough is a town which has the right of sending a Burgess to Parliament. As this right was originally conferred by royal charter, it is called a chartered borough. Cowper is here speaking of municipal corporations, not of the election of members of Parliament.

Burghers. For the present qualifications of a burgher, see Fonblanque's *How we are Governed*, p. 69.

The main. Cf. "Goes it against the mam of Poland" (*Hamlet*, iv. i), and "'Twas caviare to the general" (*Hamlet*, n. 2).

676 *Ofsin.* Justify the preposition.

The chanties. The duties of kindness and affection. Show how the word charity has got its restricted meaning

681 See Macaulay's *Essays*, "Lord Clive," vol. in p 5.

689 *Atones.* Derive.

690 *Gallantry.* An equivocal word, though the sense is here clearly determined by the context. The connection of the two meanings will be seen at once if it is remembered that the first qualification of the *preux chevalier* was to be constant in his *devoirs* to the sex. We got the word from the Italian. The Italians christened their late king, Victor Emmanuel, "II re galantuomo."

691-801 *But though thus infected by the vices of the town, to me the country is still divine. Those poets who sang her charms—Virgil, Milton, Cowley—were the favourites of my boyhood. The love of the country is born in all, and can never be quite extinguished, witness the suburban villa, the window-garden. Some are born for greatness, I for rural ease and leisure.*

694 *Had found me.* Why not "I had found?" Cf. Virg. *Eclogue*, i. 27, "Libertas quæ sera tamen respexit inertem."

He refers to his school-boy days at Westminster.

700 *Rural too the first-born efforts.* The earliest extant poems of Cowper are rather amatory than rural. They were published posthumously by James Croft, the brother-in-law of Theodora Cowper, the poet's cousin, whom he addresses in them under the name of Delia. See *Life and Globe Edition Preface*, xviii.

702 *Jingling her poetic bells.* The metaphor seems to be from the fool's cap and bells.

710 Cowper was a warm admirer of Milton, whose language he constantly imitates in the *Task* (see notes *passim*). He intended publishing an annotated edition of his poems, and his notes to the first and second books of *Paradise Lost* have been published in his collected works. What parts of *Paradise Lost* would be most likely to have charmed Cowper as a boy?

720 *Possessing it at last.* What part of his life does he refer to? See *life*.

723 *Ingenious Cowley.* B. 1618, d. 1667, the poet of the

Royalists, as Milton was of the Commonwealth. Macaulay speaks of "the quaint ingenuity which had deformed the verses of Donne and been a blemish on those of Cowley."—*Hist. of England*, i. 396 Johnson (*Lives of the Poets*) calls his style "metaphysic" (z., full of conceits) "and fashionable." Pope (1st Epistle or 2d bk. of *Horace*) in the same sense writes:—

"Who now reads Cowley? if he pleases yet,
His moral pleases, not his *pointed* wtt;
Forget his Epic, nay, Pindaric Art;
But still I love the language of his heart."

One example will illustrate the character of his ingenuity or perverted wit. He has been describing the war of the elements—

"Till they to number and first rules were brought:
Water and air he for the tenor chose,
Earth made the bass, the treble, flame arose."

His epic of which Pope speaks was the *Davideis*, in twelve books, of which he only completed four.

Courtly tho retired. Cowley had been a constant adherent of Charles I., and accompanied the queen to Paris, where, as secretary of Lord Jermyn, he rendered great services to the cause, cyphering and decyphering all the correspondence which passed between the king and queen. At the Restoration he found, with many others, that the royal promises of reward were not kept, and retired discontented into Sussex. Sprat, his enthusiastic biographer, gives a slightly different version, which agrees better with Cowper:—"He was satiated with the arts of a court; which sort of life, though his virtue made it innocent to him, yet nothing could make it quiet." He sought "the true delight of solitary studies, of temperate pleasures, and a moderate revenue below the malice and flatteries of fortune." The "moderate revenue" was derived from a farm at Chertsey on the Thames, of which he obtained the lease through the influence of Lord Jermyn, then Earl of St Albans.

"There his first lays majestic Denham sung:
There the last numbers flow'd from Cowley's tongue.
—POPE, *Windsor Forest*.

758 *Obtains.* The Latin "*obtinet*," holds good.

750-753. Cf. Milton, *P. Z.*, ix. 445-455-

757 *The well he cultivates.* A bold metaphor for the damp dark garden shut in on all sides by walls.

760 *Livery.* "And livery is also the upper weed which a servant-man weareth, so called, as I suppose, *for* that it was delivered and taken from him at pleasure."

Spencer's *View of the State of Ireland* quoted in Trench's *Select Glossary*, where see the other meanings.

761 *The exuberant whole*. Though we constantly use "whole" as a substantive, we could hardly join an adjective to it. So Pope, *Essay on Man*, Ep. i. 248. "The amazing whole."

765 *Mignonette*, or, as the Frenchman spells it, "mignonnette."

774 *Crazy*. Rickety, insecure. See note on *Timepiece*, l. 60.

762-780 Any one who has visited a court in the east end of London, or seen one of the exhibitions of window garden flowers, started by Baroness Coutts, will recognise the truth of Cowper's description.

789-793 Contrast this with l. 578 and note.

798 Cf. Virgil's "flumina amem silvasque *inglonus*."

799 *Vale of life*. Is this used in the same sense as *'the vale of years' above °

BOOK V.

THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

"THIS morning; and the sun, with ruddy orb
Ascending, fires th' horizon; while the clouds,
That crowd away before the driving wind,
More ardent as the disk emerges more,
Resemble most some city in a blaze,
Seen through the leafless wood. His slanting ray
Slides ineffectual down the snowy vale,
And, tinging all with his own rosy hue,
From ev'ry herb and ev'ry spiry blade
Stretches a length of shadow o'er the field; 10
Mine, spindling into longitude immense,
In spite of gravity, and sage remark
That I myself am but a fleeting shade,
Provokes me to a smile. With eye askance
I view the muscular proportioned limb
Transform'd to a lean shank; the shapeless pair,
As they design'd to mock me, at my side
Take step for step, and, as I near approach
The cottage, walk along the plastered wall,
Prepost'rous sight! the legs without the man. 20
The verdure of the plain lies buried deep
Beneath the dazzling deluge, and the bents
And coarser grass upspeanng o'er the rest,
Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine
Conspicuous, and, in bright apparel clad,
And fledged with icy feathers, nod superb.
The cattle mourn in corners, where the fence
Screens them, and seem, half petrified, to sleep

In unrecumbent sadness. There they wait
 Their wonted fodder, not, like hung'nng man, 30
 Fretful if unsuppled, but silent, meek,
 And patient of the slow-paced swain's delay.
 He from the stack carves out th' accustom'd load,
 Deep-plunging, and again deep-plunging oft
 His broad keen knife into the solid mass:
 Smooth as a wall the upright remnant stands,
 With such undeviating and even force
 He severs it away: no needless care,
 Lest storms should overset the leaning pile
 Deciduous, or its own unbalanced weight. 40
 Forth goes the woodman, leaving unconcern'd
 The cheerful haunts of man, to wield the axe
 And drive the wedge in yonder forest drear,
 From morn to eve his solitary task.
 Shaggy and lean and shrewd, with pointed ears
 And tail cropp'd short, half lurcher and half cur,
 His dog attends him. Close behind his heel
 Now creeps he slow, and now with many a frisk,
 Wide-scamp'nng, snatches up the drifted snow
 With iv'ry teeth, or ploughs it with his snout; 50
 Then shakes his powdered coat and barks for joy.
 Heedless of all his pranks the sturdy churl
 Moves right toward the mark; nor stops for aught,
 But now and then, with pressure of his thumb,
 T' adjust the fragrant charge of a short tube,
 That fumes beneath his nose; the trailing cloud
 Streams far behind him, scenting all the air.
 Now from the roost, or from the neighboring pale,
 Where, diligent to catch the first faint gleam
 Of smiling day, they gossip'd side by side, 60
 Come trooping at the housewife's well-known call
 The feather'd tribes domestic; half on wing,
 And half on foot, they brush the fleecy flood,
 Conscious, and fearful of too deep a plunge.
 The sparrows peep, and quit the shelt'ring eaves
 To seize the fair occasion; well they eye
 The scatter'd grain, and, thievishly resolved
 T' escape th' impending famine, often scared
 As oft return, a pert, voracious kind.
 Clean riddance quickly made, one only care 70
 Remains to each, the search of sunny nook,

Or shed impervious to the blast. Resign'd
 To sad necessity, the cock foregoes
 His wonted strut, and, wading at their head
 With well-consider'd steps, seems to resent
 His altered gait, and stateliness retrench'd.
 How find the myriads, that in summer cheer
 The hills and valleys with their ceaseless songs,
 Due sustenance, or where subsist they now?
 Earth yields them nought: the impson'd worm is
 safe 80
 Beneath the frozen clod; all seeds of herbs
 Lie covert! close, and berry-bearing thorns
 That feed the thrush (whatever some suppose),
 Afford the smaller minstrel no supply.
 The long-protracted rigour of the year
 Thins all their numerous flocks. In chinks and holes
 Ten thousand seek an unmolested end,
 As instinct prompts, self-buried ere they die.
 The very rooks and daws forsake the fields,
 Where neither grub nor root nor earth-nut now 90
 Repays their labour more; and perch'd aloft
 By the way-side, or stalking in the path,
 Lean pensioners upon the traveler's track,
 Pick up their nauseous dole, though sweet to them,
 Of voided pulse, or half-digested grain.
 The streams are lost amid the splendid blank,
 O'erwhelming all distinction. On the flood
 Indurated and fix'd the snowy weight
 Lies undissolved, while silently beneath
 And unperceived the current steals away; 100
 Not so where, scornful of a check, it leaps
 The mill-dam, dashes on the restless wheel,
 And wantons in the pebbly gulf below.
 No frost can bind it there. Its utmost force
 Can but arrest the light and smoky mist
 That in its fall the liquid sheet throws wide.
 And see where it has hung th' embroider'd banks
 With forms so various, that no pow'rs of art,
 The pencil, or the pen, may trace the scene!
 Here glitt'ning turrets rise, upbearing high no
 (Fantastic misarrangement) on the roof
 Large growth of what may seem the sparkling trees,
 And shrubs of fairy land. The crystal drops

That trickle down the branches, fast congeal'd,
 Shoot into pillars of pellucid length,
 And prop the pile they but adorn'd before.
 Here grotto within grotto safe defies
 The sunbeam. There imboss'd and fretted wild,
 The growing wonder takes a thousand shapes
 Capricious, in which fancy seeks in vain 120
 The likeness of some object seen before.
 Thus nature works as if to mock at art,
 And in defiance of her rival pow'rs ;
 By these fortuitous and random strokes
 Performing such inimitable feats,
 As she with all her rules can never reach.
 Less worthy of applause though more admired,
 Because a novelty, the work of man,
 Imperial mistress of the fur-clad Russ !
 Thy most magnificent and mighty freak, 130
 The wonder of the North. No forest fell
 When thou wouldst build: no quarry sent its stores
 To enrich thy walls; but thou didst hew the floods,
 And make thy marble of the glassy wave.
 In such a palace Anstaeus found
 Cyrene, when he bore the plaintive tale
 Of his lost bees to her maternal ear.
 In such a palace poetry might place
 The armoury of winter, where his troops,
 The gloomy clouds, find weapons, arrowy sleet, 140
 Skin-piercing volley, blossom-bruising hail,
 And snow that often blinds the traveller's course,
 And wraps him in an unexpected tomb.
 Silently as a dream the fabric rose.
 No sound of hammer or of saw was there.
 Ice upon ice, the well-adjusted parts
 Were soon conjoin'd, nor other cement ask'd
 Than water interfused to make them one.
 Lamps gracefully disposed, and of all hues,
 Illumined ev'ry side. A wat'ry light 150
 Glean'd through the clear transparency, that seem'd
 Another moon new-risen, or meteor fall'n
 From heaven to earth, of lambent flame serene.
 So stood the brittle prodigy, though smooth
 And slipp'ry the materials, yet frost-bound
 Firm as a rock. Nor wanted aught within

That royal residence might well befit,
 For grandeur or for use. Long wavy wreaths
 Of flow'rs, that fear'd no enemy but warmth,
 Blush'd on the panels. Mirror needed none 160
 Where all was vitreous, but in order due
 Convivial table and commodious seat
 (What seem'd at least commodious seat) were there,
 Sofa and couch and high-built throne august.
 The same lubricity was found in all,
 And all was moist to the warm touch; a scene
 Of evanescent glory, once a stream,
 And soon to slide into a stream again.
 Alas ! 'twas but a mortifying stroke
 Of undesigned seventy, that glanced 170
 (Made by a monarch) on her own estate,
 On human grandeur and the courts oi kings.
 'Twas transient in its nature, as in show
 'Twas durable; as worthless, as it seem'd
 Intrinsically precious; to the foot
 Treach'rous and false; it smiled, and it was cold.

Great princes have great playthings. Some ha\ e
 play'd
 At hewing mountains into men, and some
 At building human wonders mountain high.
 Some have amused the dull sad years of life 180
 (Life spent in indolence, and therefore sad)
 With schemes of monumental fame, and sought
 By pyramids and mausolean pomp,
 Short-lived themselves, t' immortalise their bones.
 Some seek diversion in the tented field,
 And make the sorrows of mankind their sport.
 But war's a game which, were their subjects wise,
 Kings should not play at. Nations would do well
 T' extort their truncheons from the puny hands
 Of heroes, whose infirm and baby minds 190
 Are gratified with mischief, and who spoil,
 Because men suffer it, their toy the world.

When Babel was confounded, and the great
 Confed'racy of projectors wild and vain
 Was split into diversity of tongues,
 Then as a shepherd beparates his flock,

These to the upland, to the valley those,
 God drave asunder and assign'd their lot
 To all the nations. Ample was the boon
 He gave them, in its distribution fair 200
 And equal, and he bade them dwell in peace.
 Peace was awhile their care: they plough'd and sow'd,
 And reap'd their plenty without grudge or strife.
 But violence can never longer sleep
 Than human passions please. In ev'ry heart
 Are sown the sparks that kindle fiery war ;
 Occasion needs but fan them, and they blaze.
 Cam had already shed a brother's blood :
 The deluge wash'd it out, but left unquench'd
 The seeds of murder in the breast of man. 210
 Soon, by a righteous judgment, in the line
 Of his descending progeny was found
 The first artificer of death; the shrewd
 Contriver who first sweated at the forge,
 And forced the blunt and yet unbloodied steel
 To a keen edge, and made it bright for war.
 Him, Tubal named, the Vulcan of old times,
 The sword, and falchion their inventor claim,
 And the first smith was the first murd'rer's son.
 His art survived the waters; and ere long, 220
 When man was multiplied and spread abroad
 In tribes and clans, and had begun to call
 These meadows and that range of hills his own,
 The tasted sweets of property begat
 Desire of more; and industry in some
 To improve and cultivate their just demesne,
 Made others covet what they saw so fair.
 Thus war began on earth. These fought for spoil,
 And those in self-defence. Savage at first
 The onset, and irregular. At length 230
 One eminent above the rest, for strength,
 For stratagem, or courage, or for all,
 Was chosen leader. Him they served in war,
 And him in peace, for sake of warlike deeds
 Rev'renced no less. Who could with him compare?
 Or who so worthy to control themselves
 As he, whose prowess had subdued their foes ?
 Thus war, affording field for the display
 Of virtue, made one chief, whom times of peace,

Which have their exigencies too, and call 240
 For skill in government, at length made king.
 King was a name too proud for man to wear
 With modesty and meekness, and the crown,
 So dazzling in their eyes who set it on,
 Was sure t' intoxicate the brows it bound.
 It is the abject property of most,
 That being parcel of the common mass,
 And destitute of means to raise themselves,
 They sink and settle lower than they need.
 They know not what it is to feel within 250
 A comprehensive faculty, that grasps
 Great purposes with ease, that turns and wields,
 Almost without an effort, plans too vast
 For their conception, which they cannot move.
 Conscious of impotence they soon grow drunk
 With gazing, when they see an able man
 Step forth to notice; and besotted thus
 Build him a pedestal and say—Stand theie,
 And be our admiration and our praise.
 They roll themselves before him in the dust, 260
 Then most deserving in their own account
 When most extravagant in his applause,
 As if exalting him they raised themselves.
 Thus by degrees, self-cheated of their sound
 And sober judgment that he is but man,
 They derm-deify and fume him so
 That in due season he forgets it too.
 Inflated and astrut with self-conceit
 He gulps the windy diet, and ere long,
 Adopting their mistake, profoundly thinks 270
 The world was made in vain if not for him.
 Thenceforth they are his cattle: drudges, born
 To bear his burdens, drawing in his gears,
 And sweating in his service. His caprice
 Becomes the soul that animates them all.
 He deems a thousand, or ten thousand lives,
 Spent in the purchase of renown for him,
 An easy reck'ning, and they think the same.
 Thus kings were first invented, and thus kings
 Were burnish'd into heroes, and became 280
 The arbiters of this terraqueous swamp;
 Storks among frogs, that have but croak'd and died.

Strange that such folly, as lifts bloated man
To eminence fit only for a God.
Should ever drivel out of human lips,
Ev'n in the cradled weakness of the world !
Still stranger much, that when at length mankind
Had reach'd the sinewy firmness of their youth,
And could discriminate and argue well
On subjects more mysterious, they were yet 290
Babes in the cause of freedom, and should fear
And quake before the gods themselves had made.
But above measure strange, that neither proof
Of sad experience, nor examples set
By some whose patriot virtue has prevailed,
Can even now, when they are grown mature
In wisdom, and with philosophic deeds
Familiar, serve t'emancipate the rest!
Such dupes are men to custom, and so prone
To rev'rence what is ancient, and can plead 300
A course of long observance for its use,
That even servitude, the worst of ills,
Because delivered down from sire to son,
Is kept and guarded as a sacred thing.
But is it fit, or can it bear the shock
Of rational discussion, that a man,
Compounded and made up like other men
Of elements tumultuous, in whom lust
And folly in as ample measure meet,
As in the bosoms of the slaves he rules, 310
Should be a despot absolute, and boast
Himself the only freeman of his land?
Should when he pleases, and on whom he will,
Wage war, with any or with no pretence
Of provocation giv'n, or wrong sustain'd,
And force the beggaily last doit, by means
That his own humour dictates, from the clutch
Of poverty, that thus he may procure
His thousands, weary of penurious life,
A splendid opportunity to die? 320
Say ye, who (with less prudence than of old
Jotham ascribed to his assembled trees
In politic convention) put your trust
I' th' shadow of a bramble, and reclined
In fancied peace beneath his dang'rous branch,

Rejoice in him and celebrate his sway,
 Where find ye passive fortitude? Whence springs
 Your self-denying zeal that holds it good
 To stroke the prickly grievance, and to hang
 His thorns with streamers of continual praise? 330
 We too are friends to loyalty; we love
 The king who loves the law; respects his bounds,
 And reigns content within them; him we serve
 Freely and with delight, who leaves us free,
 But recollecting still that he is man,
 We trust him not too far. King though he be,
 And king in England, too, he may be weak
 And vain enough to be ambitious still,
 May exercise amiss his proper pow'rs,
 Or covet more than freemen choose to grant: 340
 Beyond that mark is treason. He is ours,
 T'administer, to guard, t'adorn the state,
 But not to warp, or change it. We are his,
 To serve him nobly in the common cause
 True to the death, but not to be his slaves.
 Mark now the difference, ye that boast your love
 Of kings, between your loyalty and ours.
 We love the man. The paltry pageant you.
 We the chief patron of the commonwealth;
 You the regardless author of its woes; 350
 We, for the sake of liberty, a king;
 You chains and bondage for a tyrant's sake.
 Our love is principle, and has its root
 In reason, is judicious, manly, free;
 Yours, a blind instinct, crouches to the rod,
 And licks the foot that treads it in the dust
 Were kingship as true treasure as it seems,
 Sterling, and worthy of a wise man's wish,
 I would not be a king to be beloved
 Causeless, and daub'd with undiscerning praise, 360
 Where love is mere attachment to the throne,
 Not to the man who fills it as he ought.

Whose freedom is by suft'rance, and at will
 Of a superior, he is never free.
 Who lives, and is not weary of a life
 Exposed to manacles, deserves them well.
 The state that strives for liberty, though foil'd

And forced t' abandon what she bravely sought,
 Deserves at least applause for her attempt,
 And pity for her loss. But that's a cause 370
 Not often unsuccessful; pow'r usurp'd
 Is weakness when opposed; conscious of wrong
 Tis pusillanimous and prone to flight.
 But slaves that once conceive the glowing thought
 Of freedom, in that hope itself possess
 All that the contest calls for ; spirit, strength,
 The scorn of danger, and united hearts,
 The surest presage of the good they seek.

Then shame to manhood, and opprobrious more
 To France than all her losses and defeats, 380
 Old or of later date, by sea or land,
 Her house of bondage worse than that of old
 Which God avenged on Pharaoh—the Bastille !
 Ye horrid tow'rs, th' abode of broken hearts,
 Ye dungeons and ye cages of despair,
 That monarchs have supplied from age to age
 With music such as suits their sov'reign ears,
 The sighs and groans of miseiable men !
 There's not an English heart that would not leap
 To hear that ye were fall'n at last, to know 390
 That ev'n our enemies, so oft employ'd
 In forging chains for us, themselves were free.
 For he that values liberty, confines
 His zeal for her predominance within
 No narrow bounds; her cause engages him
 Wherever pleaded. 'Tis the cause of man.
 There dwell the most forlorn of human kind,
 Immured though unaccused, condemn'd untried,
 Cruelly spared, and hopeless of escape.
 There, like the visionary emblem seen 400
 By him of Babylon, life stands a stump,
 And filleted about with hoops of brass,
 Still lives, though all its pleasant boughs are gone,
 To count the hour-bell and expect no change;
 And ever as the sullen sound is heard,
 Still to reflect that, though a joyless note
 To him whose moments all have one dull pace,
 Ten thousand rovers in the world at large
 Account it music; that it summons some

To theatre, or jocund feast, or ball; 410
 The wearied hireling finds it a release
 From labour, and the lover, that has chid
 Its long delay, feels ev'ry welcome stroke
 Upon his heart-strings trembling with delight—
 To fly for refuge from distracting thought
 To such amusements, as ingenious woe
 Contrives, hard-shifting and without her tools—
 To read engraven on the mouldy walls,
 In stagg'ring types, his predecessor's tale,
 A sad memorial, and subjoin his own— 420
 To turn purveyor to an overgorged
 And bloated spider, till the pamper'd pest
 Is made familiar, watches his approach,
 Comes at his call, and serves him for a fiend—
 To wear out time in ruin'ning to and fro
 The studs that thick emboss his iron door,
 Then downward and then upward, then aslant
 And then alternate, with a sickly hope
 By dint of change to give his tasteless task
 Some relish, till the sum exactly found 430
 In all directions, he begins again—
 Oh comfortless existence ! hcomm'd around
 With woes, which who that suffers would not kneel
 And beg for exile, or the pangs of death ?
 That man should thus encroach on fellow man,
 Abridge him of his just and native rights,
 Eradicate him, tear him from his hold
 Upon th' endearments of domestic life
 And social, nip his fruitfulness and use,
 And doom him for perhaps a heedless word 440
 To barrenness and solitude and tears,
 Moves indignation; makes the name of king
 (Of king whom such prerogative can please)
 As dreadful as the Manichean god,
 Adored through fear, strong only to destroy.

'Tis liberty alone that gives the flow'r
 Of fleeting life its lustre and perfume,
 And we are weeds without it All constraint,
 Except what wisdom lays on evil men,
 Is evil; hurts the faculties, impedes 450
 Their progress in the road of science; blinds

The eyesight of discovery, and begets,
 In those that suffer it, a sordid mind
 Bestial, a meagre intellect, unfit
 To be the tenant of man's noble form.
 Thee therefore still, blameworthy as thou art,
 With all thy loss of empire, and though squeezed
 By public exigence, till annual food
 Fails for the craving hunger of the state,
 Thee I account still happy, and the chief 460
 Among the nations, seeing thou art free !
 My native nook of earth ! thy clime is rude,
 Replete with vapours, and disposes much
 All hearts to sadness, and none more than mine;
 Thine unadult'rate manners are less soft
 And plausible than social life requires,
 And thou hast need of discipline and art
 To give thee what politer France receives
 From Nature's bounty—that humane address
 And sweetness, without which no pleasure is 470
 In converse, either starved by cold reserve,
 Or flush'd with fierce dispute, a senseless brawl;
 Yet, being free, I love thee. For the sake
 Of that one feature, can be well content,
 Disgraced as thou hast been, poor as thou art,
 To seek no sublunary rest beside.
 But once enslaved, farewell! I could endure
 Chains nowhere patiently, and chains at home,
 Where I am free by birthright, not at all.
 Then what were left of roughness in the grain 480
 Of British natures, wanting its excuse
 That it belongs to freemen, would disgust
 And shock me. I should then with double pain
 Feel all the rigour of thy fickle clime;
 And, if I must bewail the blessing lost
 For which our Hampdens and our Sidneys bled,
 I would at least bewail it under skies
 Milder, among a people less austere,
 In scenes which, having never known me free,
 Would not reproach me with the loss I felt 490
 Do I forbode impossible events,
 And tremble at vain dreams? Heav'n grant I may.
 But th'age of virtuous politics is past,
 And we are deep in that of cold pretence.

Patriots are grown too shrewd to be sincere,
And we too wise to trust them. He that takes,
Deep in his soft credulity, the stamp
Design'd by loud declaimers on the part
Of liberty, themselves the slaves of lust,
Incurs derision for his easy faith 500
And lack of knowledge, and with cause enough.
For when was public virtue to be found,
Where private was not? Can he love the whole
Who loves no part? he be a nation's friend
Who is, in truth, the friend of no man there?
Can he be strenuous in his country's cause,
Who slights the chanties for whose dear sake
That country, if at all, must be beloved?
—'Tis therefore sober and good men are sad
For England's glory, seeing it wax pale 510
And sickly, while her champions wear their hearts
So loose to private duty, that no brain,
Healthful and undisturb'd by factious fumes,
Can dream them trusty to the gen'ral weal.
Such were not they of old, whose temper'd blades
Dispersed the shackles of usurp'd control,
And hew'd them link from link Then Albion's sons
Were sons indeed. They felt a filial heart
Beat high within them at a mother's wrongs,
And shining each in his domestic sphere, 520
Shone brighter still once call'd to public view.
'Tis therefore many, whose sequester'd lot
Forbids their interference, looking on,
Anticipate perforce some dire event;
And seeing the old castle of the state,
That promised once more firmness, so assail'd
That all its tempest-beaten turrets shake,
Stand motionless expectants of its fall.
All has its date below. The fatal hour
Was registered in heav'n ere time began. 530
We turn to dust, and all our mightiest works
Die too. The deep foundations that we lay,
Time ploughs them up, and not a trace remains.
We build with what we deem eternal rock;
A distant age asks where the fabric stood;
And in the dust, sifted and search'd in vain,
The undiscoverable secret sleeps.

But there is yet a liberty unsung
 By poets, and by senators unpraised,
 Which menarchs cannot grant, nor all the power 540
 Of earth and hell confed'rate take away;
 A liberty, which persecution, fraud,
 Oppression, prisons, have no power to bind,
 Which whoso tastes can be enslaved no more.
 'Tis liberty of heart, derived from heav'n,
 Bought with His blood who gave it to mankind,
 And seal'd with the same token. It is held
 By charter, and that charter sanction'd sure
 By th' unimpeachable and awful oath
 And promise of a God. His other gifts 550
 All bear the royal stamp that speaks them his,
 And are august, but this transcends thefti all.
 His other works, this visible display
 Of all-creating energy and might,
 Are grand, no doubt, and worthy of the word
 That, finding an interminable space
 Unoccupied, has fill'd the void so well,
 And made so sparkling what was dark before.
 But these are not his glory. Man, 'tis true,
 Smit with the beauty of so fair a scene, 560
 Might well suppose th' artificer divine
 Meant it eternal, had he not himself
 Pronounced it transient, glorious as it is,
 And still designing a more glorious far,
 Doom'd it, as insufficient for his praise.
 These, therefore, are occasional, and pass;
 Form'd for the confutation of the fool
 Whose lying heart disputes against a God;
 That office served, they must be swept away.
 Not so the labours of his love; they shine 570
 In other heav'ns than these that we behold,
 And fade not. There is paradise that fears
 No forfeiture, and of its fruits he sends
 Large prelibation oft to saints below.
 Of these the first in order, and the pledge
 And confident assurance of the rest,
 Is liberty; a flight into his arms
 Ere yet mortality's fine threads give way,
 A clear escape from tyrannising lust,
 And full immunity from penal woe. 580

Chains are the portion of revolted man,
 Stripes and a dungeon; and his body serves
 The triple purpose. In that sickly, foul,
 Opprobrious residence, he finds them all.
 Propense his heart to idols, he is held
 In silly dotage on created things,
 Careless of their Creator. And that low
 And sordid gravitation of his pow'rs
 To a vile clod, so draws him with such force
 Resistless from the centre he should seek, 590
 That he at last forgets it. All his hopes
 Tend downward, his ambition is to sink,
 To reach a depth profounder still, and still
 Profounder, in the fathomless abyss
 Of folly, plunging in pursuit of death.
 But ere he gain the comfortless repose
 He seeks, and acquiescence of his soul,
 In heav'n-renouncing exile, he endures—
 What does he not? from lusts opposed in vain,
 And self-reproaching conscience. He foresees 600
 The fatal issue to his health, fame, peace,
 Fortune, and dignity; the loss of all
 That can ennoble man, and make frail life,
 Short as it is, supportable. Still worse,
 Far worse than all the plagues with which his sins
 Infect his happiest moments, he forebodes
 Ages of hopeless misery; future death,
 And death still future; not a hasty stroke,
 Like that which sends him to the dusty grave,
 But unrepeatable enduring death ! 610
 Scripture is still a trumpet to his fears:
 What none can prove a forg'ry, may be true;
 What none but bad men wish exploded, must.
 That scruple checks him. Riot is not loud
 Nor drunk enough to drown it. In the midst
 Of laughter his compunctions are sincere,
 And he abhors the jest by which he shines.
 Remorse begets reform. His master-lust
 Falls first before his resolute rebuke,
 And seems dethroned and vanquished. Peace ensues, 620
 But spurious and short-lived, the puny child
 Of self-congratulating Pride, begot
 On fancied Innocence. Again he falls,

And fights again; but finds his best essay
 A presage ominous, portending still
 Its own dishonour by a worse relapse.
 Till Nature, unavailing Nature, foiPd
 So oft, and wearied in the vain attempt,
 Scoffs at her own performance. Reason now
 Takes part with appetite, and pleads the cause, 630
 Perversely, which of late she so condemned;
 With shallow shifts and old devices, worn
 And tatter'd in the service of debauch,
 Cov'ring his shame from his offended sight

" Hath God indeed given appetites to man,
 And stored the earth so plenteously with means
 To gratify the hunger of his wish,
 And doth he reprobate and will he damn
 The use of his own bounty? making first
 So frail a kind, and then enacting laws 640
 So strict, that less than perfect must despair?
 Falsehood ! which whoso but suspects of truth,
 Dishonours God, and makes a slave of man.
 Do they themselves, who undertake for hire
 The teacher's office, and dispense at large
 Their weekly dole of edifying strains,
 Attend to their own music? have they faith
 In what, with such solemnity of tone
 And gesture, they propound to our belief?
 Nay—conduct hath the loudest tongue. The voice 650
 Is but an instrument on which the priest
 May play what tune he pleases. In the deed,
 The unequivocal authentic deed,
 We find sound argument, we read the heart."

Such reas'nings (if that name must needs belong
 T' excuses in which reason has no part)
 Serve to compose a spirit well inclined
 To live on terms of amity with vice,
 And sin without disturbance. Often urged
 (As often as, libidinous discourse 660
 Exhausted, he resorts to solemn themes
 Of theological and grave import)
 They gam at last his unreserved assent
 Till, harden'd his heart's temper in the forge

Of lust, and on the anvil of despair,
 He slights the strokes of conscience. Nothing moves,
 Or nothing much, his constancy in ill;
 Vain tampering has but foster'd his disease,
 'Tis desperate, and he sleeps the sleep of death.
 Haste now, philosopher, and set him free. 670
 Charm the deaf serpent wisely. Make him hear
 Of rectitude and fitness : moral truth
 How lovely, and the moral sense how sure,
 Consulted and obey'd, to guide his steps
 Directly to THE FIRST AND ONLY FAIR.
 Spare not in such a cause. Spend all the pow'rs
 Of rant and rhapsody in virtue's praise,
 Be most sublimely good, verbosely grand,
 And with poetic trappings grace thy prose
 Till it outmantle all the pride of verse.— 680
 Ah, tinkling cymbal and high-sounding brass,
 Smitten in vain ! such music cannot charm
 Th' eclipse that intercepts truth's heav'nly beam,
 And chills and daikens a wide-wand'ning soul.
 The still small voice is wanted. He must speak,
 Whose word leaps forth at once to its effect,
 Who calls for things that are not, and they come.

Grace makes the slave a freeman. 'Tis a change
 That turns to ridicule the turgid speech
 And stately tone of moralists, who boast, 690
 As if, like him'of fabulous renown,
 They had indeed ability to smooth
 The shag of savage nature, and were each
 An Orpheus and omnipotent in song.
 But transformation of apostate man
 From fool to wise, from earthly to divine,
 Is work for Him that made him. He alone,
 And he, by means in philosophic eyes
 Trivial and worthy of disdain, achieves
 The wonder; humanising what is brute 700
 In the lost kind, extracting from the lips
 Of asps their venom, overpow'ring strength
 By weakness, and hostility by love.

Patriots have toil'd, and in their country's cause
 Bled nobly, and their deeds, as they deserve,

Receive proud recompense. We give in charge
 Their names to the sweet lyre. Th' historic muse,
 Proud of the treasure, marches with it down
 To latest times; and sculpture, in her turn,
 Gives bond in stone and ever-dunng brass, 710
 To guard them, and t' immortalize her trust.
 But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,
 To those who, posted at the shrine of truth,
 Have fall'n in her defence. A patriot's blood
 Well spent in such a strife may earn indeed,
 And for a time ensure to his loved land
 The sweets of liberty and equal laws;
 But martyrs struggle for a brighter pnze,
 And win it with more pain. Their blood is shed
 In confirmation of the noblest claim, 720
 Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
 To walk with God, to be divinely free,
 To soar, and to anticipate the skies !
 Yet few remember them. They lived unknown
 Till persecution dragg'd them into fame
 And chased them up to heaven. Their ashes flew
 —No marble tells us whither. With their names
 No bard embalms and sanctifies his song,
 And history, so warm on meaner themes,
 Is cold on this. She execrates indeed 730
 The tyranny that doom'd them to the fire,
 But gives the glorious suffrers little praise.

He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
 And all are slaves beside. There's not a chain
 That hellish foes confed'rate for his harm
 Can wind around him, but he casts it off
 With as much ease as Samson his green withes.
 He looks abroad into the varied field
 Of Nature, and, though poor perhaps compared
 With those whose mansions glitter in his sight, 740
 Calls the delightful scen'ry all his own.
 His are the mountains, and the valleys his,
 And the resplendent rivers. His t' enjoy
 With a propriety that none can feel,
 But who, with filial confidence inspired,
 Can lift to heaven an unpresumptuous eye,
 And smiling say—My Father made them all!

Are they not his by a peculiar right,
 And by an emphasis of mt'rest his,
 Whose eye they fill with tears of holy joy, 750
 Whose heart with praise, and whose exalted mind
 With worthy thoughts of that unwearied love
 That plann'd, and built, and still upholds a world
 So clothed with beauty, for rebellious man?
 Yes—ye may fill your garners, ye that reap
 The loaded soil, and ye may waste much good
 In senseless not; but ye will not find
 In feast or in the chase, in song or dance,
 A liberty like his, who, unimpeach'd 760
 Of usurpation, and to no man's wrong,
 Appropriates nature as his Father's work,
 And has a richer use of yours, than you.
 He is indeed a freeman. Free by birth
 Of no mean city, planned or ere the hills
 Were built, the fountains open'd, or the sea
 With all his roaring multitude of waves.
 His freedom is the same in ev'ry state;
 And no condition of this changeful life
 So manifold in cares, whose ev'ry day 770
 Brings its own evil with it, makes it less.
 For he has wings that neither sickness, pain,
 Nor penury, can cripple or confine.
 No nook so narrow but he spreads them there
 With ease, and is at large. Th' oppressor holds
 His body bound, but knows not what a range
 His spirit takes, unconscious of a chain;
 And that to bind him is a vain attempt,
 Whom God delights in, and in whom he dwells.

Acquaint thyself with God if thou wouldst taste 780
 His works. Admitted once to his embrace,
 Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before;
 Thine eye shall be instructed, and thine heart,
 Made pure, shall relish, with divine delight
 Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought
 Brutes graze the mountain-top with faces prone,
 And eyes intent upon the scanty herb
 It yields them; or, recumbent on its brow,
 Ruminates, heedless of the scene outspread
 Beneath, beyond, and stretching far away

From inland regions to the distant main. 790
 Man views it and admires, but rests content
 With what he views. The landscape has his praise,
 But not its Author. Unconcern'd who form'd
 The paradise he sees, he finds it such,
 And such well-pleased to find it, asks no more.
 Not so the mind that has been touch'd from heav'n,
 And in the school of sacred wisdom taught
 To read his wonders, in whose thought the world,
 Fair as it is, existed ere it was.
 Not for his own sake merely, but for his 800
 Much more who fashion'd it, he gives it praise;
 Praise that from earth resulting as it ought
 To earth's acknowledged sov'reign, finds at once
 Its only just proprietor in Him.
 The soul that sees him, or receives sublimed
 New faculties, or learns at least t' employ
 More worthily the pow'rs she own'd before;
 Discerns in all things what, with stupid gaze
 Of ignorance, till then she overlook'd,
 A ray of heav'nly light gilding all forms 810
 Terrestrial, in the vast and the minute,
 The unambiguous footsteps of the God
 Who gives its lustre to an insect's wing,
 And wheels his throne upon the rolling worlds.
 Much conversant with heav'n, she often holds
 With those fair ministers of light to man,
 That fill the skies nightly with silent pomp,
 Sweet conference; inquires what strains were they
 With which heav'n rang, when ev'ry star, in haste*
 To gratulate the new-created earth, 820
 Sent forth a voice, and all the sons of God
 Shouted for joy.—" Tell me, ye shining hosts
 That navigate a sea that knows no storms,
 Beneath a vault unsullied with a cloud,
 If from your elevation, whence ye view
 Distinctly scenes invisible to man,
 And systems of whose birth no tidings yet
 Have reach'd this nether world, ye spy a race
 Favour'd as ours, transgressors from the womb,
 And hasting to a grave, yet doom'd to rise, 830
 And to possess a onghter heav'n than yours?
 As one who, long detain'd on foreign shores.

Pants to return, and when he sees afar
 His country's weather-bleach'd and battered rocks,
 From the green wave emerging, darts an eye
 Radiant with joy towards the happy land;
 So I with animated hopes behold,
 And many an aching wish, your beamy fires,
 That show like beacons in the blue abyss,
 Ordain'd to guide th' embodied spirit home 840
 From toilsome life, to never-ending rest.
 Love kindles as I gaze. I feel desires
 That give assurance of their own success,
 And that infused from heav'n must thither tend."

So reads he nature whom the lamp of truth
 Illuminates. Thy lamp, mysterious Word!
 Which whoso sees, no longer wanders lost
 With intellects bemazed in endless doubt,
 But runs the road of wisdom. Thou hast built,
 With means that were not till by thee employ'd, 850
 Worlds that had never been, hadst thou in strength
 Been less, or less benevolent than strong.
 They are thy witnesses, who speak thy pow'r
 And goodness infinite, but speak in ears
 That hear not, or receive not their report.
 In vain thy creatures testify of thee
 Till thou proclaim thyself. Theirs is indeed
 A teaching voice; but 'tis the praise of thine
 That whom it teaches it makes prompt to learn,
 And with the boon gives talents for its use. 860
 Till thou art heard, imaginations vain
 Possess the heart, and fables, false as hell,
 Yet deem'd oracular, lure down to death
 The uninform'd and heedless souls of men.
 We give to chance, blind chance, ourselves as blind,
 The glory of thy work, which yet appears
 Perfect and unimpeachable of blame,
 Challenging human scrutiny, and proved
 Then skilful most when most severely judged.
 But chance is not; or is not where thou reign'st: 870
 Thy providence forbids that fickle pow'r
 (If pow'r she be that works but to confound)
 To mix her wild vagaries with thy laws.
 Yet thus we dote, refusing, while we can,

Instruction, and inventing to ourselves
Gods such as guilt makes welcome, gods that sleep,
Or disregard our follies, or that sit
Amused spectators of this bustling stage.
Thee we reject, unable to abide
Thy purity, till pure as thou art pure. 880
Made such by thee, we love thee for that cause
For which we shunn'd and hated thee before.
Then we are free; then liberty, like day,
Breaks on the soul, and by a flash from heav'n
Fires all the faculties with glorious joy.
A voice is heard that mortal ears hear not
Till thou hast touch'd them; 'tis the voice of song,
A loud Hosanna sent from all thy works,
Which he that hears it, with a shout repeats, 890
And adds his rapture to the genVal praise.
In that blest moment, Nature, throwing wide
Her veil opaque, discloses with a smile
The Author of her beauties, who, retired
Behind his own creation, works unseen
By the impure, and hears his pow'r denied.
Thou art the source and centre of all minds,
Their only point of rest, eternal Word!
From thee departing, they are lost and rove
At random, without honour, hope, or peace.
From thee is all that soothes the life of man, 900
His high endeavour, and his glad success,
His strength to suffer, and his will to serve.
But oh, thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown!
Give what thou canst, without thee we are poor,
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away.

BOOK VI.

THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

'THERE is in souls a sympathy with sounds,
And as the mind is pitch'd the ear is pleased
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave;
Some chord in unison with what we hear
Is touch'd within us, and the heart replies.
How soft the music of those village bells
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet! now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again and louder still,
Clear and sonorous as the gale comes on. 10
With easy force it opens all the cells
Where mem'ry slept Wherever I have heard
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
And with it all its pleasures and its pains.
Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
That in a few short moments I retrace
(As in a map the voyager his course)
The windings of my way through many years.
Short as in retrospect the journey seems,
It seem'd not always short; the rugged path, 20
And prospect oft so dreary and forlorn
Moved many a sigh at its disheart'ning length.
Yet feeling present evils, while the past
Faintly impress the mind, or not at all,
How readily we wish time spent revoked,
That we might try the ground again, where once
(Through inexperience as we now perceive)
We miss'd that happiness we might have found.

Some friend is gone, perhaps his son's best friend
 A father, whose authority, in show 30
 When most severe, and must'nng all its force,
 Was but the graver countenance of love;
 Whose favour, like the clouds of spring, might low'r,
 And utter now and then an awful voice,
 But had a blessing in its darkest frown,
 Threatening at once and nourishing the plant
 We loved, but not enough, the gentle hand
 That reared us. At a thoughtless age allured
 By ev'ry gilded folly, we renounced
 His shelt'ring side, and wilfully forewent 40
 That converse which we now in vain regret
 How gladly would the man recall to life
 The boy's neglected sire ! a mother too,
 That softer friend, perhaps more gladly still,
 Might he demand them at the gates of death.
 Sorrow has, since they went, subdued and tamed
 The playful humour; he could now endure
 (Himself grown sober in the vale of tears)
 And feel a parent's presence no restraint
 But not to understand a treasure's worth 50
 Till time has stol'n away the slighted good,
 Is cause of half the poverty we feel,
 And makes the world the wilderness it is.
 The few that pray at all pray oft amiss,
 And, seeking grace t' improve the prize they hold,
 Would urge a wiser suit than asking more.

The night was winter in his roughest mood,
 The morning sharp and clear; but now at noon
 Upon the southern side of the slant hills,
 And where the woods fence off the northern blast 60
 The season smiles, resigning all its rage,
 And has the warmth of May. The vault is blue
 Without a cloud, and white without a speck
 The dazzling splendour of the scene below.
 Again the harmony comes o'er the vale,
 And through the trees I view th' embattled tow'r
 Whence all the music. I again perceive
 The soothing influence of the wafted strains,
 And settle in soft musings, as I tread
 The walk still verdant under oaks and elms,

Whose outspread branches overarch the glade.
 The roof, though moveable through all its length,
 As the wind sways it, has yet well sufficed,
 And, intercepting in their silent fall
 The frequent flakes, has kept a path for me.
 No noise is here, or none that hinders thought
 The redbreast warbles still, but is content
 With slender notes and more than half suppressed.
 Pleased with his solitude, and flitting light
 From spray to spray, where'er he rests he shakes 80
 From many a twig the pendant drops of ice,
 That tinkle in the withered leaves below.
 Stillness, accompanied with sounds so soft,
 Charms more than silence. Meditation here
 May think down hours to moments. Here the heart
 May give an useful lesson to the head,
 And learning wiser grow without his books.
 Knowledge and wisdom, far from being one,
 Have oft-times no connexion. Knowledge dwells 90
 In heads replete with thoughts of other men;
 Wisdom in minds attentive to their own.
 Knowledge, a rude unprofitable mass,
 The mere materials with which wisdom builds,
 Till smoothed and squared and fitted to its place,
 Does but encumber whom it seems t' enrich.
 Knowledge is proud that he has learn'd so much.
 Wisdom is humble that he knows no more.
 Books are not seldom talismans and spells
 By which the magic art of shrewder wits
 Holds an unthinking multitude in thrall'd. 100
 Some to the fascination of a name
 Surrender judgment hoodwink'd. Some the style
 Infatuates, and, through labyrinths and wilds
 Of error, leads them by a tune entranced.
 While sloth seduces more, too weak to bear
 The insupportable fatigue of thought,
 And swallowing therefore without pause or choice,
 The total grist unsifted, husks and all.
 But trees, and rivulets whose rapid course
 Defies the check of winter, haunts of deer, 110
 And sheep-walks populous with bleating lambs,
 And lanes, in which the primrose ere her time
 Peeps through the moss and clothes the hawthorn root,

That the wind severs from the broken wave;
 The lilac various in array, now white,
 Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
 With purple spikes pyramidal, as if
 Studious of ornament, yet unresolved 160
 Which hue she most approved, she chose them all;
 Copious of flow'rs the woodbine, pale and wan,
 But well compensating their sickly looks
 With never-cloying odours, early and late;
 Hypencum all bloom, so thick a swarm
 Of flow'rs like flies, clothing her slender rods,
 That scarce a leaf appears; mezcreeon too,
 Though leafless, well attired, and thick beset
 With blushing wreaths investing ev'ry spray;
 Althaea with the purple eye; the broom, 170
 Yellow and bright as bullion unalloy'd
 Her blossoms; and luxuriant above all
 The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
 The deep dark green of whose unvarnish'd leaf
 Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more
 The bright profusion of her scattered stars.—
 These have been, and these shall be in their day,
 And all this uniform uncolour'd scene
 Shall be dismantled of its fleecy load,
 And flush into variety again. 180
 From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
 Is Nature's progress when she lectures man
 In heav'nly truth; evincing, as she makes
 The grand transition, that there lives and works
 A soul in all things, and that soul is God.
 The beauties of the wilderness are his,
 That makes so gay the solitary place
 Where no eye sees them. And the fairer forms
 That cultivation glories in, are his.
 He sets the bright procession on its way, 190
 And marshals all the order of the year.
 He marks the bounds which winter may not pass,
 And blunts his pointed fury. In its case,
 Russet and rude, folds up the tender germ
 Uninjured, with inimitable art,
 And, ere one flow'ry season fades and dies,
 Designs the blooming wonders of the next.

Some say that in the origin of things,
 When all creation started into birth,
 The infant elements received a law 200
 From which they swerve not since; that under force
 Of that controlling ordinance they move,
 And need not his immediate hand, who first
 Prescribed their course, to regulate it now.
 Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
 The incumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
 The great Artificer of all that moves
 The stress of a continual act, the pain
 Of unremitted vigilance and care,
 As too laborious and severe a task. 210
 So man the moth is not afraid, it seems,
 To span Omnipotence, and measure might
 That knows no measure, by the scanty rule
 And standard of his own, that is to-day,
 And is not ere to-morrow's sun go down.
 But how should matter occupy a charge
 Dull as it is, and satisfy a law
 So vast in its demands, unless impell'd
 To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,
 And under pressure of some conscious cause? 220
 The lord of all, himself through all diffused,
 Sustains and is the life of all that lives.
 Nature is but a name for an effect
 Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire
 By which the mighty process is maintain'd,
 Who sleeps not, is not weary; in whose sight
 Slow-circling ages are as transient days;
 Whose work is without labour, whose designs
 No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts,
 And whose beneficence no charge exhausts. 230
 Him blind antiquity profaned, not served,
 With self-taught rites and under various names
 Female and male, Pomona, Pales, Pan,
 And Flora and Vertumnus; peopling earth
 With tutelary goddesses and gods
 That were not, and commending as they would
 To each some province, garden, field, or grove.
 But all are under one. One spirit—His
 Who bore the platted thorns with bleeding brows,
 Rules universal nature. Not a flow'r 240

But shows some touch in freckle, streak, or stain,
Of his unnavall'd pencil. He inspires
Their balmy odours and imparts their hues,
And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes,
In grains as countless as the sea-side sands,
The forms with which he sprinkles all the earth.
Happy who walks with him ! whom, what he finds
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flow'r,
Or what he views of beautiful or grand
In nature, from the broad majestic oak 250
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts with remembrance of a present God.
His presence, who made all so fair, perceived,
Makes all still fairer. As with him no scene
Is dreary, so with him all seasons please.
Though winter had been none, had man been true,
And earth be punish'd for its tenant's sake,
Yet not in vengeance; as this smiling sky
So soon succeeding such an angry night,
And these dissolving snows, and this clear stream, 260
Recov'nng fast its liquid music, prove.

Who then, that has a mind well strung and tuned
To contemplation, and within his reach
A scene so friendly to his fav'nte task,
Would waste attention at the chequer'd board,
His host of wooden warriors to and fro
Marching and counter-marching, with an eye
As fixt as marble, with a forehead ridged
And furrow'd into storms, and with a hand
Trembling, as if eternity were hung 270
In balance on his conduct of a pin?
Nor envies he aught more their idle sport,
Who pant with application misapplied
To trivial toys, and, pushing iv'ry balls
Across the velvet level, feel a joy
Akin to rapture, when the bauble finds
It's destined goal of difficult access.
Nor deems he wiser him, who gives his noon
To miss, the mercer's plague, from shop to shop
Wand'ring, and htt'ring with unfolded silks 280
The polish'd counter, and approving none,
Or promising with smiles to call again.

Nor him, who, by his vanity seduced,
 And sooth'd into a dream that he discerns
 The difference of a Guido from a daub,
 Frequents the crowded auction. Station'd there
 As duly as the Langford of the show,
 With glass at eye, and catalogue in hand,
 And tongue accomplished in the fulsome cant
 And pedantry that coxcombs learn with ease, 290
 Oft as the price-deciding hammer falls
 He notes it in his book, then raps his box,
 Swears 'tis a bargain, rails at his hard fate
 That he has let it pass—but never bids.

Here unmolested, through whatever sign
 The sun proceeds, I wander; neither mist,
 Nor freezing sky, nor sultry, checking me,
 Nor stranger intermeddling with my joy.
 Ev'n in the spring and play-time of the year 300
 That calls the unwonted villager abroad
 With all her little ones, a sportive train
 To gather king-cups in the yellow mead,
 And prank their hair with daisies, or to pick
 A cheap but wholesome salad from the brook,
 These shades are all my own. The tim'rous hare,
 Grown so familiar with her frequent guest,
 Scarce shuns me; and the stock-dove unalarm'd
 Sits cooing in the pine-tree, nor suspends
 His long love-ditty for my near approach. 310
 Drawn from his refuge in some lonely elm
 That age or injury has hollow'd deep,
 Where on his bed of wool and matted leaves
 He has butslept the winter, ventures forth
 To frisk awhile, and bask in the warm sun,
 The squirrel, flippant, pert, and full of play.
 He sees me, and at once, swift as a bird,
 Ascends the neigh'bring beech; there whisks his brush,
 And perks his ears, and stamps and scolds aloud,
 With all the prettiness of feign'd alarm,
 And anger insignificantly fierce. 320

The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
 For human fellowship, as being void
 Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike

To love and friendship both, that is not pleased
 With sight of animals enjoying life,
 Nor feels their happiness augment his own.
 The bounding fawn that darts across the glade
 When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,
 And spirits buoyant with excess of glee;
 The horse, as wanton and almost as fleet, 330
 That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,
 Then stops and snorts, and throwing high his heels
 Starts to the voluntary race again;
 The very kine that gambol at high noon,
 The total herd receiving first from one,
 That leads the dance, a summons to be gay,
 Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth
 Their efforts, yet resolved with one consent
 To give such act and utterance as they may
 To ecstasy too big to be suppress'd— 340
 These, and a thousand images of bliss,
 With which kind nature graces ev'ry scene
 Where cruel man defeats not her design,
 Impart to the benevolent, who wish
 All that are capable of pleasure pleased,
 A far superior happiness to theirs,
 The comfort of a reasonable joy.

Man scarce had risen, obedient to His call
 Who form'd him from the dust, his future grave,
 When he was crowned as never king was since. 350
 God set the diadem upon his head,
 And angel choirs attended. Wond'ring stood
 The new-made monarch, while before him pass'd,
 All happy and all perfect in their kind,
 The creatures, summon'd from their various haunts
 To see their sovereign, and confess his sway.
 Vast was his empire, absolute his pow'r,
 Or bounded only by a law whose force
 'Twas his subhmest privilege to feel
 And own, the law of universal love. 360
 He ruled with meekness, they obey'd with joy
 No cruel purpose lurked within his heart,
 And no distrust of his intent in theirs.
 So Eden was a scene of harmless spoit,
 Where kindness on his part who ruled the whole

Begat a tranquil confidence in all,
 And fear as yet was not, nor cause for fear.
 But sin marred all; and the revolt of man,
 That source of evils not exhausted yet,
 Was pumsh'd with revolt of his from him. 370
 Garden of God, how terrible the change
 Thy groves and lawns then witness'd ! evVy heai t,
 Each animal of ev'ry name, conceived
 A jealousy and an instinctive fear,
 And, conscious of some danger, either fled
 Precipitate the loathed abode of man,
 Or growl'd defiance in such angry sort,
 As taught him too to tremble m his turn.
 Thus harmony and family accord
 Were driv'n from Paradise; and in that hour 380
 The seeds of cruelty, that since have swell'd
 To such gigantic and enormous growth,
 Were sown in human nature's fruitful soil.
 Hence date the persecution and the pain
 That man inflicts on all inferior kinds,
 Regardless of their plaints. To make him sport,
 To gratify the frenzy of his wrath,
 Or his base gluttony, are causes good
 And just, in his account, why bird and beast
 Should suffer torture, and the streams be dyed 390
 With blood of their inhabitants impaled.
 Earth groans beneath the burden of a war
 Waged with defenceless innocence, while he,
 Not satisfied to prey on all around,
 Adds tenfold bitterness to death by pangs
 Needless, and first torments ere he devours.
 Now happiest they that occupy the scenes
 The most remote from his abhorr'd resort,
 Whom once as delegate of God on earth
 They fear'd, and as his perfect image loved. 400
 The wilderness is theirs with all its caves,
 Its hollow glens, its thickets, and its plains
 Unvisited by man. There they are free,
 And howl and roar as likes them, uncontroll'd,
 Nor ask his leave to slumber or to play.
 Woe to the tyrant, if he dare intrude
 Within the confines of their wild domain;
 The lion tells him—I am monarch here—

And if he spares him, spares him on the terms
 Of royal mercy, and through gen'rous scorn 410
 To rend a victim trembling at his foot.
 In measure, as by force of instinct drawn,
 Or by necessity constrained they live
 Dependent upon man, those in his fields,
 These at his crib, and some beneath his roof,
 They prove too often at how dear a rate
 He sells protection. Witness, at his foot
 The spaniel dying for some venial fault,
 Under dissection of the knotted scourge;
 Witness, the patient ox, with stripes and yells 420
 Driven to the slaughter, goaded as he runs
 To madness, while the savage at his heels
 Laughs at the frantic sufter's fury spent
 Upon the guiltless passenger o'erthrown.
 He too is witness, noblest of the tram
 That wait on man, the flight-performing horse:
 With unsuspecting readiness he takes
 His murderer on his back, and, pushed all day,
 With bleeding sides, and flanks that heave for life,
 To the far-distant goal, arrives and dies. 430
 So little mercy shows who needs so much!
 Does law, so jealous in the cause of man,
 Denounce no doom on the delinquent? None.
 He lives, and o'er his brimming beaker boasts
 (As if barbarity were high desert)
 Th'inglorious feat, and, clamorous in praise
 Of the poor brute, seems wisely to suppose
 The honours of his matchless horse his own.
 But many a crime, deem'd innocent on earth,
 Is registered in heav'n, and these, no doubt, 440
 Have each their record, with a curse annexed.
 Man may dismiss compassion from his heart,
 But God will never. When he charged the Jew
 T'assist his foe's down-fallen beast to rise,
 And when the bush-exploring boy that seized
 The young, to let the parent bird go free,
 Proved he not plainly that his meaner works
 Are yet his care, and have an interest all,
 All, in the universal Father's love.
 On Noah, and in him on all mankind, 450
 The charter was conferr'd by which we hold

The flesh of animals in fee, and claim,
 O'er all we feed on, power of life and death.
 But read the instrument, and mark it well;
 Th' oppression of a tyrannous control
 Can find no warrant there. Feed then, and yield
 Thanks for thy food. Carnivorous through sin,
 Feed on the slain, but spare the living brute.

The governor of all, himself to all
 So bountiful, in whose attentive ear 460
 The unfledged raven and the lion's whelp
 Plead not in vain for pity on the pangs
 Of hunger unassuaged, has interposed,
 Not seldom, his avenging arm, to smite
 Th'injurious trampler upon nature's law,
 That claims forbearance even for a brute.
 He hates the hardness of a Balaam's heart;
 And, prophet as he was, he might not strike
 The blameless animal, without rebuke,
 On which he rode. Her opportune offence 470
 Saved him, or th'unrelenting seer had died.
 He sees that human equity is slack
 To interfere, though in so just a cause,
 And makes the task his own; inspiring dumb
 And helpless victims with a sense so keen
 Of injury, with such knowledge of their strength,
 And such sagacity to take revenge,
 That oft the beast has seem'd to judge the man.
 An ancient, not a legendary tale,
 By one of sound intelligence rehearsed, 480
 (If such, who plead for Providence, may seem
 In modern eyes,) shall make the doctrine clear.

Where England, stretch'd towards the setting sun,
 Narrow and long, overlooks the western wave,
 Dwelt young Misagathus; a scorner he
 Of God and goodness, atheist in ostent,
 Vicious in act, in temper savage-fierce.
 He journeyed, and his chance was, as he went,
 To join a traveller of far different note,—
 Evander, famed for piety, for years 490
 Deserving honour, but for wisdom more.
 Fame had not left the venerable man

A stranger to the manners of the youth,
 Whose face, too, was familiar to his view.
 Their way was on the margin of the land,
 O'er the green summit of the rocks whose base
 Beats back the roaring singe, scarce heard so high.
 The chanty that warm'd his heart was moved
 At sight of the man-monster. With a smile
 Gentle and affable, and lull of grace, 500
 As fearful of offending whom he wish'd
 Much to persuade, he plied his ear with truths
 Not harshly thunder'd forth or rudely press'd,
 But, like his purpose, gracious, kind, and s\lect
 And dost thou dream, th'impenetrable man
 Exclaim'd, that me the lullabies of age,
 And fantasies of dotards such as thou,
 Can cheat, or move a moment's fear in me?
 Mark now the proof I give thee, that the brave
 Need no such aids as superstition lends 510
 To steel their hearts against the dread of death.
 He spoke, and to the precipice at hand
 Push'd with a madman's fury. Fancy shrinks,
 And the blood thrills and curdles at the thought
 Of such a gulf as he design'd his grave.
 But though the felon on his back could dare
 The dreadful leap, more rational, his, steed
 Declined the death, and wheeling swiftly round,
 Or e'er his hoof had piess'd the crumbling verge,
 Baffled his rider, saved against his will. 520
 The frenzy of the brain may be redress'd
 By med'cine well applied, but without grace
 The heart's insanity admits no cure.
 Enraged the more by what might have reform'd
 His horrible intent, again he sought
 Destruction, with a zeal to be destroyed,
 With sounding whip and rowels dyed in blood.
 But still in vain. The Providence that meant
 A longer date to the far nobler beast,
 Spared yet again th' ignobler for his sake. 530
 And now, his prowess proved, and his smceie,
 Incurable obduracy evinced,
 His rage grew cool; and, pleased perhaps t'have earn'd
 So cheaply the renown of that attempt,
 With looks of some complacence he resumed

His road, deriding much the blank amaze
 Of good Evander, still where he was left
 Fixt motionless, and petrified with dread.
 So on they fared; discourse on other themes
 Ensuing, seem'd t' obliterate the past, 540
 And tamer far for so much fury shown,
 (As is the course of rash and fiery men,)
 The rude companion smiled as if transformed.
 But 'twas a transient calm A storm was near,
 An unsuspected storm. His hour was come.
 The impious challenger of pow'r divine
 Was now to learn that Heav'n, though slow to wrath,
 Is never with impunity defied.
 His horse, as he had caught his master's mood,
 Snorting, and starting into sudden rage, 550
 Unbidden, and not now to be controll'd,
 Rush'd to the cliff, and having reach'd it, stood.
 At once the shock unseated him; he flew
 Sheer o'er the craggy barrier, and, immersed
 Deep in the flood, found, when he sought it not,
 The death he had deserved, and died alone.
 So God wrought double justice; made the fool
 The victim of his own tremendous choice,
 And taught a brute the way to safe revenge.

I would not enter on my list of friends 560
 (Though graced with pohsh'd manners and fine sense,
 Yet wanting sensibility) the man
 Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
 An inadvertent step may crush the snail
 That crawls at evening in the public path;
 But he that has humanity, forewarn'd,
 Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.
 The creeping vermin, loathsome to the sight,
 And charged perhaps with venom, that intrudes
 A visitor unwelcome into scenes 570
 Sacred to neatness and repose, th' alcove,
 The chamber, or refectory, may die.
 A necessary act incurs no blame.
 Not so when, held within their proper bounds
 And guiltless of offence, they range the air
 Or take their pastime in the spacious field.
 There they are privileged; and he that hunts

Or harms them there is guilty of a wrong,
 Disturbs th' economy of nature's realm,
 Who, when she form'd, designed them an abode. 580
 The sum is this: if man's convenience, health,
 Or safety interfere, his rights and claims
 Are paramount, and must extinguish theirs.
 Else they are all—the meanest things that aie,
 As free to live and to enjoy that life,
 As God was free to form them at the first,
 Who in his sov'reign wisdom made them all.
 Ye, therefore, who love mercy, teach your sons
 To love it too. The spring-time of our years
 Is soon dishonour'd and defiled in most 590
 By budding ills, that ask a prudent hand
 To check them. But, alas ! none sooner shoots,
 If unrestram'd, into luxuriant growth,
 Than cruelty, most devilish of them all.
 Mercy to him that shows it, is the rule
 And righteous limitation of its act,
 By which Heav'n moves in pard'ning guilty man ;
 And he that shows none, being ripe in years,
 And conscious of the outrage he commits,
 Shall seek it, and not find it in his turn. 600

Distinguished much by reason, and still more
 By our capacity of grace divine,
 From creatures that exist but for our sake,
 Which having served us, perish, we are held
 Accountable, and God, some future day,
 Will reckon with us roundly for th' abuse
 Of A\hat he deems no mean or trivial trust.
 Superior as we are, they yet depend
 Not more on human help, than we on theirs.
 Their strength, or speed, or vigilance, were giv'n 610
 In aid of our defects. In some are found
 Such teachable and apprehensive parts,
 That man's attainments in his own concerns,
 Match'd with th'expertness of the brutes in theirs,
 Are oft-times vanquish'd and thrown far behind.
 Some show that nice sagacity of smell,
 And read with such discernment, in the port
 And figure of the man, his secret aim,
 That oft we owe our safety to a skill

We could not teach, and must despair to learn. 620
 But learn we might, if not too proud to stoop
 To quadruped instructors, many a good
 And useful quality, and virtue too,
 Rarely exemplified among ourselves;
 Attachment never to be wean'd, or changed
 By any change of fortune, proof alike
 Against unkindness, absence, and neglect;
 Fidelity, that neither bribe nor threat
 Can move or warp; and gratitude for small
 And trivial favours, lasting as the life, 630
 And ghst'nmg even in the dying eye.

Man praises man. Desert in arts or arms
 Wins public honour; and ten thousand bit
 Patiently present at a sacred song,
 Commemoration-mad; content to hear
 (Oh wonderful effect of music's pow'r!)
 Messiah's eulogy, for Handel's seike,
 But less, methinks, than sacrilege might seive—
 (For was it less? What heathen would have dated
 To strip Jove's statue of his oaken wreath 640
 And hang it up in honour of a man?)
 Much less might serve, when all that we design
 Is but to gratify an itching ear,
 And give the day to a musician's praise.
 Remember Handel! who, that was not born
 Deaf as the dead to harmony, forgets,
 Or can, the more than Homer of his age?
 Yes—we remember him; and, while we praise
 A talent so divine, remember too
 That His most holy Book from whom it came 650
 Was never meant, was never used before
 To buckram out the mem'ry of a man.
 But hush!—the muse perhaps is too severe,
 And with a gravity beyond the size
 And measure of th' offence, rebukes a deed
 Less impious than absurd, and owing more
 To want of judgment than to wrong design.
 So in the chapel of old Ely House,
 When wand'rmg Charles, who meant to be the third,
 Had fled from William, and the news was fresh, 660
 The simple clerk, but loyal, did announce,

And eke did rear right merrily, two staves,
 Sung to the praise and glory of King George.
 —Man praises man; and Garrick's mem'ry next,
 When time has somewhat mellow'd it, and made
 The idol of our worship while he lived
 The god of our idolatry once more,
 Shall have its altar; and the world shall go
 In pilgrimage to bow before his shrine.
 The theatre too small, shall suffocate 670
 Its squeezed contents, and more than it admits
 Shall sigh at their exclusion, and return
 Ungratirled. For there some noble lord
 Shall stuff his shoulders with King Richard's bunch,
 Or wrap himself in Hamlet's inky cloak,
 And strut, and storm, and straddle, stamp, and stare,
 To show the world how Garck did not act.
 For Garrick was a worshipper himself;
 He drew the liturgy, and framed the rites
 And solemn ceremonial of the day, 680
 And call'd the world to worship on the banks
 Of Avon famed in song. Ah ' pleasant proof
 That piety has still in human hearts
 Some place, a spark or two not yet extinct.
 The mulb'ry-tree was hung with blooming wreaths,
 The mulb'ry-tree stood centre of the dance,
 The mulb'ry-tree was hymn'cl with dulcet ans,
 And from his touchwood trunk the mulb'ry-tiee
 Supplied such relics as devotion holds
 Still sacred, and preserves with pious care. 690
 So 'twas a hallow'd time : decorum reign'd,
 And mirth without offence. No few return'd
 Doubtless much edified, and all refresh'd.
 —Man praises man. The rabble all alive,
 From tippling-benches, cellars, stalls, and styes,
 Swarm in the streets. The statesman of the day,
 A pompous and slow-moving pageant comes ;
 Some shout him, and some hang upon his car
 To gaze in his eyes and bless him. Maidens wave
 Their kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy; 700
 While others, not so satisfied, unhorse
 The gilded equipage, and, turning loose
 His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve.
 Why? what has charnVd them? Hath he saved the state?

No. Doth he purpose its salvation ? No.
 Enchanting novelty, that moon at full,
 That finds out every crevice of the head
 That is not sound and perfect, hath in theirs
 Wrought this disturbance. But the wane is near,
 And his own cattle must suffice him soon. 710
 Thus idly do we waste the breath of praise,
 And dedicate a tribute, in its use
 And just direction sacred, to a thing
 Doom'd to the dust, or lodged already there.
 Encomium in old time was poets' work ;
 But, poets having lavishly long since
 Exhausted all materials of the art,
 The task now falls into the public hand ;
 And I, contented with a humble theme,
 Have pour'd my stream of panegyric down 720
 The vale of nature, where it creeps and winds
 Among her lovely works, with a secure
 And unambitious course, reflecting clear
 If not the virtues, yet the worth, of brutes.
 And I am recompensed, and deem the toils
 Of poetry not lost, if verse of mine
 May stand between an animal and woe,
 And teach one tyrant pity for his drudge.

The groans of nature in this nether world,
 Which Heav'n has heard for ages, have an end. 730
 Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
 Whose fire was kindled at the prophets' lamp,
 The time of rest, the promised sabbath, comes.
 Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh
 Fulfill'd their tardy and disastrous course
 Over a sinful world; and what remains
 Of this tempestuous state of human things,
 Is merely as the working of a sea
 Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest.
 For He, whose car the winds are, and the clouds 740
 The dust that waits upon his sultry march,
 When sin hath moved him, and his wrath is hot,
 Shall visit earth in mercy; shall descend
 Propitious, in his chariot paved with love,
 And what his storms have blasted and defaced
 For man's revolt, shall with a smile repair.

Sweet is the harp of prophecy; too sweet
 Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch;
 Nor can the wonders it records be sung
 To meaner music, and not suffer loss. 750
 But when a poet, or when one like me,
 Happy to rove among poetic flow'rs,
 Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last
 On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,
 Such is the impulse and the spur he feels
 To give it praise proportion'd to its worth,
 That not t' attempt it, arduous as he deems
 The labour, were a task more arduous still.

Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
 Scenes of accomplish, bliss ' which who can see, 760
 Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
 His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?
 Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
 And clothe all climes with beauty; the reproach
 Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field
 Laughs with abundance, and the land once lean,
 Or fertile only in its own disgrace,
 Exults to see its thistly curse repeal'd.
 The various seasons woven into one,
 And that one season an eternal spring, 770
 The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,
 For there is none to covet, all are full.
 The lion and the hbbard and the bear
 Graze with the fearless flocks. All bask at noon
 Together, or all gambol in the shade
 Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.
 Antipathies are none. No foe to man
 Lurks in the serpent now. The mother sees,
 And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
 Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm, 780
 To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
 The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.
 All creatures worship man, and all mankind
 One Lord, one Father. Error has no place :
 That creeping pestilence is driven away ;
 The breath of heav'n has chased it In the heart
 No passion touches a discordant string,
 But all is harmony and love. Disease

Is not The pure and uncontaminate blood
 Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age. 790
 One song employs all nations ; and all cry,
 " Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us !"

The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks
 Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
 From distant mountains catch the flying joy,
 Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
 Each rolls the rapturous Hosanna round.
 Behold the measure of the promise fill'd,
 See Salem built, the labour of a God!
 Bright as a sun the sacred city shines; 800
 All kingdoms and all princes of the earth
 Flock to that light; the glory of all lands
 Flows into her, unbounded is her joy
 And endless her increase. Thy rams are there
 Nebaroth, and the flocks of Kedar there ;
 The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,
 And Saba's spicy groves pay tribute there.
 Praise is in all her gates. Upon her walls,
 And in her streets, and in her spacious courts
 Is heard salvation. Eastern Java there 810
 Kneels with the native of the farthest West,
 And Ethiopia spreads abroad the hand,
 And worships. Her report has travelled forth
 Into all lands. From every clime they come
 To see thy beauty and to share thy joy,
 O Sion! an assembly such as earth
 Saw never; such as heav'n stoops down to see.

Thus heav'nward all things tend. For all were once
 Perfect, and all must be at length restored.
 So God has greatly purposed; who would else 820
 In his dishonour'd works himself endure
 Dishonour, and be wrong'd without redress.
 Haste then, and wheel away a shattered world,
 Ye slow-revolving seasons ! We would see
 (A sight to which our eyes are strangers yet)
 A world that does not dread and hate his laws,
 And suffer for its crime : would learn how fair
 The creature is that God pronounces good,
 How pleasant in itself what pleases him.
 Here ev'ry drop of honey hides a sting; 830

Worms wind themselves into our sweetest flow'rs,
 And ev'n the joy, that haply some poor heart
 Derives from heav'n, pure as the fountain is,
 Is sullied in the stream; taking a taint
 From touch of human lips, at best impure.
 Oh for a world in principle as chaste
 As this is gross and selfish ! over which
 Custom and prejudice shall bear no sway,
 That govern all things here, should'nng aside
 The meek and modest truth, and forcing her 840
 To seek a refuge from the tongue of strife
 In nooks obscure, far from the ways of men;
 Where violence shall never lift the sword,
 Nor cunning justify the proud man's wrong,
 Leaving the poor no remedy but tears;
 Where he that fills an office, shall esteem
 Th'occasion it presents of doing good
 More than the perquisite; where la\, shall speak
 Seldom, and never but as wisdom prompts,
 And equity; not jealous more to guard 850
 A worthless form, than to decide aright;
 Where fashion shall not sanctify abuse,
 Nor smooth good-breeding (supplemental grace)
 With lean performance ape the work of love.

Come then, and added to Thy many crowns
 Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
 Thou who alone art worthy! it was Thine
 By ancient covenant, ere nature's birth,
 And Thou hast made it Thine by purchase since,
 And overpaid its value with Thy blood. 860
 Thy saints proclaim Thee king; and in their hearts
 The title is engraven with a pen
 Dipt in the fountain of eternal love.
 Thy saints proclaim Thee king ; and Thy delay
 Gives courage to their foes, who, could they sec
 The dawn of Thy last advent, long-desired,
 Would creep into the bowels of the hills,
 And flee for safety to the falling rocks.
 The very spirit of the world is tired
 Of its own taunting question, ask'd so long, 870
 "Where is the promise of your Lord's approach?"
 The infidel has shot his bolts away,

Till, his exhausted quiver yielding none,
 He gleans the blunted shafts that have recoil'd,
 And aims them at the shield of truth again.
 The veil is rent, rent too by priestly hands,
 That hides divinity from mortal eyes ;
 And all the mysteries to faith proposed,
 Insulted and traduced, are cast aside,
 As useless, to the moles and to the bats. 880
 They now are deem'd the faithful and are praised,
 Who, constant only in rejecting Thee,
 Deny thy Godhead with a martyr's zeal,
 And quit their office for their error's sake.
 Blind and in love with darkness! yet ev'n these
 Worthy, compared with sycophants, who knee
 Thy name adoring, and then preach Thee man!
 So fares Thy church. But how Thy church may fare,
 The world takes little thought; who will may preach,
 And what they will. All pastors are alike 890
 To wand'ring sheep, resolved to follow none.
 Two gods divide them all, Pleasure and Gain;
 For these they live, they sacrifice to these,
 And in their service wage perpetual war
 With conscience and with Thee. Lust in their heart
 And mischief in their hands, they roam the earth
 To prey upon each other; stubborn, fierce,
 High-minded, foaming out their own disgrace.
 Thy prophets speak of such; and noting down 900
 The features of the last degen'rate times,
 Exhibit ev'ry lineament of these.
 Come then, and added to Thy many crowns
 Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,
 Due to thy last and most effectual work,
 Thy word fulfill'd, the conquest of a world.

He is the happy man whose life ev'n now
 Shows somewhat of that happier life to come;
 Who, doom'd to an obscure but tranquil state,
 Is pleas'd with it, and, were he free to choose,
 Would make his fate his choice; whom peace, the fruit 910
 Of virtue, and whom virtue, fruit of faith,
 Prepare for happiness; bespeak him one
 Content indeed to sojourn while he must
 Below the skies, but having there his home.

The world o'erlooks him in her busy search
 Of objects more illustrious in her view;
 And occupied as earnestly as she,
 Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the world.
 She scorns his pleasures, for she knows them not;
 He seeks not hers, for he has proved them vain. 920
 He cannot skim the ground like summer birds
 Pursuing gilded flies, and such he deems
 Her honours, her emoluments, her joys;
 Therefore in contemplation is his bliss,
 Whose pow'r is such, that whom she lifts from earth
 She makes familiar with a heav'n unseen,
 And shows him glories yet to be reveal'd.
 Not slothful he, though seeming unemploy'd,
 And censured oft as useless. Stillest streams
 Oft water fairest meadows; and the bird 930
 That flutters least is longest on the wing.
 Ask him, indeed, what trophies he has raised,
 Or what achievements of immortal fame
 He purposes, and he shall answer—None.
 His warfare is within. There unfatigued
 His fervent spirit labours. There he rights,
 And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself,
 And never-with'ring wreaths, compared with which
 The laurels that a Caesar reaps are weeds.
 Perhaps the self-approving haughty world, 940
 That, as she sweeps him with her whistling silks,
 Scarce deigns to notice him, or, if she see,
 Deems him a cipher in the works of God,
 Receives advantage from his noiseless hours
 Of which she little dreams. Perhaps she owes
 Her sunshine and her rain, her blooming spring
 And plenteous harvest, to the pray'r he makes,
 When, Isaac-like, the solitary saint
 Walks forth to meditate at eventide,
 And think on her, who thinks not for herself. 950
 Forgive him then, thou bustler in concerns
 Of little worth, and idler in the best,
 If, author of no mischief and some good,
 He seek his proper happiness by means
 That may advance, but cannot hinder thine.
 Nor though he tread the secret path of life,
 Engage no notice, and enjoy much ease,

Account him an incumbrance on the state,
 Receiving benefits, and rend'ning none.
 His sphere though humble, if that humble sphere 960
 Shine with his fair example, and though small
 His influence, if that influence all be spent
 In soothing sorrow and in quenching strife,
 In aiding helpless indigence, in works
 From which at least a grateful few derive
 Some taste of comfort in a world of woe,
 Then let the supercilious great confess
 He serves his country; recompenses well
 The state beneath the shadow of whose vine
 He sits secure, and in the scale of life
 Holds no ignoble, though a slighted place. 970
 The man whose virtues are more felt than seen,
 Must drop, indeed, the hope of public praise ;
 But he may boast, what few that win it can,
 That if his country stand not by his skill,
 At least his follies have not wrought her fall.
 Polite refinement offers him in vain
 Her golden tube, through which a sensual world
 Draws gross impurity, and likes it well,
 The neat conveyance hiding all th' offence.
 Not that he peevishly rejects a mode 980
 Because that world adopts it. If it bear
 The stamp and clear impression of good sense,
 And be not costly more than of true worth,
 He puts it on, and for decorum sake
 Can wear it e'en as gracefully as she.
 She judges of refinement by the eye,
 He by the test of conscience, and a heart
 Not soon deceived; aware that what is base
 No polish can make sterling, and that vice, 990
 Though well perfumed and elegantly dress'd,
 Like an unburied carcass trick'd with flowers,
 Is but a garnish'd nuisance, fitter far
 For cleanly riddance than for fair attire.
 So life glides smoothly and by stealth away,
 More golden than that age of fabled gold
 Renown'd in ancient song; not vex'd with care,
 Or stain'd with guilt, beneficent, approved
 Of God and man, and peaceful in its end.
 So glide my life away! and so at last, 1000

My share of duties, decently fulfilled,
May some disease, not tardy to perform
Its destined office, yet with gentle stroke,
Dismiss me weary to a safe retreat
Beneath the turf that I have often trod.
It shall not grieve me, then, that once, when call'd
To dress a Sofa with the flow'rs of verse,
I play'd a while, obedient to the fair,
With that light task, but soon to please her more,
Whom flow'rs alone I knew would little please, 1010
Let fall th' unfmish'd wreath, and roved for fruit;
Roved far and gather'd much; some harsh, 'tis true
Pick'd from-the thorns and briers of reproof,
But wholesome, well-digested; grateful some
To palates that can taste immortal truth;
Insipid else, and sure to be despised.
But all is in His hand whose praise I seek.
In vain the poet sings, and the world hears,
If He regard not, though divine the theme.
'Tis not in artful measures, in the chime 1020
And idle tinkling of a minstrel's lyre
To charm His ear, whose eye is on the heart;
Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,
Whose approbation—prosper even mine.

NOTES

BOOK V.—THE WINTER MORNING WALK.

Cowper describes a frosty morning, the slanting winter sun casting a grotesque, elongated shadow of himself as he walks, the spangled grasses glittering above the fields of snow, the woodman with his dog burrowing in the snow, the benumbed birds half-tamed by the cold, the iced mill-wheel, the frosted imagery of the trees. Cowper is the first of English poets who does justice to the cheerfulness of winter. Thomson describes its grander aspects in more sonorous verses, but his poem lacks that out-of-door freshness which lends such a charm to Cowper. "Your muscles grow springy and your lungs dilate with the crisp air as you walk along with him." By winter he is reminded of the Empress of Russia's palace of ice, which leads him on to the amusements of monarchs; war, the game of kings, and the evils it entails on their subjects. Thence he passes to the discussion of monarchy in general, describes the Bastille, and contrasts English liberty. But the only true liberty is that of the Christian; martyrs, though unappreciated by the world, rank far higher than patriots. It is the Christian alone who justly admires the works of God. Then he returns to what, with all its digressions, is the main subject of the Task, the beauties of the country.

1-127 *Sights on a frosty morning, the long shadow on the snow, the frosted grass, the patient cattle waiting to be fed, the woodman and his dog, the poultry floundering through the snow to be fed, the starved rooks, the waterfall with its thousand fantastic shapes and forms.*

7 *Ineffectual.* The sun has no power to melt the snows.

9 So Drayton speaks of "the spiring grass."

11 *Spindling.* Spindle is the diminutive of spin, but always intransitive.

14 *Askance.* Italian, "schiancio," athwart.

15 *Muscular.* May be an adjective, but more probably an adverb, like well-proportioned.

17 *Parse* "designed."

20 *The legs without the man.* What is the construction?

Cowper is so exact an artist that we can hardly imagine him describing what he had not seen. Yet it is difficult to realise the

phenomena here described, unless we suppose the path along the plaster'd wall considerable above the level of the base of the cottage.

22 *Bents*. The name is given in some parts of the country to the sub-order Agrostis, in others to the Cynosurus, or dog's-tail grasses, whose dry stalks, rejected by the sheep, remain all the autumn.

24 *Unstgkly and unseen*. The meaning of unsightly must not be pressed; there was no beauty in them to attract the eye.

26 *Nod superb*. The expression seems hardly appropriate for the grasses on a still winter morning, reminding us rather of "Mrs. Montagu's feather hangings."

27 Compare Virgil's picture of the dying ox, *Georgic*, iii 5-15.

39 The *leaning pile deciduous*. See note on *Sofa*, l. 104.

40 Show what advantage Latin or Greek would have here.

45 *Shiewd*. Sagacious; for history of the woid, see Trench's *English, Past and Present*, p. 214.

46 *Lurcher* is the same word as lurker; a lurcher is a dog who lies in wait to seize his prey.

60 *Gossiped*. So in *Pairing Time Anticipated*—

"I shall not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau
If buds confabulate or no."

Gossip. Corruption of God-sib, akin in God, originally a sponsor; hence, from their garrulity when they met at a chnsten-ing, the present sense of the word.

63 *The fleecy flood*. Called, l. 22, "the dazzling deluge." Can you justify the confusion of metaphors?

64 *Conscious*. Is this a proper use of the word? Distinguish knowledge and consciousness.

83 *Whatever some suppose* must refer to what follows. Many of the smaller songsters are *Insectivora*, and of these Cowper's observations would be true; but many of the *Grammivora* would, I imagine, feed on hips and haws. Notice, however, Cowper's keen personal observation. He and White of Selborne were kindred spirits.

96 *Splendid blank*. Another Latinsm.

101 "This is a description of Lavender Mill, about two miles from Olney. It was destroyed about twenty years after these lines were written, and its place is now filled by a cotton-mill."—*Globe Edition*.

107 *Embroidered*. An anticipatory epithet.

110 The icicles are like inverted tin rets, which seem to support the roof.

118 *Embossed*. See *Sofa*, l. 121.

127-176 *A description of the Empress of Russia's palace of ice*. "The ice-palace of St Petersburg was constructed by the Empress Anne in the very cold winter of 1740. Large blocks of ice were

cut from the Neva, squared with rule and compass, and carved with figures. When each was ready, it was moved to its place with cranes and pulleys, and at the instant of fitting it a little water was thrown upon the block to which it was joined. This instantly freezing, the whole was literally one block of ice, *producing, without contradiction, an effect infinitely more beautiful than if it had been built of the most costly marble, its transparency and bluish tint giving it rather the appearance of a precious stone.' See an article in the *Penny Magazine* for 1837 (p 459), extracted from an account published at the time at St Petersburg. There is an engraving of it in the same page, from the same source. The toy lasted from January till March "—*Note to Globe Edition.*

127 *Less worthy.* Put this sentence in the logical order of the words.

129 *Imperial mistrew.* Anne Ivanoviia, one of the Romanov dynasty, came to the throne 1730.

130 *Freak.* From Italian "fregar," to rub, properly an itching desire; thence an irrational desire, a capnce.

135 *Aristaus.* Forthestoïy, see *Georgic*, iv. 318. His mother's palace is called by Virgil "thalamus flummis alti," and "vitiea sediha." See in particular lines 363-374.

140 *Arrowy sleet.* Milton, *P R.*, in. 334. "Sharp sleet of arrowy showers."

144 Compare Bishop Heber's famous lines on the building of Solomon's Temple in the Oxford prize poems :

"Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric grew," &c.

147 *Cement.* Latin "cæmentum," for cædimentum, propely cut stones, rubble. Notice the accent. So Shakespeare—

"May cement their divisions, and bind up ;"

"the piece of virtue which is set

Betwixt us, as the cement of our love."

151 *Transparency.* Abstract for the concrete.

153 *Lambent flame serene.* See note on *Sofa*, 1. 104.

158 *Wreaths of flowers.* See note on 1. 127.

160 *Pannels,* or more correctly pannels, from old French "panel," modern French "panneau," the diminutive of "pane," from the Latin "pannus," a cloth.

165 *Lubricity.* Another instance of Cowper's favourite phraseology. Carlyle still uses the word in the sense of lewdness.

169 What is meant by the irony of history ?

171 *Estate.* Account for the initial e. What are "the three estates of the realm"?

176 // *smiled and it was cold.* What is the point of the antithesis?

176-193 *War is par excellence* the sport of monarchs.

177 *Hewing mountains into men.* The architect Dinocrates proposed, as a monstrous piece of flattery, to carve mount Atho; into a colossal figure of Alexander the Great, but the project was never executed.

178 *Building human wonders,* refers to the pyramids; "human," because the work of men; but the antithesis is somewhat forced.

183 *Pyramids.* Built for the sepulture of the kings of Egypt. The most celebrated pyramids are those of Cheops, Chaphiem, and Mencheres.

Mausoleum pomp. Mausolus, king of Caria, 377-353 B.C., built a magnificent tomb in honour of his wife, the celebrated Artemisia. It was counted one of the seven wonders of the world, and the name mausoleum has (like palace) passed from a proper into a common name.

184 *Short-lived themselves,* is ambiguous. It may refer to mausoleums (cf Juvenal's "Data sunt ipsis quoque fata scipulis," sepulchres themselves have their day); but it is better to take it of princes themselves, as pyramids can hardly be called short-lived.

186 "Quidquid delirant reges plectuntur Aclnvi," which Cailyle has somewhere translated, "Kings play the fool, and the Greeks must pay the piper."

189 *Their truncheons.* So Shakespaie, "the marshal's truncheon" where we should speak of the marshal's baton.

192 *Toy.* An abbreviation of play-toy = play-thing; Germ., "zeug."

193-363. *The origin of monarchy sought in the beginnings of society. Property begets aggression, aggression the need of a leader. The successful leader in war is naturally chosen leader in peace. Hence the king. The vulgar offer greatness extravagant worship, and the king himself is intoxicated with this worship, and thinks that the people exist for him, not he for the people. Hence the despot. Such a perversion and abuse is strange in the earliest times, stranger still that custom should make it tolerable even now. I too love a king, but only as the chief magistrate appointed by the state, subject to the constitution, and bound to carry out its laws.*

193 *Babel.* See Genesis ii. Babel, the name both of the tower and the town, means confusion. The most probable conjecture is that the town was an observatory, and possibly also connected with the worship of the sun.

217 It was the general belief in Cowper's day that the gods and heroes of Greek and Roman mythology were distorted copies of characters in the Bible. Deucalion was identified with Noah, Hercules with Samson, Pluto with Satan, &c.

218 *Falchion.* French, "fauchon," a short, curved sword; the poetical name for a sword.

219 Genesis iv. 22.

226 *Demesne* is the same word as domain ; *Lat.*, " dominium " See note on *Sofa*, 1. 331.

230-241 In these lines Cowper has admirably described the origin of one kind of monarchy. Aristotle in his *Politics* makes one of his four classes of kings consist of the descendants of some warrior or benefactor in heroic times. So too Carlyle, in his *Lectures on Heroes*, describes the king as " the Kon-ning Kan-ning, the man that *knows* or *cans*;" the Duke or *Dux*, the military leader." But Cowper errs in considering this the only form of monarchy. We must reckon, besides, at least three distinct forms of monarchy: 1. The patriarchal, such as arose amongst pastoral or nomad tribes. 2. The priestly. 3. The form common to most of the Aryan nations, where the king was the hereditary chief, the leader in war and peace, but controlled by his council of elders and nobles, and by the assembly of the whole people

239 *Virtue*. Used almost in the sense of the Latin " *virtus*," "bravery."

245 The metaphor halts. A crown may be said to intoxicate a man, a crown having become in common parlance a synonym for royalty ; but it is a fault to say, " The crown intoxicates the brow it binds," for the additional words are only applicable to "crown" in its literal sense, and violate the rule, "a metaphor must be wholly false, and must not combine truth with falsehood."—*English Lessons for English People*.

246 *It is the object, &c.* The majority are by nature so poor-spirited.

251 *The comprehensive faculty*. The power of grasping and combining many ideas. Take as an instance Napoleon.

253 *Build him a pedestal*. Suggested, perhaps, by the image which Nebuchadnezzar set up in the plain of Dura.

266 *Fume*. Perfume with odours, offers incense to him as to a god.

" Exalted on his pedestal of pride
And fumed with frankincense on every side."

—*Truth*, 1. 313.

268 *Astrut*. On the strut, as agog is on the go.

269 *Windy diet*. The air of flattery which inflates him.

270 *Profoundly*. Explain.

272 *Drudges*. To drudge is to drag a drudge; one who drags.

"At the gate he profered his servise
To drudge and draw."—CHAUCER.

273 *Gears*. Traces.

280 *Burnished*. To burnish is to polish metals by friction.

¹ A long-exploded derivative King originally meant the father or head of a family

281 *Terraqueous* may be called a preparatory epithet, *i.e.*, it serves to introduce the allusion in the next line.

282 *Storks among frogs*. Referring to the fable of the frogs, who, discontented with King Log, chose King Stork to reign over them. In Phædrus the second king is a water-serpent; in La Fontaine, a ciane.

285 *Drivel out of human lips*. So Thrasyarchus, in the *Republic*, asks Socrates, "Have you a nuisance?" "Why," says Socrates. "Why, because she leaves you to duvel and omits to wipe your nose when you require it, so that you can't even distinguish," &c.

Primitive times may have *acted* on the theory of the divine right of kings, but they did not *assert* it, as Cowper makes them do.

288 *Cradled weakness of the world*. An instance of metathesis or transposition of epithets.

295 Give instances.

297 *Philosophic deeds*. The expression sounds strange, as we usually connect philosophy with thought as opposed to action; but thought if sincere must issue in action, and the suicide of Cato (for instance) might properly be called a "philosophic deed." See *Julius Cæsar*, A. v. sc. I, 101.

316 *Doit*. Dutch, "duit," the $\frac{1}{160}$ th of a guilder.

320 Compare Southey's familiar *Battle of Blenheim*,

"But 'twas a famous victory."

322 Judges ix 6.

341 *Treason*. Generally applied only to the breach of faith of a subject towards his sovereign, but the word is equally applicable to the sovereign, as it is only under the Act of Settlement, and subject to the conditions which it imposes, that an English sovereign reigns

346-463 This admirable description of the limited monarchy of England is marred by the forced and unsound antithesis of the conclusion. It would be more true to say that you (the courtiers) love the man, we (the true patriots), the throne, the constitution

358 *Sterling*. Originally the name of the English penny, the standard coin in which it was stipulated that payments should be made. The word is probably a contraction of *esterling*, the *Esterlings*, or Eastern merchants from the Hanseatic towns on the Baltic, having been the first coiners of money.

360 *Causeless*. The adjective for the adverb.

363 *Whose freedom* This use of *whose* and *who* (l. 465) marks the transition from "who," the interrogative, to "who," the relative. In this instance we might punctuate "whose freedom is by suffrage?" "He is never free"

378 "The author hopes that he shall not be censured for unnecessary warmth upon so interesting a subject. He is aware that

it is become almost fashionable to stigmatise such sentiments as no better than empty declaration ; but it is an symptom, and peculiar to modern times."—COWPER'S Note.

379-446 *A description of the Bastille and a prisoner there, introduced to show the difference between English and French monarchy.*

382 *House of bondage*, Exodus xiii. 3, 14.

383 The Bastille, with its massive walls, ten feet thick, its eight gloomy towers, its dungeons, where a prisoner might, by a *lettre de cachet*, be confined for life without even knowing his offence, was a standing monument of the *ancien regime*. The Bastille had become famous through Europe by the narrative of the daring escape of two prisoners, D'Latude and D'Alegre, in 1756, who constructed a rope of more than 80 feet out of the linen threads of their shirts. Cowper's words are almost prophetic. The Bastille was demolished by the French mob, July 14th, 1789.

400 Daniel iv. 14, 15.

403 *Still lives to count*. A consecutive, not a final sentence.

412 *Hard shifting*, i e., shifting hardly, refers to "ingenuity," contained in the epithet "ingenious," not to woe.

421 *To turn purveyor*. So Byron's *Prisoner of Chillon*, 1, 381—

"With spiders I had friendship made,
And watched them in their sullen trade."

The whole poem may be profitably compared with Cowper's description.

433 *Which, who, &c.* See note on l. 643.

444 *Mamtheart god* Manes, or Mamechseus, a Persian, founder of the sect of the Mamechans in the last half of the fourth century A D., taught that there were two opposite principles of good and of evil, both eternal and of equal power—the Ormuzd and Ahriman of the old Persian religion. The latter, to which Cowper here refers, was to be worshipped in order to deprecate his malignant wrath.

446-538 *'Tis liberty alone that makes England dear to me. Her manners are rugged as her climate, but she is free. This freedom is in jeopardy, for modern patriotism is mostly insincere. All that is human has its day, and there are signs that England's day is nearly done.*

450 *Hurts the faculties, &c.* The proposition admits of question. Despotism, by withdrawing the best intellects from public life, has often indirectly promoted science.

455 *Loss of empire*. Referring again to the loss of the American Colonies. But America was not our only loss. By the treaty of Versailles, France obtained Tobago and St Lucia in the West Indies, besides all the settlements which had been wrested from her during the war in India. Spain received Minorca, and East

and West Florida ; Holland, Trincomalee, and most of the other possessions she had lost.

And though squeezed. Referring to the new taxes imposed by Pitt when he was Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, December 1783 But the charge is wholly unfounded. It has been estimated that in the five years from 1783 to 1788 the revenue was increased by 5,000,000/., of which not more than 1,500,000/ was raised by new taxes

462 *Thy dime n rude* Cf *Timepiece*, 1. 206, seq. and notes.

465 *Unadulterate* Verbs ending in -d, -t, -te, often omit the -ed of the past participle, on account of their already having an ending like the participle.

469 *Humane* Latin, "humanus," polished, refined.

471 *Either starved* Notice Cowper's fondness for participial constructions. It rarely causes ambiguity (yet see two lines farther on, "being free I love thee"), but it renders his style unperiodic, loose, and unfinished² "His artless blank verse seems more like a flowing and melodious conversation with some clear friend than a service of the Muses."

The pupil should in each case, where there is any possibility of mistake, be required to convert the participle into a verb depending on a conjunction

477 *But once enslaved, farewell.* Tennyson has expressed the same thoughts in the well-known lines, "You ask me why, tho' ill at ease ;" but the finished terseness and polish of the later poet form a striking contrast to the artless simplicity of Cowper's style, which has been pointed out above.

480 *Grain.* Whence the metaphor ?

Ham'den. Mortally wounded at Charlgrave Field near Oxford, 1643 See *English History*

Sidney. Not the Sidney of *Winter Evening*, 1. 516, but Algernon Sidney, second son of Robert, Earl of Leicester, executed 1683, on the charge of having taken part with Monmouth in the Rye House Plot.

493 It was not long after that Burke wrote, "But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophists, economists, and calculators has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever."

502 *Chanties.* Cf. Milton, *P. L.*, iv. 756.

"Relations dear and all the chanties
Of father, son, and brother."

For whose dear sake. Sake is the A.-S. "sacu," suit-at-law. "For whose sake" is literally "in whose cause." "Dear" is either an instance of metathesis (see above, *Garden*, 661), or we

² Aristotle (*Rhetoric*, ix 3) has admirably described the style under the name of ? — "A style which runs on indefinitely without conclusion or ending till the subject matter is exhausted.

may explain it thus : the cause of those who are precious to us is itself precious See note on *Garden*, 1. 661.

503 Cf. "Can sunt parentes, can liberi, propinqui, familiares, sed omnium cantates patna una complexa est."—CICERO.

511 *Wear their hearts so loose.* Entertain such unfixed immoral notions concerning. Cf Latin, "annum gerere."

515-521 *The Puritans.* For their domestic viitues, read, *inter aha*, Mr Kingsley's animated description of Zeal-for-Truth ; Thoresby in *Plays and Puritans*.

525 *Castle of the slate.* An appositional genitive.

535 Troy, Carthage, Tyre, Nineveh, till Mr Layaid's discovenes. Give other examples

538-581 *The glorious liberty of the children of God.*

538 *Yet.* Besides the liberty spoken of in 1 446

547 Matt, xxviii 28.

555 John i 3.

562 2 Peter iii. 10, 13.

566 *Occasional.* Not from time to time, but for a single occasion, temporal.

567 Psalm xiv. I.

577-581 It is worth while comparing Plato's noble language—"Evil cannot be annihilated, but must of necessity pci vade this mortal nature and this world of ours. Wherefore we must strive to escape hence, and fly thitherwards as soon as may be. And this flight consists in becoming as like to God as we can. And to be made like him is to become just and holy and wise as well."—*Theætetus*.

581-704 *The natural man tries in vain to escape from Jus bondage. Pleasures pall, conscience threatens, Scripture terrifies him, He reforms, but soon falls again. Baffled, he betakes himself to sophistry—"Appetites were given us to be indulged; preachers' lives refute their doctrines" Thus he lives on hardened and impenitent to the end. Morality is helpless to save him, it is only the gospel of love that can set him free.*

582 *His body.* The body as representing the appetites and passions (Romans vii, 24). But true wisdom consists not in abusing and villifying the body (which must inevitably lead to ascetism or epicureanism), but in legaidmg the body as an instrument of the mind, to be cared for and respected as a good and willing servant (i Cor. vi 19).

584 *Opprobbious.* So Milton calls the Mount of Olives, "that opprobrious hill," because of the temple of Moloch which Solomon built upon it.

585 *Propense his heart to idols.* Absolute construction.

Idols. Here all created objects, as opposed to the Creator.

588 *Gravitation.* Natural tendency or attraction; hence the epithets low, sordid.

596 *Comfortless repose*. Perhaps suggested by Milton's account of Satan's fall in *Paradise Lost*, book I. "Such resting found the sole of unblest feet," &c.

6n The religious thought of the 18th century was almost wholly occupied with the evidences of Christianity. But, as Mr Pattison has pointed out, the first half of the century was chiefly devoted to the internal, the second to the external proofs. Dr Larclner's *Credibility of the Gospel History* was the standard work in Cowper's day. Paley's *Evidences* appeared about ten years later than the *Task*.

613 *Exploded* Latin, "explode," to hiss off the stage.

622 *Begot or fancied innocence*. Pride is the father, innocence the mother. See note on *Garden*, 1. 544.

625 *A presage ominous*. Because it begets pride, which presages a fall.

627 *Nature*. Here opposed to grace, the natural man.

632 *Worn and tattered* As we speak of a threadbare argument.

635-642 The answer to the question is of course No. The answer to *Whicfallacy* is that the question itself is wholly beside the mark. God has given men appetites to satisfy, but he has also given him moral qualities and reason, and man is bound to subordinate the lower parts of his nature to the higher.

635 Genesis iii. 1.

640 *A kind* A race. Cf. "the kind" above. *Garden*, 1. 209.

643 *Which whoso, &c.* A Latinism, (mendacium) quod qui verum esse vel suspicatur. Cf 1 433.

646 *Dole*. What is dealt out; "deal" is the German "theil."

648 *Why music**

650 "By their deeds ye shall know them" "The object of religion is conduct; conduct is three-fourths of human life."

653 *Authentic*. Of the man himself, expressing his true nature. Bishop Watson thus distinguishes "authentic" and "genuine," when applied to writings —

"A genuine book is that which was written by the person whose name it bears as the author of it. An authentic book is that which relates to matters of fact as they really happened."

655 We use the substantive *reason* absolutely, the verb *to reason* relatively. "The reason has higher senses than reasoning. In the *Femmes Saviintes* the master of the house complains that there is in his family so much reasoning that there is no reason,—

Raison est l'emplor de toute ma maison,
Et le raisonnement en chasse la Raison."

—WHEWELL.

660-664 Theology was a favourite topic of conversation with the wits of that day. "Lord Bolingbroke was seldom in the company of the Countess of Huntingdon without discussing some

topicbeneficial to his eternal interests, and he always paid the utmost respect and deference to her ladyship's opinion."—PATTISON, *Tendencies of Religious Thought*, &c. Where see other instances.

664 *His hearts temper*. His heart is the proof armour which resists the strokes of conscience. Temper is properly the quality of any metal in respect of hardness.

669 *Sleep of death*. The common Bible metaphor.

670-681 There can be no religion without morality, and it is mischievous thus to oppose the two. The moralist might with justice turn the tables, and ask the Christian apologist whether it is not *he* who is ranting, and why *he* has failed to save the prodigal.

671 Psalm Iviii. 5.

675 , summum bonum. First = aichitypal, that from which all others spring.

Cf. "Go, soar with Plato to th' empyreal sphere,
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair.

POPE'S *Essay on Man*.

677 *Rhapsody*. Greek, the reciting of epic poetry, or a portion of a poem so recited. From the ihapsodists reciting their lays in season and out of season, rhapsody acquired the meaning of any high-flown n relevant language.

680 *Out-mantle*. To mantle is to cover, hence to fill, and as a neuter verb, to be full; "a mantling cup" is a full cup.

681 Whence the phrase?

682 *Such music*, &c. An allusion to the old superstition that the moon was in pain when eclipsed, and could be relieved by music. "The idea that the sun and moon are swallowed or bitten by dragons, or other creatures, is not only veiy common in the Old World, but it is even found in North and South America and Polynesia."—TYLOK'S *Early History of Mankind*, p. 163

685 I Kings xix. 12.

Shag. The rough hair of an animal. Shag tobacco is tobacco cut into fine shreds like hair.

702 *Strength by weakness*. 2 Corinthians xn 9.

The icicles of the mill reminded the poet of the Russian ice-palace, which he takes as a type of the amusements of kings in general. Thence, by a somewhat forced transition, he passes on to war, "the game of kings," monarchy, civil liberty, and lastly Christian libeity, thus following thenatuai bent of his genius. He says himself in reference to the *Task*, "all I write must have a religious cast."

704-777 *The respective claims of patriots and martyrs, and the different treatment they receive of men*. The Christian freeman.

706 Cf. Horace, *Odes*, iv. ix. 10, n.

710 *Give bond in stones*. Expand the metaphor.

717 *Equal laws.* The . which Harmodius and Aristogiton, according to the famous *Schönan*, gave to Athens.

726 *And chased them up to heaven.* A fine conceit. Notice the intentional ambiguity of the language, heaven being used literally and for immortal fame

728 At least one noble exception to Cowper's statement is to be found in Milton's *Sonnets*.

730 A hit at Hume's account of the Marian persecutions.

733 See John viii 32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." And of the Romans, especially chaps, viii. and ix.

737 vSee Judges xvi 9.

744 *Propriety.* Cf. Milton, *P. L.*, iv. 750.

"Hail, wedded love, mystic law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common else !"

747 Romans vii. 17.

749 *An emphasis of interest.* An emphatic, *i e.*, a special participation.

759 *Impeach* is the old French "empescher," to obstruct, the idea being that of clogging another with a charge.

764 Acts xxii. 39.

765 Proverbs viii 23-27.

771 "Soyons comme l'oiseau pose pom un instant

Sur des rameaux trop frêles,

Qui sent ployer la branche, et qui chante poutant

Sachant qu'il a des Tules"—V. HUGO.

Compare also Dionysius' famous reply to Theseus, referred to by Horace, *I Ep* xvi ad. fin.

779-906 *Only by a knowledge of God in revelation can we attain to a knowledge of God in nature. Thoughts which the Contemplation of the starry heavens suggests to the Christian. An address to the Creator) by whose illumination we view the world, not as the Work of change, but of order, beauty, and love*

785 Cf Ovid's "Os homini sublime dedit cælumque tueri."

802 *Resulting.* Properly bounding back, hence the preposition "to."

805 *Sublimed.* Latin, "sublimis, sublevimis," raised aloft. The technical meaning of "to sublime" is to reduce a solid substance to a gas or vapour; hence to refine.

814 He makes the worlds which are His throne revolve.

818 *What strains, &c.* Job xxxviii. 7.

834 *Weather-bleached.* The ram and frost denude the chalk cliffs

Weather. German, "wetter," stoim.

840 *Embodied.* I Corinthians xv. 44.

848 *Intellects*. As incorrect a use of the plural as *iŝ* that of talent in the singular.

858 ' *Tis the praise of thine*. It is the peculiar virtue of thy voice.

870 *But chance is not*. Cf. Pope's noble lines, *Essay on Man*, i. *ad Jin*.

All nature is but art, unknown to thee ;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see ;
All discord, harmony not understood ;
All partial evil, universal good."

Notice that Cowper, unlike Pope, here ignores wholly the existence of evil in the world.

873 *The wild vagaries*. The w. v. of chance. A curious use of the aittle. It almost resembles the French and German use of the article to individualise nouns.

876 *Gods that sleep*, &c. The Epicurean gods. See *Timepiece*, 1 516.

BOOK VI.—THE WINTER WALK AT NOON.

The sound of church bells suggests to the poet reflections on the associative power of sounds, and he dwells on the personal associations they suggest to him. Then follows the often-quoted description of the *Winter Walk*, from which the book takes its name. He has all the fidelity of a Flemish artist, joined with a richness of colour and feeling rare in that school. He proceeds to contrast wisdom gained by such a study of outdoor nature with book-knowledge. Familiarity with nature is wont to breed contempt, whereas the power of God is as much shown in the constant order of nature as in a miracle. This leads the poet to paint what the garden will be when reclothed by Spring. He then asserts the unremitting energy of Providence as opposed to a single creative act, or (to use the language of modern religious controversy), a personal deity as opposed to impersonal law. He returns to his favourite theme, the contrast between the fashionable amusements of the chess-player, the billiard-player, the virtuoso, with those of the lover of the country, and in particular with that of watching wild animal life. The crime of cruelty to animals is illustrated by a tale, which is as poor a production as anything Cowper ever wrote. It is meant as a terrible warning, but its improbability makes the reader more inclined to laugh. This, however, is a single blot on an otherwise almost perfect book. In the moral which he draws from the story he is again simple, unaffected, admirable. He next apologises ifor his love and praise

of animals, by giving instances of the extravagant and often undeserved praises which man passes on his fellow-men, though he might have found better instances than those he takes—the Handel and Shakespeare commemorations. Lastly, taking as his text Romans viii 22, 23, he foretells the final restoration of the fallen creation and the triumph of Christ's kingdom on earth. His language is borrowed in great part from the Old Testament, and he seems to catch something of the sublimity of an inspired prophet.

1-56 *The sound of church bells and the associations they awaken—ajathers and a mother s love Desideria.*

1 Sound has been called the most associative of the senses; the truth seems to be that as the associations of sound are fewer, so they are more vivid and intense.

2 *Pitched* "Pitch in the sense of a certain height or scale, or a certain degree of a quality, is from the notion of marking a definite point by sticking in a peg. 1 he pitch of one's voice is the point which it reaches in the musical scale " " *Pitch* and *pick* are different ways of pronouncing the same word. The radical signification is sinking with a pointed mstiumcnt, driving somethingpointed, stickinginto."—WEDGWOOD'S *Et. Diet.*

3 Cowper seems to allude to the well-known law of resonance. We all know how the tick-tack of a clock beats to any tune that is running in our heads. Cf. Browning, *Christmas Eve*, iv.—

" A tune was bom in my head last week,
Out of the thump-thump and shriek-shriek
Of the tram, as I came by it, up from Manchester;
And when next week I take it back again,
My head will sing to the engine's clack again,
While it only makes my neighboin's haunches stir,
Finding no dormant musical sprout
In him, as in me, to be jolted out."

11 *Cells where memory slept.* What has been called the pigeon-hole theory of memory is at least as old as Plato (see *Theætetus*), and has taken firm root in popular language.

30 Cowper is evidently thinking of his own father, a good and zealous clergyman, but much taken up with parochial duties, whom Cowper seems to have respected more than loved.

43 *A mother too.* See poem on the receipt of my mother's picture. In 1784, the year of the publication of the *Task*, Cowper wrote to his friend Joseph Hill, " I can truly say that not a week passes (perhaps I might with equal veracity say a day) in which I do not think of her. Such was the impression her tenderness made upon me, though the opportunity for showing it was so short." It will be remembered that Cowper was only six when he lost his mother.

50-52 Cf. *Virtutem incolumem odimus, sublatam ex oculis quainmus nividi* —HOR *Od* in 24, 21 And, *Virtutem videant intabescantque rehta.*—*Pers.* in. 38

52 *Poverty* Want of friends, isolation.

53 It was doubtless the want of domestic ties in his own case that made Cowper *par excellence* the poet of the family and home.

56-197 The' *Winter's Walk at Noon* is one of the most beautiful of Cowper's descriptions. Every touch is copied straight from nature, and helps to make a perfectly harmonious picture, and though we might wish the moralising (lines 87-108) shorter, yet we could not spare it, for it suggests the exquisite lines (108-117) in which Cowper puts as it were the finishing touch to the piece.

66 The *embattled tower*. Emberton church

69 *Settle in*. Fall gradually into. See note on *Timepiece*, 1. 301.

85 *Think down hours to minutes*. Make hours of thought seem minutes ; the metaphor is taken from straining or boiling down

88 *Knowledge and wisdom*. There is doubtless much truth in Cowper's distinction between knowledge and wisdom, and the mere bookworm cannot compete with the original observer of men and nature At the same time, we must allow that Cowper, who was a small reader himself, unduly depreciates book-learning. No man can now hope to attain high excellence in any branch of learning who has not read much. For a fairer view of the subject, read Bacon's essay *Of Studies*.

98 As an instance we may quote the superstitious respect which converted Virgil into an enchanter in the Middle Ages. But the remedy for this is not, as Cowper would have us do, to read less, but to read more.

Talismans. Arabic, "telsam," a magical image, on which are mystical characters as charms against enchantments. Compare the use of Latin to conjure ghosts :—

"Thou art a scholar; speak to it, Horatio."

99 *Shrewder*. See Trench's *Study of Words*, sub voce.

104 *By a tune entranced*. As Orpheus led trees and beasts to the sound of his lute. "A tune," the mere jingle of the words regardless of the sense

112 What is Milton's epithet for the primrose ?

114 *Deceive no student*. How far is this true ? To appreciate nature justly requires no less careful study than to understand books. Compare Wordsworth's *Peter Bell*—

"A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose was to him,
And it was nothing more."

- 120 Parse "all "
 126 Joshua x. 12.
 127 Psalm civ. 19.
 139 *Intestine*. A pedantic use of the word, to which it is hard to find an exact parallel. Cf. *'intestine war.'
 142 *Barren ay lances*. So Virgil talks of "densis hastilibus horrida myitus,"—, *En* in. 22.
 149 *Laburnum rich in streaming gold*. Cf. Tennyson's bold description, " Laburnums dropping-wells of fiie."
 152 *The other tall*. The guelder lose.
 158 *Sanguine*.

" This fellow

Upbraided me about the rose I wear,
 Saying the sanguine colour of the leaves
 Did represent my master's blushing cheeks "

—SHAKESPEARE, *Henry VI*

162 I have never noticed the honeysuckle in bloom befoie the middle of May, but it continues in bloom till the end of September.

165 The Hypencum most commonly grown in gardens is *II. calycmum*, or large floweing Tutsan, but from the description Cowper must have meant one of the bt John's worts.

167 *Mezereon* Spurge laurel

170 *Althaa*. Probably the hollyhock, which is an *Althaea* from the Mediterranean region

170 The story is told that Linnæus, on flist seeing the bioom growing wild in England (in Russia it is a hot-house plant), fell on his knees and thanked God for so much beauty.

173 *Elegant*. A word which has been so vulgarised by india-crimmate abuse as to be almost lost to poetry.

182 *Progress*. Used almost in a double sense for the course nature herself pursues, and the progressive lessons she teaches.

185 Point out the difference between Cowper's "There lives and works a soul in all things," and Virgil's "Totamque mfusa per artus, Mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet."

188 " Full many a flower is born to blush unseen
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air,"

—GRAY'S *Elegy*.

190 *The bright procession*. The course of the seasons under the figure of a progress of allegorical figures was a common plan in Latin poetry. See the famous passage in Lucretius, v. 736. Quote parallels from English poetry.

198-262 *Those reproved who held that God having created the universe, leaves it to maintain itself by its own force. Providence is an unremitting energy. God is not only all-present, but one. Happy he who sees Him in everything.*

201-205 This is to confuse law and force. When we speak of a law of nature all we mean is an invariable sequence of cause and effect. For instance, the law of gravitation is, that bodies are attracted to one another in the inverse ratio of the square of the distance ; but what the force of gravitation is, or how it acts, of this we know nothing.

211 Cf. Byron—

" Creatures of clay, vain dwellers in the dust,
The moth survives you, and are ye more just "

216 How can inert matter fulfil a task imposed upon it, or obey rigid and complicated laws, unless impelled by unremitting force, and conscious of unremitting supervision ? The language, or rather the thought, is confused. Cowper first speaks of matter as *dull, i e* , dead, senseless. He then (by a figure of speech admissible in itself, but faulty from the context) proceeds to attribute to it the consciousness of the operation of a first cause.

225 No one would think of accusing Cowper of pantheism, yet his language cannot fail to recall the statement of that doctrine in Virgil's celebrated lines, *Æn.* vi. 724—

"Cælum ac teiras . . .
Spiritus intus aht, totamque infusa per artus
Mens agitat molem et magno se corpore miscet."

and *Georgics*, iv. 221.

" Deum namque ire per omnes
Terrasque tractusque mans, cselumque profundum."

Perhaps the most ancient expression of this belief is to be found in an Orphic to which Plato refers

"Zeus is the beginning, Zeus the middle, ot Zeus all things are made."

See further quotations in a valuable note of Mr Pattison on *Essay of 'Man'*, Ep. i 1. 267.

233 *Pomona, Pales, &c* Modern research has discovered that Greek and Roman mythology arose from allegory partly conscious and partly unconscious, from a personification of the powers of nature, from a crystallization of metaphors. *Pales*, for instance, is the goddess of fodder, from the root *pa*, to feed. *Vei'tumnus* is the changing god, that is, the god of seasons. The origin of the other gods here mentioned is obvious.

241 *Freckle*. Is the German "fleck," a spot.

244 *Nectar*. The drink of the gods, hence any fragrant liquid. Euripides talks of the nectar of bees.

Includes, &c. Invests things with forms, &c.

254 *As with him*. The sentence is tautological. Can you alter it so as to make the antithesis complete ?

256 *Though winter had been none.* A fond fancy for which there is no warrant in Scripture. The lines are evidently introduced to recall the reader's attention to the subject of the book, which he was indeed in danger of forgetting.

261 *Liquid music.* Notice the double meaning of the epithet.

262-295 *What lover of nature would waste his time with chess, billiards, shopping, or dilettanteism?*

265 This tirade against the innocent game of chess is unprovoked and wanton.

268 *A forehead ridged and furrowed into storms.* The *cunosa fehatas* of the phrase justifies the mixture of metaphors. It may perhaps be paraphrased thus, "A forehead wrinkled so as to give the expression of a man in a storm of passion."

271 *A pin.* A piece. Push-pin was an old child's game. Cf. the French proverb "Tirer son epingle du jeu," to recover one's stakes in a game, to get out of a scrape.

275 *A velvet level.* "*virides sed non de gramme mensas.*"—**C.S.C.**

276 *Bauble.* French "*babiole*," a plaything, connected with baby, in the sense of a doll. A bauble was the badge of a fool's office. It was a short stick with a man's head with ass's ears carved upon it. Hence the proverb, 'If every fool should wear a bauble, fuel would be dear.'

285 Guido Reni, a Bolognese painter, b 1575, .. 1642. His most famous pictures are the *Cenci*, the *Ecce Homo*, the *Aurora*, the *Crucifixion of St Peter*, and *St Michael and the Dragon*.

287 *Langford.* The "Christie and Manson" of Cowper's day.

288. *At eye.* Notice the articles omitted after prepositions, as is common in Greek and French.

295 *Sign.* The signs or constellations of the Zodiac.

298 Proverbs xiv. 10.

302 *King cups.* Marsh marigolds, though in some parts the lesser celandine is so called.

303 *Prank.* "Hold a good wager she was every day longer prinking in the glass than you was."—*Art of Tormenting*. Connected with "prank," German "prangen," to glitter.

304 *Salad,* of watercresses.

310 Cowper was never happier than in this description of the squirrel, but he is not perfectly correct in his natural history, for the squirrel does not truly outsleep the winter or hibernate. He lays up stores of nuts, fir cones, &c., which he seeks from time to time, sleeping meanwhile, till awakened by the pangs of hunger.

321-343 *Human sympathy with the happiness of animals.*

321-327 This is becoming every day more true, but it was not always so. The duties that we owe to animals are generally the last to be acknowledged, and many good and kind-hearted
COWP.

men in Cowper's clay could see no harm'in cock-fighting or bear-baitmg, just as in our own day there may be found good and kind-hearted men who still uphold battues and pigeon-shooting.

334 *Kine*. The Sanskrit for cow is "go," (by Grimm's law) a soft consonant in Sanskrit becomes the conespndmg hard consonant in Low German (English). The word is interesting as showing that the animal had been domesticated befoie the Anan race separated. So daughter, according to Professor Muller, means little milk-maid. Most of the words of peace are the same in all the members of the Arian family, those of war and of the chase are different in each dialect The inference is obvious.

346, 347 We can have no critenon by which to measure the two kinds of pleasure Man's is of course of a highei quality, but being reflex, far less intense.

348-459 *At the creation man was given dominion over the beasts of the field) but then it was a loving rule. The Fall begot fear on the part of animals, and cruelty on the part of man. This cruelty has grown more and more wanton, so that there is no safety for them but in the desert. Instances. Cruelty to animals is allowed among men, but a sin in the sight of God, as proved by the Mosaic Law. We may use but not abuse our delegated authority*

348 *Seq.* Compare with this Milton's narrative of the creation, *P. L.*, book vii.

370 *Of his*. Of what belonged to him, his subjects.

372-379 *Cf.*—

"Beasts now with beasts 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish : to graze the herb all leaving,
Devoured each other ; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him ; or, with countenance grim,
Glared on him passing.

—*P. L.* , book x. 710.

381 *To make him sport*. A substantival sentence, stands as the subject to "are."

404 *As likes them*. So Shakespeare, "it dislikes me."

Impersonal verbs are far more frequent in the early stages of a language, on the same principle that makes children prefer *me* to *I*.

412-416 Some animals and plants only thrive under domestication, the reason being that they have been so modified by culture that a return to their original wild state is impossible.

426 *The flight-performing horse*. An ugly-sounding epithet, but appropriate for a hunter.

427 *Takes his murderer on his back*. Referring to the fable of the horse and the stag.

432 The law of England has been so far amended since

Cowper's time that cruelty to animals is now penal.³ But public opinion, we fear, is not yet sufficiently enlightened to secure a conviction against a man for riding his horse to death in the hunting-field.

444 Exodus xxiii. 5-

446 Deuteronomy xxn 6, 7.

450 Genesis ix. 2, 3.

454 *Instrument*. Any legal document containing the terms of a contract.

457 *Carnivorous through sin*. A poetical fiction. Our teeth disprove it.

459-560 *That God punishes cruelty to animals shown by the history of Balaam, and the "ancient tale" of Misagathus*. (For the last see introduction to book vi.)

461 *The unfledged raven*. Psalm cxlvii. 9.

The hods whelp. Psalm civ. 21.

467 Numbers xxii.

480 The authority is not known.

485 *Misagathus*. , hater of good. Evander, below, is taken from the name of the pious king of Pallanteum, the ally of Æneas. For these classical names see note on *Sofa*, 1. 262.

486 *In ostent*. Ostensibly. The word is also used for an omen.

506 *Lullabies of age*. Old age is a second childhood.

514 *Thrills*. Ital., "trillaie," to shake, to tingle.

"A sudden horror chill

Ran through each nerve and thrilled in every vein."

—ADDISON.

Curdles. Sudden terror causes the heart to stop beating, "gehduisque cort formidine sanguis."—VIRGIL.

516 *Felon*. Ital, "fello;" French, "fella," ciuel.

519 *Or e'er*. See note on *Sofa*, 1. 68.

Rowels. Fr., "rouelle," little wheel.

549 *As he had caught*. See note on *Winter Evening*, 1. 479.

554 *Sheer*. Gothic, "skeirs," clear, clean.

561 For the antithesis between sense and sensibility, compare Miss Austin's famous novel, and the French "sense" and "sensible."

566 *Humanity*. Properly means the qualities which are or ought to be common to mankind; hence applied, as here and generally, to moral qualities; for its other meaning—intellectual qualities—compare the Scotch "the humanities."

567 Would snails, strictly speaking, belong to the genus reptile?

568 *Vermin*. See Trench's *Select Glossary*.

³ By 12 and 13 Viet., c 92, s 2, if any person cruelly bent, ill-treat, over-drive, abuse, or torture, or cause to be so ill-treated, any animal, every such offender, for every such offence, shall forfeit not exceeding .5.

571 *The alcove*. See note on *Sofa*, l. 278, here for a summer-house.

572 *Refectory*. Dining-room. The word would not now be used except of a monastery, or at any rate some public establishment.

577 Cowper was the sworn enemy of field-sports. See *Garden*, l. 325. How far do you consider his arguments conclusive against them?

579 *Economy*. The regular operation and arrangement. Derive the word.

583 *Paramount*. "Per" and "ad montem"; whence *Noi man amontj* above.

594 Cruelty is devilish because it is wanton and objectless.

596 God justly limits his mercy to those who aie themselves merciful.

Quote a famous passage of Shakespeare on the quality of meicy.

601-632 *Man, the lord of the creation but accountable for his rule. Animals in intelligence and moral qualities often superior to man.*

603 The notion that animals exist solely for man is as misleading and opposed to scientific piogress as the old geocentric theory.

606 *Roundly*. Completely; and so, rigorously.

612 *Parts*. Talent.

616-620 Referring to the many well-attested stones of dogs who have saved their masters from robbers.

621—631 Give instances. See in Dr Brown's *Horæ Subseciviv, Our dogs, Rab and his Friends*. *Quarterly Review*, October 1872, *Consciousness of Dogs*.

632-664 *Instances of man's extravagant praise of man. The Handel Commemoration*

635 *Commemoration mad*. The H C was celebrated in Westminster Abbey, May 1784, the centenary of the great composer's birth. Cowper, whose aim in the *Task* was, among others, "to shoot folly as it flies" (so he tells us in one of his letters), added these lines as the poem was passing through the press. He might have chosen a better mark. The C. realized ,22,000 for the fund for decayed musicians, which sum was invested (alas!) in South Sea annuities. See letter of Dr Burney, *Annual Register*, 1784, p. 331.

638 As Cowper himself recants (l. 653), we may forbear criticism.

640 *Oaken wreath*. The oak was sacred to Jupiter: the wreath would be of oak leaves carved in gold.

650 *Whom*. What is the antecedent?

Buckram out. Buckram is stiff linen cloth; hence buckram the adjective—stiff, formal. Every one will remember Falstaff's men in buckram.

658 The news of the battle of Culloden, fought on April 8th, 1746, leached London on Sunday morning.

659 Charles Edward Stuart, grandson of James II. ; William Duke of Cumberland, 3d son of George II.

662 *Eke*. German "auch," a word common in Spenser, Shakespeare, &c. "A tram-band captain eke was he," *John Gilpin*, where Cowper is imitating the old ballad language. Justify the use of the archaism here.

Two staves A stave (a modification of staff) is a verse or so much of a psalm as is given out by the clerk or precentor at one time to be sung by the congregation. The staves of a cask are the parts out of which a cask is set up; so the staves of a psalm are the poitions of which the psalm is composed.

664-729 *Other instances of man's praise of man*. I. *Garrick unit one day be worshipped with the same enthusiasm, but not the same taste and sense that he showed in conducting the Shakespeare jubilee* 2 *The crowd unharness and drag the carriage of some "popular statesman of the day. Poetry has exhausted itself in panegyrics. The only theme left for us is praise of nature, and of the virtues of animals as seen in nature—a worthy theme if it tend to alleviate the sufferuigs of animals.*

664 Garrick, David, b. 1716, d. 1779. The most famous of English actors. lie revived the taste for Shakespeaie on the English stage, and set the fashion of natural and unaffected acting. By his death "the ninth of nations was eclipsed"—JOHNSON'S *Epitaph*.

666 *Idol of our worship*. "The god of our idolatry" in the next line is merely for the sake of variety; there is no contrast intended. Cowper implies that Garrick's memory will after his death be paitially forgotten, and that then there will come a revival.

668 *Shall*, as distinguished from *will*, gives a tone of prophecy. In the *third* person we only use "shall" where our own will, or choice, or power exercises some influence over the event; so in Scripture the announcement of a prophecy brings its own fulfilment.

674 Richard III., Hamlet, Macbeth, and Romeo, were Garrck's principal Shakespenan chaacters.

675 *Inky cloak*. *Hamlet*, i. 2. 77.

679 The Stratford Jubilee of 1769. Garrick, who incurred large expenses on the occasion, recouped himself by bringing out in London the Shakespeare pageant, devised by him for Stratfoird, but prevented by the ram.

Liturgy. „, any public service, hence the form according to which the services of the church are peiformed.

683 *Piety*. The satire falls flat; for piety, in the proper sense, means affection and reverence for any superior.

685 *The mulberry tree*. A mulberry tree in Shakespeare's

garden, said to have been planted by Shakespeare himself. It was cut down in 1756 by the Rev. Francis Gastrell, in order to save himself the trouble of showing it to visitors. By a similar act of Vandalism, he pulled down Shakespeare's house, to save himself from paying house-rates. In September 1769 the Mayor and Corporation of Stratford-upon-Avon presented Garrick with a cup carved from the mulberry tree. Garrick held this cup in his hand when he sang the song which he composed for the occasion.

"Behold this fair goblet, 'twas carved from the tree,
Which, O my sweet Shakespeare, was planted by thee,
As a relic I kiss it, and bow at the shrine,
What comes from thy hand must be ever divine.

All shall yield to the mulberry tree,

Bend to thee

Blest Mulberry!

Matchless was he

Who planted thee

And thou like him immortal shalt be."

—See CHAMBERS' *Book of Days*, vol. i. p. 590.

678—694 It is hard to make out how much of this description is ironical, and how much is earnest. Cowper seems as though he had set out meaning to curse, and remained to bless

700 *Kerchiefs*. *Couvrechiefs*. In old Fr., chef-caput, head.

706 *Moon at full*.

"Nor moonlight cold which maketh mad."

—BROWNING, *Paracelsus*.

712 *A tribute, in its use, &c.* The attribution of praise when justly employed and directed, is holy and venerable.

720 Cowper's verse is like his theme Cf. Sir John Denham's well-known verses on the river Thames —

"Oh! could I flow like thee! and make thy stream

My great example as it is my theme ;

Though deep, yet clear; though gentle yet not dull,

Strong without rage; without o'erflowing full."

724 *Virtues*. The special attribute of man. *Virtues* is from "vir." See *Sofa*, 1. 678, with rote.

729 "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now " (Romans viii. 22).

734 Cowper was a firm believer in the then almost commonly received notion of the millennium. As the world was six days in making and God rested on the seventh day, so it was believed that it would last six thousand years, to which would succeed the thousand years of Christ's personal reign on earth. Cowper

probably follows Archbishop Usher's chronology, which made the date of the creation of the world 4004 B. c.

740 Psalm civ. 1. "Who maketh the clouds his chariot, who walketh upon the wings of the wind."

744 *His chariot paved with love.* His chariot brings love with it, or perhaps the metaphor rather is, it strews the path before it with love.

760 *Accomplished.* Not actually fulfilled, but certain to be fulfilled.

767 Producing only weeds in abundance.

768 *This thy curse.* Genesis in. 18. Illustrate this use of the epithet.

771 Compare Virgil's fourth *Eclogue*, and Pope's *Messiah*.

773 Isaiah lxxv. 25. *Libbard.* A corruption of leopard, used by Shakespeare.

777 *Antipathies.* Oppositions of nature, generally used in a milder sense for unaccountable dislikes.

778 Isaiah xi. 8.

780 *Worm.* Newton ignorantly took Cowper to task for the use of the word worm. Cowper then replies (*Letter* 184)—"As to the word worm, it is the very appellation which Milton himself, in a certain passage of the *Paradise Lost*, gives to the serpent. Not having the book at hand I cannot now refer to it, but I am sure of the fact. I am mistaken too, if Shakespeare's Cleopatra do not call the asp, by which she thought fit to destroy herself, by the same name. But not having read the play these five and twenty years, I will not affirm it. They are, however, beyond all doubt, convertible terms: a worm is a small serpent, and a serpent is a large worm. And when an epithet significant of the most terrible species of those creatures is adjoined, the idea is surely sufficiently ascertained. No animal of the vermicular or serpentine kind is crested but the most formidable of all."

The letter is doubly interesting, as showing the excellence of Cowper's memory, and also the paucity, or, we may say, the total absence of books at Olney.

The "certain passage of the *Paradise Lost*" is bk. ix. 1. 1067—

" O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm."

Worm in the sense of serpent occurs seven times in *Antony and Cleopatra*, A. v. sc. 2.

782 *Lambent.* Now generally restricted to flame.

792 Revelation v. 12.

805 Isaiah lx. 7. "Nebaroth and Kedar, the sons of Ishmael and progenitors of the Arabs, in the prophetic scripture here alluded to, may be reasonably considered as representatives of the Gentiles at large."—Author's note.

806 Ormus and Ind are found together in *Par. Lost*, ii. 2. The island of Ormus in the Persian Gulf was once a vast emporium of the Indian trade, and celebrated for its wealth and extended commerce all over Asia.

807 *Sabds spicy graves*. Saba, the Arabia Felix of the ancients.

"Sabsean odours from the spicy shoies
Of Araby the bless'd."—*Par. Lost*, iv. 162.

812 *Æthiopia*. Psalm Ixviii. 31.

813 *Her report*. The news of the new Jerusalem.

831 A favourite simile of Shakespeare,—*"As in the sweetest bud the eating canker dwells"*—*Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 1.1 42.

833 *"Medio de fonte leporum"*

Surgit aman aliquid quod in ipsis floribus angit.

—*Lucretius*, iv. 1127.

846 *"To an honest mind the best perquisites of a place are the advantages it gives a man of doing good."*—ADDISON.

853 *Good-breeding*. Show what assumption is implied in this word. Compare *"gentleman."*

867 Revelation vi. 16.

871 2 Peter in. 4.

876 Men now, nay, even ministers, question the inscrutable attributes of God (Job ix.), and reject the mysteries of religion as though they were idols (Isaiah in. 20).

882 Cowper is referring to the Unitarian secession from the Church of England, of which Priestley was the most prominent leader.

886 *Who knee thy name.*

"I could as well be brought
To knee his throne and squire-like pension beg."
—SHAKESPEARE.

897 2 Peter ii. 10.

908 *"Nee vixit male qui natus monensque fefelht."*—HORACE.

Aristotle's definition of happiness is *"conscious activity in the way of virtue."* Which is the truest conception of happiness, his or Cowper's?

921 For the simile compare the *Garden*, 133, seq.

945 *"Prosperity is the blessing of the Old Testament, adversity is the blessing of the New."* Chnst's teaching is that God sends his rain and sunshine both on the just and the unjust.

948 Gen. xxiv 63.

978 The pleasures of the world are likened to a cup of Circe sucked through a golden tube.

980 *The neat conveyance*. Dropping the metaphor, *"the refined way in which it takes its pleasure."* So Burke, though applying

the words very differently, says, "Vice itself loses half its evil by losing all its grossness"

990 *terluig* Probably a corruption of Easterling; the Easterlings or North Germans were the first money-comes in England. Sterling was first of all the name of the English penny, then applied generally to the coin of the realm, hence to everything of standard value, genuine.

993 *Garnished*. French "garnir," to provide; hence adorn, trick out.

1001 *Decently*. Explain.

1012 "I come to pluck your beards harsh and crude."—LYCIDAS.

1013 Turn this metaphor into a simile.

The last three hundred lines of the *Task* are so full of Scripture language and allusions, that I have only attempted to give references to the most obvious quotations and reproductions. The student will notice many more for himself

It is worth remarking how much Burke and Bright borrow their language from the Bible in the most eloquent passages of their speeches. The same observation applies to many other English classics.



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