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The Seasons

Thomson, James

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Spring.

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W. Kent inv. et del.

E. Fournier Sculp.

SPRING.

S P R I N G.

B 2



THE ARGUMENT.

The Subject proposed. Inscribed to the Countess of HARTFORD. The Season is described as it affects the various Parts of Nature, ascending from the Lower to the Higher; and mixed with Digressions arising from the Subject. Its Influence on inanimate Matter, on Vegetables, or Brute Animals, and last on Man; concluding with a Dissuasive from the wild and irregular Passion of Love, opposed to That of a pure and happy Kind.

S P R I N G.

COME, gentle SPRING, Ethereal Mildness, come,
 And from the Bosom of yon dropping Cloud,
 While Music wakes around, veil'd in a Shower
 Of shadowing Roses, on our Plains descend.

O HARTFORD, fitted, or to shine in Courts 5
 With unaffected Grace, or walk the Plain
 With Innocence and Meditation join'd
 In soft Assemblage listen to my Song,
 Which thy own Season paints; when Nature all
 Is blooming, and benevolent, like thee. 10

AND see where furly WINTER passes off,
 Far to the North, and calls his ruffian Blasts:
 His Blasts obey, and quit the howling Hill,
 The shatter'd Forest, and the ravag'd Vale;
 While softer Gales succeed, at whose kind Touch, 15
 Dissolving Snows in livid Torrents lost,
 The Mountains lift their green Heads to the Sky.

B 3

As

As yet the trembling Year is unconfirm'd,
 And W I N T E R oft at Eve resumes the Breeze,
 Chills the pale Morn, and bids his driving Sweets 20
 Deform the Day delightful: so that scarce
 The Bittern knows his Time, with Bill ingulph'd,
 To shake the founding Marsh; or from the Shore
 The Plovers when to scatter o'er the Heath,
 And sing their wild Notes to the listening Waste. 25

At last from *Aries* rolls the bounteous Sun,
 And the bright *Bull* receives him. Then no more
 Th' expansive Atmosphere is cramp'd with Cold;
 But, full of Life and vivifying Soul,
 Lifts the light Clouds sublime, and spreads them thin, 30
 Fleecy, and white, o'er all-surrounding Heaven.

F O R T H fly the tepid Airs; and unconfin'd,
 Unbinding Earth, the moving Softness strays.
 Joyous, th' impatient Husbandman perceives
 Relenting Nature, and his lusty Steers 35
 Drives from their Stalls, to where the well-us'd Plow
 Lies in the Furrow, loosen'd from the Frost.
 There, unrefusing to the harness'd Yoke,
 They lend their Shoulder, and begin their Toil,
 Chear'd by the simple Song and soaring Lark. 40
 Meanwhile, incumbent o'er the shining Share,
 Th

S P R I N G.

7

The Master leans, removes th' obstructed Clay,
Winds the whole Work, and sidelong lays the Glebe,

WHILE, thro the neighbouring Fields the Sower stalks,
With measur'd Step; and, liberal, throws the Grain 45
Into the faithful Bosom of the Ground.
The Harrow follows harsh, and shuts the Scene.

BE gracious, HEAVEN! for now laborious Man,
Has done his Part. Ye fostering Breezes, blow!
Ye softening Dews, ye tender Showers, descend! 50
And temper all, thou world-reviving Sun,
Into the perfect Year! Nor, ye, who live
In Luxury and Ease, in Pomp and Pride,
Think these last Themes unworthy of your Ear:
Such Themes as these the *rural* MARO sung 55
To wide-imperial Rome, in the full Height
Of Elegance and Taste, by Greece refin'd.
In ancient times, the sacred Plow employ'd
The Kings, and awful Fathers of Mankind:
And Some, with whom compar'd, your Insect-Tribes 60
Are but the Beings of a Summer's Day,
Have held the Scale of Empire, rul'd the Storm
Of mighty War; then, with victorious Hand,
Disdaining little Delicacies, seiz'd
The Plow, and greatly independant scorn'd 65
All the vile Stores Corruption can bestow.

B 4

Y E

Y E generous B R I T O N S, venerate the Plow !
 And o'er your Hills, and long withdrawing Vales,
 Let Autumn spread his Treasures to the Sun,
 Luxuriant, and unbounded ! As the Sea, 70
 Far thro his azure turbulent Domain,
 Your Empire owns, and from a thousand Shores
 Wafts all the Pomp of Life into your Ports ;
 So with superior Boon may your rich Soil,
 Exuberant, Nature's better Blessings pour 75
 O'er every Land, the naked Nations clothe,
 And be th'exhaustless Granary of a World !

N O R only thro the lenient Air this Change,
 Delicious, breathes ; the penetrative Sun,
 His Force deep-darting to the dark Retreat 80
 Of Vegetation, sets the steaming Power
 At large to wander o'er the vernant Earth,
 In various Hues ; but chiefly thee, gay *Green* ;
 Thou smiling Nature's univerfal Robe !
 United Light and Shade ! where the Sight dwells 85
 With growing Strength, and ever-new Delight.

F R O M the moist Meadow to the wither'd Hill,
 Led by the Breeze, the vivid Verdure runs,
 And swells, and deepens, to the cherish'd Eye.
 The Hawthorn whitens ; and the juicy Groves 90
 Put forth their Buds, unfolding by degrees,
 Til

Till the whole leafy Forest stands display'd,
 In full Luxuriance, to the sighing Gales ;
 Where the Deer ruffle thro the twining Brake,
 And the Birds sing conceal'd. At once, array'd 95
 In all the Colours of the flushing Year,
 By Nature's swift and secret-working Hand,
 The Garden glows, and fills the liberal Air
 With lavish Fragrance ; while the promis'd Fruit
 Lies yet a little Embryo, unperceiv'd, 100
 Within its crimson Folds. Now from the Town
 Buried in Smoke, and Sleep, and noisom Damps,
 Oft let me wander o'er the dewy Fields,
 Where Freshness breathes, and dash the trembling Drops
 From the bent Bush, as thro the verdant Maze 105
 Of Sweet-bryar Hedges I pursue my Walk ;
 Or taste the Smell of Dairy ; or ascend
 Some Eminence, A U G U S T A, in thy Plains,
 And see the Country, far-diffus'd around,
 One boundless Blush, one white-empurpled Shower 110
 Of mingled Blossoms ; where the raptur'd Eye
 Hurries from Joy to Joy, and hid beneath
 The fair Profusion, yellow Autumn spies.

I F, brush'd from *Russian* Wilds, a cutting Gale,
 Rise not, and scatter from his humid Wings 115
 The clammy Mildew ; or, dry-blowing, breathe
 Untimely Frost ; before whose baleful Blast
 The full-blown Spring thro all her Foliage shrinks,

B 5

Joyless,

Joyless, and dead, a wide-dejected Waste,
 For oft, engender'd by the hazy North, 120
 Myriads on Myriads, Insect-Armies waft
 Keen in the poison'd Breeze ; and wasteful eat,
 Thro Buds and Bark, into the blacken'd Core,
 Their eager Way. A feeble Race ! yet oft
 The sacred Sons of Vengeance ! on whose Course 125
 Corrosive Famine waits, and kills the Year.
 To check this Plague the skilful Farmer Chaff,
 And blazing Straw, before his Orchard burns ;
 Till all involv'd in Smoke, the latent Foe
 From every Cranny suffocated falls : 130
 Or scatters o'er the Blooms the pungent Dust
 Of Pepper, fatal to the frosty Tribe :
 Or, when th' envenom'd Leaf begins to curl,
 With sprinkled Water drowns them in their Nest :
 Nor while they pick them up with busy Bill, 135
 The little trooping Birds unwisely scares.

B E patient, Swains ; these cruel-seeming Winds
 Blow not in vain. Far hence they keep, repress'd,
 Those deepning Clouds on Clouds, furcharg'd with Rain,
 That o'er the vast *Atlantic* hither borne, 140
 In endless Train, would quench the Summer-Blaze,
 And, cheerless, drown the crude unripen'd Year.

T H E North-East spends his Rage, and now, shut up
 Within his Iron Caves, th' effusive South

Warms

S P R I N G.

11

Warms the wide Air, and o'er the Void of Heaven 145
 Breathes the big Clouds with vernal Showers distent.
 At first a dusky Wreath they seem to rise,
 Scarce staining Ether ; but by fast Degrees,
 In Heaps on Heaps, the doubling Vapour sails
 Along the loaded Sky, and mingling deep 150
 Sits on th' Horizon round a settled Gloom.
 Not such as wintry Storms on Mortals shed,
 Oppressing Life, but lovely, gentle, kind,
 And full of every Hope and every Joy,
 The Wish of Nature. Gradual sinks the Breeze, 155
 Into a perfect Calm ; that not a Breath
 Is heard to quiver thro' the closing Woods,
 Or rustling turn the many-twinkling Leaves
 Of Aspin tall. Th' uncurling Floods, diffus'd
 In glassy Breadth, seem thro delusive Lapse 160
 Forgetful of their Course. 'Tis Silence all,
 And pleasing Expectation. / Herds and Flocks
 Drop the dry Sprig, and mute-imploring eye
 The falling Verdure. Hush'd in short Suspense,
 The plummy People streak their Wings with Oil, 165
 To throw the lucid Moisture trickling off ;
 And wait th' approaching Sign to strike, at once,
 Into the general Choir. Even Mountains, Vales,
 And Forests seem, impatient, to demand
 The promis'd Sweetness. Man superior walks 170
 Amid the glad Creation, musing Praise,
 And looking lively Gratitude. At last,

B 6

The

The Clouds consign their Treasures to the Fields,
 And, softly shaking on the dimpled Pool
 Prelusive Drops, let all their Moisture flow, 175
 In large Effusion o'er the freshen'd World. |
 The stealing Shower is scarce to patter heard,
 By such as wander thro the Forest-Walks,
 Beneath th'umbrageous Multitude of Leaves.
 But who can hold the Shade while Heaven descends 180
 In univerfal Bounty, shedding Herbs,
 And Fruits, and Flowers, on Nature's ample Lap?
 Swift Fancy fir'd anticipates their Growth;
 And, while the milky Nutriment distills,
 Beholds the kindling Country colour round. 185

THUS all day long the full-distended Clouds
 Indulge their genial Stores, and well-shower'd Earth
 Is deep enrich'd with vegetable Life;
 Till, in the western Sky, the downward Sun
 Looks out, effulgent, from amid the Flush 190
 Of broken Clouds, gay shifting to his Beam.
 The rapid Radiance instantaneous strikes
 Th' illumin'd Mountain, thro the Forest streams,
 Shakes on the Floods, and in a yellow Mist,
 Far smoaking o'er th' interminable Plain 195
 In twinkling Myriads lights the dewy Gems.
 Moist, bright, and green, the Landskip laughs around.
 Full swell the Woods; their every Musick wakes,
 Mix'd in wild Concert with the warbling Brooks
 Increas'd,

S P R I N G.

13

Increas'd, the distant Bleatings of the Hills, 200
 The hollow Lows responsive from the Vales,
 Whence blending all the sweeten'd Zephyr springs.
 Meantime refracted from yon eastearn Cloud,
 Beftriding Earth, the grand ethereal Bow
 Shoots up immense; and every Hue unfolds, 205
 In fair Proportion running from the Red,
 To where the Violet fades into the Sky.
 Here, awful N E W T O N, the dissolving Clouds
 Form, fronting on the Sun, thy showery Prism;
 And to the sage-instructed Eye unfold 210
 The various Twine of Light by thee disclos'd
 From the white mingling Maze. Not so the Swain,
 He wondering views the bright Enchantment bend,
 Delightful, o'er the radiant Fields, and runs
 To catch the falling Glory; but amaz'd 215
 Beholds th' amusive Arch before him fly,
 Then vanish'd quite away. Still Night succeeds,
 A soften'd Shade, and saturated Earth
 Awaits the Morning-Beam, to give to Light,
 Rais'd thro ten thousand different Plastic Tubes, 220
 The balmy Treasures of the former Day.

THE N spring the lively Herbs, profusely wild,
 O'er all the deep-green Earth, beyond the Power
 Of Botanist to number up their Tribes:
 Whether he steals along the lonely Dale, 225
 In silent Search; or thro the Forest, rank

With



With what the dull Incurious Weeds account,
 Bursts his blind Way ; or climbs the Mountain-Rock,
 Fir'd by the nodding Verdure of its Brow.
 With such a liberal Hand has Nature flung 230
 Their Seeds abroad, blown them about in Winds,
 Innumerable mix'd them with the Nursing Mold,
 The moistning Current, and prolifick Rain.

BUT who their Virtues can declare ? Who pierce
 With Vision pure, into these secret Stores 235
 Of Health, and Life, and Joy ? The Food of Man,
 While yet he liv'd in Innocence, and told
 A Length of golden Years, unlesh'd in Blood,
 A Stranger to the savage Arts of Life,
 Death, Rapine, Carnage, Surfeit, and Disease, 240
 The Lord, and not the Tyrant of the World.

THE first fresh Dawn then wak'd the gladden'd Race
 Of uncorrupted Man, nor, blush'd to see
 The Sluggard sleep beneath its sacred Beam.
 For their light Slumbers gently fum'd away ; 245
 And up they rose as vigorous as the Sun,
 Or to the Culture of the willing Glebe,
 Or to the chearful Tendence of the Flock.
 Meantime the Song went round ; and Dance and Sport
 Wisdom and friendly Talk successive stole 250
 Their Hours away. While in the rosy Vale
 Love breath'd his infant Sighs, from Anguish free,
 And

And full replete with Blifs ; save the sweet Pain,
 That, inly thrilling, but exalts it more.
 Nor yet injurious Act, nor furlly Deed, 255
 Was known among these happy Sons of HEAVEN ;
 For Reason and Benevolence were Law.
 Harmonious Nature too look'd smiling on.
 Clear shone the Skies, cool'd with eternal Gales,
 And balmy Spirit all. The youthful Sun 260
 Shot his best Rays, and still the gracious Clouds
 Drop'd Fatness down ; as o'er the swelling Mead,
 The Herds and Flocks, commixing, play'd secure.
 This when, emergent from the gloomy Wood,
 The glaring Lion saw, his horrid Heart 265
 Was meeken'd, and he join'd his sullen Joy.
 For Musick held the whole in perfect Peace :
 Soft sigh'd the Flute ; the tender Voice was heard,
 Warbling the vary'd Heart ; the Woodlands round
 Apply'd their Quire ; and Winds and Waters flow'd 270
 In Consonance. Such were those Prime of Days.

BUT now those white unblemish'd Minutes whence
 The fabling Poets took their golden Age,
 Are found no more amid these Iron Times,
 These Dregs of Life ! Now the distemper'd Mind 275
 Has lost that Concord of harmonious Powers,
 Which forms the Soul of Happiness ; and all
 Is off the Poise within : the Passions all
 Have burst their Bounds ; and Reason half extinct,

Or

Or impotent, or else approving, sees 280
 The foul Disorder. Senseless, and deform'd,
 Convulsive Anger storms at large ; or pale,
 And silent, settles into fell Revenge.
 Base Envy withers at another's Joy,
 And hates that Excellence it cannot reach. 285
 Desponding Fear, of feeble Fancies full,
 Weak, and unmanly, loosens every Power.
 Even Love itself is Bitterness of Soul,
 A pensive Anguish pining at the Heart :
 Or, sunk to sordid Interest, feels no more 290
 That noble Wish that never-cloy'd Desire,
 Which selfish Joy disdainingly seeks, alone,
 To bless the dearer Object of his Flame.
 Hope sickens with Extravagance ; and Grief,
 Of Life impatient, into Madness swells ; 295
 Or in dead Silence wastes the weeping Hours.
 These, and a thousand mix'd Emotions more,
 From ever-changing Views of Good and Ill,
 Form'd infinitely various, vex the Mind
 With endless Storm. Whence, deeply rankling, grows
 The partial Thought, a listless Unconcern, 301
 Cold, and averting from our Neighbour's Good ;
 Then dark Disgust, and Hatred, winding Wiles,
 Coward Deceit, and ruffian Violence.
 At last, extinct each social Feeling, fell 305
 And joyless Inhumanity pervades,
 And

And petrifies the Heart. Nature disturb'd
Is deem'd, vindictive, to have chang'd her Course.

H E N C E, in old dusky Time, a Deluge came :
When the deep-cleft disparting Orb, that arch'd 310
The central Waters round, impetuous rush'd
With univerfal Burst, into the Gulph,
And o'er the high-pil'd Hills of fractur'd Earth
Wide-dash'd the Waves, in Undulation vast ;
Till from the Center to the streaming Clouds, 319
A shoreless Ocean tumbled round the Globe.

T H E Seasons since have, with severer Sway,
Oppress'd a broken World : the Winter keen
Shook forth his Waste of Snows ; and Summer shot
His pestilential Heats. Great Spring, before, 320
Green'd all the Year ; and Fruits and Blossoms blush'd
In social Sweetness, on the self-same Bough.
Pure was the temperate Air ; an even Calm
Perpetual reign, save what the Zephyrs bland
Breath'd o'er the blue Expanse : for then nor Storms 325
Were taught to blow, nor Hurricanes to rage ;
Sound slept the Waters ; no sulphureous Glooms
Swell'd in the Sky, and sent the Lightning forth ;
While sickly Damps, and cold autumnal Fogs,
Hung not, relaxing, on the Springs of Life. 330
But now, of turbid Elements the Sport,
From Clear to Cloudy toft, from Hot to Cold,

And

And Dry to Moist, with inward-eating Change,
 Our drooping Days are dwindled down to Nought,
 Their Period finish'd ere 'tis well begun. 335

AND yet the wholesome Herb neglected dies ;
 Tho with the pure exhilarating Soul
 Of Nutriment and Health, and vital Powers,
 Beyond the Search of Art, 'tis copious blest.
 For, with hot Ravine fir'd, enfanguin'd Man 340
 Is now become the Lion of the Plain,
 And worse. The Wolf, who from the nightly Fold
 Fierce drags the bleating Prey, ne'er drunk her Milk,
 Nor wore her warming Fleece : nor has the Steer,
 At whose strong Chest the deadly Tyger hangs, 345
 E'er plow'd for him. They too are temper'd high,
 With Hunger stung, and wild Necessity,
 Nor lodges Pity in their shaggy Breast.
 But *Man*, whom Nature form'd of milder Clay,
 With every kind Emotion in his Heart, 350
 And taught alone to weep ; while from her Lap
 She pours ten thousand Delicacies, Herbs,
 And Fruits as numerous as the Drops of Rain
 Or Beams that gave them Birth : shall he, fair Form !
 Who wears sweet Smiles, and looks erect on Heaven, 355
 E'er stoop to mingle with the prowling Herd,
 And dip his Tongue in Gore ? The Beast of Prey,
 Blood-stain'd deserves to bleed : but you, ye Flocks,
 What have ye done ; ye peaceful People, What,
 To

S P R I N G.

19

To merit Death? You, who have given us Milk 360
 In luscious Streams, and lent us your own Coat
 Against the Winter's Cold? And the plain Ox,
 That harmless, honest, guileless Animal,
 In What has he offended? He, whose Toil,
 Patient and ever-ready, clothes the Land 365
 With all the Pomp of Harvest; shall he bleed,
 And struggling groan beneath the cruel Hands,
 Even of the Clowns he feeds? And That perhaps,
 To swell the Riot of th' Autumnal Feast,
 Won by his Labour? This the feeling Heart 370
 Would tenderly suggest: but 'tis enough,
 In this late Age, adventurous, to have touch'd
 Light on the Numbers of the *Samian* Sage.
 High HEAVEN forbids the bold presumptuous Strain,
 Whose wisest Will has fix'd us in a State 375
 That must not yet to pure Perfection rise.
 Besides, who knows, how *rais'd* to higher Life,
 From Stage to Stage, the *Vital Scale ascends*?

Now when the first foul Torrent of the Brooks,
 Swell'd with the vernal Rains, is ebb'd away, 380
 And, whitening, down their mossy-tinctur'd Stream
 Descends the billowy Foam: now is the Time,
 While yet the dark brown Water aids the Guile,
 To tempt the Trout. The well-diffembled Fly,
 The Rod fine-tapering with elastic Spring, 385
 Snatch'd from the hoary Steed the floating Line,
 And

And all thy slender watry Stores prepare.
 But let not on thy Hook the tortur'd Worm,
 Convulsive, twist in agonizing Folds ;
 Which by rapacious Hunger swallow'd deep,
 Gives as you tear it from the bleeding Breaſt
 Of the weak helples uncomplaining Wretch,
 Harſh Pain and Horror to the tender Hand. 390

WHEN with his lively Ray, the potent Sun
 Has pierc'd the Streams, and rous'd the finny Race,
 Then, iſſuing chearful, to thy Sport repair ;
 Chief ſhould the Weſtern Breezes curling play, 395
 And light o'er Ether bear the ſhadowy Clouds.
 High to their Fount, this Day, amid the Hills,
 And Woodlands warbling round, trace up the Brooks ;
 The Next, purſue their rocky-channel'd Maze,
 Down to the River, in whoſe ample Wave 400
 Their little Naiads love to ſport at large.
 Juſt in the dubious Point, where with the Pool
 Is mix'd the trembling Stream, or where it boils
 Around the Stone, or from the hollow'd Bank,
 Reverted, plays in undulating Flow, 405
 There throw, nice-judging, the deluſive Fly ;
 And, as you lead it round in artful Curve,
 With Eye attentive mark the ſpringing Game.
 Strait as above the Surface of the Flood
 They wanton riſe, or urg'd by Hunger leap, 410
 Then fix, with gentle Twitch, the barbed Hook :
 Some

S P R I N G.

21

Some lightly tossing to the grassy Bank,
 And to the shelving Shore, slow-dragging some,
 With various Hand proportion'd to their Force.
 If yet too young, and easily deceiv'd, 415
 A worthless Prey scarce bends your pliant Rod,
 Him, piteous of his Youth, and the short Space
 He has enjoy'd the vital Light of Heaven,
 Soft disengage, and back into the Stream
 The speckled Infant throw. But should you lure 420
 From his dark Haunt, beneath the tangled Roots
 Of pendant Trees, the Monarch of the Brook,
 Behoves you then to ply your finest Art.
 Long time he, following cautious, scans the Fly;
 And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft 425
 The dimpled Water speaks his jealous Fear.
 At last, while haply o'er the shaded Sun
 Passes a Cloud, he desperate takes the Death,
 With fullen Plunge. At once he darts along,
 Deep-struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd Line; 430
 Then seeks the farthest Ooze, the sheltering Weed,
 The cavern'd Bank, his old secure Abode;
 And flies aloft, and flounces round the Pool,
 Indignant of the Guile. With yielding Hand,
 That feels him still, yet to his furious Course 435
 Gives way, you, now retiring, following now
 Across the Stream, exhaust his idle Rage:
 Till floating broad upon his breathless Side,
 And to his Fate abandon'd to the Shore 439
 You gaily drag your unresisting Prize. | THUS



THUS pass the temperate Hours : but when the Sun
 Shades from his Noon-day Throne the scattering Clouds,
 Even shooting lifeless Languor thro the Deeps ;
 Then seek the Bank where flowering Elders croud,
 Where scatter'd wild the Lily of the Vale 445
 Its balmy Essence breathes, where Cowslips hang
 The dewy Head, where purple Violets lurk,
 With all the lowly Children of the Shade :
 Or lie reclin'd beneath yon spreading Ash,
 Hung o'er the Steep ; whence, born on liquid Wing, 450
 The sounding Culver shoots ; or where the Hawk,
 High in the beetle Cliff, his Airy builds.
 There let the Classic Page thy Fancy lead
 Thro rural Scenes ; such as the *Mantuan* Swain
 Paints in the matchless Harmony of Song. 455
 Or catch thyself the Landskip, gliding swift
 Athwart Imagination's vivid Eye :
 Or by the vocal Woods and Waters lull'd,
 And lost in lonely Musing, in a Dream,
 Confus'd, of careless Solitude, where mix 460
 Ten thousand wandering Images of Things,
 Soothe every Gust of Passion into Peace,
 All but the Swellings of the soften'd Heart,
 That waken, not disturb the tranquil Mind.

BEHOLD yon breathing Prospect bids the Muse 465
 Throw all her Beauty forth. But who can paint
 Like

S P R I N G.

23

Like Nature ? Can Imagination boast,
 Amid its gay Creation, Hues like hers ?
 Or can it mix them with that matchless Skill,
 And lose them in each other, as appears 470
 In every Bud that blows ? If Fancy then
 Unequal fails beneath the pleasing Task ;
 Ah what shall Language do ? Ah where find Words
 Ting'd with so many Colours ; and whose Power,
 To Life approaching, may perfume my Lays 475
 With that fine Oil, those aromatic Gales,
 That inexhaustive flow continual round ?

Y E T tho' successful, will the Toil delight.
 Come then, ye Virgins, and ye Youths, whose Hearts
 Have felt the Raptures of refining Love ; 480
 And thou, A M A N D A, come, Pride of my Song !
 Form'd by the Graces, Loveliness itself !
 Come with those downcast Eyes, sedate and sweet,
 Those Looks demure, that deeply pierce the Soul ;
 Where with the Light of thoughtful Reason mix'd, 485
 Shines lively Fancy and the feeling Heart :
 O ! come ! and while the rosy-footed May
 Steals blushing on, together let us tread
 The Morning-Dews and gather in their Prime
 Fresh-blooming Flowers, to grace thy braided Hair, 490
 And thy lov'd Bosom that improves their Sweets.

S E E, where the winding Vale its lavish Stores,
 Irrigulous, spreads. See, how the Lily drinks

The



The latent Rill, scarce oozing thro the Grafs,
 Of Growth luxuriant ; or the humid Bank, 495
 In fair Profusion, decks. Long let us walk,
 Where the Breeze blows from yon extended Field
 Of blossom'd Beams. *Arabia* cannot boast
 A fuller Gale of Joy than, liberal, thence
 Breathes thro the Sense, and takes the ravish'd Soul. 500
 Nor is the Mead unworthy of thy Foot,
 Full of fresh Verdure, and unnumber'd Flowers,
 The Negligence of *Nature*, wide, and wild ;
 Where, undisguis'd by mimic *Art*, she spreads
 Unbounded Beauty to the roving Eye. 505
 Here their delicious Task the fervent Bees,
 In swarming Millions, tend. Around, athwart,
 Thro the soft Air, the busy Nations fly,
 Cling to the Bud, and, with insert'd Tube,
 Suck its pure Essence, its ethereal Soul. 510
 And oft, with bolder Wing, they soaring dare
 The purple Heath, or where the Wild-thyme grows,
 And yellow load them with the luscious Spoil.

A T length the finish'd Garden to the View
 Its Vistas opens, and its Alleys green. 515
 Snatch'd thro the verdant Maze, the hurried Eye
 Distracted wanders ; now the bowery Walk
 Of Covert close, where scarce a speck of Day
 Falls on the lengthen'd Gloom, protracted sweeps ;
 Now meets the bending Sky, the River now 520
 Dimpling

S P R I N G.

25

Dimpling along, the breezy-ruffled Lake,
 The Forest darkening round, the glittering Spire,
 Th' ethereal Mountain, and the distant Main.
 But why so far excursive? when at Hand,
 Along these blushing Borders, bright with Dew, 525
 And in yon mingled Wilderness of Flowers,
 Fair-handed Spring unbosoms every Grace :
 Throws out the Snow-drop, and the Crocus first ;
 The Daisy, Primrose, Violet darkly blue,
 And Polyanthus of unnumber'd Dyes ; 530
 The yellow Wall-Flower, stain'd with iron Brown ;
 And lavish Stock that scents the Garden round.
 From the soft Wing of vernal Breezes shed,
 Anemonies ; Auriculas, enrich'd
 With shining Meal o'er all their velvet Leaves ; 535
 And full Renunculas, of glowing Red.
 Then comes the Tulip-Race, where Beauty plays
 Her idle Freaks : from Family diffus'd
 To Family, as flies the Father Dust,
 The varied Colours run ; and, while they *break* 540
 On the charm'd Eye, th' exulting Florist marks,
 With secret Pride the Wonders of his Hand.
 No gradual Bloom is wanting ; from the Bud,
 First-born of Spring, to Summer's musky Tribes :
 Nor Hyacinths, of purest virgin White,
 Low-bent, and blushing inward ; nor Jonquils, 545
 Of potent Fragrance ; nor Narcissus fair,
 As o'er the fabled Fountain hanging still ;

C

Nor



Nor broad Carnations; nor gay-spotted Pinks;
 Nor, shower'd from every Bush, the Damask-rose.
 Infinite Numbers, Delicacies, Smells, 550
 With Hues on Hues Expression cannot paint,
 The Breath of Nature, and her endless Bloom.

Hail, SOURCE OF BEING! UNIVERSAL SOUL
 Of Heaven and Earth! ESSENTIAL PRESENCE, hail!
 To THEE I bend the Knee; to THEE my Thoughts,
 Continual, climb; who, with a Master-hand, 555
 Haft the great Whole into Perfection touch'd.
 By THEE the various vegetative Tribes,
 Wrapt in a filmy Net, and clad with Leaves,
 Draw the live Ether, and imbibe the Dew. 560
 By THEE dispos'd into congenial Soils,
 Stands each attractive Plant, and sucks, and swells
 The juicy Tide; a twining Mass of Tubes.
 At THY Command the vernal Sun awakes
 The torpid Sap, detruded to the Root 565
 By wintry Winds, that now in fluent Dance,
 And lively Fermentation, mounting, spreads
 All this innumerable-colour'd Scene of things.

As rising from the vegetable World
 My Theme ascends, with equal Wing ascend, 570
 My panting Muse; and hark, how loud the Woods
 Invite you forth in all your gayest Trim.
 Lend me your Song, ye Nightingales! oh pour
 The mazy-running Soul of Melody

Into

S P R I N G.

27

Into my varied Verse ! while I deduce,
 From the first Note the hollow Cuckoo sings,
 The Symphony of Spring, and touch a Theme
 Unknown to Fame, *the Passion of the Groves.* 575

W H E N first the Soul of Love is sent abroad,
 Warm thro the vital Air, and on the Heart 580
 Harmonious seizes, the gay Troops begin,
 In gallant Thought, to plume the painted Wing ;
 And try again the long-forgotten Strain,
 At first faint-warbled. But no sooner grows
 The soft Infusion prevalent, and wide, 585
 Than, all alive, at once their Joy o'erflows
 In Musick unconfin'd. Up-springs the Lark,
 Shrill-voic'd, and loud, the Messenger of Morn ;
 Ere yet the Shadows fly, he mounted sings
 Amid the dawning Clouds, and from their Haunts 590
 Calls up the tuneful Nations. Every Copse
 Deep-tangled, Tree irregular, and Bush
 Bending with dewy Moisture, o'er the Heads
 Of the coy Quiristers that lodge within,
 Are prodigal of Harmony. The Thrush 595
 And Wood-lark, o'er the kind contending Throng
 Superior heard, run thro' the sweetest Length
 Of Notes ; when listening *Philomela* deigns
 To let them joy, and purposes, in Thought .
 Elate, to make her Night excel their Day.
 The Black-bird whistles from the thorny Brake ;

C 2 *

The

The mellow Bullfinch answers from the Grove :
 Nor are the Linnets, o'er the flowering Furze
 Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to These
 Innumerable Songsters, in the freshening Shade 605
 Of new-sprung Leaves, their Modulations mix
 Mellifluous. The Jay, the Rook, the Daw,
 And each harsh Pipe discordant heard alone,
 Aid the full Concert : while the Stock-dove breathes
 A melancholy Murmur thro' the whole. 610

'Tis Love creates their Melody, and all
 This Waste of Music is the Voice of Love ;
 That even to Birds, and Beasts, the tender Arts
 Of pleasing teaches. Hence the glossy kind
 Try every winning way inventive Love 615
 Can dictate, and in Courtship to their Mates
 Pour forth their little Souls. First, wide around,
 With distant Awe, in airy Rings they rove,
 Endeavouring by a thousand Tricks to catch
 The cunning, conscious, half-averted Glance 620
 Of their regardless Charmer. Should she seem
 Softening the least Approvance to bestow,
 Their Colours burnish, and by Hope inspir'd,
 They brisk advance ; then, on a sudden struck,
 Retire disorder'd ; then again approach ; 625
 In fond rotation spread the spotted Wing,
 And shiver every Feather with Desire.

CONNUBIAL

CONNUBIAL Leagues agreed, to the deep Woods
 They haste away, all as their Fancy leads,
 Pleasure, or Food, or secret Safety prompts; 630
 That NATURE's *great Command* may be obey'd,
 Nor all the sweet Sensations they perceive
 Indulg'd in vain. Some to the Holly-Hedge
 Nestling repair, and to the Thicket some;
 Some to the rude Protection of the Thorn 635
 Commit their feeble Offspring. The cleft Tree
 Offers its kind Concealment to a Few,
 Their Food its Insects, and its Moss their Nests.
 Others apart far in the grassy Dale,
 Or roughening Waste, their humble Texture weave. 640
 But most in woodland Solitudes delight,
 In unfrequented Glooms, or shaggy Banks,
 Steep, and divided by a babbling Brook,
 Whose Murmurs soothe them all the live-long Day,
 When by kind Duty fix'd. Among the Roots 645
 Of Hazel, pendant o'er the plaintive Stream,
 They frame the first Foundation of their Domes;
 Dry Sprigs of Trees, in artful Fabrick laid,
 And bound with Clay together. Now 'tis nought
 But restless Hurry thro the busy Air, 650
 Beat by unnumber'd Wings. The Swallow sweeps
 The slimy Pool, to build his hanging House
 Intent. And often, from the careless Back
 Of Herds and Flocks, a thousand tugging Bills



Pluck Hair and Wool; and oft, when unobserv'd, 655
 Steal from the Barn a Straw: till soft and warm,
 Clean, and compleat, their Habitation grows.

As thus the patient Dam assiduous sits,
 Not to be tempted from her tender Task,
 Or by sharp Hunger, or by smooth Delight, 660
 Tho' the whole loos'n'd Spring around Her blows,
 Her sympathizing Lover takes his Stand
 High on th' opponent Bank, and ceaseless sings
 The tedious Time away; or else supplies
 Her place a moment, while she sudden flits 665
 To pick the scanty Meal. Th' appointed Time
 With pious Toil fulfill'd, the callow Young,
 Warm'd and expand'd into perfect Life,
 Their brittle Bondage break, and come to Light,
 A helpless Family, demanding Food 670
 With constant Clamour. O what Passions then,
 What-melting Sentiments of kindly Care,
 On the new Parents seize! Away they fly
 Affectionate, and undesiring bear
 The most delicious Morfel to their Young, 675
 Which equally distributed, again
 The Search begins. Even so a gentle Pair,
 By Fortune sunk, but form'd of generous Mold,
 And charm'd with Cares beyond the vulgar Breast,
 In some lone Cott amid the distant Woods, 680
 Sustain'd alone by providential H E A V E N,
 Oft

Of, as they weeping eye their infant Train,
Check their own Appetites and give them all.

NOR Toil alone they scorn: exalting Love,
By the great FATHER OF THE SPRING inspir'd, 685
Gives instant Courage to the *fearful* Race,
And to the *simple* Art. With stealthy Wing,
Should some rude Foot their woody Haunts molest,
Amid a neighbouring Bush they silent drop,
And whirring thence, as if alarm'd, deceive 690
Th' unfeeling School-Boy. Hence, around the Head
Of wandering Swain, the white-wing'd Plover wheels
Her founding Flight, and then directly on
In long Excursion skims the level Lawn,
To tempt him from her Nest. The Wild-Duck, hence,
O'er the rough Moss, and o'er the trackless Waste 696
The Heath-Hen flutters, (pious Fraud!) to lead
The hot pursuing Spaniel far astray.

BE not the Muse aſham'd, here to bemoan
Her Brothers of the Grove, by tyrant Man 700
Inhuman caught, and in the narrow Cage
From Liberty confin'd, and boundleſs Air.
Dull are the pretty Slaves, their Plumage dull,
Ragged, and all its brightening Luſtre loſt;
Nor is that ſprightly Wildneſs in their Notes, 705
Which, clear and vigorous, warbles from the Beech.
Oh then, ye Friends of Love and Love-taught Song,

Spare the soft Tribes, this barbarous Art forbear!
 If on your Bosom Innocence can win,
 Music engage, or Piety persuade.

719

BUT let not chief the Nightingale lament
 Her ruin'd Care, too delicately fram'd
 To brook the harsh Confinement of the Cage.
 Oft when, returning with her loaded Bill,
 Th' astonish'd Mother finds a vacant Nest,
 By the hard Hand of unrelenting Clowns
 Robb'd, to the Ground the vain Provision falls;
 Her Pinions ruffle, and low-drooping scarce
 Can bear the Mourner to the poplar Shade;
 Where, all abandon'd to Despair, she sings
 Her Sorrows thro' the Night; and, on the Bough,
 Sole-sitting, still at every dying Fall
 Takes up again her lamentable Strain
 Of winding Woe; till wide around the Woods
 Sigh to, her Song, and with her Wail resound.

715

720

725

BUT now the feather'd Youth their former Bounds,
 Ardent, disdain; and, weighing off their Wings,
 Demand the free Possession of the Sky.
 This one glad Office more, and then dissolves
 Parental Love at once, now needless grown.
 Unlavish *Wisdom* never works in vain.
 'Tis on some Evening, sunny, grateful, mild,
 When nought but Balm is breathing thro' the Woods,
 With

730

With

With yellow Lustre bright, that the new Tribes
 Visit the spacious Heavens, and look abroad 735
 On Nature's Common, far as they can see,
 Or wing, their Range, and Pasture. O'er the Boughs
 Dancing about, still at the giddy Verge
 Their Resolution fails; their Pinions still,
 In loose Libration stretch'd, to trust the Void 740
 Trembling refuse: till down before them fly
 The Parent-Guides, and chide, exhort, command,
 Or push them off. The surging Air receives
 The plummy Burden; and their self-taught Wings
 Winnow the waving Element. On Ground 745
 Alighted, bolder up again they lead,
 Farther and farther on, the lengthening Flight;
 Till vanish'd every Fear, and every Power
 Rouz'd into Life and Action, light in Air:
 Th' acquitted Parents see their soaring Race, 750
 And once rejoicing never know them more.

HIGH from the Summit of a craggy Cliff,
 Hung o'er the Deep, such as amazing frowns
 On utmost * *Kilda's* Shore, whose lonely Race
 Resign the setting Sun to *Indian* Worlds, 755
 The royal Eagle draws his vigorous Young,
 Strong-pounc'd, and ardent with paternal Fire.
 Now fit to raise a Kingdom of their own,
 He drives them from his Fort, the towering Seat,

C 5

For

* *The farthest of the Western Islands of Scotland.*

For Ages, of his Empire ; which, in Peace, 760
 Unfain'd he holds, while many a League to sea
 He wings his Course, and preys in distant Isles.

SHOULD I my Steps turn to the rural Seat,
 Whose lofty Elms, and venerable Oaks,
 Invite the Rook, who high amid the Boughs, 765
 In early Spring, his airy City builds,
 And ceaseless caws amusive ; there, well-pleas'd,
 I might the various Polity survey
 Of the mixt Household-Kind. The careful Hen
 Calls all her chirping Family around, 770
 Fed, and defended by the fearless Cock,
 Whose Breast with ardour flames, as on he walks,
 Graceful, and crows Defiance. In the Pond,
 The finely-checker'd Duck, before her Train,
 Rows garrulous. The stately-sailing Swan 775
 Gives out his snowy Plumage to the Gale ;
 And, arching proud his Neck, with oary Feet
 Bears forward fierce, and guards his Osier-Isle,
 Protective of his Young. The Turkey nigh,
 Loud-threatening, reddens ; while the Peacock spreads 780
 His every colour'd Glory to the Sun,
 And swims in radiant Majesty along.
 O'er the whole homely Scene, the cooing Dove
 Flies thick in amorous Chace, and wanton rolls
 The glancing Eye, and turns the changeful Neck. 785

W H I L E

W H I L E thus the gentle Tenants of the Shade
 Indulge their purer Loves, the rougher World
 Of Brutes, below, ruff furious into Flame, *row*
 And fierce Desire. Thro all his lusty Veins
 The Bull, deep-scorch'd, the raging Passion feels. 790
 Of Pasture sick, and negligent of Food,
 Scarce seen, he wades among the yellow Broom,
 While e'er his ample Sides the rambling Sprays
 Luxuriant shoot; or thro the mazy Wood
 Dejected wanders, nor th' inticing Bud 795
 Crops, tho' it presses on his careless Sense.
 And oft, in jealous madning Fancy wrapt,
 He seeks the Fight; and, idly-butting, feigns
 His Rival gor'd in every knotty Trunk.
 Him should he meet, the bellowing War begins; 800
 Their Eyes flash Fury; to the hollow'd Earth,
 Whence the Sand flies, they mutter bloody Deeds,
 And groaning deep th' impetuous Battle mix:
 While the fair Heifer, balmy-breathing, near,
 Stands kindling up their Rage. The trembling Steed,
 With this hot Impulse seiz'd in every Nerve, 806
 Nor hears the Rein, nor heeds the sounding Thong;
 Blows are not felt; but tossing high his Head,
 And by the well-known Joy to distant Plains
 Attracted strong, all wild he bursts away; 810
 O'er Rocks, and Woods, and craggy Mountains flies;
 And, neighing, on the aërial Summit takes

Th' exciting Gale ; then, steep-descending, cleaves
 The headlong Torrents foaming down the Hills,
 Even where the Madness of the straiten'd Stream. 815
 Turns in black Eddies round : such is the force
 With which his frantick Heart and Sinews swell. |

No R undelighted, by the boundless Spring,
 Are the broad Monsters of the foaming Deep :
 From the deep Ooze and gelid Cavern rous'd, 820
 They flounce and tumble in unwieldy Joy.
 Dire were the Strain, and dissonant, to sing
 The cruel Raptures of the Savage Kind :
 How by this Flame their native Wrath sublim'd,
 They roarl, amid the Fury of their Heart, 825
 The far-resounding Waste in fiercer Bands,
 And growl their horrid Loves. | But this the Theme
 I sing, enraptur'd, to the BRITISH FAIR,
 Forbids, and leads me to the Mountain-brow,
 Where sits the Shepherd on the grassy Turf, 830
 Inhaling, healthful, the descending Sun.
 Around him feeds his many-bleating Flock,
 Of various Cadence ; and his sportive Lambs,
 This way and that convolv'd, in friskful glee,
 Their Frolicks play. And now the sprightly Race 835
 Invites them forth ; when swift, the Signal given,
 They start away, and sweep the massy Mound
 That runs around the Hill ; the Rampart once
 Of iron War, in ancient barbarous Times,

When

S P R I N G.

37

When disunited BRITAIN ever bled, 840
 Lost in eternal Broil : ere yet she grew
 To this deep-laid indissoluble State,
 Where *Wealth* and *Commerce* lift the golden Head ;
 And, o'er our Labours, *Liberty* and *Law*,
 Impartial, watch, the Wonder of a World! 845

W H A T is this *mighty Breath*, ye Curious, say,
 That, in a powerful Language, felt not heard,
 Instructs the Fowls of Heaven ; and thro' their Breast
 These Arts of Love diffuses ? What, but G O D ?
 Inspiring G O D ! who boundless Spirit all, 850
 And unremitting Energy, pervades,
 Adjusts, sustains, and agitates the Whole.
 He ceaseless works *alone*, and yet *alone*
 Seems not to work ; with such perfection fram'd
 Is this complex stupendous Scheme of Things. 855
 But, tho conceal'd, to every purer Eye
 Th' informing Author in his Works appears :
 Chief, lovely Spring, in thee, and thy soft Scenes,
 The S M I L I N G G O D is seen ; while Water, Earth,
 And Air attest his Bounty ; which exalts 860
 The Brute-Creation to this finer Thought,
 And annual melts their undesigned Hearts
 Profusely thus in Tendernefs and Joy.

S T I L L let my Song a nobler Note assume,
 And sing th' insusive Force of Spring on Man ; 865
 When



When Heaven and Earth, as if contending, vye
 To raise his Being, and serene his Soul.
 Can he forbear to join the general Smile
 Of Nature? Can fierce Passions vex his Breast,
 While every Gale is Peace, and every Grove 870
 Is Melody? Hence! from the bounteous Walks
 Of flowing Spring, ye fordid Sons of Earth,
 Hard, and unfeeling of another's Woe,
 Or only lavish to yourselves; away!
 But come, ye generous Minds, in whose wide Thought,
 Of all his Works, CREATIVE BOUNTY burns, 876
 With warmest Beam; and on your open Front,
 And liberal Eye, sits, from his dark Retreat,
 Inviting modest Want. Nor, till invok'd,
 Can restless Goodness wait; your active Search 880
 Leaves no cold wintry Corner unexplor'd;
 Like silent-working HEAVEN, surprizing oft
 The lonely Heart with unexpected Good.
 For you the roving Spirit of the Wind
 Blows Spring abroad; for you the teaming Clouds
 Descend in gladfome Plenty o'er the World; 885
 And the Sun sheds his kindest Rays for you,
 Ye Flower of human Race!—In these green Days,
 Reviving Sickness lifts her languid Head;
 Life flows afresh; and young-ey'd Health exalts
 The whole Creation round. Contentment walks 890
 The sunny Glade, and feels an inward Blis
 Spring o'er his Mind, beyond the Power of Kings
 To

To purchase. Pure Serenity apace
 Induces Thought, and Contemplation still.
 By swift degrees the Love of Nature works, 895
 And warms the Bosom ; till at last sublim'd
 To Rapture, and enthusiastic Heat,
 We feel the present DEITY, and taste
 The Joy of GOD to see a happy World !

THESE are the Sacred Feelings of thy Heart, 900
 Thy Heart inform'd by Reason's purer Ray,
 O LYTTLETON, the Friend ! thy Passions thus
 And Meditations vary, as at large,
 Courting the Muse, thro HAGLEY-PARK you stray,
 Thy *British Tempe!* There along the Dale, 905
 With Woods o'er-hung, and shag'd with mossy Rocks,
 Whence on each hand the gushing Waters play,
 And down the rough Cascade white-dashing fall,
 Or gleam in lengthen'd Vista thro' the Trees,
 You silent steal ; or sit beneath the Shade 910
 Of solemn Oaks, that tuft the swelling Mounts
 Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless Hand,
 And pensive listen to the various Voice
 Of rural Peace : the Herds, the Flocks, the Birds,
 The hollow-whispering Breeze, the Complaint of Rills,
 That, purling down amid the twisted Roots 916
 Which creep around, their dewy Murmurs shake
 On the sooth'd Ear. From these abstracted oft,
 You wander thro the Philosophic World ;

Where

Where in bright Train continual Wonders rise, 920
Or to the curious or the pious Eye.

And oft, conducted by Historic Truth,
You tread the long Extent of backward Time :
Planning, with warm Benevolence of Mind,
And honest Zeal unwarp'd by Party-Rage, 925

BRITANNIA's Weal ; how from the venal Gulph
To raise her Virtue, and her Arts revive.

Or, turning thence thy View, these graver Thoughts
The Muses charm : while, with sure Taste refin'd,
You draw th' inspiring Breath of antient Song ; 930
Till nobly rises, emulous, thy own.

Perhaps thy lov'd LUCINDA shares thy Walk,
With Soul to thine attun'd. Then Nature all
Wears to the Lover's Eye a Look of Love ;
And all the Tumult of a guilty World, 935
Toft by ungenerous Passions, sinks away.

The tender Heart is animated Peace ;
And as it pours its copious Treasures forth,
In vary'd Converse, softening every Theme,
You, frequent-pausing, turn, and from her Eyes, 940

Where meeken'd Sense, and amiable Grace,
And lively Sweetness dwell, enraptur'd, drink
That nameless Spirit of ethereal Joy,
Inimitable Happiness ! which Love,
Alone, bestows, and on a *favour'd Few*. 945

Meantime you gain the Height, from whose fair Brow
The bursting Prospect spreads immense around ;
And.

S P R I N G. 41

And snatch'd o'er Hill and Dale, and Wood and Lawn,
 And verdant Field, and darkening Heath between,
 And Villages embosom'd soft in Trees, 950
 And spiry Towns by surging Columns mark'd
 Of household Smoak, your Eye excursive roams :
 Wide-stretching from the *Hall*, in whose kind Haunt
 The *Hospitable Genius* lingers still,
 To Where the broken Landskip, by Degrees, 955
 Ascending, roughens into rigid Hills ;
 O'er which the *Cambrian Mountains*, like far Clouds
 That skirt the blue Horizon, dusky, rise.

FLUSH'D by the Spirit of the genial Year,
 Now from the Virgin's Cheek a fresher Bloom 960
 Shoots, less and less, the live Carnation round ;
 Her Lips blush deeper Sweets ; she breathes of Youth ;
 The shining Moisture swells into her Eyes,
 In brighter Flow ; her wishing Bosom heaves,
 With Palpitations wild ; kind Tumults seize 965
 Her Veins, and all her yielding Soul is Love.
 From the keen Gaze her Lover turns away,
 Full of the dear extatic Power, and sick
 With sighing Languishment. Ah then, ye Fair !
 Be greatly cautious of your sliding Hearts : 970
 Dare not th' infectious Sigh ; the pleading Look,
 Down-cast, and low, in meek Submission dress'd,
 But full of Guile. Let not the fervent Tongue,
 Prompt to deceive, with Adulation smooth,

Gain



Gain on your purpos'd Will. Nor in the Bower, 975
 Where Woodbines flaunt, and Roses shed a Couch,
 While Evening draws her crimson Curtains round,
 Trust your soft Minutes with betraying Man.

AND let th' aspiring Youth beware of Love,
 Of the smooth Glance beware; for 'tis too late, 980
 When on his Heart the Torrent-Softness pours.
 Then Wisdom prostrate lies, and fading Fame
 Dissolves in Air away; while the fond Soul,
 Wrapt in gay Visions of unreal Bliss,
 Still paints th' illusive Form; the kindling Grace;
 Th' enticing Smile; the modest-seeming Eye, 986
 Beneath whose beauteous Beams, belying Heaven,
 Lurk searchless Cunning, Cruelty, and Death:
 And still, false-warbling in his cheated Ear,
 Her syren Voice, enchanting, draws him on, 990
 To guileful Shores, and Meads of fatal Joy.

EVEN present, in the very Lap of Love
 Inglorious laid; while Musick flows around,
 Perfumes, and Oils, and Wine, and wanton Hours;
 Amid the Roses fierce Repentance rears 995
 Her snaky Crest: a quick-returning Pang
 Shoots thro' the conscious Heart; where Honour still,
 And great Design, against th' oppressive Load
 Of Luxury, by Fits, impatient heave.

BUT

B U T absent, what fantastic Woes, arrous'd, 1000
 Rage in each Thought, by restless Musing fed,
 Chill the warm Cheek, and blast the Bloom of Life ?
 Neglected Fortune flies ; and sliding swift,
 Prone into Ruin, fall his scorn'd Affairs.
 'Tis nought but Gloom around. The darken'd Sun
 Loses his Light. The rosy-bosom'd Spring 1006
 To weeping Fancy pines ; and yon bright Arch,
 Contracted, bends into a dusky Vault.
 All Nature fades extinct ; and she alone
 Heard, felt, and seen, possesses every Thought, 1010
 Fills every Sense, and pants in every Vein.
 Books are but formal Dulness, tedious Friends ;
 And sad amid the social Band he sits,
 Lonely, and unattentive. From the Tongue
 Th' unfinished'd Period falls : while borne away, 1015
 On swelling Thought, his wasted Spirit flies
 To the vain Bosom of his distant Fair ;
 And leaves the Semblance of a Lover, fix'd
 In melancholy Site, with Head declin'd,
 And love-dejected Eyes. Sudden he starts, 1020
 Shook from his tender Trance, and restless runs
 To glimmering Shades, and sympathetic Glooms ;
 Where the dun Umbrage o'er the falling Stream,
 Romantic, hangs ; there thro the pensive Dusk
 Strays, in heart-thrilling Meditation lost, 1025
 Indulging all to Love : or on the Bank
 Thrown,

Thrown, amid drooping Lilies, swells the Breeze
 With Sighs unceasing, and the Brook with Tears.
 Thus in soft Anguish he consumes the Day,
 Nor quits his deep Retirement, till the Moon 1030
 Peeps thro the Chambers of the fleecy East,
 Enlighten'd by degrees, and in her Train
 Leads on the gentle Hours; then forth he walks,
 Beneath the trembling Languish of her Beam,
 With soften'd Soul, and wooes the Bird of Eve 1035
 To mingle Woes with his: or while the World
 And all the Sons of Care lie hush'd in Sleep,
 Associates with the midnight Shadows drear;
 And, sighing to the lonely Taper, pours
 His idly-tortur'd Heart into the Page, 1040
 Meant for the moving Messenger of Love;
 Where Rapture burns on Rapture, every Line
 With rising Frenzy fir'd. But if on Bed
 Delirious slung, Sleep from his Pillow flies.
 All Night he tosses, nor the balmy Power 1045
 In any Posture finds; till the grey Morn
 Lifts her pale Lustre on the paler Wretch,
 Exanimate by Love: and then perhaps
 Exhausted Nature sinks a while to Rest,
 Still interrupted by distracted Dreams, 1050
 That o'er the sick Imagination rise,
 And in black Colours paint the mimick Scene.
 Oft with th' Enchantress of his Soul he talks;
 Sometimes in Crouds distress'd; or if retir'd

S P R I N G.

45

To secret-winding flower-enwoven Bowers,
 Far from the dull Impertinence of Man,
 Just as he, credulous, his endless Cares
 Begins to lose in blind oblivious Love,
 Snatch'd from her yielded Hand, he knows not how,
 Thro Forests huge, and long untravel'd Heaths 1055
 With Defolation brown, he wanders waste,
 In Night and Tempest wrapt ; or shrinks aghast,
 Back, from the bending Precipice ; or wades
 The turbid Stream below, and strives to reach
 The farther Shore ; where succourless, and sad, 1065
 She with extended Arms his Aid implores,
 But strives in vain ; borne by th' outrageous Flood
 To distance down, he rides the ridgy Wave,
 Or whelm'd beneath the boiling Eddy sinks.
 These are the charming Agonies of Love, 1070
 Whose Misery delights. But thro the Heart
 Should Jealousy its Venom once diffuse,
 'Tis then delightful Misery no more,
 But Agony unmix'd, incessant Gall,
 Corroding every Thought, and blasting all 1075
 Love's Paradise. Ye fairy Prospects, then,
 Ye Beds of Roses, and ye Bowers of Joy,
 Farewel ! Ye Gleamings of departed Peace,
 Shine out your last ! the yellow-tinging Plague
 Internal Vision taints, and in a Night 1080
 Of livid Gloom Imagination wraps.
 Ah then instead of love-enliven'd Cheeks,

Of



Of sunny Features, and of ardent Eyes
 With flowing Rapture bright, dark Looks succeed,
 Suffus'd, and glaring with untender Fire, 1085
 A clouded Aspect, and a burning Cheek,
 Where the whole poison'd Soul, malignant, sits,
 And frightens Love away. Ten thousand Fears
 Invented wild, ten thousand frantic Views
 Of horrid Rivals, hanging on the Charms 1090
 For which he melts in Fondness, eat him up
 With fervent Anguish, and consuming Rage.
 In vain Reproaches lend their idle Aid,
 Deceitful Pride, and Resolution frail,
 Giving false Peace a Moment. Fancy pours, 1095
 Afresh, her Beauties on his busy Thought,
 Her first Endearments, twining round the Soul,
 With all the Witchcraft of ensnaring Love.
 Strait the fierce Storm involves his Mind anew, 1099
 Flames thro' the Nerves, and boils along the Veins :
 While anxious Doubt distracts the tortur'd Heart ;
 For even the sad Assurance of his Fears
 Were Peace to what he feels. Thus the warm Youth,
 Whom Love deludes into his thorny Wilds,
 Thro' flowery-tempting Paths, or leads a Life 1105
 Of fever'd Rapture, or of cruel Care ;
 His brightest Aims extinguish'd all, and all
 His lively Moments running down to waste.

B U T

B U T happy they ! the happiest of their Kind !
 Whom gentler Stars unite, and in one Fate 1110
 Their Hearts, their Fortunes, and their Beings blend.
 'Tis not the coarser Tie of human Laws,
 Unnatural oft, and foreign to the Mind,
 That binds their Peace, but Harmony itself,
 Attuning all their Passions into Love ; 1115
 Where Friendship full-exerts her softest Power,
 Perfect Esteem enliven'd by Desire
 Ineffable, and Sympathy of Soul ;
 Thought meeting Thought, and Will preventing Will,
 With boundless Confidence : for nought but Love 1120
 Can answer Love, and render Bliss secure.
 Let him, ungenerous, who, alone intent
 To bless himself, from fordid Parents buys
 The loathing Virgin, in eternal Care,
 Well-merited, consume his Nights and Days : 1125
 Let barbarous Nations, whose inhuman Love
 Is wild Desire, fierce as the Suns they feel ;
 Let Eastern Tyrants from the Light of Heaven
 Seclude their Bosom-slaves, meanly possess'd
 Of a meer, lifeless, violated Form : 1130
 While Those whom Love cements in holy Faith,
 And equal Transport, free as Nature live,
 Disdaining Fear. What is the World to them,
 Its Pomp, its Pleasure, and its Nonfense all !
 Who in each other clasp whatever fair 1135

High

High Fancy forms, and lavish Hearts can wish ;
 Something than Beauty dearer, should they look
 Or on the Mind, or mind-illumin'd Face,
 Truth, Goodness, Honour, Harmony, and Love,
 The richest Bounty of indulgent HEAVEN. 1140
 Mean-time a smiling Offspring rises round,
 And mingles both their Graces. By degrees,
 The human Blossom blows ; and every Day,
 Soft as it rolls along, shews some new Charm,
 The Father's Lustre, and the Mother's Bloom. 1145
 Then infant Reason grows apace, and calls
 For the kind Hand of an assiduous Care.
 Delightful Task ! to rear the tender Thought,
 To teach the young Idea how to shoot,
 To pour the fresh Instruction o'er the Mind, 1150
 To breathe th' enlivening Spirit, and to fix
 The generous Purpose in the glowing Breast.
 Oh speak the Joy ! ye, whom the sudden Tear
 Surprizes often, while you look around,
 And nothing strikes your Eye but Sights of Bliss, 1155
 All various Nature pressing on the Heart :
 An elegant Sufficiency, Content,
 Retirement, rural Quiet, Friendship, Books,
 Ease and alternate Labour, useful Life,
 Progressive Virtue, and approving HEAVEN. 1160
 These are the matchless Joys of virtuous Love ;
 And thus their Moments fly. The Seasons thus,
 As ceaseless round a jarring World they roll,
 Still

S P R I N G.

49

Still find them happy ; and consenting *SPRING*
Sheds her own rosy Garland on their Heads : 1165
Till Evening comes at last, serene and mild ;
When after the long vernal Day of Life,
Enamour'd more, as more Remembrance swells
With many a Proof of recollected Love,
Together down they sink in social Sleep ; 1170
Together freed, their gentle Spirits fly
To Scenes where Love and Bliss immortal reign.

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