Samuel Parker's

Roxbury, Octobr 4. 1817.

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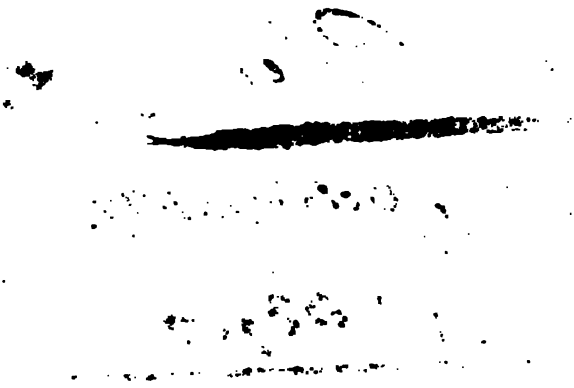

CREATION:

IN SEVEN BOOKS.

CREATION:

A PHILOSOPHICAL POEM,

IN SEVEN BOOKS.

BY SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

JOHNSON'S EDITION.

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LIFE OF BLACKMORE.

SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE, though eminent both as a poet and physician, is one of those great men, of whose life and manners few memorials have been left by his contemporaries, and who has been more censured by his enemies, than praised by his friends. He was descended from a respectable family in Wiltshire, and having received the rudiments of his education at a country school, was sent to Westminster at the age of thirteen, and from thence, in 1668, removed to Edmund Hall, Oxford, where he took the degree of Master of Arts on the 3d of June, 1676. Though he resided at college thirteen years, a much longer time than is usually spent at the university, Docter Johnson is of opinion that he did not devote his time and attention to those pursuits which generally occupy the minds of students; because, in his poems, there are many errors respecting the names of nations and places, which he seems to have introduced without having taken the pains to ascertain their propriety.

In the early part of his life he was reduced to the necessity of engaging in the profession of a school-master, an humiliation with which his enemies failed not to reproach him, when he acquired a degree of fame sufficient to excite their malevolence. In a satirical piece, written against him, are these lines:

"By nature form'd, by want a pedant made,
"Blackmore at first set up the whipping trade;
"Next quack commenc'd, then fierce with pride, he swore,
"That tooth-ach, gout, and corns, should be no more.
"In vain his drugs, as well as birch he tried;
"His boys grew blockheads, and his patients died."

Dr. Garth alludes to his being a school-master in the following lines:

"Unwieldy pedant, let thy awkward muse
"With conscious praise, with flatteries abuse;
"To lash, and not be felt, in thee's an art;
"Thou ne'er mad'st any but thy school-boys smart."

Dr. Johnson, with respect to these sarcasms, very candidly observes, that it should be remembered, to the honour of our author, "that to have been once a school-master, is the only reproach which all the perspicacity of malice, animated by wit, has ever fixed upon his private life."

It is probable that indigence did not long compel him to follow the profession of a school-master; and it is presumed that some circumstances concurring in his favour, he travelled into Italy, and took the degree of Doctor of Physic at the University of Padua. He also visited France, Germany, and the Low Countries, and having travelled about a year and a half on the continent, he returned to England.

Dr. Johnson observes, that when our author first engaged in physic, he inquired, as he himself says, of Dr. Sydenham, what authors he should read, and was directed by Sydenham to Don Quixotte, "which," said he "is a very good book; I read it still." Whether he rested satisfied with this direction, or sought for better, he commenced

physician, and attained to a degree of eminence and an extensive practice. He became Fellow of the College of Physicians, April 12, 1687; being one of the thirty, which, by the new Charter of King James, was added to the former number. His residence was at Sadler's Hall, in Cheapside, and his friends were chiefly in the city. At that time a citizen was a term of reproach, and his place of abode was another topic to which his enemies had recourse for a subject of scandal.

Blackmore was not known as a poet till, (in 1695) he published *Prince Arthur*, an heroic poem, in ten books, written, as he relates, "by such catches and starts, and in such occasional, uncertain hours as his profession afforded, and for the greatest part in coffee-houses, or in passing up and down the streets." From the latter part of this apology, he was accused by Dryden of writing "to the rumbling of his chariot wheels." It seems that he had incurred the displeasure of Dryden by censuring in his Preface, the licentiousness of the stage.

Prince Arthur appears to have found many readers, for in two years it went through three editions, a very uncommon instance of favourable reception at a time when literary curiosity was yet confined to particular classes of the nation. Such success naturally raised animosity, and Dennis attacked him in a formal criticism fraught with malevolence and illiberality; but to the censure of Dennis, may be opposed the approbation of Locke, and the admiration of Molineux, which are found in their printed letters. It is also praised by Dr. Watts in his *Horæ Lyricæ*. And Gildon says, in his "*Art of Poetry*," that "notwithstanding his

merit, this admirable author did not think himself upon the same footing with Homer."

It is remarked by Pope that what "raises the hero, often sinks the man." But it may be said of Blackmore, that, as the poet sinks, the man rises. The animadversions of Dennis, insolent and contemptuous as they were, raised in him no implacable resentment; for, in one of his latter works, he praises Dennis as equal to Boileau, in poetry, and superior to him in critical abilities. Indeed, he seems to have been more delighted with praise, than hurt by censure; for, in two years after the publication of *Prince Arthur*, in ten books, he produced *King Arthur*, in twelve. In the preface to the latter poem, he atoned for the severity of that to the former, by bestowing an eulogium on Congreve's "Mourning Bride."—He acknowledges also, that many defects are to be found in *Prince Arthur*, and apologizes for them by confessing, that when he undertook that poem, he had been long a stranger to the muses. "I had read but little poetry," says he "throughout my whole life: and in fifteen years before, I had not, as I can remember, wrote an hundred lines in verse, except a copy of Latin verses in honour of a friend's book."

The resentment of the wits and critics was not softened by the panegyric, or the apology; the provocation was now doubled; Blackmore, however, found advantages more than equivalent to all their efforts at scandal, for he was this year appointed one of the physicians in ordinary to king William, who advanced him to the honour of knighthood, with the present of a gold chain and medal.

The honours conferred on our author by the king, were, by some, attributed to his new poem; but, as his majesty had no great predilection for the muses, it was more probably imputed to the eminence he had attained to in his profession, or rather to his zealous attachment to the principles of the revolution: for he says, in his Dedication to *Alfred*, that "he had a greater part in the succession of the House of Hanover, than ever he had boasted." Pope, when he became his enemy, mentions this as an instance of honours and rewards being improperly bestowed by kings.

"The hero William, and the martyr Charles,
"One knighted Blackmore, and one pensioned Quarles."

In 1700 he published a *Satire upon Wit*, of which Dr. Johnson speaks in the following terms. "A proclamation of defiance, which united the poets almost all against him, and which brought upon him lampoons and ridicule from every side. This, doubtless, he foresaw, and evidently despised: nor should his dignity of mind be without its praise, had he not paid the homage to greatness, which he denied to genius, and degraded himself by conferring that authority over the national taste, which he takes from the poets, upon men of high rank and wide influence, but of less wit, and not greater virtue.—In this performance he justly censured Dryden's impurities, but praised his powers; though, in a subsequent edition, he retained the satire, and omitted the praise; what was his reason I know not; Dryden was then no longer in his way."

The same year he published a *Paraphrase on the Book of Job*, and other parts of scripture, which Dryden, who pursued him with great malignity, lived long enough to ridicule in a prologue.

In 1705, he published *Eliza*, an *Heroic Poem*, in ten books, which seems to have been very little regarded; Dr. Johnson observes, that he does not remember to have found *Eliza* either praised or blamed by any author serious or comical. He says, "She dropped, as it seems, dead-born from the press."

In 1706, our author turned his thoughts to the celebration of living characters, and wrote a poem on the *Kit Cat Club*, and the next year *Instructions to Vanderbank*, an eminent painter, as a sequel to the *Advice to the Poets*, which Steele ridiculed in his "Tatler," with such success, that, as Fenton observes, he put an end to the species of writing that gave *Advice to Painters*.

In 1712, he published *Creation*, a *Philosophical Poem*, which is deservedly esteemed a classical performance, and merits the highest degree of approbation. There is a tradition, that as Blackmore proceeded in this poem, he laid his manuscript, from time to time, before a club of wits with whom he associated, and that every one contributed as he could, either improvement or correction. But admitting this friendly revision to have actually taken place, which is by no means certain, the author will still retain an ample dividend of praise, for to him must always be assigned the plan of the work, the distribution of its parts, the choice of topics, the train of argument, and, what is yet more, the general predominance of philosophical judgment and poetical spirit; for

correction seldom effects more than the suppression of faults; a happy line or a single elegance, may, perhaps, be added; but of a large work the original constitution and general character must alway remain.

Blackmore sometimes deviated into other tracks of literature, and endeavoured to entertain the polite world as a periodical essayist. When the *Spectator* stopped, he wrote in concert with Mr. Hughes, a paper published three times a week, called the *Lay Monastery*, founded on the supposition that some literary men, whose characters are described, had retired to a house in the country to enjoy philosophical leisure, and resolved to instruct the public, by communicating their dispositions and amusements. Whether any real persons were concealed under fictitious names, is not known. However, with their joint abilities, they could draw the publication but to forty papers, which were afterwards collected in a volume, and called in the title *A Sequel to the Spectators*.

In 1716 and 1717 he published two volumes of Essays on several subjects, which deserve commendation only as they are written for the highest and noblest purpose, the promotion of religion and virtue. Dr. Johnson observes, "that Blackmore's prose is not the prose of a poet, for it is languid, sluggish, and lifeless; his diction is neither daring nor exact, his flow neither rapid nor easy, and his periods neither smooth nor strong.

In August, 1714, Blackmore became one of the Elects of the College of Physicians, and was soon after chosen censor.—He seems to have arrived late, whatever was the reason, at his medical honours.

Having succeeded so well in demonstrating the existence of the providence of God, and thereby establishing the great principle of all religion, he thought his undertaking imperfect, unless he likewise enforced the truth of revelation, and for that purpose he published a poem on *Redemption*, in six books. He had likewise written, before his *Creation*, three books on the *Nature of Man*.

The lovers of musical devotion wished for a more happy metrical version than they yet obtained of the book of psalms; a wish which the piety of our author induced him to gratify; and he produced in 1721, a *new Version of the Psalms of David, fitted to the tunes used in the Churches*, which being recommended by the archbishops, and many bishops, obtained a licence for admission into public worship; but it obtained no admission, from the preference given to the version of Tate and Brady; so that Blackmore's name may be added to many others, who, by the same attempt, have obtained only the praise of meaning well. He was not yet deterred from heroic poetry. There was yet another monarch of this island whom he considered as worthy of the epic muse, and in 1723 he produced *King Alfred, an Heroic Poem*, in twelve books, which, like Eliza, "dropped dead-born from the press." Of his four epic poems, says Dr. Johnson, the first had such reputation and popularity as enraged the critics, the second was at least known to be ridiculed, the two last found neither friends nor enemies. Johnson, who was no friend to the house of Hanover, before he was bound by obligations to it, remarks on the last poem, that the opinion of the nation was settled at the time of its publication; that a hero introduced by Black-

more was not likely to find either respect or kindness; that *Alfred* took his place by *Eliza;* that benevolence was ashamed to favour, and malice was weary of insulting.

His biographers have reported that the ridicule which was thrown on the poet was in time followed by the neglect of the physician, and that his practice, which was once invidiously great, forsook him in the latter part of his life; but the fact may be reasonably doubted, and some communications in the Gentleman's Magazine shew that he was consulted by persons of the highest rank, and preserved his professional credit and reputation till the close of his life. It would indeed be highly absurd to estimate a man's medical abilities by his poetical fame.

Besides the poems and essays already mentioned, he wrote a variety of historical, theological, and medical tracts. Amongst the latter were Treatises on the small pox, consumptions, the spleen, the gout, the rheumatism, the kings evil, the dropsy, the jaundice, the stone, the diabetes, and the plague. On the medical writings of our author Dr. Johnson has the following remarks.

"Of those books, if I had read them, it could not be expected that I should be able to give a critical account. I have been told that there is something in them of vexation and discontent discovered by a perpetual attempt to degrade physic from its sublimity, and to represent it as attainable without much previous or concomitant learning. By the transient glances which I have thrown upon them, I have observed an affected contempt of the ancients, and a supercilious derision of transmitted knowledge. Of this indecent arrogance the fol-

1714. This friendship was broken by his accusing Pope, in his Essays, of profaneness and immorality, on a report from Curl, that he was the author of a "Travestie on the first Psalm." Pope was afterwards the perpetual and incessant enemy of Blackmore, and satirized him in the "Dunciad" in the following lines.

"But far o'er all, sonorous Blackmore's strain;
"Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again.
"In Tot'nam fields, the brethren with amaze!
"Prick all their ears up and forget to graze,
"Long Chanc'ry Lane retentive rolls the sound,
"And courts to courts return it round and round.
"Thames wafts it thence to Rufus' roaring hall;
"And Hungerford re-echoes bawl for bawl.
"All hail him victor in both arts of song,
"Who sings so loudly, and who sings so long."

Hardly any writer has been more ridiculed than Blackmore; yet there have been few, perhaps none, who have had better intentions. He was certainly a man of considerable learning and abilities, and a most zealous advocate for the cause of religion and virtue. He wrote indeed too much, and was sometimes deficient in taste; nor did he take sufficient time to polish his compositions; but he was far from being deficient in genius, and it is evident that it was not his dullness which excited so much animosity against him. His *Creation* is by universal consent accounted the noblest production of his genius. Addison, in one of his numbers of the Spectator, says "it was undertaken with so good an intention, and executed with so great a mastery that it deserves to be looked upon as one of the best in our English verse. *The reader* cannot but be pleased to see the depths

of philosophy enlivened with all the charms of poetry, and to see so great a strength of reason amidst so beautiful a redundancy of the imagination."

Some notice is due to the candid declaration of Dennis, who notwithstanding his asperity towards our author in other instances, calls his *Creation* a "philosophical poem, which has equalled that of Lucretius in the beauty of its versification, and infinitely surpassed it in the solidity and strength of its reasoning."

"Blackmore," says Dr. Johnson, "by the unremitted enmity of the wits, whom he provoked more by his virtue than his dullness, has been exposed to worse treatment than he deserved. His name was so long used to point every epigram upon dull writers, that it became at last a bye-word of contempt; but it deserves observation, that malignity takes hold only of his writings, and that his life passed without reproach, even when his boldness of reprehension naturally turned upon him many eyes desirous to espy faults, which many tongues would have made haste to publish. But those who could not blame, could at least forbear to praise, and therefore of his private life and domestic character there are very few memorials.

"As an author he may justly claim the honours of magnanimity. The incessant attacks of his enemies, whether serious or merry, are never discovered to have disturbed his quiet, or to have lessened his confidence in himself; they neither awakened him to silence or to caution; they neither provoked him to petulance, nor depressed

him to complaint. While the distributors of literary fame were endeavouring to depreciate and degrade him, he either despised or defied them, wrote on as he had written before, and never turned aside to quiet them by civility, or repress them by confutation.

"He depended with great security on his own powers, and perhaps was for that reason less diligent in perusing books. His literature was, I think, but small. What he knew of antiquity I suspect him to have gathered from modern compilers: but though he could not boast of much critical knowledge, his mind was stored with general principles, and he left minute researches to those whom he considered as little minds.

"The poem on *Creation* has the appearance of much circumspection; it wants neither harmony of numbers, accuracy of thought, nor elegance of diction: it has either been written with great care, or, what cannot be imagined of so long a work, with such felicity as made care less necessary.

"Its two constituent parts are ratiocination and description. To reason in verse is allowed to be difficult; but Blackmore not only reasons in verse, but very often reasons poetically: and finds the art of uniting ornament with strength, and ease with closeness. This is a skill which Pope might have condescended to learn from him, when he needed it so much in his Moral Essays.

"In his descriptions both of life and nature, the poet and the philosopher happily co-operate; truth is recommended by elegance, and elegance, sustained by truth. In the structure of the poem, not only the greater parts are properly consecu-

tive, but the didactive and illustrative paragraphs are so happily mingled that labour is relieved by pleasure, and the attention is led on through a long succession of varied excellence to the original position, the fundamental principle of wisdom and of virtue."

CREATION;

A PHILOSOPHICAL POEM.

IN SEVEN BOOKS.

" Principio cœlum, ac terras camposque liquentes,
" Lucentemque globum Lunæ, Titaniaque astra
" Spiritus intus alit, totamque infusa per artus
" Mens agitat molem, et magno se corpore miscet.
" Inde hominum, pecudumque genus, viteque volantum,
" Et quæ marmoreo fert monstra sub æquore pontus."

Virgil.

PREFACE.

IT has been the opinion of many persons of great sense and learning, that the knowledge of a God, as well as some other self-evident and uncontested notions, is born with us, and exists antecedent to any perception or operation of the mind. They express themselves on this subject in metaphorical terms, altogether unbecoming philosophical and judicious inquiries, while they assert, that the knowledge of a God is interwoven with our constitution, that it is written, engraven, stamped, and imprinted in clear and discernible characters on the heart; in which manner of speech they *affect to follow* the great orator of the Romans.

By these unartful phrases they can mean nothing but this, that the proposition, *There is a God*, is actually existent in the mind, as soon as the mind has its being; and is not at first acquired, though it may be afterwards confirmed, by any act of reason, by any argument or demonstration. I must confess my inability to conceive this inbred knowledge, these original independent ideas, that owe not their being to the operation of the understanding, but are, I know not how, congenite and co-existent with it.

For how a man can be said to have knowledge before he knows, how ideas can exist in the mind without and before perception, I must own is too difficult for me to comprehend. That a man is born with a faculty or capacity to know, though as yet without any actual knowledge; and that, as the eye has a native disposition and aptitude to perceive the light, when fitly offered, though as yet it never exercised any act of vision, and had no innate images in the womb; so the mind is endued with a power and faculty to know and perceive the truth of this proposition, *There is a God*, as soon as it shall be represented to it; all this is clear and intelligible; but any thing more is, as I have said, above my reach. In this opinion, which I had many years ago entertained, I was afterwards confirmed by the famous author of the Essay on Human Understanding. Nor can I see that, by this doctrine, the argument for the existence of a deity, drawn from the general assent of all nations (excepting perhaps some few, who are so barbarous that they approach very near the condition of brute animals), is at all invalidated. For supposing there is no inbred knowledge of a God; yet if mankind

generally assent to it, whether their belief proceeds from their reflection on themselves, or on the visible creation about them, it will be certainly true, that the existence of a deity carries with it the clearest and most uncontrolable evidence; since mankind so readily and so universally perceive and embrace it. It deserves consideration, that St. Paul upon this argument does not appeal to the light within, or to any characters of the Divine Being originally engraven on the heart, but deduces the cause from the effect, and from the creation infers the Creator.

It is very probable that those who believe an innate idea of a Divine Being, unproduced by any operation of the mind, were led by this to another opinion, namely, that there never was in the world a real atheist in belief and speculation, how many soever there may have been in life and practice. But, upon due examination, this opinion, I imagine, will not abide the test; which I shall endeavour to make evident.

But before I enter upon this subject, it seems proper to take notice of the apology, which several persons of great learning and candour have made for many famous men, and great philosophers, unjustly accused of impiety.

Whoever shall set about to mend the world, and reform men's notions, as well as their manners, will certainly be the mark of much scandal and reproach; and will effectually be convinced, that it is too possible the greatest lovers and benefactors of mankind may be represented by the multitude, whose opinions they contradict, as the worst of men. The hardy undertakers, who express their zeal to rectify the sentiments of a prejudiced peo-

ple in matters of religion, who labour to stem the tide of popular error, and strike at the foundations of any ancient, established superstition, must themselves expect to be treated as pragmatical and insolent innovators, disturbers of the public peace, and the great enemies of religion. The observation of all ages confirms this truth; and, if any man who is doubtful of it would try the experiment, I make no question he will very soon be thoroughly convinced.

It is no wonder, therefore, that Anaxagoras, though he was the first philosopher who plainly asserted an Eternal Mind by whose power the world was made, for opposing the public worship at Athens, whose refined wits were plunged in the most senseless idolatry, and particularly for denying the divinity of the sun, should be condemned for irreligion, and treason against the gods; and be heavily fined and banished the city. It is no wonder, after so sharp a persecution of this zealous reformer, that Socrates, the next successor but one to Anaxagoras, and the last of the Ionic school, for opposing their scandalous rabble of deities, and asserting one Divine Being, should be condemned for atheism, and put to death, by blind superstition and implacable bigotry.

Some have been condemned by their antagonists for impiety, who maintain positions, which those from whom they dissent imagine have a tendency to the disbelief of a deity. But this is a manifest violation of justice, as well as candour, to impute to any man the remote consequences of his opinion, which he himself disclaims and detests, and who, if he saw the connection of his principles with such conclusions, would readily re-

nounce them. No man can be reasonably charged with more opinions than he owns; and if this justice were observed in polemical discourses, as well of theology as philosophy, many persons had escaped those hard names, and terrible censures, which their angry antagonists have thought fit to fix upon them. No one, therefore, is to be reputed an atheist, or an enemy to religion, upon the account of any erroneous opinion, from which another may, by a long chain of sequels, draw that conclusion; much less for holding any doctrines in philosophy, which the common people are not able to examine or comprehend, who, when they meddle with speculations of which they are unqualified to judge, will be as apt to censure a philosopher for an atheist, as an astronomer for a magician.

I would fain too in this place make some apology for the great numbers of loose and vicious men, who laugh at religion, and seem in their conversation to disclaim the belief of a deity. I do not mean an apology for their practice, but their opinion. I hope these unhappy persons, at least the greatest part, who have given up the reins to their passions and exorbitant appetites, are, rather than atheists, a careless and stupid sort of creatures, who either out of a supine temper, or for fear of being disturbed by remorse in their unwarrantable enjoyments, never soberly consider with themselves, or exercise their reason on things of the highest importance. These persons never examine the arguments that enforce the belief of a deity, and the obligations of religion: but take the word of their ingenious friends, or some atheistical pretender to philosophy, who assures them there is no God, and therefore no religion. And notwith-

standing all atheists have leave given them by their principles to become libertines, yet it is not true that all libertines are atheists. Some plainly assert their belief of a God; and others, who deny his existence, yet do not deny it upon any principles, any scheme of philosophy which they have framed, and by which they account for the existence and duration of the world, in the beautiful order in which we see it, without the aid of a divine eternal mind.

But there are two sorts of men, who, without injustice, have been called atheists; those who frankly and in plain terms have denied the being of a God; and those who, though they asserted his being, denied those attributes and perfections, which the idea of a God includes; and so, while they acknowledged the name, subverted the thing. These are as real atheists as the former, but less sincere. If any man should declare he believes a deity, but affirms that this deity is of human shape, and not eternal; that he derives his being from the fortuitous concourse and complication of atoms; or, though he allowed him to be eternal, should maintain, that he showed no wisdom, design, or prudence, in the formation, and no care or providence in the government of the world; that he never reflects on any thing exterior to his own being, nor interests himself in human affairs: does not know, or does not attend to, any of our actions: such a person is, indeed, and in effect, as much an atheist as the former. For though he owns the appellation, yet his description is destructive of the idea of a God. I do not affirm, *that the idea* of a God implies the relation of a *creator:* but, since in the demonstration of the

existence of a God, we argue from the effect to the cause, and proceed from the contemplation of the creature to the knowledge of the creator, it is evident we cannot know there is a God, but we must know him to be the maker, and, if the maker, then the governor and the benefactor of the world. Could there be a God, who is entirely regardless of things without him, who is perfectly unconcerned with the direction and government of the world, is altogether indifferent whether we worship or affront him, and is neither pleased nor displeased with any of our actions; he would certainly to us be the same as no God. The log in the fable would be altogether as venerable a deity; for if he has no concern with us, it is plain we have none with him: if we are not subject to any laws he has made for us, we can never be obedient or disobedient, nor can we need forgiveness, or expect reward. If we are not the subjects of his care and protection, we can owe him no love or gratitude; if he either does not hear, or disregards our prayers, how impertinent is it to build temples, and to worship at his altars? in my opinion, such notions of a deity, which lay the axe to the root of all religion, and make all the expressions of it idle and ridiculous, which destroy the distinction of good and bad, all morality of our actions, and remove all the grounds and reasons of fear of punishment, and hope of reward, will justly denominate a man an atheist, though he ever so much disclaims that ignominious title.

* Thales, the founder of the Ionic school, and the philosophers who succeeded him, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Diogenes, Apollionates, Anaxagoras and Archelaus, are censured by Aristotle as

disbelievers of a deity; the reason he gives is, that these philosophers, in treating of the principles of the world, never introduce the deity, as the efficient cause. But if it be considered, that natural science was then in its infancy, and that those primitive philosophers only undertook to account for the material principle, out of which the world was made, which one asserted to be water, one fire, another air; though this may prove that they formed but a lame and unfinished scheme of philosophy, yet it does not evince that they denied the being of a God, or that they did not believe him to be the efficient cause of all things. It is indeed a convincing evidence that their philosophy was imperfect, as at first it might well be; but from their silence or omission of him in their systems, when they designed to treat only of the material causes of things, it is unreasonable to affirm, that they denied his being: and it is certain Anaxagoras taught, that besides matter, it was absolutely necessary to assert a divine mind, the contriver and maker of the world; and for this religious principle, as was said before, he was at Athens an illustrious confessor.

After the death of Socrates, the Ionic school was soon divided into various sects and philosophical parties: of the Cyrenaic school, Theodorus and Dion Boristhenites, were reputed atheists, contemners of the gods, and deriders of religion. Yet since it does not appear, that they had formed any impious scheme of philosophy, or maintained their irreligion by any pretended principles of reason, it is not improbable that these men were rather abandoned libertines, without consideration

and reflection, than speculative and philosophical atheists.

The Italic school, to its great dishonour, was more fertile in impiety, and produced a greater number of these irreligious philosophers. The masters, who succeeded their famous founder Pythagoras, soon degenerated from his noble and pious principles, and not only corrupted the purity of his doctrine, but became downright apostates, renouncing the belief of a God, and subverting the foundation of religion. Leucippus, Democritus, Diagorus, and Protagoras, were justly reckoned in this rank; who asserted, that the world was made by the casual combination of atoms, without any assistance or direction of a divine mind. They taught their followers this doctrine, supported it with arguments, and so were atheists on the pretended principles of reason. But among all the ancient obdurate atheists, and inveterate enemies of religion, no one seems more sincere, or more implacable than Epicurus.

And though this person was perhaps of as dull an understanding, of as unrefined thought, and as little sagacity and penetration, as any man, who was ever complimented with the name of a philosopher; yet several great wits, and men of distinguished learning in this last age, have been pleased to give the world high encomiums of his capacity and superior attainments.

After a long night of ignorance had overspread the face of Europe, many wise men, from a generous love of truth, resolved to exercise their reason, and free themselves from prejudice, and a servile veneration of great names, and prevailing *authority*; and growing impatient of tyrannical

atheism; for while he affirms that the world, as to its formation, as well as its progression and duration, is independent on the gods, and owes nothing to their power, wisdom, or providence, he utterly subverts all pretence to religion and divine worship; and comes at last into the dregs of the Epicurean scheme: this, I believe, I have plainly proved in the following poem.

As to the modern atheists, Vaninus, Hobbes and Spinosa, I have spoken of them in their turn, and shall not anticipate what is said hereafter.

I have been determined to employ some of my leisure hours in writing on this subject, by the melancholy reflection I have often made on the growth of profaneness, and the prevailing power of loose and irreligious principles in this nation.

It is a mortifying consideration to all who love mankind, and wish well to their country, that this opinion has of late years, above the example of past ages, spread its contagious influence so far and wide, that now, emboldened by the power and number of its asserters, it becomes insolent and formidable. Those impious maxims, which a small party in the last age, when inflamed with wine, vented in private, are now the entertainment of the coffee-house, publicly professed, and in many companies spoken of in cool blood, as the ordinary subjects of conversation.

All ages have brought forth some monsters, some professors, and patrons of irreligion; monsters in respect of their scarceness, as well as deformity; but the amazing abundance of these odious productions is, I believe, peculiar to this fertile age. I am apt to think, that most who were reckoned atheists in former reigns were rather unbridled

libertines, than irreligious in principle; but now we are so far advanced, that the infection has seized the mind, the atheist in practice is become one in speculation, and looseness of manners improved to intellectual impiety.

Many, which is without example, express an ardent zeal for profaneness, are grown bigots in atheism, and with great industry and application propagate their principles, form parties, and concert measures to carry on with vigour the cause of irreligion. They caress and are very fond of those who boldly declare for impiety, and mock all religion, as cheat and imposture. These are wits, men of sense, of large and free thoughts, and cannot fail of being men in fashion. And as the renegades and deserters of heaven, who renounce their God for the favour of men, and chuse to grow popular at the dearest rate, are by many protected and applauded; so there are places where a man that has the assurance to own the belief of a Deity, and a future state, would be exposed and laughed out of countenance. Hence many are tempted to conceal their notions of religion for fear of blasting their reputation, and of being neglected and despised by those, from whose favour they expect profit or promotion.

Immediately after the restoration, the people, intoxicated with the pleasures of peace, and influenced by the example of a loose court, as well as from their great aversion to the former fanatical strictness, and severity of conversation, which they detested as hypocrisy, indulged themselves in sensual liberties, and by degrees sunk deep into luxury and vice. Then it was that some irreligious men, taking advantage of this growing dissolution of *manners, began* to propagate their detestable no-

tions, and sow the seeds of profaneness and impiety, which sprung up apace, and flourished in proportion to the growth of immorality. Thus vice and irreligion, mutually assisting each other, extended their power by daily encroachments; and the solid temper and firmness of mind which the people once possessed, being slackened and dissolved by the power of riot and forbidden pleasure, their judgment soon became vitiated; which corruption of taste has ever since gradually increased, as the confederate powers of vice and profaneness have spread their infection, and gained upon religion.

While loose principles and impious opinions pervert the judgment, a petulant humour, that inclines men to give an air of levity and ridicule to all their discourses, and turn every thing to mirth and raillery, does in proportion get ground; this being esteemed the most successful method to weaken the power and authority of religion in the minds of men.

I would not here be understood as if I condemned the qualifications of wit and pleasantry, but only the misapplication of them. I shall always retain a great value for ingenious men, provided they do not abuse and prostitute their talents to the worst purposes, I mean the deriding all sobriety of manners, and turning into jest the principles which constitute our duty here, and assure our happiness hereafter. But can any man who reveres a God, and loves his country, stand by unconcerned, while loose and profane wits shew so much zeal and diligence in propagating maxims, which tend so directly to the dishonour of the one, and the ruin of the other?

Should atheism and corruption of manners, those inseparable companions, which as causes and effects mutually introduce and support each other, prevail much farther; should impious notions in any age hereafter generally infect the highest, as well as the inferior ranks of men, what confusion of affairs must ensue? It would be impossible to find men of principle to fill the places of trust and honour, or patrons to promote them: merit would incapacitate and disqualify for the favour of great men, and a religious character would be an invincible obstruction to advancement; there would be no persons of rank to encourage men of worth, and bring neglected virtue into fashion. On the contrary, the contemners of heaven and deriders of piety would be caressed, applauded, and promoted. The disposers of preferment would confer all on those who embrace their opinions, and what a terrible temptation would this be to our youth to accommodate their notions to those of the men in power, when they shall see that their favour is not otherwise to be procured?

Is it not highly probable, that in such an age, clubs and cabals would be formed of scoffers and buffoons, to laugh religion out of countenance, and make the professors of it the object of public scorn and contempt?

Besides, it is natural to believe, that magistrates in a commonwealth, generally composed of atheists, would likewise proceed to violence, and persecute those whom they could not persuade to embrace their notions, as much as any sect of religion has ever done. For it is not religion, but corrupted *human nature*, that pushes men on to compulsive *methods of obliging* their adversaries to renounce

their own, and assert the opinions of men in power. It is from the factious temper of a party, not the spirit of piety, it is from pride and impatience of contradiction, or from lust of dominion, or a violent desire of engrossing the places of honour and profit, that men endeavour by cruel and coercive methods to silence their opponents, and suppress their competitors. And if it will be allowed that human passions will always exert themselves with uniformity, and therefore still produce the like effects; if we may foretel what atheists when in power are like to do, from what they have done, as far as they had ability, we may be assured, when they do not want power, they will never want a will to employ violence to extinguish the notions of piety, and the hateful heresy of religion. It would not be strange if atheistical tests in such a state of affairs should be formed and imposed, to keep men of dangerous principles out of all posts of power and profit, and all that believed the being of a God, and the rewards and punishments of another life, should be looked on as disaffected to the Government, and the disturbers of the public peace.

And if such notions of impiety, and such a degenerate constitution of manners should ever prevail in this unhappy nation, any man without the gift of prophecy, and indeed with a very moderate penetration, may foresee, that the public will then be exposed to inevitable ruin.

But before the interests of virtue and religion are reduced to so deplorable a state, it is to be hoped this once wise and sober nation will awaken from its lethargy. That notwithstanding the present popularity of vice, levity and impiety, it may one day recover its relish of solid knowledge and

real merit. That buffoons themselves may one day be exposed, the laughers in their turn become ridiculous, and an atheistical scoffer be as much out of credit, as a sober and religious man is at present: virtue, seriousness, and a due reverence of sacred and divine things may revive among us; and it is the duty and interest of every man that loves his country, and wishes well to mankind, to make his utmost efforts to bring about such a happy revolution. This would the sooner be effected, if the virtuous part of ingenious men, (for virtue has still a party) would not supinely stand by, and see the honour and interests of religion exposed and insulted; but instead of an abject, unactive despondence, would unite their endeavours, with vigour and resolution, against the common enemies of God and their country. It is great pity that in so noble a cause any should shew such poorness of spirit, as to be ashamed of asserting their religion, and stemming the tide of impiety, for fear of becoming the entertainment of scoffing libertines.

I know the gentlemen of atheistical notions pretend to refined parts, and pass themselves upon the world for wits of the first rank: yet in debate they decline argument, and rather trust to the decision of raillery. But if it were possible for these gentlemen to apply themselves in good earnest to the reasons alledged in proof of a divine being, in a manner that becomes an enquiry of such consequence, I should believe their conviction were not to be despaired of.

But there is little appearance that they will be ever prevailed on to consider this matter, with deliberate and unprejudiced thought; and therefore I am not so sanguine to think that any arguments

I can bring, though ever so clear and demonstrative, are likely to make any impression upon a veteran atheist. I have nevertheless thought it a seasonable service to endeavour to stop the contagion, and as far as I am able, to preserve those who are not yet infected.

I would entreat these to distinguish between raillery and argument, and not believe, that mirth ought to determine in so weighty a case. That they would not admit of principles of the utmost concern without examination, and take impiety upon content. That they would appeal from the buffoon and the mocker, to the impartial decision of right reason, and debate this matter with the gravity that becomes the importance of the subject.

But since the gentlemen who own no obligations of religion for the rule of behaviour, set up in its stead a spurious principle, which they call honour, and a greatness of mind, that will not descend to a mean or base action; let them reflect, whether that term, as they use it, is not an empty sound without any determined meaning. If honour lays a man under any obligation to perform or forbear any action, then it is evident, honour is a law or rule, and the transgression of it makes us guilty and obnoxious to punishment: and if it be a law it must be the declaration of some legislator's will, for this is the definition of a law that regulates the manners of a moral agent. Now I ask a man of honour, who denies religion, what or whose law he breaks, if he deviates from what he imagines a point of honour? It is plain there can be no transgression, where there is no law; no irregularity, where there is no rule; nor can a man do a base

or dishonourable thing, if he lies under no obligation to the contrary. Honour, therefore, abstracted from the notion of religion which enjoins it, is an idle chimera, which can have little power over any man, that does not believe a divine legislator whose authority must enforce it.

It is the same with friendship and gratitude, which are principles that the atheist will often commend. But how is any man bound to be grateful, or to be a friend? should he act a contrary part, and be treacherous and ungrateful, what guilt has he contracted? Has he offended against any law? Or can he become guilty, without the breach of any? If you say he has broken any law, tell us the law, and by whom it was made. If the laws of the supreme being are set aside, we can lie under no regulation, but have an unbounded liberty over all our actions. We may without the least fault or dishonour, break our oaths, subvert the government, betray our friends, assassinate our parents, in short, commit all kinds of the most detestable crimes without remorse. For not being controlled by any obligation, we may do whatever our passions or our interests prompt us to, without being accountable to any tribunal, for the least transgression.

If it be said, we are obliged by the laws of our country; I answer, that as to the actions we are speaking of, such as a man of honour, a great and generous person is supposed to think himself obliged to, these are such as are not regulated by municipal laws, and therefore men are at liberty, whether they will act by what they call a principle of honour or not, and can justly incur no censure or reproach, should they have no regard to that

pompous and sounding word. For if their actions are not morally determined, either by human or divine laws, they may very justly, and honourably too, act with unlimited freedom in these matters. Besides, whoever believes himself free from the obligations of divine precepts, cannot look on himself as bound by any human laws. He may indeed from the apprehension of punishment forbear an action, thus forbidden, and it is his interest so to do: but if he thinks no divine authority makes it his duty to submit to the magistrate and obey the laws of his country, he is at liberty, as to any guilt, whether he will obey or no. If he ventures the punishment, he escapes the sin. If any atheist swears fidelity to his prince, what controlling power is he under, which affects the mind, not to betray him, if he thinks it fit and safe to do it? If he lets his parents, or his patron, or his friend perish, what iniquity is he accountable for?

The existence of a God has been already cleared, and abundantly demonstrated by many pious and learned authors, whence this attempt may be censured, as impertinent and unnecessary. But all those excellent performances being writ in prose, and the greatest part in the learned languages, or at least in a scholastic manner, are ill accommodated to great numbers not of a learned education; and many who have more knowledge and greater genius will not undergo the trouble of reading and considering the arguments expressed in a manner to them obscure, dry and disagreeable. I have therefore formed a poem on this great and important subject, that I might give it the advantages peculiar to poetry, and adapt it more to the general *apprehension* and capacity of mankind. The har-

mony of numbers engages many to read and retain what they would neglect, if written in prose; and I persuade myself the Epicurean philosophy had not lived so long, nor been so much esteemed, had it not been kept alive and propagated by the famous poem of Lucretius.

I have chosen to demonstrate the existence of a God from the marks of wisdom, design, contrivance, and the choice of ends and means, which appear in the universe. Out of the various arguments, that evince the truth of this proposition, *There is a God*, I have selected this as the most evident and intelligible.

I may with reason presume, that I shall not incur any censure for not employing new arguments to prove the being of a God; none but what have been produced before by many writers, even from the eldest days of philosophy. It was never objected to Lucretius, that in his applauded poem, he has not invented a new system of philosophy, but only recited, in poetical numbers, the ancient doctrines of Democritus and Epicurus. Nor can it with reason be supposed, that the arguments by which he supports their opinions were not long before in the schools of Greece. Nor have modern writers on this subject invented, but pursued the demonstration of a God, from the evident appearance of contrivance and wisdom in the visible world, which they have done with more clearness and strength, than those who went before them. And while these have attempted to evince the existence of a God only from the contemplation of corporeal nature, I have carried the argument on to the actions of living, sensitive, and intelligent beings, so far as we are acquainted with them;

believing that brighter and more noble strokes of wisdom and design appear in the principles of life, sensation, and reason, than in all the compass of the material world.

I have endeavoured to give the subject yet greater degrees of perspicuity, more variety of argument, as well as easy and familiar expression, that the style being more pleasing, and the demonstration more readily apprehended, it may leave a deeper impression, and its effects and usefulness may become more extensive. In order to this, I have rarely used any term of art, or any phrase peculiar to the writings and conversation of learned men. I have attempted, as Monsieur Fontenelle has done with great success in his plurality of worlds, to bring philosophy out of the secret recesses of the schools, and strip it of its uncouth and mysterious dress, that it may become agreeable, and admitted to a general conversation.

I take it for granted, that no judicious reader will expect, in the philosophical and argumentative parts of this poem, the ornaments of poetical eloquence. In this case, where metaphor and description are not admitted, lest they should darken and enfeeble the argument, if the reasoning be close, strong and easily apprehended, if there be an elegant simplicity, purity, and propriety of words, and a just order and connexion of the parts, mutually supporting and enlightening one another, there will be all the perfection which the style can demand.

I may safely conclude, that no man will expect that in this poem I should borrow any embellishments from the exploded and obsolete theology of *the ancient* idolaters of Greece or Rome. That I

should address any rapturous invocations to their idle deities, or adorn the style with allusions to their fabulous actions. I have more than once publicly declared my opinion, that a Christian poet cannot but appear monstrous and ridiculous in a Pagan dress. That though it should be granted, that the heathen religion might be allowed a place in light and loose songs, mock heroic, and the lower lyric compositions, yet in Christian poems of the sublime and greater kind, the mixture of the Pagan theology must, by all who are masters of reflection and good sense, be condemned, if not as impious, at least as impertinent and absurd. And this is a truth so clear and evident, that I make no doubt it will by degrees force its way, and prevail over the contrary practice. Should Britons recover their virtue and reform their taste, they would no more bear the heathen religion in verse, than in prose. Christian poets, as well as Christian preachers, the business of both being to instruct the people, though the last are only wholly appropriated to it, should endeavour to confirm and spread their own true religion. If a divine should begin his sermon with a solemn prayer to Bacchus, or Apollo, to Mars, or Venus, what would the people think of their preacher? And is it not as really, though not equally absurd, for a poet in a great and serious poem, wherein he celebrates some wonderful and happy event of divine Providence, or magnifies the illustrious instrument, that was honoured to bring the event about, to address his prayer to false deities, and cry for help to the abominations of the heathen?

The design of this poem is to demonstrate the self-existence of an eternal mind from the created

and dependent existence of the universe, and to confute the hypothesis of the Epicureans and the fatalists, under whom all the patrons of impiety, ancient or modern, of whatsoever denomination, may be ranged. The first of whom affirm the world was in time caused by chance, and the other that it existed from eternity without a cause. It is true, as before-mentioned, both these acknowledged the existence of gods, but by their absurd and ridiculous description of them, it is plain they had nothing else in view, but to avoid the obnoxious character of atheistical philosophers.

This likewise has been often objected to the deists of the present times, that at least a great part of them only conceal their notions under that name, while they are really to be numbered among the atheists. I have before expressed my reasons, why I cannot embrace this opinion. It is true indeed, that most of the deists maintain a particular friendship with the atheists, are pleased with their loose and impious conversation, and appear very tender of their credit and esteem. They are charitable in crying up their shining qualities, and in concealing, excusing, or lessening their immoral actions. While at the same time they shew an affectation in exposing the faults and follies of the Christians, especially those who are the most strict and regular in their manners, and appear to be most in earnest. It is likewise remarkable that these gentlemen express no zeal for the extirpation of irreligious principles: they have never, as far as I know, written any thing against them; nor are they pleased in company to declare their detestation of such impious maxims, or to produce arguments to confute them. While at the same

time they take great pains, and shew a warm zeal to weaken the belief of the Christian religion, and to expose the pretended errors of its different professors; which seems indeed strange, since he that owns a God and his providence, should in reason look upon those, who believe neither, to be infinitely more opposite to him, than those who agree with him in the belief of a God, and differ only in the point of revealed religion.

Besides, it is observable that the present deists have not drawn and published any scheme of religion, or catalogue of the duties they are obliged to perform, or whence such obligations arise. They do not tell us, that they look on man as an unaccountable creature, nor if they do, for what, and to whom, or when that account is to be made, and what rewards and punishments will attend it. I do not affirm they have no such scheme in their thoughts, but since they will not let us know their creed, and in the mean time deride and triumph over that of the Christians, I cannot defend them from those, who say they are justly to be suspected.

And that the deist may clear himself from the suspicion of being an atheist, or at least a friend and favourer of their principles; I could wish he would in public assert and demonstrate the being of a God and his providence, and declare his abhorrence of the principles of those who disbelieve them.

It would likewise give great satisfaction, and remove the objections of those that charge them with direct irreligion, if they would please to give some account of their belief: whether they look upon God as one who governs mankind by laws to be

discovered by the light of reason, which restrain our inclinations and determine our duty; that they would tell what those laws are, and what sanctions do enforce them; and till this be done, they cannot well discharge themselves from the suspicion before-mentioned.

And here I would address myself to the irreligious gentlemen of the age, and I desire them not to take up prejudices against the existence of a God, and run away with impious maxims, until they have exercised their consideration, and made an impartial enquiry into the grounds and reasons, that support the belief of a divine eternal being. In order to such a reasonable examination, it is but just and decent they should be in earnest, and hear the arguments we offer with temper and patience. That they should inure themselves to think, and weigh the force of those arguments, as becomes sincere enquirers after truth. The being of a God, and the duties that result from that principle, are subjects of the greatest excellence and dignity in themselves, and of the greatest concern and importance to mankind; and therefore should never be treated in mirth and ridicule. Generals of armies and counsellors of state, senators and judges, in the great and weighty affairs that come before them, do not put on the air of jesters and buffoons, and instead of grave and solemn debates aim at nothing but sallies of wit, and treat their subjects and one another only with raillery and derision: yet the business proposed to the consideration of the persons I speak to is, in every respect, infinitely superior to any of theirs before-mentioned.

Are they sure there is no God, and therefore no religion? If they are not, what a terrible risk do they run! If their reasons amount only to a probability, the contrary opinion may be true, and that *may be* is enough to give them the most frightful apprehensions, and disturb them amidst all the pleasures they enjoy. But if they say they are assured, and past doubt, there is no God; let them consider, confidence in an opinion is not always the effect of certainty and demonstration. Their predecessors, the atheists of former ages, were as certain, that is, as confident, they reasoned right, as they can be. They cannot pretend to clearer light, and greater assurance of the truth of their maxims, than Epicurus and Lucretius did; or insult their adversaries with greater contempt than those have done: yet these men themselves, at least many of them, allow those philosophers were grossly mistaken, and will by no means trust to the Epicurean scheme, as the foundation of their opinions. If these great masters, notwithstanding their unexampled confidence, have been mistaken, why may not their successors, be so?

If they set up Aristotle's scheme, and think they secure their principles by making the world to be eternal, and all effects and events the result of such a fatal necessity, and an indissoluble concatenation of causes, as render it impossible, that things that are should not be, or that they should be otherwise than they are; let them consider, that the greatest assertors of impiety, I mean Democritus, Leucippus, Epicurus, and Lucretius, opposed this as an idle and incoherent system; and *that indeed it is* so, shall be after demonstrated:

and should not this shake their confidence, that all their friends in the European schools, who were sufficiently delivered from the prejudices of education and superstitious impressions, could not see the least probability in the scheme of the fatalists, on which these gentlemen are pleased to rely in a matter of the highest importance?

Will they confide in Mr. Hobbes? has that philosopher said any thing new? does he bring any stronger forces into the field than the Epicureans did before him? will they derive their certainty from Spinosa? can such an obscure, perplexed, unintelligible author create such certainty, as leaves no doubt or distrust? If he is indeed to be understood, what does he alledge more than the ancient fatalists have done, that should amount to demonstration?

Besides, if, as they pretend, they are established beyond possibility of deception in the truth of their maxims, why are they so very fond of those authors, that set up any new doctrine? and why do they embrace with so much pleasure their new schemes of irreligion? They are very glad to hear of any great genius, that can invent any fresh arguments to strengthen their opinions; and does not this betray a secret diffidence, that demands further light and confirmation?

But further; since these gentlemen show so much industry in propagating their opinions, and are so fond of making proselytes to atheism; since they affect a zeal in countenancing, applauding, and preserving, those whom they have delivered from religious prejudices, and reformed and refined with their free, large, and generous principles: how comes it to pass, that they neglect to

inform and improve their nearest relations? Are they careful to instruct their wives and daughters, that they need not revere the imaginary phantom of a God; that religion is the creature of a timorous and superstitious mind, or of crafty priests, and cunning politicians; that, therefore, they are free from all restraints of virtue and conscience, and may prostitute their persons in the most licentious manner, without any remorse, or uneasy reflection; that it is idle to fear any divine punishment hereafter; and as to the shame and dishonour that may attend the liberties they take, in case they become public, that scandal proceeds from the gross mistakes of people perverted with religion, and misguided by a belief of a divine being, and of rewards and punishments in an imaginary life after this.

Do they take pains to inform their eldest sons, that they owe them no gratitude or obedience; that they may use an uncontrolled freedom in indulging all their appetites, passions, and inclinations; that, if they are willing to possess their father's honour and estate, they may by poison or the poignard, take away his life; and, if they are careful to avoid the punishment of the magistrate, by their secret conduct, they may be fully satisfied of the innocence of the action; and as they have done themselves much good, so they have done their father no injury, and therefore may enjoy in perfect tranquillity the fruits of their parricide? Whatever they may affirm among their loose friends, I cannot conceive they can be guilty of so much folly, as to propagate these opinions in their own families, and instruct their wives and children *in the boundless* liberties, which, by the principles

of atheism, are their undoubted right; for in all actions, where religion does not interpose and restrain us, we are perfectly, as has been said, free to act as we think best for our profit and pleasure.

Besides, to what a deplorable condition would mankind be reduced, should these opinions be universally embraced? If so many kings and potentates, who yet profess their belief of a God, and of rewards and punishments in a life to come, do notwithstanding, from boundless ambition, and a cruel temper, oppress their subjects at home, and ravage and destroy their neighbours abroad, should think themselves free from all divine obligations, and therefore too from the restraints of oaths and solemn contracts; these fences and securities removed, what a deluge of calamities would break in upon the world! what oppression, what violence, what rapine, what devastation would finish the ruin of human nature! For if mighty princes are satisfied that it is impossible for them to do any wrong, what bounds are left to insatiable avarice and exorbitant thirst of power! if monarchs may without the least guilt violate their treaties, break their vows, betray their friends, and sacrifice their truth and honour at pleasure to their passions, or their interest, what trust, what confidence could be supported between neighbour potentates? and without this what confusion and distraction must of necessity ensue!

On the other hand, if subjects were universally atheists, and looked on themselves as under no divine obligation to pay any duty or obedience to the supreme magistrate: if they believed that *when they* took their oaths of allegiance they *swore by* nothing, and invocated a power not in

being; that therefore those oaths oblige them no longer than they think it safe, and for their own interest to break them: should such principles obtain, would not the thrones of princes be most precarious? Would not ambition, revenge, resentment, or interest, continually excite some or other to betray or assault the lives of their sovereigns? and why should they be blamed by the atheist for doing it? why are traitors, assassins, haters of their princes, and enemies to their country, branded with the odious names of ruffians and villains, if they lie under no obligations to act otherwise than they do?

Should conspirators, who assassinate their lawful soverign, have the good fortune to escape, I ask the atheist, if he has in the least an ill opinion of them for being engaged in such an execrable undertaking? if he says he has not, then the point is gained, and an atheist is what I have represented. If he says he has, I next ask him, why? Let him tell me in what their guilt consists? Is it in the breach of any divine law? that cannot be, for he owns none. Is it the transgression of any human law? Tell me what obligation he is under to obey any human law, if no divine law enforces such obedience? Does their guilt consist in the breach of their duty to their prince and their oaths of allegiance? Still the same question recurs, what duty can a subject owe to a prince which divine laws do not constitute and determine? And how can an oath of allegiance bind, but by virtue of some divine command, that obliges us not to violate our vows?

By this it appears that an atheist must be the worst of subjects. That his principles subvert the *thrones of princes*, and undermine the foundations

of government and society, on which the happiness of mankind so much depends; and therefore it is not possible to conceive how there can be a greater disturber of the public peace, or a greater enemy to his prince and country, than a professed atheist, who propagates with zeal his destructive opinions.

I have proved, in the following poem, that no hypothesis hitherto invented in favour of impiety, has the least strength or solidity, no not the least appearance of truth to recommend it. A man must be deserted of heaven, and inflexibly hardened, that cannot or rather will not see the unreasonableness of irreligious principles. I demand only a candid temper in the reader, and a mind pleased with truth, and delivered from the prejudices of atheistical conversation.

A SUMMARY ACCOUNT OF THE FOLLOWING POEM, AND OF WHAT IS CONTAINED IN EACH BOOK.

THE design of this work is to demonstrate the existence of a Divine Eternal mind.

The arguments used for this end are taken from the various marks of wisdom and artful contrivance, which are evident to observation in the several parts of the material world, and the faculties of the human soul.

The first book contains the proof of a Deity, from the instances of design and choice, which occur in the structure and qualities of the earth and sea.

The second pursues the proof of the same proposition, there is a God, from the celestial motions, and more fully from the appearances in the solar system, and the air.

In the third, the objections which are brought by atheistical philosophers against the hypothesis established in the two preceding books, are answered.

In the fourth, is laid down the hypothesis of the Atomists or Epicureans, and other irreligious philosophers, and confuted.

In the fifth, the doctrine of the Fatalists, or Aristotelians, who make the world to be eternal, is considered and subverted.

In the sixth, the argument of the two first books is resumed, and the existence of God demonstrated from the prudence and art discovered in the several parts of the body of man.

In the seventh, the same demonstration is carried on from the contemplation of the instincts in brute animals, and the faculties and operations of the soul of man.

The book concludes with a recapitulation of what has been treated of, and a hymn to the Creator of the world.

CREATION;

A PHILOSOPHICAL POEM.

IN SEVEN BOOKS.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The proposition. The invocation. The existence of a God demonstrated, from the marks of wisdom, choice, and art, which appear in the visible world, and infer an intelligent and free cause. This evinced from the contemplation, I. Of the earth. 1. Its situation. 2. The cohesion of its parts, not to be solved by any hypothesis yet produced. 3. Its stability. 4. Its structure, or the order of its parts. 5. Its motion diurnal and annual, or else the motion of the sun in both those respects. The cause of these motions not yet accounted for by any philosopher. 6. Its outside or face; the beauties and conveniences of it; its mountains, lakes, and rivers. II. The existence of a God proved from the marks and impressions of prudence and design, which appear in the sea. 1. In its formation. 2. The proportion of its parts in respect of the earthy. 3. Its situation. 4. The contexture of its parts. 5. Its brackish or briny quality. 6. Its flux and reflux.

NO more of courts, of triumphs, or of arms,
No more of valour's force, or beauty's charms;
The themes of vulgar lays, with just disdain,
I leave unsung, the flocks, the amorous swain,
The pleasures of the land, and terrors of the main.

How abject, how inglorious 'tis to lie
Grovelling in dust and darkness, when on high
Empires immense and rolling worlds of light
To range their heavenly scenes the muse invite!
I meditate to soar above the skies;
To heights unknown, thro' ways untry'd, to rise:
I would th' Eternal from his works assert,
And sing the wonders of creating art.
While I this unexampled task essay,
Pass awful gulphs, and beat my painful way,
Celestial dove, divine assistance bring,
Sustain me on thy strong extended wing;
That I may reach th' Almighty's sacred throne,
And make his causeless power, the cause of all things,
Thou dost the full extent of nature see, [known.
And the wide realms of vast immensity:
Eternal wisdom thou dost comprehend,
Rise to her heights, and to her depths descend:
The father's secret counsels thou canst tell,
Who in his bosom didst forever dwell:
Thou on the deep's dark face, immortal dove,
Thou, with almighty energy didst move
On the wild waves, incumbent didst display
Thy genial wings, and hatch primæval day:
Order from thee, from thee distinction came,
And all the beauties of the wond'rous frame:
Hence stampt on nature we perfection find,
Fair as th' idea in th' eternal mind.
See thro' this vast extended theatre
Of skill divine what shining marks appear:
Creating power is all around exprest,
The God discover'd, and his care confest.
Nature's high birth, her heavenly beauties show;
By ev'ry feature we the parent know.

Th' expanded spheres amazing to the sight,
Magnificent with stars and globes of light; [pose,
The glorious orbs, which heaven's bright host com-
Th' imprison'd sea, that restless ebbs and flows;
The fluctuating fields of liquid air,
With all the curious meteors hov'ring there,
And the wide regions of the land, proclaim
The power divine, that rais'd the mighty frame.
What things soe'er are to an end referr'd,
And in their motions still that end regard,
Always the fitness of the means respect,
These as conducive chuse, and those reject,
Must by a judgment foreign and unknown
Be guided to their end, or by their own;
For to design an end, and to pursue
That end by means, and have it still in view,
Demands a conscious, wise, reflecting cause,
Which freely moves, and acts by Reason's laws:
That can deliberate, means elect, and find
Their due connexion with the end design'd.
And since the world's wide frame does not include
A cause with such capacities endued;
Some other cause o'er nature must preside
Which gave her birth, and does her motions guide.
And here behold the cause, which God we name,
The source of beings, and the mind supreme;
Whose perfect wisdom, and whose prudent care
With one confederate voice unnumber'd worlds
declare.
See how the earth has gain'd that very place,
Which of all others in the boundless space
Is most convenient, and will best conduce
To the wise ends requir'd for nature's use.
You, who the mind and cause supreme deny,
Nor on his aid to form the world rely,

Must grant, had perfect wisdom been employ'd
To find, thro' all th' interminable void,
A seat most proper, and which best became
The earth and sea, it must have been the same.
  Now, who can this surprising fact conceive,
Who this event fortuitous believe,
That the brute earth unguided should embrace
The only useful, only proper place,
Of all the millions in the empty space?
  Could stupid atoms with impetuous speed
By different roads and adverse ways proceed;
From regions opposite begin their flight,
That here they might rencounter, here unite?
What charms could these terrestrial vagrants see
In this one point of all immensity,
That all th' enamour'd troops should thither flow?
Did they its useful situation know?
And when the squadrons with a swift career
Had reach'd that point, why did they settle there,
When nothing check'd their flight, but gulphs of [air;
Since Epicurus and his scholars say
That unobstructed matter flies away,
Range's the void, and knows not where to stay?
If you, sagacious sons of art, pretend
That by their native force they did descend,
And ceas'd to move, when they had gain'd their [end;
That native force till you enlighten'd know,
Can its mysterious spring disclose, and show
How 'tis exerted, how it does impel,
Your uninstructive words no doubts dispel.
We ask you, whence does motive vigour flow?
You say the nature of the thing is so.
But how does this relieve th' inquirer's pain?
Or how the dark impulsive power explain?

The Atomists, who skill mechanic teach,
Who boast their clearer sight, and deeper reach,
Assert their atoms took that happy seat,
Determin'd thither by their inbred weight;
That downward thro' the spacious void they strove
To that one point, from all the parts above.
Grant this position true, though up and down
Are to a space not limited unknown;
But since they say our earth from morn to morn
On its own axis is oblig'd to turn;
That swift rotation must disperse in air
All things which on the rapid orb appear:
And if no power that motion should control,
It must disjoint and dissipate the whole:
'Tis by experience uncontested found,
Bodies orbicular, when whirling round,
Still shake off all things on their surface plac'd,
And to a distance from the centre cast.
If pond'rous atoms are so much in love
With this one point, that all will thither move,
Give them the situation they desire;
But let us then, ye sages, next inquire,
What cause of their cohesion can you find;
What props support, what chains the fabric bind?
Why do not beasts that move, or stones that lie
Loose on the field, thro' distant regions fly?
Or why do fragments, from a mountain rent,
Tend to the earth, with such a swift descent?
Those who ascribe this one determin'd course
Of pond'rous things to gravitating force,
Refer us to a quality occult,
To senseless words, for which while they insult
With just contempt the famous Stagyrite, [light.
Their schools should bless the world with clearer

Some, the round earth's cohesion to secure,
For that hard task employ magnetic power.
Remark, say they, the Globe, with wonder own
Its nature, like the fam'd attractive stone,
This has its axis, so the observer tells,
Meridians, poles, equator, parallels.
To the terrestrial poles by constant fate
The obsequious poles themselves accommodate.
And when of this position dispossest
They move, and strive, nor ever will they rest,
Till their lov'd situation they regain,
Where pleas'd they settle, and unmov'd remain.
And should you, so experience does decide,
Into small parts the wond'rous stone divide,
Ten thousand of minutest size express
The same propension, which the large possess.
Hence all the globe ('tis said) we may conclude
With this prevailing energy endu'd.
That this attractive, this surprising stone
Has no peculiar virtue of it own;
Nothing but what is common to the whole,
To sides, to axis, and to either pole.
The mighty magnet from the centre darts
This strong, though subtile force, through all the [parts:
Its active rays ejaculated thence,
Irradiate all the wide circumference.
While ev'ry part is in proportion blest,
And of its due attractive power possest;
While adverse ways the adverse atoms draw
With the same strength, by nature's constant law
Ballanc'd and fixt they can no longer move;
Through gulphs immense no more unguided rove.
If cords are pull'd two adverse ways, we find
The more we draw them, they the faster bind.

So when with equal vigour nature strains,
This way and that, these fine mechanic chains,
They fix the earth, they part to part unite,
Preserve their structure, and prevent their flight.
Pressure, they say, and weight we must disown,
As things occult, by no ideas known.
And on the earth's magnetic pow'r depend
To fix its seat, its union to defend.
Let us this fam'd hypothesis survey,
And with attentive thought remark the way,
How earth's attractive parts their force display.
The mass, 'tis said, from its wide bosom pours
Torrents of atoms, and eternal showers
Of fine magnetic darts, of matter made
So subtle, marble they with ease pervade:
Refin'd, and (next to incorporeal) thin,
Not by Ausonian glasses to be seen.
These emanations take their constant flight
Swift from the earth, as from the sun the light;
To a determin'd distance they ascend,
And there inflect their course, and downward tend.
What can insult unequal reason more
Than this magnetic, this mysterious power?
That cords and chains beyond conception small,
Should gird and bind so fast this mighty ball:
That active rays should spring from ev'ry part,
And though so subtle, should such force exert!
That the light legions should be sent abroad,
Range all the air, and traverse ev'ry road:
To stated limits should excursions make,
Then backward of themselves their journey take:
Should in their way to solid bodies cling,
And home to earth the captive matter bring;
Where all things on its surface spread or bound
By their coersive vigour to the ground!

Can this be done without a guide divine?
Should we to this hypothesis incline,
Say, does not here conspicuous wisdom shine?
Who can enough magnetic force admire?
Does it not counsel and design require
To give the earth this wond'rous energy,
In such a measure, such a just degree,
That it should still perform its destin'd task,
As nature's ends and various uses ask?
For, should our globe have had a greater share
Of this strong force, by which the parts cohere,
Things had been bound by such a powerful chain,
That all would fix'd and motionless remain;
All men, like statues, on the earth would stand,
Nor would they move the foot, or stretch the hand.
Birds would not range the skies, nor beasts the woods,
Nor could the fish divide the stiffen'd floods.
Again, had this strange energy been less,
Defect had been as fatal as excess.
For want of cement strong enough to bind
The structure fast, huge ribs of rock disjoin'd
Without an earthquake, from their base would start,
And hills unhing'd from their deep roots depart.
And while our orb perform'd its daily race,
All beings found upon its ample face
Would, by that motion dissipated, fly
Whirl'd from the globe, and scatter through the sky.
They must, obedient to mechanic laws,
Assemble where the stronger magnet draws;
Whether the sun that stronger magnet proves,
Or else some planet's orb, that nearer moves.
Who can unfold the cause that does recal
Magnetic rays, and make them backward fall?

If these effluvia, which do upward tend,
Because less heavy than the air, ascend;
Why do they ever from their heights retreat,
And why return to seek their central seat?
From the same cause, ye sons of art, declare,
Can they by turns descend and rise in air?
Prodigious 'tis that one attractive ray
Should this way tend, the next an adverse way;
For should th' unseen magnetic jets descend
All the same way, they could not gain their end:
They could not draw and bind the fabric fast,
Unless alike they every part embrac'd.
How does Cartesius all his sinews strain,
How much he labours, and how much in vain,
The earth's attractive vigour to explain?
This bold contriver thus his thoughts conveys:
Incessant streams of thin magnetic rays
Gush from their fountains, with impetuous force,
In either pole, then take an adverse course:
Those from the southern pole the northern seek;
The southern those that from the northern break:
In either pole these rays emitted meet
Small pores provided, for their figures fit:
Still to and fro they circulating pass,
Hold all the frame, and firmly bind the mass.
Thus he the parts of earth from flight restrains,
And girds it fast by fine imagin'd chains.
But oh! how dark is human reason found,
How vain the man with wit and learning crown'd;
How feeble all his strength when he essays
To trace dark nature, and detect her ways,
Unless he calls its Author to his aid,
Who every secret spring of motion laid;
Who over all his wondrous works presides,
And to their useful ends their causes guides.

These paths in vain are by inquirers trod;
There's no philosophy without a God.
  Admir'd Cartesius, let the curious know,
If your magnetic atoms always flow
From pole to pole, what form'd their double source,
What spurr'd, what gave them their inflected course.
Tell, what could drill and perforate the poles,
And to th' attractive rays adapt their holes?
A race so long what prompts them to pursue?
Have the blind troops th' important end in view?
How are they sure they in the poles shall meet,
Pores of a figure to their figure fit?
Are they with such sagacity endued
To know, if this their journey be pursued,
They shall the earth's constructure closely bind,
And to the centre keep the parts confin'd.
  Let us review this whole magnetic scheme,
Till wiser heads a wiser model frame.
For its formation let fit atoms start,
To one determin'd point, from ev'ry part;
Encount'ring there from regions opposite,
They clash, and interrupt each other's flight;
And rendezvousing with an adverse course,
Produce an equal poise, by equal force:
For while the parts by laws magnetic act,
And are at once attracted and attract: [field,
While match'd in strength they keep the doubtful
And neither overcome, and neither yield,
To happy purpose they their vigour spend,
For these contentions in the balance end,
Which must in liquid air the globe suspend.
  Besides materials which are brute and blind,
Did not this work require a knowing mind?
Who for the task should fit detachments chuse
From all the atoms, which their host diffuse

Through the wide regions of the boundless space,
And for their rendezvous appoint the place.
Who should command by his almighty nod,
These chosen troops, unconscious of the road,
And unacquainted with th' appointed end,
Their marches to begin, and thither tend;
Direct them all to take the nearest way,
Whence none of all th' unnumber'd millions stray:
Make them advance with such an equal pace,
From all the adverse regions of the space,
That they at once should reach the destin'd place;
Should muster there, and round the centre swarm,
And draw together in a globous form.
  Grant, that by mutual opposition made
Of adverse parts, their mutual flight is staid;
That thus the whole is in a balance laid;
Does it not all mechanic heads confound,
That troops of atoms, from all parts around,
Of equal number, and of equal force,
Should to this single point direct their course:
That so the counter-pressure every way,
Of equal vigour, might their motions stay,
And, by a steady poise, the whole in quiet lay?
  Besides, the structure of the earth regard;
For firmness how is all its frame prepar'd?
With what amazing skill is the vast building rear'd?
Metals and veins of solid stone are found
The chief materials which the globe compound.
See how the hills which high in air ascend,
From pole to pole their lofty lines extend.
  These strong unshaken mounds resist the shocks
Of tides and seas tempestuous, while the rocks
That secret in a long continued vein
Pass through the earth, the pond'rous pile sustain.

These mighty girders, which the fabric bind,
These ribs robust and vast, in order join'd;
These subterranean walls dispos'd with art,
Such strength and such stability impart,
That storms above, and earthquakes under ground,
Break not the pillars, nor the work confound.
  Give to the earth a form orbicular,
Let it be pois'd and hung in ambient air;
Give it the situation to the sun
Such as is only fit; when this is done,
Suppose it still remain'd a lazy heap;
From what we grant you no advantage reap.
You either must the earth from rest disturb,
Or roll around the heav'ns the solar orb.
Else what a dreadful face will nature wear!
How horrid will these lonesome seats appear!
This ne'er would see one kind refreshing ray;
That would be ruin'd, but a different way,
Condemned to light, and curs'd with endless day.
A cold Icelandian desart one would grow,
One like Sicilian furnaces would glow.
  That nature may this fatal error shun,
Move which will please you best, the earth or sun:
But, say, from what great builder's magazines
You'll engines fetch, what strong, what vast ma-
Will you employ to give this motion birth, [chines
And whirl so swiftly round the sun or earth?
Ye learned heads, by what mechanic laws
Will you of either orb this motion cause?
Why do they move? Why in a circle? Why
With such a measure of velocity?
Say, why the earth, if not the earth, the sun,
Does through his winding road the zodiac run?
Why do revolving orbs their tracks sublime
So constant keep, that since the birth of time.

They never varied their accustom'd place,
Nor lost a minute in so long a race?
But hold, perhaps I rudely press too far;
You are not vers'd in reasoning so severe.
To a first question your reply's at hand;
Ask but a second, and you speechless stand.
You swim at top, and on the surface strive,
But to the depths of nature never dive:
For if you did, instructed you'd explore
Divine contrivance, and a God adore.
Yet, sons of art, one curious piece devise,
From whose construction motion shall arise.
Machines, to all philosophers 'tis known,
Move by a foreign impulse, not their own.
Then let Gassendus chuse what frame he please,
By which to turn the heav'nly orbs with ease;
Those orbs must rest, till by th' exerted force
Of some first mover, they begin their course:
Mere disposition, mere mechanic art,
Can never motion to the globes impart:
And if they could, the marks of wise design
In that contrivance would conspicuous shine.
These questions still recur, we still demand
What moves them first, and puts them off at hand:
What makes them this one way their race direct,
While they a thousand other ways reject?
Why do they never once their course inflect?
Why do they roll with such an equal pace,
And to a moment still perform their race?
Why earth or sun diurnal stages keep?
In spiral tracks why through the zodiac creep?
Who can account for this, unless they say
These orbs th' Eternal Mind's command obey,
Who bade them move, did all their motions guide,
To *each its destin'd* province did divide;

Which to complete he gave them motive power,
That shall, as long as he does will, endure.
Thus we the frame of nature have exprest;
Now view the earth in finished beauty drest:
The various scenes which various charms display,
Through all th' extended theatre survey.
See how sublime th' uplifted mountains rise,
And with their pointed heads invade the skies.
How the high cliffs their craggy arms extend,
Distinguish'd states and sever'd realms defend;
How ambient shores confine the restless deep,
And in their ancient bounds the billows keep;
The hollow vales their smiling pride unfold;
What rich abundance do their bosoms hold?
Regard their lovely verdure, ravish'd view
The party-colour'd flowers of various hue.
Not eastern monarchs, on their nuptial day,
In dazzling gold and purple shine so gay
As the bright natives of th' unlabour'd field,
Unvers'd in spinning, and in looms unskill'd.
See how the ripening fruits the gardens crown,
Imbibe the sun, and make his light their own.
See the sweet brooks in silver mazes creep,
Enrich the meadows, and supply the deep;
While from their weeping urns the fountains flow,
And vital moisture, where they pass, bestow.
Admire the narrow stream, and spreading lake,
The proud aspiring grove, and humble brake;
How do the forests and the woods delight!
How the sweet glades and openings charm the sight!
Observe the pleasant lawn and airy plain,
The fertile furrows, rich with various grain;
How useful all; how all conspire to grace
Th' extended earth, and beautify her face.

Now see with how much art the parts are made;
With how much wisdom are the strata laid,
Of different weights, and of a different kind,
Of sundry forms, for sundry ends design'd.
Here in their beds the finish'd minerals rest,
There the rich wombs the seeds of gold digest.
Here in fit moulds, to Indian nations known,
Are cast the several kinds of precious stone;
The diamond here, by mighty monarchs worn,
Fair as the star that ushers in the morn;
There, splendid by the sun's embodied ray,
The beauteous ruby does its light display.
There marble's various colour'd veins are spread;
Here of bitumen unctuous stores are bred.
What skill on all its surface is bestow'd,
To make the earth for man a fit abode?
The upper moulds with active spirits stor'd,
And rich in verdant progeny, afford
The flow'ry pasture, and the shady wood,
To men their physic, and to beasts their food.
Proceed yet farther, and a prospect take
Of the swift stream, and of the standing lake.
Had not the deep been form'd, that might contain
All the collected treasures of the main,
The earth had still o'erwhelm'd with water stood,
To man an uninhabitable flood.
Yet had not part as kindly staid behind,
In the wide cisterns of the lakes confin'd,
Did not the springs and rivers drench the land,
Our globe would grow a wilderness of sand;
The plants and groves, the tame and savage beast,
And man, their lord, would die with drought op-
Now, as you see, the floating element [prest.
Part loose in streams, part in the ocean pent,

So wisely is dispos'd, as may conduce
To man's delight, or necessary use.
  See how the mountains in the midst divide
The noblest regions, that from either side
The streams, which to the hills their currents owe,
May every way along the valley flow,
And verdant wealth on all the soil bestow.
So Atlas, and the mountains of the moon,
From North to South in lofty ridges run
Through Afric realms, whence falling waters lave
Th' inferior regions with a winding wave.
They various rivers give to various soil,
Niger to Guinea, and to Egypt Nile.
So from the tow'ring Alps, on different sides,
Dissolving snows descend in num'rous tides,
Which in the vale beneath their parties join
To form the Rhone, the Danube, and the Rhine.
So Caucasus, aspiring Taurus so,
And fam'd Imaus, ever white with snow,
Through eastern climes their lofty heads extend,
And this and that way ample currents send:
A thousand rivers make their crooked way,
And disembogue their floods into the sea;
Whence should they ne'er by secret roads retire,
And to the hills, from whence they came, aspire;
They by their constant streams would so increase
The wat'ry stores, and raise so high the seas,
That the wide hollow would not long contain
Th' unequal treasures of the swelling main:
Scorning the mounds which now its tide withstand,
The sea would pass the shores, and drown the land.
  Tell, by what paths, what subterranean ways,
Back to the fountain's head the sea conveys
The refluent rivers, and the land repays?

Tell, what superior, what controlling cause
Makes waters, in contempt of nature's laws,
Climb up, and gain th' aspiring mountain's height,
Swift and forgetful of their native weight?
What happy works, what engines under ground,
What instruments of curious art are found,
Which must with everlasting labour play,
Back to their springs the rivers to convey,
And keep their correspondence with the sea?
  Perhaps you'll say, their streams the rivers owe
In part to rain, in part to melting snow;
And that the attracted watry vapours rise
From lakes and seas, and fill the lower skies.
These when condens'd the airy region pours
On the dry earth in rain, or gentle show'rs.
Th' insinuating drops sink thro' the sand,
And pass the porous strainers of the land:
Which fresh supplies of liquid riches bring
To ev'ry river's head, to each exhausted spring.
The streams are thus, their losses to repair,
Back to their source transmitted thro' the air.
The waters still their circling course maintain,
Flow down in rivers, and return in rain.
And on the soil with heat immoderate dried,
To which the rain's pure treasures are denied,
The mountains more sublime in ether rise,
Transfix the clouds, and tow'r amidst the skies:
The snowy fleeces, which their heads involve,
Still stay in part, and still in part dissolve.
Torrents and loud impetuous cataracts
Thro' roads abrupt and rude unfashion'd tracts
Roll down the lofty mountain's channel'd sides,
And to the vale convey their foaming tides.
At length, to make their various currents one,
The congregated floods together run.

These confluent streams make some great river's
By stores still melting and descending fed. [head,
Thus from th' aspiring mountains of the moon
Dissolving treasures rush in torrents down;
Which pass the sun-burnt realms and sandy soil,
And bless th' Egyptian nation with their Nile:
Then whosoe'er his secret rise would know,
Must climb the hills, and trace his head in snow.
And though the Rhine, the Danube and the Rhone,
All ample rivers of our milder zone,
While they advance along the flats and plains,
Spread, by the show'rs augmented, and the rains;
Yet these their source and first beginning owe
To stores, that from the Alpine mountains flow.
Hence, when the snows in winter cease to weep,
And undissolv'd their flaky texture keep,
The banks with ease their humble streams contain,
Which swell in summer, and those banks disdain.
Be this account allow'd, say, do not here
Th' impressions of consummate art appear?
In ev'ry spacious realm a rising ground,
Observers tell, is in the middle found;
That all the streams, which flow from either side,
May thro' the valleys unobstructed glide.
What various kingdoms does the Danube lave,
Before the Euxine sea receives it wave?
How many nations of the sun-burnt soil
Does Niger bless? how many drink the Nile?
Thro' what vast regions near the rising sun
Does Indus, Ganges, and Hydaspus run?
What happy empires, wide Euphrates, teem,
And pregnant grow by thy prolific stream;
How many spacious countries does the Rhine
In winding banks, and mazes serpentine

Traverse, before he splits in Belgia's plain,
And lost in sand creeps to the German main!
Floods which thro' Indian realms their course pursue,
That Mexico enrich, and wash Peru,
With their unwearied streams yet farther pass,
Before they reach the sea, and end their race.
And since the rivers and the floods demand,
For their descent, a prone and sinking land,
Does not this due declivity declare
A wise director's providential care?

See, how the streams advancing to the main
Thro' crooked channels draw their chrystal train.
While ling'ring thus they in meanders glide,
They scatter verdant life on either side:
The valleys smile, and with their flow'ry face
And wealthy births confess the floods embrace.
But this great blessing would in part be lost,
Nor would the maids their blooming plenty boast,
Did uncheck'd rivers draw their fluid train
In lines direct, and rapid seek the main.

The sea does next demand our view; and there
No less the marks of perfect skill appear.
When first the atoms to the congress came,
And by their concourse form'd the mighty frame,
What did the liquid to th' assembly call,
To give their aid to form the pond'rous ball?
First, tell us, why did any come? next, why
In such a disproportion to the dry?
Why were the moist in number so outdone,
That to a thousand dry, they are but one?
When they united, and together clung,
When undistinguish'd in one heap they hung,
How was the union broke, the knot unty'd,
What did th' entangled elements divide?

Why did the moist disjoin'd, without respect
To their less weight, the lowest seat elect?
Could they dispense to lie below the land,
With nature's law, and unrepeal'd command;
Which gives to lighter things the greatest height,
And seats inferior to superior weight?
Did they foresee, unless they lay so low,
The restless flood the land would overflow,
By which the delug'd earth would useless grow?
What, but a conscious agent, could provide
The spacious hollow, where the waves reside?
Where bar'd with rock, and fenc'd with hills, the deep
Does in its womb the floating treasure keep;
And all the raging regiments restrain
In stated limits, that the swelling main,
May not in triumph o'er the frontier ride,
And thro' the land licentious spread its tide?
What other cause the frame could so contrive,
That when tempestuous winds the ocean drive,
They cannot break the tie, nor disunite
The waves, which roll connected in their flight?
Their bands, tho' slack, no dissolution fear,
Th' unsever'd parts the greatest pressure bear,
Tho' loose, and fit to flow, they still cohere.
This apt, this wise contexture of the sea,
Makes it the ships driv'n by the winds obey;
Whence hardy merchants sail from shore to shore,
Bring India's spices home, and Guinea's ore.
When you with liquid stores have fill'd the deep,
What does the flood from putrefaction keep?
Should it lie stagnant in its ample seat,
The sun would thro' it spread destructive heat.
The wise contriver on his end intent,
Careful this fatal error to prevent,

And keep the waters from corruption free,
Mixt them with salt, and season'd all the sea.
What other cause could this effect produce?
The brackish tincture thro' the main diffuse?
You, who to solar beams this task assign,
To scald the waves, and turn the tide to brine,
Reflect, that all the fluid stores which sleep
In the remotest caverns of the deep,
Have of the briny force a greater share,
Than those above, that meet the ambient air.
Others, but oh how much in vain! erect
Mountains of salt, the ocean to infect.
Who, vers'd in nature, can describe the land,
Or fix the place on which those mountains stand?
Why have those rocks so long unwasted stood,
Since, lavish of their stock, they thro' the flood,
Have, ages past, their melting chrystal spread,
And with their spoils the liquid regions fed?
  Yet more, the wise contriver did provide,
To keep the sea from stagnating, the tide;
Which now we see advance, and now subside.
If you exclude this great directing mind,
Declare what cause of this effect you find.
You who this globe round its own axis drive,
From that rotation this event derive:
You say, the sea, which with unequal pace,
Attends the earth in this its rapid race,
Does with its waves fall backward to the West,
And thence repell'd, advances to the East:
While this revolving motion does endure,
The deep must reel, and rush from shore to shore.
Thus to the setting, and the rising sun,
Alternate tides in stated order run.
The experiments you bring us, to explain
This notion, are impertinent and vain.

An orb or ball round its own axis whirl;
Will not the motion to a distance hurl
Whatever dust or sand you on it place,
And drops of water from its convex face?
If this rotation does the seas affect,
The rapid motion rather would eject
The stores, the low capacious caves contain,
And from its ample bason cast the main;
Aloft in air would make the ocean fly,
And dash its scatter'd waves against the sky.
If you, to solve th' appearance, have recourse
To the bright sun's or moon's impulsive force;
Do you, who call for demonstration, tell
How distant orbs th' obedient flood impel.
This strong mysterious influence explain,
By which, to swell the waves they press the main;
But if you chuse magnetic power, and say
Those bodies by attraction move the sea;
Till with new light you make this secret known,
And tell us how 'tis by attraction done,
You leave the mind in darkness still involv'd,
Nor have you, like philosophers, resolv'd
The doubts, which we to reas'ning men refer,
But with a cant of words abuse the ear.
Those, who assert the lunar orb presides
O'er humid bodies, and the ocean guides:
Whose waves obsequious ebb, or swelling run
With the declining or increasing moon;
With reason seem her empire to maintain,
As mistress of the rivers and the main.
Perhaps her active influences cause
Th' alternate flood, and give the billow laws;
The waters seem her orders to obey,
And ebb and flow, determin'd by her sway.

Grant that the deep this foreign sovereign owns,
That mov'd by her it this and that way runs.
Say, by what force she makes the ocean swell,
Does she attract the waters, or impel?
How does she rule the rolling waves, and guide
By fixt and constant laws, the restless tide?
Why does she dart her force to that degree,
As gives so just a motion to the sea,
That it should flow no more, no more retire,
Than nature's various useful ends require?
A mind supreme you therefore must approve,
Whose high command caus'd matter first to move:
Who still preserves its course, and with respect
To his wise ends, all motion does direct.
He to the silver moon this province gave,
And fixt her empire o'er the briny wave:
Endu'd her with such just decrees of power,
As might his aims and wise designs procure:
Might agitate and work the troubled deep,
And rolling waters from corruption keep;
But not impel them o'er their bounds of sand,
Nor force the wasteful deluge o'er the land.

Th

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

ıe introduction. The numerous and important blessings of religion. The existence of a God demonstrated from the wisdom and design which appear in the motion of the heavenly orbs; but more particularly in the system. I. In the situation of the sun, and its due distance from the earth. The fatal consequences of its having been placed otherwise than it is. II. In its diurnal motion, whence the change of day and night proceeds. Then in its annual motion, whence arise the different degrees of heat and cold. The confinement of the sun between the tropics, not to be accounted for by any philosophical hypothesis. The difficulties of the same, if the earth moves and the sun rests. The spring of the sun's motion, not to be explained by any irreligious philosophy. The contemplation of the solar light, and the uses made of it for the end proposed. The appearances in the solar system not to be solved, but by asserting a God. The system of Ptolemy, Copernicus, Tycho Brahe, and Kepler considered. The solar system described and compared with the fixed stars which are supposed centres of the like systems. Reflections on that comparison. The hypothesis of Epicurus, in relation to the motion of the sun. Wisdom and design discovered in the air; in its useful structure, its elasticity, its various meteors; the wind, the rain, thunder and lightning. A short contemplation of the vegetable kind.

CARUS, by hardy Epicurus taught,
rom Greece to Rome his impious system brought;
hen war with heaven he did insulting wage,
nd breath'd against the gods immortal rage:

See, he exclaims, the source of all our woe;
Our fears and suff'rings from religion flow.
We grant, a train of mischiefs oft proceeds
From superstitious rites and penal creeds;
But view religion in her native charms,
Dispersing blessings with indulgent arms,
From her fair eyes what heavenly rays are spread?
What blooming joys smile round her blissful head?
Offspring divine! by thee we bless the cause,
Who form'd the world, and rules it by his laws;
His independent being we adore,
Extol his goodness, and revere his power.
Our wond'ring eyes his high perfections view,
The lofty contemplation we pursue,
'Till ravish'd we the great idea find,
Shining in bright impressions on our mind.
Inspir'd by thee, guest of celestial race,
With generous love, we human kind embrace;
We provocations unprovok'd receive,
Patient of wrong, and easy to forgive;
Protect the orphan, plead the widow's cause,
Nor deviate from the line unerring justice draws.
Thy lustre, blest effulgence, can dispel
The clouds of error, and the gloom of hell;
Can to the soul impart etherial light,
Give life divine and intellectual sight:
Before our ravish'd eyes thy beams display,
The opening scenes of bliss, and endless day;
By which incited we with ardour rise,
Scorn this inferior ball, and claim the skies.
Tyrants to thee a change of nature owe,
Break all their tortures, and indulgent grow.
Ambitious conquerors in their mad career,
Check'd by thy voice, lay down the sword and spear.

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The boldest champions of impiety,
Scornful of heaven, subdu'd or won by thee,
Before thy hallow'd altars bend the knee.
Loose wits, made wise, a public good become,
The sons of pride an humble mien assume,
The profligate, in morals grow severe,
Defrauders just, and sycophants sincere.
With amorous language, and bewitching smiles,
Attractive airs, and all the lover's wiles,
The fair Egyptian Jacob's son carest,
Hung on his neck, and languish'd on his breast.
Courted with freedom now the beauteous slave,
Now flatt'ring sued, and threat'ning now did rave;
But not the various eloquence of love,
Nor power enrag'd could his fix'd virtue move.
See, aw'd by heaven, the blooming Hebrew flies
Her artful tongue, and more persuasive eyes:
And springing from her disappointed arms,
Prefers a dungeon to forbidden charms.
Stedfast in virtue's and his country's cause,
Th' illustrious founder of the Jewish laws,
Who, taught by heaven at genuine greatness aim'd,
With worthy pride imperial blood disclaim'd.
Th' alluring hopes of Pharaoh's throne resign'd,
And the vain pleasures of a court declin'd,
Pleas'd with obscure recess, to ease the pains
Of Jacob's race, and break their servile chains.
Such generous minds are form'd, where blest religion reigns.
Ye friends of Epicurus, look around,
All nature view with marks of prudence crown'd.
Mind the wise ends, which proper means promote;
See how the diff'rent parts for diff'rent use are wrought;
Contemplate all this conduct and design,
Then own, and praise th' artificer divine.

Regard the orbs sublime in æther borne,
Which the blue regions of the skies adorn;
Compar'd with whose extent, this low hung ball
Shrunk to a point, is despicably small:
Their number, counting those th' unaided eye
Can see, or by invented tubes descry,
With those which in the adverse hemisphere,
Or near each pole to lands remote appear,
The widest stretch of human thought exceeds,
And in th' attentive mind amazement breeds:
While these so numerous, and so vast of size,
In various ways roll thro' the trackless skies;
Thro' crossing roads perplext and intricate,
Perform their stages, and their rounds repeat;
None by collision from their course are driv'n,
No shocks, no conflicts break the peace of heaven.
No shatter'd globes, no glowing fragments fall,
No worlds o'erturn'd crush this terrestrial ball,
In beauteous order all the orbs advance,
And in their mazy complicated dance,
Not in one part of all the pathless sky
Did any ever halt, or step awry.
When twice ten thousand men depriv'd of sight,
To some wide vale direct their footsteps right;
Shall there a various figur'd dance essay,
Move by just steps, and measur'd time obey;
Shall cross each other with unerring feet,
Never mistake their place, and never meet:
Nor shall in many years the least decline
From the same ground, and the same winding line:
Then may in various roads the orbs above,
Without a guide, in perfect concord move;
Then beauty, order, and harmonious laws
May not require a wise directing cause.

See, how th' indulgent father of the day
At such due distance does his beams display,
That he his heat may give to sea and land,
In just degrees, as all their wants demand.
But had he in th' unmeasurable space
Of æther, chosen a remoter place;
For instance, pleas'd with that superior seat
Where Saturn, or where Jove their course repeat:
Or had he happen'd farther yet to lie,
In the more distant quarters of the sky,
How sad, how wild, how exquisite a scene
Of desolation had his planet been?
A wasteful, cold, untrodden wilderness,
The gloomy haunts of horror and distress. [head,
Instead of woods, which crown the mountain's
And the gay honours of the verdant mead;
Instead of golden fruits, the garden's pride,
By genial show'rs, and solar heat supply'd,
Icelandian cold, and Hyperborean snows,
Eternal frost, with ice that never flows,
Unsufferable winter, had defac'd
Earth's blooming charms, and made a barren waste.
No mild indulgent gales would gently bear,
On their soft wings, sweet vapours through the air,
The balmy spoils of plants, and fragrant flow'rs,
Of aromatic groves and myrtle bow'rs,
Whose odoriferous exhalations fan
The flame of life, and recreate beast and man.
But storms, ev'n worse than vex Norwegian waves,
Than breed in Scythia's hills, or Lapland caves,
Would through this bleak terrestrial desart blow,
Glaze it with ice, or whelm it o'er with snow.
Or had the sun, by like unhappy fate,
Elected to the earth a nearer seat,

His beams had cleft the hill, the valley dry'd,
Exhal'd the lake, and drain'd the briny tide.
A heat, superior far to that which broils
Bornéo, or Sumatra, Indian isles;
Than that which ripens Guinea's golden ore,
Or burns the Lybian hind, or tans the Moor,
Had laid all nature waste, and turn'd the land
To hills of cinders, and to vales of sand.
No beasts could then have rang'd the leafless wood,
Nor finny nations cut the boiling flood.
Birds had not beat the airy road, the swains
No flocks had tended on the russet plains.
Thus had the sun's bright orb been more remote
The cold had kill'd; and if more near, the drought.
Next see, Lucretian sages, see the sun
His course diurnal and his annual run;
How in his glorious race he moves along,
Gay as a bridegroom, as a giant strong,
How his unvary'd labour he repeats,
Returns at morning, and at eve retreats;
And by the distribution of his light,
Now gives to man the day, and now the night:
Night, when the drowsy swain and traveller cease
Their daily toil, and sooth their limbs with ease;
When all the weary sons of woe restrain
Their yielding cares with slumber's silken chain,
Solace sad grief, and lull reluctant pain.
And while the sun, ne'er covetous of rest,
Flies with such rapid speed from east to west,
In tracks oblique he thro' the Zodiac rolls,
Between the northern and the southern poles:
From which revolving progress thro' the skies,
The needful seasons of the year arise.
And as he now advances, now retreats,
Whence winter colds proceed, and summer heats,

He qualifies and cheers the air by turns,
Which winter freezes, and which summer burns.
Thus his kind rays the two extremes reduce,
And keep a temper fit for nature's use.
The frost and drought, by his alternate pow'r,
The earth's prolific energy restore.
The lives of man and beast demand the change;
Hence fowls the air, and fish the ocean range.
Of heat and cold this just successive reign,
Which does the balance of the year maintain,
The gard'ner's hope, the farmer's patience props,
Gives vernal verdure, and autumnal crops.
Should but the sun his duty once forget,
Nor from the north, nor from the south retreat;
Should not the beams revive, and sooth the soil,
Mellow the furrow for the ploughman's toil:
A teeming vigour should they not diffuse,
Ferment the glebe, and genial spirits loose,
Which lay imprison'd in the stiffen'd ground,
Congeal'd with cold, in frosty fetters bound,
Unfruitful earth her wretched fate would mourn,
No grass would clothe the plains, no fruit the trees adorn.
But did the ling'ring orb much longer stay,
Unmindful of his course, and crooked way;
The earth, of dews defrauded, would detest,
The fatal favour of th' effulgent guest:
To distant worlds implore him to repair,
And free from noxious beams the sultry air.
His rays productive now of wealth and joy,
Would then the pasture and the hills annoy,
And with too great indulgence would destroy.
In vain the lab'ring hind would till the land,
Turn up the glebe, and sow his seed in sand.

The meads would crack, in want of binding dews,
The channels would th' exhaling river lose:
While in their haunts wild beasts expiring lie,
The panting herds would on the pasture die:
But now the sun at neither tropic stays
A longer time, than his alternate rays
In such proportion heat and lustre give,
As do not ruin nature, but revive.
When the bright orb, to solace southern seats,
Inverts his course, and from the north retreats;
As he advances, his indulgent beam
Makes the glad earth with fresh conceptions teem:
Restores their leafy honours to the woods,
Flow'rs to the banks, and freedom to the floods;
Unbinds the turf, exhilarates the plain,
Brings back his labour, and recruits the swain;
Through all the soil a genial ferment spreads,
Regenerates the plants, and new adorns the meads.
The birds on branches perch'd, or on the wing,
At nature's verdant restoration sing,
And with melodious lays salute the spring.
The heats of summer benefits produce
Of equal number, and of equal use.
The sprouting births, and beauteous vernal bloom,
By warmer rays to ripe perfection come.
Th' austere and pond'rous juices they sublime,
Make them ascend the porous soil, and climb
The orange-tree, the citron and the lime:
Which drunk in plenty by the thirsty root,
Break forth in painted flow'rs, and golden fruit.
They explicate the leaves, and ripen food
For the silk-labourers of the mulberry wood:
And the sweet liquor on the cane bestow,
From which prepar'd the luscious sugars flow;

With generous juice enrich the spreading vine,
And in the grape digest the sprightly wine.
The fragrant trees, which grow by Indian floods,
And in Arabia's aromatic woods,
Owe all their spices to the summer's heat,
Their gummy tears, and odoriferous sweat.
Now the bright sun compacts the precious stone,
Imparting radiant lustre, like his own:
He tinctures rubies with their rosy hue,
And on the sapphire spreads a heav'nly blue;
For the proud monarch's dazzling crown prepares
Rich orient pearl, and adamantine stars.
Next, autumn, when the sun's withdrawing ray,
The night enlarges, and contracts the day,
To crown his labour to the farmer yields
The yellow treasures of his fruitful fields;
Ripens the harvest for the crooked steel,
(While bending stalks the rural weapon feel.)
The fragrant fruit for the nice palate fits,
And to the press the swelling grape submits.
At length forsaken by the solar rays,
See, drooping nature sickens and decays,
While winter all his snowy stores displays:
In hoary triumph unmolested reigns
O'er barren hills, and bleak untrodden plains:
Hardens the glebe, the shady grove deforms,
Fetters the floods, and shakes the air with storms.
Now active spirits are restrain'd with cold, [hold.
And prisons crampt with ice the genial captives
The meads their flow'ry pride no longer wear,
And trees extend their naked arms in air;
The frozen furrow, and the fallow field,
Nor to the spade, nor to the harrow yield.
Yet in their turn the snows and frosts produce
Various effects, of necessary use.

Th' intemperate heats of summer are controll'd
By winter's rigour, and inclement cold, [steams,
Which checks contagious spawn, and noxious
The fatal offspring of immod'rate beams:
Th' exhausted air with vital nitre fills,
Infection stops, and death in embryo kills:
Constrains the glebe, keeps back the hurtful weed,
And fits the furrow for the vernal seed.
The spirits now, as said, imprison'd stay
Which else by warmer sun-beams drawn away,
Would roam in air, and dissipated stray.
Thus are the winter frosts to nature kind,
Frosts, which reduce excessive heats, and bind
Prolific ferments in resistless chains,
Whence parent earth her fruitfulness maintains.
To compass all these happy ends, the sun
In winding tracks does through the zodiac run.
You, who so much are vers'd in causes, tell,
What from the tropics can the sun repel?
What vig'rous arm, what repercussive blow
Bandies the mighty globe still to and fro,
Yet with such conduct, such unerring art,
He never did the trackless road desert?
Why does he never in his spiral race
The tropics, or the polar circles pass? [trol
What gulphs, what mounds, what terrors can con-
The rushing orb, and make him backward roll?
Why should he halt at either station, why
Not forward run in unobstructed sky?
Can he not pass an astronomic line,
Or does he dread th' imaginary sign,
That he should ne'er advance to either pole,
Nor farther yet in liquid ether roll,
Till he has gain'd some unfrequented place,
Lost to the world in vast unmeasur'd space?

If to the old you the new schools prefer,
And to the fam'd Copernicus adhere;
If you esteem that supposition best,
Which moves the earth, and leaves the sun at rest:
With a new veil your ignorance you hide,
Still is the knot as hard to be unty'd.
You change your scheme, but the old doubts remain,
And still you leave th' inquiring mind in pain.

This problem, as philosophers, resolve:
What makes the globe from West to East revolve?
What is the strong impulsive cause declare,
Which rolls the pond'rous orb so swift in air?
To your vain answer will you have recourse,
And tell us 'tis ingenite, active force,
Mobility, or native pow'r to move,
Words which mean nothing, and can nothing prove?
That moving power, that force innate explain,
Or your grave answers are absurd and vain:
We no resolution of our question find;
Your words bewilder, not direct the mind.

If you this rapid motion to procure,
For the hard task employ magnetic power,
Whether that power you at the centre place,
Or in the middle regions of the mass,
Or else, as some philosophers assert,
You give an equal share to every part,
Have you by this the cause of motion shown;
After explaining is it not unknown?
Since you pretend, by reason's strictest laws,
Of an effect to manifest the cause,
Nature, of wonders so immense a field,
Can none more strange, nor more mysterious yield,
None that eludes sagacious reason more
Than this obscure, inexplicable power.

Since you the spring of motion cannot show,
Be just, and faultless ignorance allow;
Say 'tis obedience, to th' Almighty nod,
That 'tis the will, the power, the hand of God.
  Philosophers of spreading fame are found,
Who by th' attraction of the orbs around
Would move the earth, and make its course obey
The sun's and moon's inevitable sway.
Some from the pressure and impelling force
Of heav'nly bodies would derive its course:
Whilst in the dark and difficult dispute
All are by turns confuted, all confute.
Each can subvert th' opponent's scheme, but none
Has strength of reason to support his own.
  The mind employ'd in search of secret things,
To find out motion's cause and hidden springs,
Through all th' etherial regions mounts on high,
Views all the spheres, and ranges all the sky:
Searches the orbs, and penetrates the air
With unsuccessful toil, and fruitless care:
Till stopp'd by awful heights, and gulphs immense
Of wisdom, and of vast omnipotence,
She trembling stands, and does in wonder gaze,
Lost in the wild inextricable maze.
  See, how the sun does on the middle shine.
And round the globe describe the equator line.
By which wise means he can the whole survey
With a direct, or with a slanting ray,
In the succession of a night and day.
Had the north pole been fixt beneath the sun,
To southern realms the day had been unknown!
If the south pole had gain'd that nearer seat,
The northern climes had met as hard a fate.
And since the space, that lies on either side,
The solar orb, is without limits wide;

Grant that the sun had happen'd to prefer
A seat askant, but one diameter:
Lost to the light by that unhappy place,
This globe had lain a frozen lonesome mass.
  Behold the light emitted from the sun,
What more familiar, and what more unknown?
While by its spreading radiance it reveals
All nature's face, it still itself conceals.
See how each morn it does its beams display,
And on its golden wings bring back the day
How soon th' effulgent emanations fly,
Through the blue gulph of interposing sky!
How soon their lustre all the regions fill,
Smiles on the vallies, and adorns the hill!
Millions of miles, so rapid in their race,
To cheer the earth, they in few moments pass.
Amazing progress! at its utmost stretch,
What human mind can this swift motion reach?
But if, to save so quick a flight, you say
The ever-rolling orb's impulsive ray
On the next threads and filaments does bear
Which form the springy texture of the air,
That those will strike the next, till to the sight
The quick vibration propagates the light:
'Tis still as hard, if we this scheme believe,
The cause of light's swift progress to conceive.
  With thought from prepossession free, reflect
On solar rays, as they the sight respect.
The beams of light had been in vain display'd,
Had not the eye been fit for vision made!
In vain the author had the eye prepar'd
With so much skill, had not the light appear'd.
  The old and new astronomers in vain
Attempt the heavenly motions to explain,

First Ptolemy his scheme celestial wrought,
And of machines a wild provision brought,
Orbs centric and eccentric he prepares,
Cycles and epicycles, solid spheres
In order plac'd, and with bright globes inlaid,
To solve the tours by heavenly bodies made.
But so perplext, so intricate a frame,
The latter ages with derision name.
The comets, which at seasons downward tend,
Then with their flaming equipage ascend;
Venus, which in the purlieus of the sun
Does now above him, now beneath him run;
The ancient structure of the heav'ns subvert;
Rear'd with vast labour, but with little art.
Copernicus, who rightly did condemn
The eldest system, form'd a wiser scheme;
In which he leaves the sun at rest, and rolls
The orb terrestrial on its proper poles;
Which makes the night and day by this career,
And by its slow and crooked course the year.
The famous Dane, who oft the modern guides,
To earth and sun their provinces divides:
The earth's rotation makes the night and day,
The sun revolving through th' ecliptic way
Effects the various seasons of the year,
Which in their turn for happy ends appear.
This scheme or that, which pleases best, embrace,
Still we the fountain of their motion trace.
Kepler asserts these wonders may be done
By the magnetic virtue of the sun,
Which he, to gain his end, thinks fit to place
Full in the centre of that mighty space,
Which does the spheres, where planets roll, include,
And leaves him with attractive force endu'd.

The sun, thus seated, by mechanic laws,
The earth, and every distant planet draws;
By which attraction all the planets found
Within his reach, are turn'd in ether round.
If all these rolling orbs the sun obey,
Who holds his empire by magnetic sway;
Since all are guided with an equal force,
Why are they so unequal in their course?
Saturn in thirty years his ring completes,
Which swifter Jupiter in twelve repeats.
Mars three and twenty months revolving spends;
The Earth in twelve her annual journey ends.
Venus, thy race in twice four months is run;
For his Mercurius three demands; the moon
Her revolution finishes in one.
If all at once are mov'd and by one spring,
Why so unequal is their annual ring?
If some, you say, prest with a pond'rous load
Of gravity, move slower in their road,
Because, with weight encumber'd and opprest,
The sluggish orbs th' attractive sun resist;
Till you can weight and gravity explain,
Those words are insignificant and vain.
If planetary orbs the sun obey,
Why should the moon disown his sov'reign sway?
Why in a whirling eddy of her own
Around the globe terrestrial should she run?
This disobedience of the moon will prove
The sun's bright orb does not the planets move.
Philosophers may spare their toil, in vain
They form new schemes, and rack their thoughtful brain
The cause of heavenly motions to explain:
After their various unsuccessful ways,
Their fruitless labour, and inept essays,

No cause of those appearances they 'll find,
But power exerted by th' eternal mind;
Which through their roads the orbs celestial drives,
And this or that determin'd motion gives.
The mind supreme does all his worlds control,
Which by his order this and that way roll.
From him they take a delegated force,
And by his high command maintain their course;
By laws decreed e'er fleeting time begun,
In their fixt limits they their stages run.
  But if the earth, and each erratic world,
Around their sun their proper centre whirl'd,
Compose but one extended vast machine,
And from one spring their motions all begin;
Does not so wide, so intricate a frame,
Yet so harmonious, sov'reign art proclaim?
Is it a proof of judgment to invent
A work of spheres involv'd, which represent
The situation of the orbs above,
Their size and number show, and how they move;
And does not in the orbs themselves appear
As great contrivance, and design as clear?
  This wide machine the universe regard,
With how much skill is each apartment rear'd?
The sun, a globe of fire, a glowing mass,
Hotter than melting flint, or fluid glass,
Of this our system holds the middle place.
Mercurius nearest to the central sun,
Does in an oval orbit circling run:
But rarely is the object of our sight,
In solar glory sunk and more prevailing light.
Venus the next, whose lovely beams adorn
As well the dewy eve, as opening morn,
Does her fair orb in beauteous order turn.

The globe terrestrial next, with slanting poles,
And all its pond'rous load, unwearied rolls.
Then we behold bright planetary Jove
Sublime in air through his wide province move;
Four second planets his dominion own,
And round him turn, as round the earth the moon.
Saturn revolving in the highest sphere,
With ling'ring labour finishes his year.
  Yet is this mighty system, which contains
So many worlds, such vast etherial plains,
But one of thousands, which compose the whole,
Perhaps as glorious, and of worlds as full.
The stars, which grace the high expansion, bright
By their own beams, and unprecarious light,
Though some near neighbours seem, and some dis-
United lustre in the Milky Way, [play
At a vast distance from each other lie,
Sever'd by spacious voids of liquid sky.
All these illustrious worlds, and many more,
Which by the tube astronomers explore;
And millions which the world can ne'er descry
Lost in the wilds of vast immensity,
Are suns, are centers, whose superior sway
Planets of various magnitude obey.
  If we with one clear, comprehensive sight
Saw all these systems, all these orbs of light;
If we their order and dependence knew,
Had all their motions and their ends in view,
With all their comets, which in ether stray,
Yet constant to their time, and to their way;
Which planets seem, though rarely they appear,
Rarely approach the radiant sun so near,
That his fair beams their atmosphere pervade,
Whence their bright hair and flaming trains are
made,

Would not this view convincing marks impart
Of perfect prudence, and stupendous art?
The masters form'd in Newton's famous school,
Who does the chief in modern science rule,
Erect their schemes by mathematic laws,
And solve appearances with just applause:
These, who have nature's steps with care pursu'd,
That matter is with active force endu'd,
That all its parts magnetic power exert,
And to each other gravitate, assert,
While by this power they on each other act,
They are at once attracted, and attract.
Less bulky matter therefore must obey
More bulky matter's more engaging sway;
By this the fabric they together hold,
By this the course of heavenly orbs unfold.
Yet these sagacious sons of science own
Attractive virtue is a thing unknown.
This wond'rous power they piously assert,
Th' almighty author did at first impart
To matter in degrees, that might produce
The motions he design'd for nature's use.
But least we should not here due rev'rence pay
To learned Epicurus, see the way
By which this reas'ner, of such high renown,
Moves through th' ecliptic road the rolling sun.
Opprest with thirst and heat, to adverse seats
By turns, says he, the panting sun retreats
To slake his drought, his vigour to repair
In snowy climes, and frozen fields of air;
Where the bright glutton revels without rest
On his cool banquet and ærial feast:
Still to and fro he does his light convey,
Through the same track, the same unalter'd way,
On luxury intent, and eager of his prey.

But if the sun is back and forward roll'd,
To treat his thirsty orb with polar cold,
Say, is it not, good Epicurus, strange,
He should not once beyond the tropic range,
Where he, to quench his drought so much inclin'd,
May snowy fields, and nitrous pastures find,
Meet stores of cold so greedily pursu'd,
And be refresh'd with never-wasting food?
Sometimes this wond'rous man is pleas'd to say
This way and that strong blasts the sun convey:
A northern wind his orb with vigour drives,
Till at the southern tropic it arrives;
Then wanting breath, and with his toil opprest,
He drops his wings, and leaves the air at rest:
Fresh gusts now springing from the southern pole,
Assault him there, and make him backward roll.
Thus gales alternate through the zodiac blow
The sailing orb, and waft him to and fro;
While Epicurus, blest with thought refin'd,
Makes the vast globe the pastime of the wind.
Were it not idle labour to confute
Notions so wild, unworthy of dispute;
I'd of the learned Epicurus ask,
If this were for the winds a proper task?
Illustrious sage, inform th' inquirer why
Still from one stated point of all the sky
The fickle meteor should the sun convey,
Through the same stages of his spiral way?
Why in one path, why with such equal pace,
That he should never miss in all his race,
Of time one minute, or one inch of space?
Remark the air's transparent element,
Its curious structure, and its vast extent:
Its wond'rous web proclaims the loom divine,
Its threads, the hand that drew them out so fine.

This thin contexture makes its bosom fit,
Celestial heat and lustre to transmit;
By which of foreign orbs the riches flow,
On this dependent, needy ball below.
Observe its parts link'd in such artful sort,
All are at once supported, and support.
The column pois'd sits hov'ring on our heads,
And a soft burden on our shoulders spreads.
So the side-arches all the weight sustain,
We find no pressure, and we feel no pain.
Still are the subtle strings in tension found,
Like those of lutes to just proportion wound,
Which of the air's vibration is the source,
When it receives the strokes of foreign force.
Let curious minds who would the air inspect,
On its elastic energy reflect;
The secret force through all the frame diffus'd,
By which its strings are from compression loos'd.
The spungy parts, now to a straighter seat
Are forc'd by cold, and widen'd now by heat.
By turns they all extend, by turns retire,
As nature's various services require.
They now expand to fill an empty space,
Now shrink to let a pond'rous body pass.
If raging winds invade the atmosphere,
Their force its curious texture cannot tear,
Make no disruption in the threads of air;
Or if it does, those parts themselves restore,
Heal their own wounds, and their own breaches cure.
Hence the melodious tenants of the sky,
Which haunt inferior seats, or soar on high,
With ease through all the fluid region stray,
And through the wide expansion wing their way:
Whose open meshes let terrestrial steams
Pass through, entic'd away by solar beams:

And thus a road reciprocal display
To rising vapours, and descending day.
  Of heat and light what ever-during stores,
Brought from the sun's exhaustless golden shores,
Through gulphs immense of intervening air,
Enrich the earth, and every loss repair!
The land, its gainful traffic to maintain,
Sends out crude vapours in exchange for rain.
The flowery garden and the verdant mead
Warm'd by their rays, their exhalations spread
In showers and balmy dews to be repaid.
The streams, their banks forsaken, upward move,
And flow again in wandering clouds above.
These regions nature's magazines on high
With all the stores demanded there supply,
Their different steams the air's wide bosom fill,
Moist from the flood, dry from the barren hill;
Materials into meteors to be wrought,
Which back to these terrestrial seats are brought,
By nature shap'd to various figures, those
The fruitful rain, and these the hail compose,
The snowy fleece and curious frostwork; these
Produce the dew, and those the gentle breeze.
Some form fierce winds, which o'er the mountain pass,
And beat with vig'rous wings the valley's face;
O'er the wide lake, and barren desert blow,
O'er Lybia's burning sand, and Scythia's snow;
Shake the high cedar, thro' the forest sweep,
And with their furious breath ferment the deep.
  This thin, this soft contexture of the air
Shows the wise author's providential care,
Who did the wond'rous structure so contrive,
That it might life to breathing creatures give;

Might reinspire, and make the circling mass
Through all its winding channels fit to pass.
Had not the maker wrought the springy frame
Such as it is, to fan the vital flame,
The blood, defrauded of its nitrous food,
Had cool'd, and languish'd in th' arterial road:
While the tir'd heart had strove with fruitless pain
To push the lazy tide along the vein.
  Of what important use to human kind,
To what great ends subservient is the wind;
Behold, where'er this active vapour flies,
It drives the clouds, and agitates the skies:
This from stagnation, and corruption saves
Th' ærial ocean's ever-rolling waves.
This, animals, to succour life, demand:
For should the air unventilated stand,
The idle deep corrupted would contain
Blue deaths, and secret stores of raging pain.
The scorching sun, would with a fatal beam
Make all the void with births malignant teem,
Engender jaundice, spotted torments breed,
And purple plagues, from pestilential seed.
Exhaling vapours would be turn'd to swarms
Of noxious insects, and destructive worms,
More than were rais'd to scourge tyrannic lust,
By Moses' rod, from animated dust.
  Another blessing, which the breathing wind
Benevolent conveys to human kind,
Is, that it cools and qualifies the air,
And with soft breezes does the regions cheer,
On which the sun o'er-friendly does display
Heat too prevailing, and redundant day.
Ye swarthy nations of the torrid zone,
How well to you is this great bounty known?

As frequent gales from the wide ocean rise
To fan your air, and moderate your skies,
So constant winds, as well as rivers, flow
From your high hills enrich'd with stores of snow.
For this great end these hills rise more sublime
Than those erected in a temp'rate clime.
Had not the author this provision made,
By which your air is cool'd, your sun allay'd,
Destroy'd by too intense a flame, the land
Had lain a parch'd inhospitable sand.
These districts, which between the tropics lie,
Which scorching beams directly darted fry,
Were thought an uninhabitable seat,
Burnt by the neighb'ring orb's immod'rate heat;
But the fresh breeze, that from the ocean blows,
From the wide lake, or from the mountain snows,
So sooths the air, and mitigates the sun,
So cures the regions of the sultry zone,
That oft with nature's blessings they abound,
Frequent in people, and with plenty crown'd.
As active winds relieve the air and land,
The seas no less their useful blasts demand.
Without this aid the ship would ne'er advance
Along the deep, and o'er the billow dance,
But lie a lazy and a useless load,
The forest's wasted spoils, the lumber of the flood.
Let but the wind with an auspicious gale
To shove the vessel fill the spreading sail,
And see with swelling canvas wing'd, she flies,
And with her waving streamers sweeps the skies!
Th' advent'rous merchant thus pursues his way,
Or to the rise, or to the fall of day;
Thus mutual traffic sever'd realms maintain,
And manufactures change to mutual gain;

Each others growth and arts they sell and buy,
Ease their redundance, and their wants supply.
  Ye Britons, who the fruit of commerce find,
How is your isle a debtor to the wind,
Which thither wafts Arabia's fragrant spoils,
Gems, pearls, and spices from the Indian isles.
From Persia silks, wines from Iberia's shore,
Peruvian drugs, and Guinea's golden ore?
Delights and wealth to fair Augusta flow
From ev'ry region whence the winds can blow.
  See, how the vapours congregated rear
Their gloomy columns, and obscure the air!
Forgetful of their gravity they rise,
Renounce the centre, and usurp the skies, [play,
Where, form'd to clouds they their black lines dis-
And take their airy march, as winds convey:
Sublime in air while they their course pursue,
They from their sable fleeces shake the dew
On the parcht mountain, and with genial rain
Renew the forest, and refresh the plain.
They shed their healing juices on the ground,
Cement the crack, and close the gaping wound.
Did not the vapours, by the solar heat
Thin'd and exhal'd, rise to their airy seat,
Or not in watry clouds collected fly,
Then form'd to pond'rous drops desert the sky,
The fields would no recruits of moisture find,
But by the sun-beams dry'd, and by the wind,
Would never plant, or flower, or fruit produce,
Or for the beast, or for his master's use.
  But in the spacious climates, which the rain
Does never bless, such is th' Egyptian plain,
With how much art is that defect supply'd?
See, how some noble river's swelling tide

Augmented by the mountain's melting snows,
Breaks from its banks, and o'er the region flows!
Hence fruitful crops, and flow'ry wealth ensue,
And to the swain such mighty gains accrue,
He ne'er reproaches heaven for want of dew.
  See, and revere th' artillery of heaven,
Drawn by the gale, or by the tempest driven!
A dreadful fire the floating batt'ries make,
O'erturn the mountain, and the forest shake.
This way and that they drive the atmosphere,
And its wide bosom from corruption clear,
While their bright flame consumes the sulphur trains,
And noxious vapours, which infect our veins.
Thus they refine the vital element,
Secure our health, and growing plagues prevent.
  Your contemplation farther yet pursue;
The wond'rous world of vegetables view!
Observe the forest oak, the mountain pine,
The tow'ring cedar, and the humble vine,
The bending willow, that o'ershades the flood,
And each spontaneous offspring of the wood!
The oak and pine, which high from earth arise,
And wave their lofty heads amidst the skies,
Their parent earth in like proportion wound,
And through crude metals penetrate the ground;
Their strong and ample roots descend so deep,
That fixt and firm they may their station keep,
And the fierce shocks of furious winds defy,
With all the outrage of inclement sky.
But the base brier and the noble vine
Their arms around their stronger neighbour twine.
The creeping ivy, to prevent its fall,
Clings with its fibrous grapples to the wall.

Thus are the trees of ev'ry kind secure,
Or by their own, or by a borrow'd power.
But ev'ry tree from all its branching roots
Amidst the glebe small hollow fibres shoots;
Which drink with thirsty mouths the vital juice,
And to the limbs and leaves their food diffuse:
Peculiar pores peculiar juice receive,
To this deny, to that admittance give.
Hence various trees their various fruits produce,
Some for delightful taste, and some for use.
Hence sprouting plants enrich the plain and wood,
For physic some, and some design'd for food.
Hence fragrant flow'rs with diff'rent colours dy'd
On smiling meads unfold their gaudy pride.
Review these num'rous scenes, at once survey
Nature's extended face, then, sceptics, say,
In this wide field of wonders can you find
No art discover'd, and no end design'd?

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Introduction. Useful knowledge first pursued by man. Agriculture. Architecture. Sculpture. Painting. Music. The Grecian philosophers first engaged in useless speculations. The absurdity of asserting the self-existent, independent and eternal being of atoms, according to the scheme of Epicurus. Answer to the objections of Atheists, to the scheme of creation asserted in the two former books. The objections brought by Lucretius against creation from the necessity of pre-existent matter for the formation of all kinds of beings; from the pretended unartful contrivance of the world; from thorns, briers and noxious weeds; from savage beasts, storms, thunder, diseases; from the painful birth and the short life of man; from the inequality of heat and cold in different climates, answered. The objections of the Pyrrhonians or Sceptics answered. A reply to those who assert all things owe their being and their motions to nature. Their different and senseless account of that word. More apparent and eminent skill and wisdom expressed in the works of nature than in those of human art. The unreasonableness of denying skill and design in the author of those works. Vaninus, Hobbes, and Spinosa considered.

ERE vain philosophy had rear'd her school,
Whose chiefs imagin'd realms of science rule,
With idle toil form visionary schemes,
And wage eternal war for rival dreams;
Studious of good, man disregarded fame,
And useful knowledge was his eldest aim:

Through metaphysic wilds he never flew,
Nor the dark haunts of school chimeras knew,
But had alone his happiness in view.
  He milk'd the lowing herd, he press'd the cheese,
Folded the flock, and spun the woolly fleece.
In urns the bee's delicious dews he lay'd,
Whose kindling wax invented day display'd;
Wrested their iron entrails from the hills,
Then with the spoils his glowing forges fills;
And shap'd with vig'rous strokes the ruddy bar
To rural arms, unconscious yet of war.
He made the ploughshare in the furrow shine,
And learn'd to sow his bread and plant his vine.
Now verdant food adorn'd the garden beds,
And fruitful trees shot up their branching heads;
Rich balm from groves, and herbs from grassy plains.
His fever sooth'd, or heal'd his wounded veins.
  Our fathers next, in architecture skill'd,
Cities for use, and forts for safety build:
Then palaces and lofty domes arose,
These for devotion, and for pleasure those.
Their thoughts were next to artful sculpture turn'd,
Which now the palace, now the dome adorn'd.
The pencil then did growing fame acquire,
Then was the trumpet heard, and tuneful lyre,
One did the triumph sing, and one the war inspire.
  Greece did at length a learned race produce,
Who needful science mock'd, and arts of use,
Consum'd their fruitless hours in eager chace
Of airy notions, through the boundless space
Of speculation, and the darksome void,
Where wrangling wits, in endless strife employ'd,
Mankind with idle subtilties embroil,
And fashion systems with romantic toil:

These with the pride of dogmatizing schools
Impos'd on nature arbitrary rules;
Forc'd her their vain inventions to obey,
And move as learned phrenzy trac'd the way.
Above the clouds while they presum'd to soar,
Her trackless heights ambitious to explore,
And heaps of undigested volumes writ,
Illusive notions of phantastic wit,
So long they nature search'd and mark'd her laws,
They lost the knowledge of th' Almighty cause.
  Th' erroneous dictates of each Grecian sage
Renounc'd the doctrines of the eldest age:
Yet these their matchless science did proclaim,
Usurp distinction, and appropriate fame.
  But though their schools produc'd no nobler fruit
Than empty schemes, and triumphs of dispute:
The notions which arise from nature's light
As well adorn the mind, as guide her right,
Enlarge her compass, and improve her sight.
These ne'er the breast with vain ambition fire,
But banish pride, and modest thoughts inspire.
By her inform'd we blest religion learn,
Its glorious object by her aid discern.
The rolling worlds around us we survey,
Th' alternate sov'reigns of the night and day:
View the wide earth adorn'd with hills and woods,
Rich in her herds, and fertile by her floods:
Walk through the deep apartments of the main,
Ascend the air to visit clouds and rain,
And while we ravish'd gaze on nature's face,
Remark her order, and her motions trace,
The long coherent chain of things we find
Leads to a cause supreme, a wise creating mind.
  You, who the being of a God disclaim,
And *think mere chance* produc'd this wond'rous frame,

Say, did you e'er reflect, Lucretian tribe,
To matter what perfections you ascribe?
Can you to dust such veneration show,
An atom with such privilege endow,
That from its nature's pure necessity
It should exist, and no corruption see?
Since your first atoms independent are,
And not each other's being prop and bear,
And since to this it is fortuitous
That others should existence have, suppose
You in your mind one atom should remove
From all the troops, that in the vacant strove,
Cannot our thought conceive one atom less?
If so, you Grecian sages must confess
That matter which you independent name,
Cannot a being necessary claim:
For what has being from necessity,
It is impossible it should not be.
Why has an atom this one place possest
Of all the empty void, and not the rest?
If by its nature's force 'tis present here,
By the same force it must be ev'ry where;
Can beings be confin'd which necessary are?
If a first body may to any place
De not determin'd; in the boundless space,
'Tis plain, it then may absent be from all;
Who then will this a self-existence call?
As time does vast eternity regard,
So place is with infinitude compar'd;
A being then, which never did commence,
Must, as eternal, likewise be immense.
What cause within, or what without is found,
That can a being uncreated bound?
None that's internal, for it has no cause;
Nor can it be controll'd by foreign laws,

For then it clearly would dependent be
On force superior, which will ne'er agree
With self-existence, and necessity.
Absurdly then to atoms you assign
Such powers, and such prerogatives divine:
Thus while the notion of a God you slight,
Yourselves (who vainly think you reason right)
Make vile material gods, in number infinite.
  Now let us, as 'tis just, in turn prepare
To stand the foe and wage defensive war.
Lucretius first, a mighty hero, springs
Into the field, and his own triumph sings.
He brings, to make us from our ground retire,
The reasoner's weapons, and the poet's fire.
The tuneful sophist thus his battle forms,
Our bulwarks thus in polish'd armour storms.
  To parent matter things their being owe,
Because from nothing no productions flow.
And if we grant no pre-existent seed,
Things diff'rent things, from what they do, might
And any thing from any thing proceed. [breed,
The spicy groves might Scythia's hills adorn,
The thistle might the amaranth have borne,
The vine the lemon, and the grape the thorn.
Herds from the hills, men from the seas might rise,
From woods the whales, and lions from the skies.
  Th' elated bard here with a conqu'ror's air
Disdainful smiles, and bids his foes despair.
But, Carus, here you use poetic charms,
And not assail us with the reas'ner's arms.
Where all is clear you fancy'd doubts remove;
And what we grant with ease, with labour prove.
What you should prove, but cannot, you decline,
But chuse a thing you can, and there you shine.

Tell us, fam'd Roman, was it e'er deny'd,
That seeds for such productions are supply'd?
That nature always must materials find
For beasts and trees to propagate their kind?
All generation the rude peasant knows
A pre-existent matter must suppose.
But what to nature first her being gave?
Tell whence your atoms their existence have?
We ask you whence the seeds constituent spring
Of ev'ry plant, and ev'ry living thing,
Whence ev'ry creature should produce its kind,
And to its proper species be confin'd?
To answer this, Lucretius will require
More than sweet numbers and poetic fire.
But see, how well the poet will support
His cause, if we the argument retort.
If chance alone could manage, sort, divide,
And, beings to produce, your atoms guide;
If casual concourse did the world compose,
And things from hits fortuitous arose,
Then any thing might come from any thing,
For how from chance can constant order spring?
The forest oak might bear the blushing rose,
And fragrant myrtles thrive in Russian snows.
The fair pomegranate might adorn the pine,
The grape the bramble, and the sloe the vine.
Fish from the plains, birds from the floods might rise,
And lowing herds break from the starry skies.
But, see, the chief does keener weapons chuse,
Advances bold, and thus the fight renews.
"If I were doubtful of the source and spring
"Whence things arise, I from the skies could bring,
"And ev'ry part of nature, proofs to show
"The world to gods cannot its being owe,

"So full of faults is all th' unartful frame:
"First we the air's unpeopled desert blame.
"Brute beasts possess the hill, and shady wood,
"Much do the lakes but more the ocean's flood
"(Which severs realms, and shores divided laves,)
"Take from the land by interposing waves.
"One third by freezing cold and burning heat—
"Lies a deform'd, inhospitable seat:
"The rest, unlabour'd, would by nature breed
"Wild brambles only, and the noxious weed:
"Did not industrious man, with endless toil,
"Extort his food from the reluctant soil,
"Did not the farmer's steel the furrow wound,
"And harrows tear the harvest from the ground,
"The earth would no spontaneous fruits afford
"To man, her vain imaginary lord.
"Oft when the labouring hind has plough'd the field,
"And forc'd the glebe unwillingly to yield,
"When green and flow'ry nature crowns his hope
"With the gay promise of a plenteous crop,
"The fruits (sad ruin!) perish on the ground,
"Burnt by the sun, or by the deluge drown'd;
"Or soon decay by snows immod'rate chill'd,
"By winds are blasted, or by lightning kill'd.
"Nature, besides, the savage beast sustains,
"Breeds in the hills the terror of the plains,
"To man a fatal race, could this be so
"Did gracious gods dispose of things below?
"Their proper plagues with annual seasons come,
"And deaths untimely blast us in the bloom.
"Man at his birth, unhappy son of grief!
"Is helpless cast on the wild coasts of life,
"In want of all things, whence our comforts flow,
"A sad and moving spectacle of woe.

"Infants in ill presaging cries complain,
"As conscious of a coming life of pain,
"All things meantime to beasts kind nature grants,
"Prevents their sufferings, and supplies their wants,
"Brought forth with ease, they grow, and skip, and feed,
"No dandling nurse, no jingling gewgaw need;
"In caves they lurk, or o'er the mountains range,
"Nor ever through the year their garments change.
"Unvers'd in arms and ignorant of war,
"They need no forts, and no invasion fear. [gain,
"Whate'er they want, from nature's hand they
"The life she gave she watches to maintain."
Thus, impotent in sense, though strong in rage,
The daring Roman does the gods engage.
But undismay'd we face th' intrepid foe,
Sustain the onset, and thus ward the blow.
Suppose defects in this terrestrial seat,
That nature is not, as you urge, complete:
That a divine and wise artificer
Might greater wonders of his art confer;
And might with ease on man and man's abode,
More bounty, more perfection have bestow'd.
If in this lower world he has not shewn
His utmost skill, say, has he therefore none?
We in productions arbitrary see
Marks of perfection different in degree.
Though masters, now more skill, now less impart,
Yet are not all their works the works of art?
Do poets still sublimer subjects sing,
Still stretch to heaven a bold aspiring wing,
Nor e'er descend to flocks and lab'ring swains,
Frequent the woods, or range the humble plains?
Did, Grecian Phidias, all thy pieces shine
With equal beauty? or, Apelles, thine?

Or Raphael's pencil never chuse to fall?
Say, are his works transfigurations all?
Did Buonarota never build, O Rome,
A meaner structure than thy wond'rous dome?
Though in their works applauded as their best,
Greater design and genius are exprest,
Yet is there none acknowledg'd in the rest?
In all the parts of nature's spacious sphere
Of art ten thousand miracles appear:
And will you not the author's skill adore,
Because you think he might discover more?
You own a watch, th' invention of the mind,
Though for a single motion 'tis design'd,
As well as that which is with greater thought,
With various springs, for various motions wrought.
An independent, wise, and conscious cause,
Who freely acts by arbitrary laws,
Who at connexion and at order aims,
Creatures distinguish'd in perfection frames.
Unconscious causes only still impart
Their utmost skill, their utmost power exert.
Those which can freely chuse discern and know,
In acting can degrees of vigour show,
And more or less of art or care bestow.
If all perfection were in all things shown,
All beauty, all variety were gone.
As this inferior habitable seat
By different parts is made one whole complete,
So our low world is only one of those
Which the capricious universe compose.
Now to the universal whole advert;
The earth regard, as of that whole a part,
In which wide frame more noble worlds abound;
Witness ye glorious orbs which hang around,

Ye shining planets that in æther stray,
And thou bright lord and ruler of the day!
Witness ye stars that beautify the skies,
How much do your vast globes in height and size,
In beauty and magnificence, outgo
Our ball of earth, that hangs in clouds below!
Between yourselves too is distinction found,
Of diff'rent bulk with diff'rent glory crown'd.
The people which in your bright regions dwell,
Must this low world's inhabitants excel,
And since to various planets they agree,
They from each other must distinguish'd be,
And own perfections diff'rent in degree.
When we on fruitful nature's care reflect,
And her exhaustless energy respect,
That stocks this globe, which you Lucretians call
The world's coarse dregs, which to the fall,
With num'rous kinds of life, and bounteous fills
With breathing guests the vallies, floods, and hills;
We may pronounce each orb sustains a race
Of living things adapted to the place.
Were the refulgent parts and most refin'd
Only to serve the dark and base design'd?
Were all the stars, those beauteous realms of light,
At distance only hung to shine by night,
And with their twinkling beams to please our sight?
How many roll in ether, which the eye
Could ne'er, till aided by the glass, descry,
And which no commerce with the earth maintain?
Are all those glorious empires made in vain?
Now, as I said, the globe terrestrial view,
As of the whole a part, a mean one too.
Though 'tis not like th' etherial worlds refin'd,
Yet is it just, and finish'd in its kind:

Has all perfection which the place demands,
Where in coherence with the rest it stands.
Were to your view the universe display'd,
And all the scenes of nature open laid,
Could you their place, proportion, harmony,
Their beauty, order, and dependence see,
You'd grant our globe had all the marks of art,
All the perfection due to such a part,
Though not with lustre, or with magnitude,
Like the bright stars, or brighter sun endu'd.
  You oft declaim on man's unhappy fate,
Insulting oft demand in this debate,
If the kind gods could such a wretch create.
  But whence can this unhappiness arise?
You say, as soon as born, he helpless lies,
And mourns his woes with ill-presaging cries.
But does not nature for the child prepare
The parent's love, the nurse's tender care;
Who, of their own forgetful, seek his good,
Enfold his limbs in bands, and fill his veins with food?
  That man is frail and mortal, is confest;
Convulsions rack his nerves, and care his breast;
His flying life is chas'd by rav'ning pains
Through all its doubles in the winding veins.
Within himself he sure destruction breeds,
And secret torments in his bowels feeds.
By cruel tyrants, by the savage beast,
Or his own fiercer passions he's opprest:
Now breathes malignant air, now poison drinks;
By gradual death, or by untimely, sinks.
  But these objectors must the cause upbraid,
That has not mortal man immortal made.
For if he once must feel the fatal blow,
Is it of great importance when, or how?

But can the objector no convenience find
In mountains, hills, and rocks, which gird and bind
The mighty frame, that else would be disjoin'd?
Do not those heaps the raging tide restrain,
And for the dome afford the marble vein?
Do not the rivers from the mountains flow,
And bring down riches to the vale below?
See how the torrent rolls the golden sand
From the high ridges to the flatter land.
The lofty lines abound with endless store
Of min'ral treasure, and metallic ore;
With precious veins of silver, copper, tin,
Without how barren, yet how rich within?
They bear the pine, the oak and cedar yield,
To form the palace, and the navy build.
When the inclement meteors you accuse,
And ask if gracious gods would storms produce:
You ne'er reflect that by the driving wind
The air from noxious vapours is refin'd;
Freed from the putrid seeds of pain and death,
That living creatures might not by their breath,
Through their warm veins, instead of vital food,
Disperse contagion, and corrupt their blood.
Without the wind the ship were made in vain,
Advent'rous merchants could not cross the main,
Nor sever'd realms their gainful trade maintain.
Then with this wise reflection you disturb
Your anxious thought, that our terrestrial orb
In many parts is not by man possest,
With too much heat, or too much cold, opprest.
But in mistake you this objection found;
Unnumber'd isles and spacious tracts of ground,
Which feel the scorching sun's director beam,
And did to you inhospitable seem,

With tawny nations, or with black abound,
With nobler rivers lav'd, with plenty crown'd.
And regions too from the bright orb remote
Are peopled, which you unfrequented thought.
  But could Lucretius on the sun reflect,
His proper distance from the earth respect,
Observe his constant road, his equal pace,
His round diurnal, and his annual race;
Could he regard the nature of the light,
Its beauteous lustre, and its rapid flight,
And its relation to the sense of sight;
Could he to all these miracles advert,
And not in all perceive one stroke of art?
Grant that the motions of the sun are such,
That some have light too little, some too much.
Grant that in diff'rent tracks he might have roll'd,
And giv'n each clime more equal heat and cold.
Yet view the revolutions, as they are,
Does there no wisdom, no design appear?
Could any but a knowing, prudent cause,
Begin such motions, and assign such laws?
If the Great Mind had form'd a diff'rent frame,
Might not your wanton wit the system blame?
Though here you all perfection should not find,
Yet is it all th' Eternal Will design'd,
It is a finish'd world, and perfect in its kind.
Not that its regions ev'ry charm include,
With which celestial empires are endu'd:
Nor is consummate goodness here conferr'd,
If we perfection absolute regard;
But what's before asserted, we repeat,
Of the vast whole it is a part complete.
  But since you murmur that the partial sun
Is not indulgent to the frigid zone;

Suppose more suns in proper orbits roll'd,
Dissolv'd the snows, and chac'd the polar cold;
Or grant that this revolv'd in such a way,
As equal heat to all he might convey,
And give the distant poles their share of day.
Observe how prudent nature's icy hoard,
With all her nitrous stores, would be devour'd:
Then would unbalanc'd heat licentious reign,
Crack the dry hill, and chap the russet plain.
Her moisture all exhal'd, the cleaving earth
Would yield no fruit, and bear no verdant birth.
  You of the pools and spacious lakes complain,
And of the liquid desarts of the main,
As hurtful these, or useless, you arraign.
  Besides the pleasure, which the lakes afford,
Are not their waves with fish delicious stor'd?
Does not the wide capacious deep, the sky
With dewy clouds, the earth with rain supply?
Do not the rivers, which the valley lave,
Creep through the secret subterranean cave,
And to the hills convey the refluent wave.
You then must own the earth the ocean needs,
Which thus the lake recruits, the fountain feeds.
  The noxious plant and savage animal,
Which you the earth's reproach and blemish call,
Are useful various ways, if not for food,
For manufactures or for med'cine good.
Thus we repel with reason, not evade
The bold objections by Lucretius made.
  Pyrrhonians next, of like ambitious aim,
Wanton of wit, and panting after fame,
Who strove to sink the sects of chief renown,
And on their ruin'd schools to raise their own,
Boldly presum'd, with rhetorician pride,
To hold of any question either side.

They thought in ev'ry subject of debate,
In either scale the proof of equal weight.
  Ask, if a God existent they allow,
The vain declaimers will attempt to shew,
That whether you renounce him, or assert,
There's no superior proof on either part.
Suppose a God, we must, say they, conclude
He lives, if so, he is with sense endu'd;
And if with sense endu'd may pain perceive,
And what can suffer pain may cease to live.
  Pyrrhonians, we a living God adore,
An unexhausted spring of vital power;
But his immortal, uncreated life
No torment feels, and no destructive grief.
Does he by diff'rent organs taste or hear?
Or by an eye do things to him appear?
Has he a muscle or extended nerve,
Which to impart or pain or pleasure serve?
Of all perfection possible possest,
He finds no want, nor is with woe opprest.
Tho' we can ne'er explore the life divine,
And sound the blest abyss by reason's line,
Yet 'tis not, mortal man, a transient life, like thine.
  Others, to whom the whole mechanic tribe
With an harmonious sympathy subscribe,
Nature with empire universal crown,
And this high queen the world's creator own.
If you, what builder rear'd the world demand,
They say 'twas done by nature's powerful hand.
If whence its order and its beauty rose,
Nature, they say, did so the frame dispose.
If what its steady motions does maintain,
And holds of causes and effects the chain;
O'er all her works this sov'reign cause presides,
Upholds the orbs, and all their motions guides.

Since to her bounty we such blessings owe,
Our gen'rous benefactor let us know.
When the word nature you express, declare
Form'd in your minds what image does appear?
Can you that term of doubtful sound explain,
Show it no idle off-spring of the brain?
Sometimes by nature your enlighten'd school
Intends of things the universal whole.
Sometimes it is the order, that connects,
And holds the chain of causes and effects.
Sometimes it is the manner, and the way,
In which those causes do their force convey,
And in effects their energy display.
That she's the work itself you oft assert,
As oft th' artificer, as oft the art.
That is, that we may nature clearly trace,
And by her marks distinctly know her face,
She's now the building, now the architect,
And now the rule which does his hand direct.
But let this empress be whate'er you please;
Let her be all, or any one of these;
She is with reason, or she's not, endu'd;
If you the first affirm, we thence conclude
A God, whose being you oppose, you grant:
But if this mighty queen does reason want,
How could this noble fabric be design'd,
And fashion'd by a maker brute and blind?
Could it of art such miracles invent?
And raise a beauteous world of such extent?
Still at the helm does this dark pilot stand,
And with a steady, never-erring hand,
Steer all the floating worlds, and their set course command?
That clearer strokes of masterly design,
Of wise contrivance, and of judgment shine

In all the parts of nature, we assert,
Than in the brightest works of human art:
And shall not those be judg'd th' effect of thought,
As well as these with skill inferior wrought?
Let such a sphere to India be convey'd,
As Archimede or modern Hugens made;
Will not the Indian, tho' untaught and rude,
This work th' effect of wise design conclude?
Is there such skill in imitation shewn,
And in the things, we imitate, is none?
Are not our arts by useful nature taught,
With pain and careful observation sought?
  Behold the painter, who with nature vies,
See his whole soul exerted in his eyes!
He views her various scenes, intent to trace
The master lines, that form her finish'd face:
Are thought and conduct in the copy clear,
While none in all th' original appear?
  Tell us what master, for mechanics fam'd,
Has one machine so admirably fram'd,
Where you will art in such perfection grant,
As in a living creature, or a plant?
Declare what curious workmanship can vie
Or with a hand or foot, an ear or eye?
That can for skill as much applause deserve,
As the fine texture of the fibrous nerve,
Or the stupendous system, which contains
Th' arterial channels, or the winding veins?
What artificial frame, what instrument
Did one superior genius yet invent,
Which to the bones or muscles is prefer'd,
If you their order, form, or use regard?
Why then to works of nature is assign'd
An author unintelligent and blind, [mind?
When ours proceed from choice and conscious

To this you say, that nature's are indeed
Most artful works, but then they ne'er proceed
From nature acting with design and art,
Who void of choice her vigour does exert;
And by unguided motion things produce
Regardless of their order, end, or use.
By Tully's mouth thus Cotta does dispute:
But thus, with ease the Roman we confute.
Say, if in artful things no art is shewn,
What are the certain marks, that make it known?
How will you artful from unartful bound,
And not th' ideas in our mind confound?
Than this no truth displays before our sight
A brighter beam, or more convincing light,
That skilful works suppose a skilful cause,
Which acts by choice, and moves by prudent laws.
Where you, unless you are, as matter, blind,
Conduct and beauteous disposition find,
Conspiring order, fitness, harmony,
Use and convenience, will you not agree
That such effects could not be undesign'd,
Nor could proceed but from a knowing mind?
Old systems you may try, or new ones raise,
May shift and wind and plot a thousand ways;
May various words, and forms of diction use,
And with a diff'rent cant th' unjudging ear amuse;
You may affirm, that chance did things create
Or let it nature be, or be it fate;
Body alone, inert and brute, you'll find,
The cause of all things is by you assign'd.
And after all your fruitless toil, if you
A cause distinct from matter will allow,
It must be conscious, not like matter blind,
And show you grant a God, by granting mind.

Vaninus next, a hardy, modern chief,
A bold opposer of divine belief,
Attempts religion's fences to subvert,
Strong in his rage, but destitute of art.
In impious maxims fix'd, he heaven defy'd,
An unbelieving anti-martyr dy'd.
Strange, that an atheist pleasure should refuse,
Relinquish life, and death in torment chuse!
Of science what a despicable share
Vaninus own'd, his publish'd dreams declare.
Let impious wits applaud a godless mind,
As blest with piercing sight, and sense refin'd,
Contriv'd and wrought by nature's careful hand,
All the proud schools of learning to command;
Let them pronounce each patron of their cause,
Claims by distinguish'd merit just applause;
Yet I this writer's want of sense arraign,
Treat all his empty pages with disdain,
And think a grave reply mispent and vain:
To borrow light this error to amend,
I would the atheist to Vaninus send.
At length Britannia's soil, immortal shame!
Brought forth a sage of celebrated name,
Who with contempt on blest religion trod,
Mock'd all her precepts, and renounc'd his God.
As awful shades and horrors of the night
Disturb the mother, and the child affright,
Who see dire spectres thro' the gloomy air
In threat'ning forms advance, and shudd'ring hear
The groans of wand'ring ghosts, and yellings of despair:
From the same spring, he says, devotion flows,
Conscience of guilt from dread of vengeance rose:
Religion is the creature of the spleen,
And troubled fancy forms the world unseen.

The spheres of ether, which the world enclose,
And all th' apartments, which the whole compose;
The lucid orbs, the earth, the air, the main,
With every diff'rent being they contain,
Are one prodigious aggregated God,
Of whom each sand is part, each stone and clod!
Supreme perfections in each insect shine,
Each shrub is sacred, and each weed divine.
Sages, no longer Egypt's son's despise,
For their cheap God, and savoury deities!
No more their coarse divinities revile!
To leeks, to onions, to the crocodile,
You might your humble adorations pay,
Were you not gods yourselves, as well as they.
As much you pull religion's altars down,
By owning all things God, as owning none.
For should all things be alike divine,
Of worship if an object you assign,
God to himself must veneration shew,
Must be the idol and the vot'ry too.
And their assertions are alike absurd,
Who own no God, or none to be ador'd.

BOOK IV.

ARGUMENT.

The introduction. No man happy, that has not conquered the fears of death. The inability of the Epicurean scheme to accomplish that end. Religion only capable of subduing those fears. The hypothesis of Epicurus concerning the formation of the universe shewn to be absurd, I. In a more general survey of the parts of the universe. II. By a more close and strict examination of his scheme. The principle of motion not accounted for by that scheme; nor the determination of it one way. Pondus, gravity, innate mobility, words without a meaning. Descent of atoms; upwards and downwards, a middle or centre absurdly asserted by Epicurus in infinite space. His hypothesis not to be supported, whether his matter be supposed finite or infinite. His ridiculous assertion relating to the diurnal and annual motion of the sun. The impossibility of forming the world by the casual concourse of atoms. They could never meet if they moved with equal speed. Primitive atoms being the smallest parts of matter, would move more slowly than bodies of greater bulk which have more gravity, yet these are absurdly supposed to move the swiftest. His assertion that some primitive atoms have a direct, and others an inclining motion, implies a contradiction. Lucretius's explanation of this inclining motion of some first atoms not intelligible. The inexplicable difficulty of stopping the atoms in their flight, and causing them to settle in a formed world. The ponderous earth not to be sustained in liquid air. The Epicurean formation of the heavens very ridiculous. No account given by the Epicureans how the sun and stars are upheld in fluid æther. Their idle account of the formation of the air. The variety of figure and size given by

Epicurus to his atoms, a convincing proof of wisdom and design. Another proof is the disproportion of the moist and dry atoms in the formation of the earth. His ludicrous and childish account of the formation of the hollow for the sea. No account given by Epicurus, or his followers, of the motion of the heavenly orbs, particularly of the sun.

CARUS, we grant no man is blest, but he,
Whose mind from anxious thoughts of death is free.
Let laurel wreaths the victor's brows adorn,
Sublime thro' gazing throngs in triumph borne:
Let acclamations ring around the skies,
While curling clouds of balmy incense rise;
Let spoils immense, let trophies gain'd in war,
And conquer'd kings attend his rolling car:
If dread of death still unsubdu'd remains,
And secret o'er the vanquish'd victor reigns,
Th' illustrious slave in endless thraldom bears
A heavier chain, than his led captive wears.
With swiftest wing the fears of future fate
Elude the guards, and pass the palace gate:
Traverse the lofty rooms, and uncontroll'd
Fly hovering round the painted roofs, and bold
To the rich arras cling, and perch on busts of gold,
Familiar horrors haunt the monarch's head,
And thoughts ill-boding from the downy bed
Chase gentle sleep, black cares the soul infest,
And broider'd stars adorn a troubled breast;
In vain they ask the charming lyre, in vain
The flatt'rer's sweeter voice to lull their pain.
Riot and wine but for a moment please,
Delights they oft enjoy, but never ease.
What are distinction, honour, wealth, and state,
The pomp of courts, the triumphs of the great;

The num'rous troops, that envy'd thrones secure,
And splendid ensigns of imperial power?
What the high palace rear'd with vast expense,
Unrivall'd art, and luxury immense,
With statues grac'd by ancient Greece supply'd,
With more than Persian wealth, and Tyrian pride?
What are the foods of all delicious kinds,
Which now the huntsman, now the fowler finds;
The richest wines, which Gallia's happy field,
Which Tuscan hills, or thine, Iberia, yield?
Nature deprav'd, abundance does pursue,
Her first and pure demands are cheap and few.
What health promotes, and gives unenvy'd peace,
Is all expenseless, and procur'd with ease.
Behold the shepherd, see th' industrious swain,
Who ploughs the field, or reaps the ripen'd grain.
How mean, and yet how tasteful is their fare?
How sweet their sleep? their souls how free from care?
They drink the streaming crystal, and escape
Th' inflaming juices of the purple grape;
And to protect their limbs from rig'rous air,
Garments, their own domestic work, they wear.
Yet thoughts of death their lonely cots molest,
Affright the hind, and break the lab'rer's rest.
Since these reflections on approaching fate,
Distrust, and ill-presaging care create;
'Tis clear we strive for happiness in vain,
While fears of death within insulting reign.
But then Lucretian wits absurdly frame,
To sink those inbred fears, their impious scheme,
To chase the horrors of a conscious mind,
They desperate means, and wild expedients find.
The hardy rebels aiming to appease
Their fierce remorse, and dream a while at ease,

Of crying guilt th' avenging power disown,
And pull the high creator from his throne;
That done they mock the threats of future pain,
As monstrous fictions of the poet's brain.
Thy force alone, religion, death disarms,
Breaks all his darts, and every viper charms.
Soften'd by thee, the grisly form appears
No more the horrid object of our fears.
We undismay'd this awful power obey,
That guides us through the safe, tho' gloomy way
Which leads to life, and to the blest abode,
Where ravish'd minds enjoy, what here they own'd, [a God.
Regard, ye sages of Lucretian race,
Nature's rich dress, behold her lovely face.
Look all around, terrestial realms survey,
The isles, the rivers, and the spacious sea:
Observe the air, view with attentive eyes
The glorious concave of the vaulted skies;
Could these from casual hits, from tumult those arise?
Can rule and beauty from distraction grow?
Can symmetry from wild confusion flow?
When atoms in th' unmeasur'd space did rove,
And in the dark for doubtful empire strove;
Did intervening chance the feuds compose,
Establish friendship, and disarm the foes?
Did this the ancient darksome horrors chace,
Distinction give, and spread celestial grace
O'er the black districts of the empty space?
Could atoms, which with undirected flight
Roam'd through the void, and rang'd the realms
Of reason destitute, without intent, [of night,
Depriv'd of choice, and mindless of event,
In order march, and to their posts advance,
Led by no guide, but undesigning chance?

What did th' entangled particles divide,
And sort the various seeds of things ally'd?
To make primæval elements select
All the fit atoms, and th' unfit reject?
Distinguish hot from cold, and moist from dry,
Range some to form the earth, and some the sky?
From the embrace, and gloomy arms of night,
What freed the glimm'ring fire, and disengag'd
the light?
Could chance such just and prudent measures take?
To frame the world such distributions make?
If to your builder you will conduct give,
A power to chuse, to manage and contrive,
Your idol chance, suppos'd inert and blind,
Must be enroll'd an active conscious mind.
Did this your wise and sovereign architect,
Design the model, and the world erect?
Were by her skill the deep foundations laid,
The globes suspended, and the heav'ns display'd
By what elastic engines did she rear
The starry roof, and roll the orbs in air?
On the formation of the earth reflect;
Is this a blind fortuitous effect?
Did all the grosser atoms, at the call
Of chance, file off to form the pond'rous ball,
And undetermin'd into order fall?
Did of themselves th' assembled seeds arrive?
And without art this artful frame contrive?
To build the earth did chance materials chuse,
And through the parts cementing glue diffuse?
Adjust the frontier of the sea and soil;
Balance and hang in air the finish'd pile?
Ye tow'ring hills, whose snowy peaks arise
Above the clouds, and winter in the skies;

Ye rocks, which on the shores your heads advance,
Are you the labour and the care of chance?
To draw up stones of such prodigious weight,
And raise th' amazing heaps to such a height,
What huge machine, what forceful instrument
Did your blind builder of the world invent?
Could it distinguish, could it wall around
The damp and dark apartments under ground?
With rocky arches vault the hollow caves,
And form the tracks of subterranean waves;
Extend the diff'rent mineral veins, and spread
For rich metallic ores the genial bed?
What could prepare the gulphs to entertain
Between their shores the interposing main?
Disjoin the land, the various realms divide,
And spread with scatter'd isles th' extended tide?
Regard th' unnumber'd wonders of the deep,
Where confluent streams, their race completed, sleep.
Did chance the compass take, and in the dark
The wide dimensions of the ocean mark?
Then dig the ample cave, and stretch the shores,
Whose winding arms confine the liquid stores,
Which gushing from the mountain to the main,
Through verdant vallies draw their humid train?
Did it design the deep abyss, and spread
The ancient waters on their central bed?
To the wild flood did sovereign fortune say,
Thus far advance, and here thy billows stay:
Be this thy barrier, this enclosing sand
Thou shalt not pass, nor overflow the land;
And do the waves revere her high command?
Did chymic chance the furnaces prepare,
Raise all the labour-houses of the air,
And lay crude vapours in digestion there?

Where nature is employ'd with wond'rous skill
To draw her spirits, and her drops distil:
Meteors for various purposes to form
The breeze to cheer, to terrify the storm.
Did she extend the gloomy clouds on high,
Where all th' amazing fireworks of the sky,
In unconcocted seeds fermenting lie?
Till the imprison'd flames are ripe for birth,
And ruddy bolts exploded wound the earth.
What ready hand applies the kindled match,
Which evening trains of unctuous vapours catch;
Whence shoots with lambent flight the falling star,
And flames unhurtful hovering dance in air?
What curious loom does chance by evening spread?
With what fine shuttle weave the virgin's thread,
Which, like the spider's net, hangs o'er the grassy
mead.
Let us the moulds to fashion meteors know,
How these produce the hail, and those the snow?
What gave the exhalations wings to rise,
To leave their centre, and possess the skies.
Let us no longer missive weapons throw,
But close the fight, and grapple with the foe:
Submit to reason's strictest test their scheme,
And by mechanic laws pursue the huddled frame.
See, how the ambitious architects design
To rear the world without the pow'r divine.
As principles the great contrivers place
Unbounded matter, in unbounded space.
Matter was first, in parts minute, endu'd
With various figures, various magnitude.
Some moving in the spacious infinite,
Describe a line oblique, and some a right.
For did not some from a straight course deflect,
They could not meet, they could no world erect.

While unfatigu'd from endless ages past,
They rang'd the dark interminable waste,
Oft clashing and rencount'ring in their flight,
Some atoms leap aside, and some upright,
They various ways recoil; and swiftly flow
By mutual repercussions to and fro.
'Till shuffled and entangled in their race,
They clasp each other with a close embrace,
Combin'd by concourse, mingled and comprest,
They grow in bulk, and complicated rest.
Hence did the world, and all its parts arise,
Hence the bright sun and stars, and hence the skies.
Hence sprung the air, the ocean, and the earth,
And hence all nature had its casual birth.

If you demand what wise directing mind
The wond'rous platform of the world design'd;
Did range, divide, and in their order place
The crude materials of the unfashion'd mass;
Did move, direct, and all the parts control,
With perfect skill to serve the beauteous whole;
Fortune to this high honour they advance,
And no surveyor want, no guide, but chance.

Lucretian masters, now to make it plain
In building worlds how raw you are, and vain:
Grant that before this mighty frame was rear'd,
Before confusion fled, and light appear'd;
In the dark void and empty realms of night,
Your restless atoms did pursue their flight;
And in their adverse paths, and wild career
By chance rencounter, and by chance cohere;
Thus claspt in strict embraces they produce
Unnumber'd casual forms for different use.
You who to clearer reason make pretence,
Of wit refin'd, and eminent in sense,

Let us, ye sons of Epicurus, know
The spring, whence all these various motions flow.
What vigour push'd primæval atoms on?
Was it a foreign impulse or their own?
If 'twas a foreign delegated force,
Which mov'd those bodies, and control'd their course,
Asserting this, you your own scheme destroy,
And power divine, to form the world, employ.
If from a moving principle within
Your active atoms did their flight begin,
That spring, that moving principle explain,
And in the schools unrivall'd you shall reign;
Declare its nature, and assign its name;
For motion, and its cause, are not the same.
We know you'll tell us 'tis impulsive weight,
Mobility, or pow'r to move innate:
Profound solution! worthy of your schools,
Where in its boasted freedom reason rules:
But thus you mock mankind, and language use,
Not to inform the mind, but to amuse.
Of motion we the principle demand,
You say 'tis pow'r to move, and there you stand!
But is it to explain to change the name?
Is not the doubt in different words the same?
Do you reveal the spring of motion more,
By wisely calling that a moving power,
Which we had term'd a principle before:
The youngest head new vers'd in reasoning knows,
That motion must a power to move suppose,
Which while in vain you labour to unfold,
You clearly tell us, that Lucretians hold
An active spring, a principle approve,
Distinct from matter, which must matter move.

Matter, as such, abstracted in the mind.
We from a power to move divested find,
Not more to motion, than to rest inclin'd.
The power which motion does to matter give,
We therefore most distinct from both conceive,
A power to nature given by nature's Lord,
When first he spoke the high creating word:
When for his world's materials he prepar'd,
And on each part his energy conferr'd.
Ye vain philosophers, presumptuous race,
Who would the great eternal mind displace,
Take from the world its maker, and advance
To his high throne your thoughtless idol chance;
Let us th' inquiry by just steps pursue;
With motion we your atoms will endue.
We ask, when in the spacious void they stray—
Why still they beat one track, and move one way?
Still the same flight why do their parties take?
Why this, or that way no digression make?
What will to this our atomists reply?
They answer, by an innate gravity,
The pond'rous bodies still are downward borne,
And never upwards of themselves return:
Acute and solid answer! see a flight,
Worthy of finest wit, and clearest sight!
Do not these wise mechanic masters know,
That no man can conceive or high or low,
Nor find distinction of superior place,
Or of inferior, in the empty space
Uncircumscrib'd, and ignorant of bound,
And where no mid'st, no centre can be found?
Perhaps, your master's doctrine to sustain,
And matter's downward motion to explain,
You with his famous Gallic friend assert,
That is superior, whence your atoms start,

And that inferior in the empty space,
To which they all direct their rapid race.
  Now let us recollect, and what you say
At large, in one contracted view survey.
You say your atoms move; we ask you, why?
Because it is their nature, you reply:
But since that native power you never shew,
You only say they move because they do;
But let your atoms move, we bid you say
Why they move this, and not a different way?
You tell us, 'tis from inbred gravity;
That is, you tell us, 'tis you know not why.
'Till what is gravity you let us know,
By senseless words how can we wiser grow?
We give you this ingenite, moving force,
That makes them always downward take their [course,
We then demand which place inferior is
Within the spacious unconfin'd abyss?
You say 'tis that, to which the atoms bend
Their swift career, for still they must descend;
That is, they downward move, because they downward tend.
  Let us, Lucretians, now our task pursue,
And of your scheme remaining wonders view.
Say, if your atoms of immortal race
Are equal and commensurate to space:
If so, the boundless vast immensity
While thus possest would full of matter be:
For in the vacant (as your schools approve)
Should finite matter be suppos'd to move,
Not knowing how to stop, or where to stay,
It unobstructed must pursue its way,
Be lost in void immense, and dissipated stray.
The scatt'ring bodies never would combine,
Nor to compose a world by concourse join.

But if all space is full, if all possest,
Which supposition you embrace as best,
Then crowded matter would for ever rest.
Nature no change of place had ever seen,
Where all is full no motion can begin.
For if it should, you'll be compell'd to say,
Body does body pierce to force its way;
Or unconfin'd immensity retreats,
To give your atoms room to change their seats.
And here with us Lucretius does agree,
That if some place from matter be not free,
In plenitude no motion could commence,
All would be stagnant in the vast immense.
If it be said, small parts of empty space
Are interspers'd through all the spreading mass,
By which some bodies give to others place:
Then matter you must grant, would finite be
And stretch unequal to immensity:
And then, as Epicurus judges right,
It would for ever take an useless flight,
Lost in expansion void and infinite.
Besides, allowing through th' extended whole
Small scatter'd spaces not of body full,
Then matter, you Lucretians must agree,
Has not existence from necessity.
For if its being necessary were,
Why are some parts of space from matter clear.
Why does it here exist, and why not there?
Lucretians, now which side you please, embrace;
If in your void you finite substance place,
'Tis dissipated through th' immense abyss,
And you to form the world materials miss.
You'll not the progress of your atoms stay,
Nor to collect the vagrants find a way.

Thus too your master's scheme will be destroy'd,
Who wholly to possess the boundless void,
No less than matter infinite employ'd.
If you in honour to your founder's skill,
The boundless void with boundless substance fill,
Then tell us how you can your bodies roll
Through space, of matter so completely full?
The force the single reason does exert,
Will the foundations of your scheme subvert:
Nor were it needful to pursue the blow,
Or form a fresh attack, unless to show
How slight your works in ev'ry quarter are,
How ill your huddled sentiments cohere.
Be this, O Greece, thy everlasting shame,
That thoughtless Epicurus rais'd a name,
Who built by artless chance this mighty frame.
Could one whose wit such narrow limits bound,
Nature, thy depths unfathomable sound?
Of his sagacious thoughts to give a part,
Does not this wise philosopher assert
The radiant sun's extinguish'd every night,
And ev'ry morn, rekindled, darts his light?
That the vast orb, which casts so far his beams,
Is such or not much bigger, than he seems?
That the dimensions of his glorious face,
Two geometric feet do scarce surpass?
Does he not make the fickle winds convey
The sun revolving through his crooked way?
But since his school has gain'd such spreading fame,
And modern wits his master-skill proclaim;
Let us yet farther carry this debate,
And, as you ask, confer on matter weight,
To make it move within the vast abyss,
And downward too, e'en where no downward is.

If this be true, as you Lucretians say,
That atoms wing with equal speed their way,
Then how could this, that atom overtake?
How could they clash, and how collisions make?
If in a line oblique your bodies rove,
Or in a perpendicular they move,
If some advance not slower in their race,
And some more swift should not pursue the chace,
How could they be entangled, how embrace?
'Tis demonstration, 'tis meridian light,
Those bodies ne'er could jostle, ne'er could fight,
Nor by their mutual shocks be ruffled in their flight.
Since matter of a greater magnitude
Must be with greater gravity endu'd,
Then the minutest parts must still proceed
With less, the greater with the greater speed.
Hence your first bodies, which the smallest are,
On which the swiftest motion you confer,
Must be contented with the slowest pace,
And yield to matter of more bulk the race.
How wond'rous little must those atoms be,
Which you endow with such velocity;
Minute beyond conception, when we find
Bodies so small, where many are combin'd?
How many various figures must we take,
What numerous complications use, to make
Some compound things, so small of magnitude,
That all our senses they with ease elude?
Light exhalations, that from earth arise
Attracted by the sun-beams through the skies,
Which the mysterious seeds of thunder bear,
Of winds, and all the meteors of the air,
Though they around us take their constant flight,
Their little size escapes the sharpest sight.

The fragrant vapours breath'd from rich perfumes,
From Indian spices, and Arabian gums,
Though many years they flow, will scarce abate
The odoriferous body's bulk or weight.
Though antimonial cups prepar'd with art
Their force to wine through ages should impart;
This dissipation, this profuse expense, [mense.
Nor shrinks their size, nor wastes their stores im-
The powder which destructive guns explode,
And by its force their hollow wombs unload,
When rarify'd, of space possesses more
Some hundred times, than what it fill'd before.
The seeds of fern, which by prolific heat,
Cheer'd and unfolded form a plant so great,
Are less a thousand times, than what the eye
Can unassisted by the tube descry.
By glasses aided we in liquor see
Some living things minute to that degree,
That a prodigious number must unite,
To make the smallest object of the sight.
How little bodies must the light compound,
Which by your masters is corporeal own'd?
Since the vast deluge of refulgent rays,
Which in a day the sun a thousand ways
Through his wide empire lavishly conveys;
Were they collected in one solid mass,
Might not in weight a single drachm surpass.
At least those atoms wond'rous small must be,
Small to an unconceiveable degree,
Since though those radiant spoils disperst in air
Do ne'er return, and ne'er the sun repair,
Yet the bright orb, whence still new torrents flow,
Does no apparent loss, no diminution know.
Now curious wits, who nature's work inspect
With *rapture, with* astonishment reflect

On the small size of atoms, which unite
To make the smallest particle of light.
Then how minute primæval atoms are,
From this account Lucretians may infer:
Yet they on these, without regard to right,
Confer the honour of the quickest flight.
  Within the void with what a swift career
Your rapid matter moves will thus appear.
That all mixt bodies are in speed out-done
By your first atoms, you with ease will own:
For compound beings can no motion have,
But what their first constituent atoms gave:
Then your primæval substances exceed
The swift-wing'd wind, or swifter light in speed.
How soon the sun-beams at the morning's birth
Leap down from heaven, and light upon the earth?
Prodigious flight! they in few moments pass
The vast etherial interposing space:
Should you enjoin a rock so hard a task,
It would more years, than light will minutes ask.
One atom then, so you'll be forc'd to say,
Must rocks and hills and the whole globe outweigh;
Since it exceeds them by its swifter flight,
And swifter motion springs from greater weight.
  If nature's rule your atoms do enjoin
To move directly downward in a line,
Say, how can any from that path decline?
Th' inclining motion then, which you suppose,
Whence the first concourse of yours atoms rose,
Must the great maxim of your schools subvert,
Which still with one confed'rate voice assert,
That matter by necessity descends
In lines direct, yet part obliquely tends.
And thus your matter, by its native force,
To diff'rent points would steer a diff'rent course:

Determin'd by the same impulsive weight,
Move in a line oblique, and in a straight.
To heal your system's deep and ghastly wound,
Which this objection gives, Lucretius found
A method; who a motion did invent
Not straight entirely, nor entirely bent:
Which forms a line to crooked somewhat like,
Slanting almost, and as it were, oblique.
Who does not now this wond'rous bard adore?
See reason's conquering light, and wit's resistless [pow'r.
If atoms after their eternal dance,
Into this beauteous fabric leap'd by chance;
If they combin'd by casual concourse, say,
What in a free and unobstructed way,
Did in a full career your atoms stay? [height
What mounds, what force, when rushing from the
Of space immense, could stop them in their flight?
Why in their road did they not forward pass?
But stay where now we find the settled mass?
Why did they cease from moving in despight
Of their own nature, and impelling weight?
Had the wise troops sagacity to know,
That there arriv'd, they should no further go?
That in this point of all the spacious void,
To form a world they were to be employ'd?
Did they, in prospect of so great a good,
In this one place of all the liquid road,
All their encumbering gravity unload?
Fatigu'd, and spent with labour infinite,
Did they grow torpid, and unapt for flight?
Or, in th' embrace and downy lap of air
Lull'd and enchanted, did they settle there?
Grant in this single place by chance they met,
That there by chance they did their weight forget;

Now, vaunting poet, should it be confess'd,
That from the earth the air is thus express'd:
Since things by heavier things are upward thrown,
Which tend with stronger gravitation down:
Why are the sun, and the fair orbs of light,
All which so far exceed the air in weight,
Hung from the centre at a greater height?
Why do not these their nature's law obey,
Rush from above, and near the centre stay,
And make all lighter bodies give them way?
Tell us, Lucretius, why they ne'er pursue
This nat'ral bent and this undoubted due.
Since to the earth you give the middle place,
To which all heavy things direct their race;
If nothing does obstruct, by certain fate
Things would in order of their diff'rent weight
Lie round the earth, and make one mighty heap,
They would their place, as different strata, keep.
Nor would the air or interceding sky
Between the distant orbs and worlds divided lie.
Ether and air would claim the highest place,
The stars and planets would the earth embrace,
As now the ocean floats upon its face.
In vain you labour by mechanic rules,
In vain exhaust the reasons of your schools,
These questions to resolve and to explain,
How sep'rate worlds were made, and sep'rate still remain.
Since to your uncompounded atoms you
Figures in number infinite allow,
From which, by various combination, springs
This unconfin'd diversity of things;
Are not in this design and counsel clear,
Does not the wise artificer appear,
Who the corporeal particles endu'd
With diff'rent shape, and diff'rent magnitude,

That from the mixtures all things might have birth
In the wide sea, and air, and heav'n, and earth?
To all these figures of distinguish'd kind,
And diff'rent sizes, are not ends assign'd?
Then own their cause did act with wise intent,
Which did those sizes square, and ev'ry shape invent.
When atoms first the world began to frame,
Is it not strange that ev'ry number came
Of such a figure, and of such a size,
As serv'd to found the earth, and spread the skies?
Had they not met in such proportion, were
Their form and number not as now they are,
In a rude mass they had confus'dly join'd,
Not in a finish'd world, like this, combin'd.
Did these assembled substances reflect,
That here a beauteous frame they must erect
Did they a gen'ral council wisely call,
To lay the platform of each mighty ball?
To settle prudent rules, and orders make,
In rearing worlds, what methods they should take?
To ev'ry atom was his task enjoin'd?
His post, and fellow-labourers assign'd?
Did they consent what parts they should compose;
That these should æther make, or water those?
That some should be the moon, or some the earth,
Those give the sun, and these the planet birth?
If all these noble worlds were undesign'd,
And carry'd on without a conscious mind,
Oh happy accident! auspicious chance!
That in such order made the work advance,
At length to such admir'd perfection brought
The finish'd structure as it had been wrought
With art transcendent and consummate thought!
Since 'tis an outrage done to common sense
To fix a central point in space immense,

Why is a middle to the earth assign'd,
To which your pond'rous bodies are inclin'd?
  Besides, reflect how this terrestrial mass
Does the whole sea a thousand times surpass;
Which in a line, if drawn directly down,
More than a mile in depth is rarely known.
Now had by chance more wat'ry atoms came
Than earthy to compose this wond'rous frame;
Or had they both in equal number met, [fit;
Which might as well have been, had chance thought
Or if the wat'ry (we no farther press)
Were but an hundred times in number less;
This globe had lain, if not a gen'ral flood,
At least a fen, a mass of ouze and mud;
With no rich fruit, or verdant beauty blest,
Wild and unpeopled, or by man, or beast.
  Who will our orb's unequal face explain,
Which Epicurus made all smooth and plain?
How did thy rocks, O earth, thy hills arise?
How did thy giant sons invade the skies?
Lucretius, that it happen'd thus, replies.
  Now give us leave, great poet, to demand,
How the capacious hollow in the land
Was first produc'd, with ease to entertain
All the assembled waters of the main.
When earth was made, this hollow for the sea
Was form'd; but how? it happen'd so to be;
It on a time fell out, that ev'ry wave
Forsook the earth, and fill'd the mighty cave,
Which happen'd opportunely to be there,
Where now their heads the rolling billows rear.
It then fell out, that stones did rocks compose,
That vales subsided, and that hills arose.
Thus the formation of the world you know;
So all events fell out, and all things happen'd so.

Can tales more senseless, ludicrous and vain,
By winter fires old nurses entertain?
Does this unfold how all things first were made
Without divine and supernat'ral aid?
His penetration has Lucretius shown,
By saying things proceed from chance alone,
As their efficient cause, that is, from none? [night,
But let your troops, which rang'd the plains of
And thro' the vacant wing'd their careless flight,
The high command of ruling chance obey;
Unguided and unconscious of the way
Let them advance to one determin'd place,
Prescrib'd by chance, in all th' unmeasur'd space
Their proper stations undirected find,
To form a world, that never was design'd.
Let all the rolling globes, and spacious skies,
From happy hits of heedless atoms rise.
Be thus the earth's unmov'd foundations laid,
Thus the thin regions of the air display'd.
Chance shall the planets in their place suspend,
Between these worlds th' etherial plains extend;
Direct the sun to that convenient seat,
Whence he displays his lustre and his heat.
This labour, all this progress is in vain,
Unless the orbs their various motions gain;
For let the sun in buoyant æther float,
Nor nearer to the earth, nor more remote:
Yet did his orb unmov'd its beams diffuse,
He'd sure destruction to the earth produce.
One half for heat, and one for cold would pray;
This would abhor the night, and that the day.
Did he not yearly thro' the zodiac pass,
Were he not constant to his daily race,
He would not, by alternate shade and light,
Produce the needful change of day and night.

Nor would the various seasons of the year,
By turns revolving, rise and disappear.
Now can judicious atomists conceive,
Chance to the sun could this just impulse give,
By which the source of day so swiftly flies,
His stages keeps, and traverses the skies?
We ask you whence these constant motions flow;
Will learned heads reply they happen'd so?
You say, the solar orb, first mov'd by chance,
Does north and south, and east and west advance?
We ask why first in these determin'd ways
He chose to move? why thence he never strays?
Why did he ne'er, since time began, decline
His round diurnal, or his annual line?
So steadily does fickle fortune steer,
Th' obedient orb, that it should never err?
Should never start aside, and never stray!
Never in pathless æther miss his way?
Why does he ne'er beyond the tropics go?
Why still revolve? why travel to and fro?
Will it a wise philosopher content,
To say these motions came by accident,
That all is undesign'd, fortuitous event?
But if the sluggish sun you'll not disturb,
But motion give to this terrestrial orb;
Still of the earth we the same question ask,
Which to explain, you have as hard a task.
Can chance this frame, these artful scenes erect,
Which knows not work less artful to effect?
Did it mechanic engines e'er produce,
A globe, or tube of astronomic use?
Why do not vessels, built and rigg'd by chance,
Drawn in long order, on the billows dance?
Might not that sov'reign cause with greater ease
A navy build than make the winds and seas?

Let atoms once the form of letters take
By chance, and let those huddled letters make
A finished poem by a lucky hit,
Such as the Grecian, or the Mantuan writ;
Then we'll embrace the doctrines you advance,
And yield the world's fair poem made by chance.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

The introduction. A description of the calamitous state of mankind, by reason of innumerable woes and sufferings to which they are obnoxious. Diseases of the body. Trouble and grief of mind. Violence and oppression. The vicissitude of human affairs, and the certain prospect of death. Whence it appears that it suits the state of mankind, and therefore is desirable, there should be a God. Arguments against the fatalists, who assert the eternity of the world. There must be granted some self-existent and independent being. The corporeal world cannot be that being. Proved from its mutability, and the variety of forms rising and disappearing in the several parts of nature. From the possibility of conceiving, without any consequent contradiction, less or more parts in the world, than are actually existent. From the possibility of plants and animals having had different shapes and limbs from what they now have. The pretended fatal chain of things not self-existent and independent; because all its links or parts are dependent, and obnoxious to corruption. Fate a word without sense or meaning. Two more arguments against the eternity of the world, from the contemplation of the light of the sun, and of motion. Aristotle's scheme considered and confuted.

AH hapless mortal man! ah rigid fate!
What cares attend our short, uncertain state?
How wide a front, how deep and black a rear,
What sad varieties of grief and fear,
Drawn in array, exert their fatal rage,
And gall obnoxious life through every stage,
From infancy to youth, from youth to age?

Who can compile a roll of all our woes?
Our friends are faithless, and sincere our foes.
Now sharp invectives from an envious tongue
Improve our errors, and our virtues wrong:
Th' oppressor now with arbitrary might
Tramples on law, and robs us of our right;
Dangers unseen on ev'ry side invade,
And snares o'er all the unfaithful ground are laid.
Oft wounds from foreign violence we feel,
Now from the ruffian's, now the warrior's steel:
By bruises or by labour we are pain'd;
A bone disjointed, or a sinew strain'd.
Now festering sores afflict our tortur'd limbs,
Now to the yielding heart the gangrene climbs.
Acute distempers fierce our veins assail,
Rush on with fury, and by storm prevail;
Others with thrift dispense their stores of grief,
And by the sap prolong the siege of life:
While to the grave we for deliv'rance cry,
And promis'd still, are still deny'd to die.
See, cholic, gout, and stone, a cruel train,
Oppos'd by all the healing race in vain,
Their various racks and lingering plagues employ,
Relieve each other, and by turns annoy,
And, tyrant like, torment, but not destroy.
We noxious insects in our bowels feed,
Engender deaths, and dark destruction breed.
The spleen with sullen vapours clouds the brain,
And binds the spirits in its heavy chain:
How'er the cause phantastic may appear,
Th' effect is real, and the pain sincere.
Hydropic wretches by degrees decay,
Growing the more, the more they waste away:
By their own ruins they augmented lie,
With thirst and heat amidst a deluge fry.

And while in floods of water these expire,
More scorching perish by the fever's fire.
Stretch'd on our downy, yet uneasy beds,
We change our pillows, and we raise our heads!
From side to side for rest in vain we turn,
With cold we shiver, or with heat we burn.
Of night impatient, we demand the day,
The day arrives, and for the night we pray:
The night and day successive come and go,
Our lasting pains no interruption know.
  Since man is born to so much woe and care,
Must still new terrors dread, new sorrow bear,
Does it not suit the state of human kind,
There should preside a good Almighty mind?
A cause supreme, that might all nature steer,
Avert our danger, and prevent our fear,
Who, when implor'd, might timely succour give,
Solace our anguish, and our wants relieve:
Father of comfort might our souls sustain,
When prest with grief, and mitigate our pain.
  'Tis certain something from all ages past
Without beginning was, and still will last.
For if of time one period e'er had been
When nothing was, then nothing could begin.
That things should to themselves a being give,
Reluctant reason never can conceive.
If you affirm, effects themselves produce,
You shock the mind, and contradiction chuse:
For they, 'tis clear, must act and move before
They were in being, or had motive pow'r:
As active causes, must of right at once
Existence claim, and as effects, renounce.
Then something is, which no beginning had,
A causeless cause, or nothing could be made,

Which must by pure necessity exist,
And whose duration nothing can resist.
  Let us inquire, and search by due degrees
What, who this self-existent being is.
  Should the material world's capacious frame
Uncaus'd, and independent being claim,
It would thus form'd and fashion'd, as we see,
Derive existence from necessity,
And then to ages unconfin'd must last
Without the least diversity or waste.
Necessity, view'd with attentive thought,
Does plain impossibility denote,
That things should not exist, which actual are,
Or in another shape, or diff'rent modes appear.
  But see, in all corporeal nature's scene,
What changes, what diversities have been?
Matter not long the same appearance makes,
But shifts her old, and a new figure takes.
If now she lies in winter's rigid arms
Dishonour'd, and despoil'd of all her charms,
Soft vernal airs will loose th' unkind embrace,
And genial dews renew her wither'd face.
Like fabled nymphs transform'd she's now a tree,
Now weeps into a flood, and streaming seeks the sea.
She's now a gaudy fly, before a worm,
Below a vapour, and above a storm.
This ouze was late a monster of the main,
That turf a lowing grazer of the plain,
A lion this did o'er the forest reign.
Regard that fair, that branching laurel plant,
Behold that lovely blushing amarant;
One William's broken frame might have assum'd,
And one from bright Maria's dust have bloom'd.

These shifting scenes, these quick rotations show
Things from necessity could never flow, [owe.
But must to mind and choice precarious beings
  Let us suppose that nature ever was,
Without beginning, and without a cause;
As her first order, disposition, frame,
Must then subsist unchangeably the same;
So must our mind pronounce, it would not be
Within the reach of possibility,
That e'er the world a being could have had
Diff'rent from what it is, or could be made
Of more or less, or other parts, than those
Which the corporeal universe compose.
Now, fatalist, we ask, if those subvert
Reason's establish'd maxims, who assert
That we the world's existence may conceive,
Though we one atom out of nature leave:
Though some one wand'ring orb, or twinkling star,
Were absent from the heav'ns, which now is there:
Though some one kind of plant, or fly, or worm,
No being had, or had another's form.
  And might not other animals arise
Of diff'rent figure, and of diff'rent size?
In the wide womb of possibility
Lie many things, which ne'er may actual be:
And more productions of a various kind
Will cause no contradiction in the mind.
'Tis possible the things in nature found [own'd.
Might diff'rent forms and diff'rent parts have
The boar might wear a trunk, the wolf a horn,
The peacock's train the bittern might adorn;
Strong tusks might in the horse's mouth have grown,
And lions might have spots, and leopards none.
But if the world knows no superior cause,
Obeys no sovereign's arbitrary laws;

If absolute necessity maintains
Of causes and effects the fatal chains;
What could one motion stop, change one event?
It would transcend the wide the vast extent,
The utmost stretch of possibility,
That things, ftom what they are, should disagree.
  If to elude this reas'ning, you reply,
Things what they are, are by necessity;
Which never else so aptly could conspire
To serve the whole, and nature's ends acquire;
To form the beauty, order, harmony,
Which we through all the works of nature see;
Ready we this assertion will allow,
For what can more exalted wisdom show?
With zeal we this necessity defend
Of means directed to their useful end;
But 'tis not that which fatalists intend,
Nor that which we oppose in this debate,
An uncontroll'd necessity of fate,
Which all things blindly does, and must produce,
Unconscious of their goodness and their use,
Which cannot ends design, nor means convenient
  If you persist, and fondly will maintain [chuse.
Of causes and effects an endless train;
That this successive series still has been,
Will never cease, and never did begin;
That things did always, as they do, proceed,
And no first cause, no wise director need:
Say, if no links of all your fatal chain
Free from corruption, and unchang'd remain;
If of the whole each part in time arose,
And to a cause its borrow'd being owes;
How then the whole can independent be?
How have a being from necessity?

Is not the whole, ye learned heads, the same
With all the parts, and different but in name?
Could e'er that whole the least perfection show,
Which from the parts, that form it, did not flow?
Then, tell us, can it from its parts derive
What in themselves those parts had not to give?
  Farther to clear the subject in debate,
Inform us, what you understand by fate.
Have you a just idea in the mind
Of this great cause of things by you assign'd?
If you the order and dependence mean
By which effects upon their causes lean,
The long succession of th' efficient train,
And firm coherence of th' extended chain;
Then fate is nothing but a mode of things,
Which from continu'd revolution springs;
A pure relation, and a mere respect
Between the cause effective and th' effect.
If causes and effects themselves are that
Which your clear-sighted schools intend by fate;
Then fate by no idea can be known,
'Tis one thing only, as a heap is one.
You no distinguish'd being by it mean,
But all the effects and causes that have been.
If you assert, that each efficient cause
Must act by fix'd inevitable laws:
If you affirm this necessary state,
And tell us this necessity is fate;
When will you bless the world with light to see
The spring and source of this necessity?
Say, what did so dispose, so things ordain
To form the links of all the casual chain;
That nature by inevitable force
Should run one ring, and keep one steady course?

That things must needs in one set order flow,
And all events must happen, as they do?
Can you no proof of your assertion find?
Produce no reason to convince the mind;
That nature this determin'd way must go?
Are all things thus, because they must be so?
We grant with ease there is necessity,
The source of things should self-existent be;
But then he's not a necessary cause,
He freely acts by arbitrary laws.
He gave to beings motive energy,
And active things to passive did apply;
In such wise order all things did dispose,
That of events necessity arose:
Without his aid, say, how will you maintain
Your fatal link of causes; hence 'tis plain
While the word Fate you thus effect to use,
You coin a senseless term th' unwary to amuse.
You, who assert the world did ne'er commence,
Prepare against this reas'ning your defence.
If solar beams, which through th' expansion dart,
Corporeal are, as learned schools assert,
Since still they flow, and no supply repays
The lavish sun his dissipated rays,
Grant, that his radiant orb did ne'er begin,
And that his motions have eternal been;
Then, by eternal, infinite expense,
By unrecruited waste, and spoils immense,
By certain fate to slow destruction doom'd,
His glorious stock long since had been consum'd;
Of light unthrifty, and profuse of day,
The ruin'd globe had spent his latest ray:
Dispers'd in beams eternally display'd,
Had lost in æther roam'd, and loose in atoms stray'd.

Grant, that a grain of matter would outweigh
The light, the sun dispenses in a day,
Through all the stages of his heavenly way;
That in a year the golden torrents sent
From the bright source, its losses scarce augment;
Yet without end if you the waste repeat,
Th' eternal loss grows infinitely great.
Then, should the sun of finite bulk sustain
In ev'ry age the loss but of a grain,
If we suppose those ages infinite,
Could there remain one particle of light?
Reflect, that motion must abate its force,
As more or less obstructed in its course:
That all the heavenly orbs, while turning round,
Have some resistance from the medium found:
Be that resistance ne'er so faint and weak,
If 'tis eternal, 'twill all motion break.
If in each age you grant the least decrease,
By infinite succession it must cease.
Hence, if the orbs have still resisted been
By air, or light, or æther ne'er so thin;
Long since their motion must have been suppress't,
The stars had stood, the sun had lain at rest,
So vain, so wild a scheme you fatalists have dress'd.
Let us the wise positions now survey
Of Aristotle's school, who's pleas'd to say
Nothing can move itself, no inward pow'r
To any being motion can procure,
Whate'er is mov'd, its motion must derive
From something else, which must an impulse give.
And yet no being motion could begin,
Else motion might not have eternal been.
That matter never did begin to move,
But in th' immense from endless ages strove,
The Stagyrite thus undertakes to prove:

He says, of motion time the measure is;
Then that's eternal too, as well as this.
Motion through ages without limit flows,
Since time, its measure, no beginning knows.
This feeble base upholds our author's hopes,
And all his mighty superstructure props.
On this he all his tow'ring fabric rears,
Sequel on sequel heaps, to reach the spheres.
But if this definition you deny
Of time, on which his building does rely,
You bring his lofty Babel from the sky.
A thousand fine deductions you confound,
Scatter his waste philosophy around,
And level all his structure with the ground.
We then this definition thus defeat;
Time is no measure which can motion mete.
For men of reas'ning faculties will see
That time can nothing but duration be
Of beings; and duration can suggest
Nothing, or of their motion or their rest:
Only prolong'd existence it implies,
Whether the thing is mov'd, or quiet lies.
This single blow will all the pile subvert,
So proudly rais'd, but with so little art.
But since the author has such fame acquir'd,
And as a god of science been admir'd;
A stricter view we'll of his system take,
And of the parts a short examen make.
Let us observe, what light his scheme affords,
His undigested heap of doubtful words.
Great Stagyrite, the lost inquirer show
The spring, whence motion did for ever flow;
Since nothing of itself e'er moves or strives,
Tell what begins, what the first impulse gives.

Hear how the man, who all in fame surmounts,
For motion's spring and principle accounts.
To his supreme, unmov'd, unactive god
He the first sphere appoints, a blest abode:
Who sits supinely on his azure throne,
In contemplation of himself alone;
Is wholly mindless of the world, and void
Of providential care, and unemploy'd.
To all the spheres inferior are assign'd
Gods subaltern, and of inferior kind.
On these he self-existence does confer,
Who, as the God supreme, eternal are.
With admiration mov'd, and ardent love,
They all their spheres around in order move,
And from these heav'nly revolutions flow
All motions, which are found in things below.
If you demand by what impulsive force
The under-gods begin their circling course:
He says, as things desirable excite
Desire, and objects move the appetite;
So his first god, by kindling ardent love,
Does all the gods in seats inferior move:
Thus mov'd, they move around their mighty spheres,
With their refulgent equipage of stars;
From sphere to sphere communicate the dance,
Whence all in heavenly harmony advance.
And from this motion propagated rise
All motions in the earth, and air, and skies.
And thus by learned Aristotle's mind
All things were form'd, yet nothing was design'd.
He owns no choice, no arbitrary will,
No artist's hand, and no exerted skill.
All motions flow from necessary fate,
Which nothing does resist, or can abate.

Things sink and rise, a being lose or gain
In a coherent, undissolving chain [tain.
Of causes and effects, which nature's course sus-
Th' unmoveable supreme the rest does move,
As proper objects raise desire and love.
They mov'd without their choice, without consent,
Move all their spheres around without intent.
Whate'er he calls his moving cause, to chuse
He gives that cause no pow'r, or to refuse.
And thus from fate all artful order springs,
This rear'd the world, this is the rise of things.
Now, give us leave to ask, great Stagyrite,
How the first God th' inferior does excite?
Of his own substance does he parts convey,
Whose motive force the under-gods obey?
If so, he may be chang'd, he may decay.
But if by stedfast gazing they are mov'd,
And admiration of the object lov'd;
If those below their motive force acquire
From the strong impulse of divine desire;
Tell us, what good your God supreme can grant,
Which those beneath, to make them happy, want.
If admiration of the God supreme,
And heavenly raptures should their breasts inflame,
Is that of motion a resistless cause,
Of motion constant to eternal laws?
Might not each second god unactive lie
On his blue sphere, and fix his ravish'd eye
On the supreme immoveable, and ne'er
Be forc'd to roll around his solid sphere?
Say, how could wonder drive them from their place?
How in a circle make them run their race?
How keep them steady in one certain pace?
He this a fundamental maxim lays,
That nature wisely acts in all her ways:

That she pursues the things, which most conduce
To order, beauty, decency, and use.
Who can to reason this affront endure?
Should it derision cause, or anger more,
To hear a deep philosopher assert
That nature, not endu'd with skill or art,
Of liberty, of choice, of reason void,
Still wisely acts, wherever she's employ'd?
Can actions be denominated wise,
Which from a brute necessity arise,
Which the blind agent never did intend,
The means unchosen, and unknown the end?
On this be laid the stress of this debate;
What wisely acts, can never act by fate.
The means and end must first be understood;
The means, as proper, and the end, as good.
The act must be exerted with intent,
By using means to gain the wish'd event.
But can a senseless and unconscious cause
By foreign impulse mov'd, and fatal laws,
This thing as good, and that as fit respect,
Design the end, and then the means elect?
Nature you grant can no event intend,
Yet that she acts with prudence you pretend,
So Nature wisely acts, yet acts without an end.
Yet while this prince of science does declare
That means or ends were never Nature's care,
That things, which seem with perfect art contriv'd,
By the resistless force of fate arriv'd:
This cautious master to secure his fame,
And 'scape the atheist's ignominious name,
Did to his god's of all degrees allow
Counsel, design, and pow'r, to chuse and know.
Yet since he's pleas'd so plainly to assert
His *gods no act of* reas'ning pow'r exert,

No mark of choice, or arbitrary will,
Employ'd no prudence, and express'd no skill
In making, or directing nature's frame;
Which from his fate inevitable came;
These gods must, as to us, be brute and blind,
And as unuseful, as if void of mind.
Acting without intent, or care, or aim,
Can they our pray'r regard, or praises claim?
Of all the irreligious in debate,
This shameful error is the common fate:
That though they cannot but distinctly see
In nature's works, and whole œconomy—
Design and judgment in a high degree;
This judgment, this design, they ne'er allow
Do from a cause endu'd with reason flow:
The art they grant, th' artificer reject,
The structure own, and not the architect.
That unwise nature all things wisely makes,
And prudent measures without prudence takes.
Grant that their admiration and their love
Of the first God, may all th' inferior move;
Grant too, though no necessity appears,
That with their rapture mov'd, they mov'd their spheres.
These questions let the Stagyrite resolve,
Why they at all, why in this way, revolve?
Declare by what necessity controll'd
In one determin'd manner they are roll'd?
Why is their swift rotation west and east,
Rather than north and south, or east and west?
Why do not all th' inferior spheres obey
The highest sphere's inevitable sway?
Tell us, if all celestial motions rise
From revolutions of the starry skies,

Whence of the orbs the various motions come?
Why some the gen'ral road pursue, and some
In æther stray, and disobedient roam?
If yours the source of motion is, declare
Why this is fix'd, and that a wand'ring star?
Tell by what fate, by what resistless force
This orb has one, and that another course?
How does the learned Greek the cause unfold
With equal swiftness why the sun is roll'd
Still east and west, to mark the night and day?
To form the year why thro' the ecliptic way?
What magic, what necessity confines
The solar orb between the tropic lines?
What charms in those enchanted circles dwell,
That with controlling power the sun repel?
The Stagyrite to this no answer makes;
Of the vast globe so little thought he takes,
That he to solve these questions never strives,
No cause, or of its place, or motion gives.
But farther yet, applauded Greek, suppose
Celestial motions from your spring arose;
That motion down to all the worlds below
From the first sphere may propagated flow:
Since you of things to shew th' efficient source,
Have always to necessity recourse;
From what necessity do spheres proceed
With such a measur'd, such a certain speed?
We fain would this mysterious cause explore,
Why motion was not either less or more;
But in this just proportion and degree,
As suits with nature's just economy.
This is a cause, a right one too, we grant,
But 'tis the final, we th' efficient want.
With greater swiftness if the spheres were whirl'd,
The motion giv'n to this inferior world

Too violent had been for nature's use,
Of too great force mix'd bodies to produce:
The elements, air, water, earth and fire,
Which now to make compounded things conspire,
By their rude shocks could never have combin'd
Or had been disengag'd, as soon as join'd.
But then had motion in a less degree
Been giv'n, than that, which we in nature see;
Of greater vigour we had stood in need,
To mix and blend the elemental seed:
To temper, work, incorporate and bind
Those principles, that hence of ev'ry kind
The various compound beings might arise,
Which fill the earth and sea, and store the skies.
Say, what necessity, what fatal laws
Did in such due proportion motion cause,
Nor more or less, but just so much, as tends
To frame the world, and serve all nature's ends?
  Ask why the highest of the rolling spheres,
Deck'd to profusion with refulgent stars,
And all with bright excrescencies embost,
Has the whole beauty of the heav'ns engrost:
When of the others, to dispel the night,
Each owns a single solitary light.
Only one planet in a sphere is found,
Marching in air his melancholy round:
Nature, he tells us, took this prudent care,
That the sublimest and the noblest sphere
Should be with nobler decorations blest,
And in magnificence out shine the rest:
That so its greater ornament and state
Should bear proportion with its greater height.
It seems then nature does not only find
Means to be good, beneficent and kind,

But has for beauty and for order car'd,
Does rank and state and decency regard.
Now should he not considering men forgive,
If, sway'd by this assertion, they believe
That nature, which does decency respect,
Is something, which can reason, chuse, reflect?
Or that some wise director must preside
O'er nature's works, and all her motions guide?
You here should that necessity declare,
Why all the stars adorn the highest sphere:
Say, how is this th' effect of fatal laws,
Without reflecting on a final cause?
One sphere has all the stars; we ask you why?
When you to beauty and to order fly,
You plain assert the truth, which you deny:
That is, that nature has wise ends in view,
With foresight works, and does designs pursue.
  Thus all the mighty wits, that have essay'd
To explicate the means, how things are made
By nature's power, without the hand divine,
The final causes of effects assign.
They say, that this or that is so or so,
That such events in such succession flow,
Because convenience, decency, and use,
Require, that nature things should thus produce.
They in their demonstrations always vaunt
Efficient causes, which they always want.
But thus they yield the question in debate,
And grant the impotence of chance and fate.
For till they show by what necessity
Things have the disposition, which we see,
Whether it be deriv'd from fate or chance,
Not the least step in science they advance.
  Grant, nature furnish'd, at her vast expense,
One *room of state* with such magnificence,

That it might shine above the others bright,
Adorn'd with num'rous burnish'd balls of light.
Does she on one by decent rules dispense
Of constellations such a wealth immense,
While the next sphere in amplitude and height
Rolls on with one erratic, lonely light?
But be it so, the question's still the same,
Tell us from what necessity it came;
Let us the great philosopher attend,
While to the world's below his thoughts descend.
His elements, earth, water, air, and fire,
He says, to make all compound things conspire.
He in the midst leaves the dull earth at rest,
In the soft bosom of the air caress'd.
The red-wing'd fire must to the moon arise,
Hover in air, and lick contiguous skies.
No charms, no force can make the fire descend,
Nor can the earth to seats superior tend.
Both unmolested peace for ever own,
This in the middle, that beneath the moon.
Water and air not so; for they by fate
Assign'd to constant duty, always wait;
Ready by turns to rise or to descend,
Nature against a vacant to defend:
For should a void her monarchy invade,
Should in her works the smallest breach be made,
That breach the mighty fabric would dissolve,
And in immediate ruin all involve.
A consequence so dismal to prevent,
Water and air are still (as said) intent
To mount or fall, this way or that to fly,
Seek subterranean vaults, to climb the sky.
While these with so much duty are opprest,
The earth and fire are privileg'd with rest.

These elements, 'tis clear, have not discern'd
The interest of the whole, nor are concern'd
Lest they, when once an interposing void
Has nature's frame o'erturn'd, should be destroy'd.
  Tell, why these simple elements are four?
Why just so many, why not less or more?
Does this from pure necessity proceed?
Or say, does nature just that number need?
If this, you mock us, and decline the task,
You give the final cause, when we the efficient ask.
If that, how often shall we call in vain,
That you would this necessity explain?
  But here forgive me, famous Stagyrite,
If I esteem it idle to recite
The reasons, so you call them, which you give,
To make us this necessity believe:
Reasons so trifling, so absurd and dry,
That those should blush, who make a grave reply.
  Your elements we grant: but now declare
How you to form compounded things prepare,
And mix your fire and water, earth and air?
The swift rotation of the spheres above,
You say, must all inferior bodies move:
The elements in sublunary space
Are by this impulse forc'd to leave their place:
By various agitations they combine
In diff'rent forms, by diff'rent mixtures join
Blended and justly temper'd they compound
All things in all th' inferior regions found.
Thus beings from th' incorporated four
Result, by undesigning nature's power.
Hence metals, plants, and minerals arise,
The clouds, and all the meteors of the skies.
Hence all the clans that haunt the hill or wood,
That beat the air, or cut the limpid flood.

E'en man, their lord, hence into being came,
Breath'd the pure air, and felt the vital flame.
Say, is not this a noble scheme, a piece
Worthy the Stagyrite, and worthy Greece?
But now, acute philosopher, declare
How this rotation of the heav'nly sphere
Can mingle fire and water, earth and air?
The fire, that dwells beneath the lunar ball,
To meet ascending earth, must downward fall.
Now turn your sphere contiguous to the fire,
Will from its seat that element retire?
The sphere could never drive its neighbour down,
But give a circling motion, like its own.
So give the air impression from above,
It in a whirl virtiginous would move:
And thus the rolling spheres can ne'er displace
The fire or air to make a mingled mass:
The elements distinct might keep their seat,
Elude the ruffle, and your scheme defeat.
But since the applauded author will demand
For complex bodies no director's hand?
Since art without an artist he maintains,
A building rears without a builder's pains:
He comes at length to Epicurus' scheme,
Pleas'd by his model compound works to frame.
One all his various atoms does unite
To form mixt things, the famous Stagyrite
By his invented elements combin'd,
Composes beings of each diff'rent kind.
But both agree, while both alike deny
The gods did e'er their care or thought apply
To form, or rule this universal frame,
Which or from fate, or casual concourse came.
Whether to raise the world you are inclin'd
By this man's chance, or that man's fate, as blind,

If still mechanic, necessary laws
Of moving matter must all beings cause;
If artful works from a brute cause result,
From springs unknown, and qualities occult;
With schemes alike absurd our reason you insult.
And now to finish this less pleasant task,
Of our renown'd philosopher, we ask,
How was the earth determin'd to its place?
Why did it first the middle point embrace?
What blandishments, what strong attractive pow'r,
What happy arts adapted to allure,
Were by that single point of all the void,
To captivate and charm the mass employ'd?
Or what machines, what grapples did it cast
On earth, to fix it to the centre fast?
But if the earth by strong enchantment caught,
This point of all the vacant fondly sought,
Since it is unintelligent and blind,
Could it the way, the nearest could it find?
When at the point arrived, how did it know
It was arriv'd, and should no farther go?
When in a globous form collected there,
What wond'rous cement made the parts cohere?
Why did the orb suspended there remain
Fix'd and unmov'd? what does its weight sustain?
Tell what its fall prevents? can liquid air
The pond'rous pile on its weak columns bear?
The earth must, in its gravity's despight,
Uphold itself; our careless Stagyrite
For its support has no provision made,
No pillar rear'd, and no foundation laid.
When by occult and unknown gravity
'Tis to its station brought, it there must lie
In undisturb'd repose, in vain we ask him why?

Say, if the world uncaus'd did ne'er begin,
If nature, what it is, has always been;
Why do no arms the poet's song employ
Before the Theban war, or siege of Troy?
And why no elder histories relate
The rise of empires, and the turns of state?
If generations infinite are gone,
Tell, why so late were arts and letters known?
Their rise and progress is of recent date,
And still we mourn their young imperfect state.
If unconfin'd duration we regard,
And time be with eternity compar'd,
But yesterday the sages of the east
First some crude knowledge of the stars exprest.
In sacred emblems Egypt's son's conceal'd
Their mystic learning, rather than reveal'd.
Greece, after this, for subtle wit renown'd,
The sciences and arts improv'd or found;
First, causes search'd, and nature's secret ways;
First taught the bards to sing immortal lays;
The charms of music and of painting rais'd,
And was for building first, and first for sculpture
Man in mechanic arts did late excel, [prais'd.
That succour life, and noxious pow'r repel;
Which yield supplies for necessary use,
Or which to pleasure or to pomp conduce.
How late was found the loadstone's magic force,
That seeks the north, and guides the sailor's course?
How newly did the printer's curious skill
The enlighten'd world with letter'd volumes fill?
But late the kindled powder did explode
The massy ball, and the brass tube unload.
The tube, to whose loud thunder Albion owes
The laurel honours, that adorn her brows;

Which awful, during eight renown'd campaigns,
From Belgia's hills, and Gallia's frontier plains,
Did through th' admiring realms around proclaim
Marlbro's swift conquests, and great Anna's name.
By this the leader of the British pow'rs,
Shook Menin, Lilla, and high Ganda's tow'rs:
Next his wise engines levell'd Tournay's pride,
Whose lofty walls advancing foes defy'd.
Though nitrous tempests, and clandestine death,
Fill'd the deep caves and num'rous vaults beneath,
Which form'd with art, and wrought with endless [toil,
Ran through the faithless excavated soil;
See, the intrepid Briton delves his way,
And to the caverns lets in war and day:
Quells subterranean foes, and rises crown'd
With spoils, from martial labour under ground.
Mons, to reward Blarignia's glorious field,
To Marlbro's terrors did submissive yield.
The hero next assail'd proud Doway's head,
And spite of confluent inundations spread
Around, in spite of works for sure defence
Rais'd with consummate art, and cost immense,
With unexampled valour did succeed;
(Villars, thy host beheld the hardy deed:)
Aria, Venantia, Bethune and Bouchain,
Of his long triumphs close th' illustrious train.
While thus his thunder did his wrath declare
And artful lightnings flash'd along the air,
Somona's castles, with the impetuous roar
Astonish'd tremble, but their warriors more:
Lutetia's lofty tow'rs with terror struck,
Caught the contagion, and at distance shook.
Tell, Gallic chiefs, for you have often heard
His dreadful cannon, and his fire rever'd;

Tell, how you rag'd, when your pale cohorts run
From Marlbro's sword, the battle scarce begun.
Tell Scaldis, Legia tell, how to their head
Your frighted waves in refluent errors fled.
While Marlbro's cannon thus prevails by land,
Britain's sea-chiefs, by Anna's high command,
Resistless o'er the Tuscan billows ride,
And strike rebellowing caves on either side.
Their sulphur tempests ring from shore to shore,
Now make the Ligur start, and now the Moor.
Hark how the sound disturbs imperious Rome,
Shakes her proud hills, and rolls from dome to [dome!
Her mitred princes hear the echoing noise,
And, Albion, dread thy wrath, and awful voice.
Aided by thee the Austrian eagles rise
Sublime, and triumph in Iberian skies.
What panic fear, what anguish, what distress,
What consternation Gallia's sons express,
While trembling on the coast, they from afar
View the wing'd terrors, and the floating war!

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

The fabulous account of the first rise of mankind, given by the ancient poets. The opinions of many of the Greek philosophers concerning that point not less ridiculous. The assertion of Epicurus and his followers, that our first parents were the spontaneous production of the earth, most absurd and incredible. The true origin of man inquired into. He is proved to be at first created by an intelligent, arbitrary cause; from the characters and impressions of contrivance, art, and wisdom, which appear in his formation. The wonderful progress of it. The figure, situation, and connection of the bones. The system of the veins, and that of the arteries. The manner of the circulation of the blood described. Nutrition, how performed. The system of the nerves. Of the animal spirits, how made, and how employed in muscular motion and sensation. A wise, intelligent cause inferred from these appearances.

THE Pagan world, to Canaan's realms unknown,
Where knowledge reign'd, and light celestial shone,
Lost by degrees their parent Adam's name,
Forgot their stock, and wonder'd whence they came.
Unguided, in the dark they strove to find,
With fruitless toil, the source of human kind.
The heathen bards, who idle fables drest,
Illusive dreams in mystic verse express'd;
And foes to natural science and divine,
In beauteous phrase made impious notions shine:
In strains sublime their diff'rent fictions sung,
Whence the first parents of our species sprung.

Prometheus, so some elder poets say,
Temper'd and form'd a paste of purer clay,
To which, well mingled with the river's stream,
His artful hand gave human shape and frame:
Then with warm life his figures to inspire,
The bold projecter stole celestial fire.
While others tell us how the human brood
Ow'd their production to the fruitful wood.
How from the laurel and the ash they sprung,
And infants on the oak, like acorns, hung:
The crude conceptions prest the bending trees,
'Till cherish'd by the sun-beams, by degrees,
Ripe children dropp'd on all the soil around,
Peopled the woods, and overspread the ground.
Great Jupiter, so some were pleas'd to sing,
Of fabled gods the father and the king,
The moving pray'r of Æacus did grant,
And into men and women turn'd the ant.
Some tell, Deucalion and his Pyrrha threw
Obdurate stones, which o'er their shoulders flew,
Then shifting shape received a vital flame,
And men and women, wond'rous change! became.
And thus the hard and stubborn race of man
From animated rock and flint began.
Now to the learned schools of Greece repair,
Who chance the author of the world declare:
Then judge if wise philosophers excel
Those idle tales, which wanton poets tell.
They say, at first to living things the earth
At her formation gave spontaneous birth.
When youthful heat was through the glebe diffus'd,
Mankind, as well as insects, she produc'd.
That genial wombs by parent chance were form'd,
Adapted to the soil; which after warm'd

And cherish'd by the sun's enlivening beam,
With human offsprings did in embryo teem.
These nourish'd there a while imprison'd lay, [way,
Then broke their yielding bands, and forc'd their
The field a crop of reas'ning creatures crown'd,
And crying infants grovell'd on the ground.
A milky store was by the mother earth
Pour'd from her bosom, to sustain the birth.
In strength and bulk encreas'd, the earth-born race
Could move, and walk, and ready change their
O'er ev'ry hill and verdant pasture stray, [place:
Skip o'er the lawns, and by the rivers play:
Could eat the tender plant, and by degrees
Brouse on the shrubs, and crop the budding trees;
The fragrant fruit from bending branches shake
And with the crystal stream their thirst at pleasure
slake.

The earth by these applauded schools, 'tis said,
This single crop of men and women bred;
Who grown adult, so chance it seems enjoin'd,
Did male and female propagate their kind.
This wise account Lucretian sages give,
Whence our first parents their descent derive.

Severely on this subject to dispute,
And tales so wild, so senseless to confute,
Were with inglorious labour to disgrace
The schools, and reason's dignity debase.
But since, with this of man's original,
The parts remaining of their scheme must fall:
(Yet farther to pursue the present theme;)
Behold how vain philosophers may dream.

Grant, Epicurus, that by casual birth
Men sprung spontaneous from the fruitful earth,
When on the glebe the naked infants lay,
How were the helpless creatures fed? You say,

The teeming soil did from its breasts exude
A soft and milky liquor for their food.
I will not ask what this apt humour made,
Nor by what wond'rous channels 'twas convey'd.
For if we such inquiries make, we know
Your short reply, it happened to be so;
Without assigning once a proper cause,
Or solving questions by mechanic laws,
To ev'ry doubt your answer is the same,
It so fell out, and so by chance it came.
How should the new-born race their food com-
[mand,
Who cannot change their place, or move a hand?
Grant that the glebe beneath will never drink,
Nor through its pores let the soft humour sink;
Will not the sun with his exhaling ray
Defraud the babe, and draw his food away?
Since for so long a space the human birth
Must lie expos'd, and naked on the earth;
Say, could the tender creature, in despight
Of heat by day, and chilling dews by night,
In spite of thunder, winds, and hail and rain,
And all inclement air, its life maintain?
In vain, you say, in earth's primæval state,
Soft was the air, and mild the cold and heat,
For did not then the night succeed the day?
The sun as now roll through its annual way?
Th' effects then on the air must be the same,
The frosts of winter, and the summer's flame.
In the first age, you say, the pregnant ground,
With human kind in embryo did abound,
And pour'd her offspring on the soil around.
But tell us, Epicurus, why the field
Did never since one human harvest yield?
And why we never see one ripening birth
Heave in the glebe, and struggle through the earth?

You say, that when the earth was fresh and young,
While her prolific energy was strong,
A race of men she in her bosom bred,
And all the fields with infant people spread.
But that first birth her strength did so exhaust,
The genial mother so much vigour lost,
That wasted now by age, in vain we hope
She should again bring forth a human crop.
Mean time she's not with labour so much worn,
But she can still the hills with woods adorn.
See, from her fertile bosom how she pours
Verdant conceptions, and, refresh'd with show'rs,
Covers the field with corn, and paints the mead
with flow'rs.
See, her tall sons, the cedar, oak, and pine,
The fragrant myrtle, and the juicy vine,
Their parent's undecaying strength declare,
Which with fresh labour, and unwearied care,
Supplies new plants, her losses to repair.
Then since the earth retains her fruitful pow'r
To procreate plants, the forest to restore:
Say, why to nobler animals alone
Should she be feeble, and unfruitful grown?
After one birth she ceas'd not to be young,
The glebe was succulent, the mould was strong.
Could she at once fade in her perfect bloom?
Waste all her spirits, and her wealth consume?
Grant that her vigour might in part decrease,
From like productions must she ever cease?
To form a race she might have still inclin'd
Tho' of a monstrous, or a dwarfish kind,
Why did she never, by one crude essay,
Imperfect lines and rudiments display?
In some succeeding ages had been found
A leg or arm unfinish'd in the ground:

And sometimes in the fields might ploughing swains
Turn up soft bones, and break unfashion'd veins.
  But grant the earth was lavish of her pow'r,
And spent at once her whole prolific store:
Would not so long a rest new vigour give,
And all her first fertility revive?
Learn Epicurus, of th' experienc'd swain,
When frequent wounds have worn the impoverish'd plain:
Let him awhile the furrow not molest,
But leave the glebe to heav'nly dews and rest;
If then he till and sow the harrow'd field,
Will not the soil a plenteous harvest yield?
  The sun, by you, Lucretius, is assign'd
The other parent of all human kind.
But does he ever languish or decay?
Does he not equal influence display,
And pierce the plains with the same active ray?
If then the glebe warm'd with the solar flame
Men once produc'd, it still should be the same.
  You say, the sun's prolific beams can form
Th' industrious ant, the gaudy fly and worm:
Can make each plant, and tree, the gard'ner's care,
Beside their leaves their proper insects bear:
Then might the heav'ns in some peculiar state,
Or lucky aspect, beasts and men create.
But late inquirers by their glasses find,
That every insect, of each diff'rent kind,
In its own egg, cheer'd by the solar rays,
Organ's involv'd, and latent life displays:
This truth discover'd, by sagacious art,
Does all Lucretian arrogance subvert.
Proud wits, your frenzy own, and overcome
By reason's force, be now forever dumb.

If, learned Epicurus, we allow
Our race to earth primæval being owe,
How did she male and female sexes frame,
Say, if from fortune this distinction came?
Or did the conscious parent then foresee,
By one conception she should barren be,
And therefore, wisely provident, design'd
Prolific pairs to propagate the kind;
That thus preserv'd, the godlike race of man,
Might not expire e'er yet it scarce began.
Since by these various arguments 'tis clear
The teeming mould did not our parents bear;
By more severe inquiries let us trace
The origin and source of human race.
I think, I move, I therefore know I am;
While I have been, I still have been the same,
Since from an infant, I a man became.
But tho' I am, few circling years are gone,
Since I in nature's roll was quite unknown.
Then since 'tis plain I have not always been,
I ask, from whence my being could begin?
I did not to myself existence give,
Nor from myself the secret pow'r receive,
By which I reason, and by which I live.
I did not build this frame, nor do I know
The hidden springs from whence my motions flow.
If I had form'd myself, I had design'd
A stronger body, and a wiser mind,
From sorrow free, nor liable to pain;
My passions should obey, and reason reign.
Nor could my being from my parents flow,
Who neither did the parts, or structure know:
Did not my mind or body understand,
My sex determine, nor my shape command.

Had they design'd and rais'd the curious frame,
Inspir'd my branching veins with vital flame,
Fashion'd the heart, and hollow channels made,
Through which the circling streams of life are
play'd;
Had they the organs of my senses wrought,
And form'd the wond'rous principle of thought;
Their artful work they must have better known,
Explain'd its springs, and its contrivance shown.
If they could make, they might preserve me too,
Prevent my fears, or dissipate my woe.
When long in sickness languishing I lay,
They with compassion touch'd did mourn and pray:
To soothe my pain and mitigate my grief,
They said kind things, yet brought me no relief,
But whatsoever cause my being gave,
The power that made me, can its creature save.
If to myself I did not being give,
Nor from immediate parents did receive;
It could not from my predecessors flow,
They, than my parents, could not more bestow.
Should we the long depending scale ascend
Of sons and fathers, will it never end?
If 'twill, then must we through the order run
To some one man, whose being ne'er begun.
If that one man was sempiternal, why
Did he, since independent, ever die?
If from himself his own existence came,
The cause, that could destroy his being, name.
To seek my Maker thus in vain I trace
The whole successive chain of human race,
Bewilder'd I my author cannot find,
Till some first cause, some self-existent mind,
Who form'd, and rules all nature, is assign'd.

When first the womb did the crude embryo hold,
What shap'd the parts! what did the limbs unfold?
O'er the whole work in secret did preside,
Give quick'ning vigour, and each motion guide.
What kindled in the dark the vital flame,
And ere the heart was form'd, push'd on the red'ning stream?
Then for the heart the aptest fibres strung?
And in the breast th' impulsive engine hung?
Say, what the various bones so wisely wrought?
How was their frame to such perfection brought?
What did their figures for their uses fit,
Their number fix, and joints adapted knit;
And made them all in that just order stand,
Which motion, strength, and ornament demand?
What for the sinew spun so strong a thread?
The curious loom to weave the muscles spread?
Did the nice strings of tender membranes drill
And perforate the nerve with so much skill,
Then with the active stream the dark recesses fill?
The purple mazes of the veins display'd,
And all th' arterial pipes in order laid,
What gave the bounding current to the blood,
And to and fro convey'd the restless flood?
The living fabric now in pieces take,
Of ev'ry part due observation make;
All which such art discover, so conduce
To beauty, vigour, and each destin'd use;
The atheist, if to search for truth inclin'd,
May in himself his full conviction find,
And from his body teach his erring mind.
When the crude embryo careful nature breeds,
See how she works, and how her works proceeds?
While through the mass her energy she darts
To free and swell the complicated parts;

Which only does unravel and untwist
Th' invelop'd limbs, that previous there exist.
And as each vital speck, in which remains
Th' entire, but rumpled animal, contains
Organs perplex'd, and clues of twining veins;
So ev'ry fœtus bears a secret hoard,
With sleeping, unexpanded issue stor'd;
Which num'rous, but unquicken'd progeny,
Clasp'd and inwrap'd within each other lie:
Engendering heats these one by one unbind,
Stretch their small tubes, and hamper'd nerves unwind;
And thus when time shall drain each magazine
Crowded with men unborn, unripe, unseen,
Nor yet of parts unfolded, no increase
Can follow, all prolific power must cease.
Th' elastic spirits which remain at rest
In the strait lodgings of the brain comprest,
While by the ambient womb's enliv'ning heat
Cheer'd and awak'd, first themselves dilate;
Then quicken'd and expanded ev'ry way
The genial lab'rers all their force display.
They now begin to work the wond'rous frame,
To shape the parts, and raise the vital flame.
For when th' extended fibres of the brain
Their active guests no longer can restrain,
They backward spring, which due effort compels
The lab'ring spirits to forsake their cells:
The spirits thus exploded from their seat,
Swift from the head to the next parts retreat,
Force their admission, and their passage beat.
Their tours around th' unopen'd mass they take,
And by a thousand ways their inroads make:
'Till there resisted they their race inflect,
And backward to their source their way direct.

Thus with a steady and alternate toil
They issue from, and to the head recoil:
By which their plastic function they discharge,
Extend their channels, and their tracks enlarge.
For by the swift excursions which they make,
Still sallying from the brain, and leaping back,
They pierce the nervous fibre, bore the vein,
And stretch th' arterial channels, which contain
The various streams of life, that to and fro
Thro' dark meanders undirected flow:
Th' inspected egg, this gradual change betrays,
To which the brooding hen expanding heat conveys.

The beating heart demanded first for use,
Is the first muscle nature does produce.
By this impulsive engine's constant aid,
The tepid floods are ev'ry way convey'd:
And did not nature's care at first provide
The active heart to push the circling tide,
All progress to her work would be deny'd.

The salient point, so first is call'd the heart,
Shap'd and suspended with amazing art,
By turns dilated, and by turns comprest,
Expels, and entertains the purple guest.
It sends from out its left contracted side
Into th' arterial tube its vital pride:
Which tube, prolong'd but little from its source,
Parts its wide trunk, and takes a double course;
One channel to the head its way directs,
One to the inferior limbs its path inflects.
Both smaller by degrees, and smaller grow,
And on the parts, thro' which they branching go,
A thousand secret subtle pipes bestow.
From which by num'rous convolutions wound,
Wrap'd with th' attending nerve, and twisted round,

The complicated knots and kernels rise,
Of various figures, and of various size.
Th' arterial ducts, when thus involv'd, produce
Unnumber'd glands, and of important use.
But after, as they farther progress make,
The appellations of a vein they take.
For tho' th' arterial pipes themselves extend
In smallest branches, yet they never end:
The same continued circling channels run
Back to the heart, where first their course begun.
The heart, as said, from its contracted cave
On the left side, ejects the bounding wave.
Exploded thus, as splitting channels lead,
Upwards it springs, or downward is convey'd.
The crimson jets rais'd with elastic force
Swift to the seats of sense pursue their course;
Arterial streams thro' the soft brain diffuse,
And water all its fields with vital dews.
From this o'erflowing tide the curious brain
Does thro' its pores the purer spirits strain:
Which to its inmost seats their passage make,
Whence their dark rise th' extended sinews take.
With all their mouths the nerves these spirits drink,
Which thro' the cells of the fine strainer sink.
These all the channel'd fibres ev'ry way
For motion and sensation still convey,
The greates portion of th' arterial blood,
By the close structure of the parts withstood,
Whose narrow meshes stop the grosser flood,
By apt canals and furrows in the brain,
Which here discharge the office of a vein,
Invert their current, and the heart regain.
The shooting streams, which thro' another road
The beating engine downward did explode,

To all th' inferior parts descend, and lave
The members with their circulating wave.
To make the arterial treasure move as slow
As nature's ends demand, the channels grow
Still more contracted, as they farther go.
Besides the glands, which o'er the body spread,
Fine complicated clues of nervous thread,
Involv'd and twisted with th' arterial duct,
The rapid motion of the blood obstruct:
These labyrinths the circling current stay
For noble ends, which after we display.
Soon as the blood has past the winding ways,
And various turnings of the wond'rous maze,
From the entangled knot of vessels freed,
It runs its vital race with greater speed:
And from the parts and members most remote
By these canals the streams are backward brought,
Which are of thinner coats and fewer fibres
wrought;
Till all the confluent rills their current join,
And in the ample Porta vein combine.
This larger channel by a thousand roads
Enters the liver, and its store unloads.
Which from that store by proper inlets strains
The yellow dregs, and sends them by the veins,
To the large cistern which the gall contains.
Then to the vein, we Cava name, the blood
Calls in the scatter'd streams, and re-collects the
flood.
As when the Thames advances through the [plain,
With his fresh waters to dilute the main;
He turns and winds amidst the flow'ry meads,
And now contracts, and now his water spreads.
Here in a course direct he forward tends,
There to his head his wave retorted bends.

See, now the sportive flood in two divides
His silver train, now with uniting tides
He wanton clasps the intercepted soil,
And forms with erring streams the reedy isle;
At length collecting all his wat'ry band,
The ocean to augment he leaves the land.
So the red currents in their secret maze
In various rounds thro' dark meanders pass,
'Till all assembled in the Cava vein
Bring to the heart's right side their crimson train;
Which now comprest with force elastic drives
The flood, that thro' the secret passes strives.
The road that to the lungs this store transmits
Into unnumber'd narrow channels splits.
The venal blood crowds through the winding ways,
And thro' the tubes the broken tide conveys:
Those num'rous streams, their rosy beauty gone,
Poor by expense, and faint with labour grown,
Are in the lungs enrich'd, which reinspire
The languid juices, and restore their fire.
The large arterial ducts that thither lead,
By which the blood is from the heart convey'd
Through either lobe ten thousand branches spread.
Here its bright stream the bounding current parts,
And through the various passes swiftly darts:
Each subtle pipe, each winding channel fills
With sprightly liquors, and with purple rills:
The pipe, distinguish'd by its gristly rings,
To cherish life ærial pasture brings;
Which the sost breathing lungs with gentle force
Constant embrace by turns, by turns divorce:
The springy air this nitrous food impels
Through all the spungy parts and bladder'd cells,
And with dilating breath the vital bellows swells.

Th' admitted nitre agitates the flood,
Revives its fire, and referments the blood.
Behold, the streams now change their languid blue,
Regain their glory, and their flame renew.
With scarlet honours re-adorn'd the tide
Leaps on, and bright with more than Tyrian pride,
Advances to the heart, and fills the cave
On the left side, which the first motion gave.
Now through the same involv'd arterial ways,
Again th' exploded jets th' impulsive engine plays.
No sons of wisdom could this current trace,
Or of th' Ionic, or Italic race:
From thee, Democritus, it lay conceal'd,
Though yielding nature much to thee reveal'd.
Though with the curious knife thou didst invade
Her dark recesses, and has oft display'd
The crimson mazes, and the hollow road,
Which to the heart conveys the refluent blood.
It was to thee, great Stagyrite, unknown,
And thy preceptor of divine renown.
Learning did ne'er this secret truth impart
To the Greek masters of the healing art.
'Twas by the Coan's piercing eye unview'd
And did attentive Galen's search elude.
Thou, wondrous Harvey, whose immortal fame,
By thee instructed, grateful schools proclaim,
Thou Albion's pride, didst first the winding way,
And circling life's dark labyrinth display.
Attentive from the heart thou didst pursue
The starting flood, and keep it still in view,
Till thou with rapture saw'st the channels bring
The purple currents back, and form the vital ring.
See, how the human animal is fed,
How nourishment is wrought, and how convey'd.

The mouth, with proper faculties endu'd,
First entertains, and then divides the food.
Two adverse rows of teeth the meat prepare,
On which the glands fermenting juice confer.
Nature has various tender muscles plac'd,
By which the artful gullet is embrac'd:
Some the long funnel's curious mouth extend
Through which ingested meats with ease descend.
Other confederate pairs for nature's use
Contract the fibres, and the twitch produce
Which gently pushes on the grateful food
To the wide stomach, by its hollow road.
That this long road may unobstructed go,
As it descends it bores the midriff through.
The large receiver from concoction made
Behold amidst the warmest bowels laid.
The spleen to this, and to the adverse side
The glowing liver's comfort is apply'd,
Beneath, the pancreas has its proper seat,
To cheer its neighbour, and augment its heat.
More to assist it for its destin'd use,
This ample bag is stored with active juice,
Which can with ease subdue, with ease unbind
Admitted meats of every diff'rent kind.
This powerful ferment mingling with the parts,
The leaven'd mass to milky chyle converts.
The stomach's fibres this concocted food
By their contraction's gentle force exclude;
Which by the mouth on the right side descends
Thro' the wide pass, which from that mouth de-
In its progression soon the labour'd chyle [pends.
Receives the confluent rills of bitter bile,
Which by the liver sever'd from the blood,
And striving through the gall-pipe, here unload
Their yellow streams, more to refine the flood.

The complicated glands, in various ranks
Dispos'd along the neighb'ring channel's banks,
By constant weeping mix their wat'ry store
With the chyle's current, and dilute it more.
Th' intestine roads inflected and inclin'd
In various convolutions turn and wind,
That these meanders may the progress stay,
And the descending chyle by this delay
May through the milky vessels find its way:
Whose little mouths in the large channel's side
Suck in the flood, and drink the cheering tide.
These num'rous veins, such is the curious frame,
Receive the pure insinuating stream;
But no corrupt or dreggy parts admit
To form the blood, or feed the limbs unfit.
Th' intestine spiral fibres these protrude,
And from the winding tubes at length exclude.
  Observe these small canals conspire to make
With all their treasure one capacious lake,
Whose common receptacle entertains
Th' united streams of the lacteal veins.
Hither the rills of water are convey'd
In curious aqueducts by nature laid
To carry all the limpid humour strain'd,
And from the blood divided by the gland;
Which mingling currents with the milky juice
Makes it more apt to flow, more fit for use.
These liquors, which the wide receiver fill
Prepar'd with labour and refin'd with skill,
Another course to distant parts begin,
Through roads that stretch along the back within.
This useful channel, lately known, ascends,
And in the vein near the left shoulder ends;
Which there unloads its wealth, that with the blood
Now flows in one incorporated flood.

Soon by the vein 'tis to the heart convey'd
And is by that elastic engine play'd
Into the lungs, whence as describ'd before,
It onward springs, and makes the wondrous tour.
  Now all the banks the branching river laves
With dancing streams, and animated waves;
New florid honours and gay youth bestows,
Diffusing vital vigour, where it flows;
Supplies fresh spirits to the living frame,
And kindles in the eyes a brighter flame.
Muscles impair'd receive new fibrous thread,
And ev'ry bone is with rich marrow fed:
Nature revives, cheer'd with the wealthy tide,
And life regal'd displays its purple pride.
  But how the wondrous distribution's made,
How to each part its proper food convey'd;
How fibrous strings for nourishment are wrought;
By what conveyance to the muscles brought;
How rang'd for motion, how for beauty mix'd;
With vital cement how th' extremes are fix'd;
How they agree in various ways to join,
In a transverse, a straight and crooked line;
Here lost in wonder we adoring stand,
With rapture own the wise director's hand,
Who nature made, and does her works command.
Let us how'er the theme as far pursue,
As learn'd observers know, or think they do.
  Mixt with the blood in the same circling tide
The rills nutritious through the vessels glide:
Those pipes still less'ning as they further pass,
Retard the progress of the flowing mass.
The glands that nature o'er the body spreads
All artful knots of various hollow threads,
Which lymphæducts, an art'ry, nerve and vein
Involv'd and close together wound contain.

Make yet the motion of the streams more slow,
Which through those mazes intricate must flow,
And hence it comes the interrupted blood
Distends its channels with its swelling flood.
Those channels turgid with th' obstructed tide,
Stretch their small holes and make their meshes
By skilful nature pierc'd on ev'ry side. [wide,
Mean time the labour'd chyle pervades the pores
In all the arterial perforated shores,
The liquid food which through those passes strives
To ev'ry part just reparation gives:
Through holes of various figures various juice
Insinuates, to serve for nature's use.
See softer fibres to the flesh are sent,
While the thin membrane finer strings augment.
The tough and strong are on the sinews laid,
And to the bones the harder are convey'd.
But what the mass nutritious does divide,
To diff'rent parts the diff'rent portions guide;
What makes them aptly to the limbs adhere,
In youth augment them, and in age repair,
The deepest search could never yet declare.
Nor less contrivance, nor less curious art
Surprise, and please in every other part.
See, how the nerves with equal wisdom made,
Arising from the tender brain, pervade
And secret pass in pairs the channell'd bone,
And thence advance through paths and roads un-
Form'd of the finest complicated thread, [known.
These num'rous cords are through the body spread.
A thousand branches from each trunk they send,
Some to the limbs, some to the bowels tend.
Part in strait lines, part in transverse are found,
One forms a crooked figure, one a round.

The entrails these embrace in spiral strings;
Those clasp th' arterial tubes in tender rings:
The tendons some compacted close produce,
And some thin fibres for the skin diffuse.
  These subtle channels, such is ev'ry nerve,
For vital functions, sense, and motion serve.
Included spirits through their secret road
Pass to and fro, as through the veins the blood.
Some to the heart advancing take their way,
Which move and make the beating muscle play.
Part to the spleen, part to the liver go,
These to the lungs, those to the stomach flow.
They help to labour and concoct the food,
Refine the chyle, and animate the blood:
Exalt the ferments, and the strainers aid,
That by a constant separation made,
They may a due œconomy maintain,
Exclude the noxious parts, the good retain.
  Yet we these wondrous functions ne'er perceive,
Functions, by which we move, by which we live:
Unconscious we these motions never heed,
Whether they err, or by just laws proceed.
  But other spirits govern'd by the will
Shoot through their tracks, and distant muscles fill.
This sov'reign, by his arbitrary nod
Restrains or sends his ministers abroad.
Swift and obedient to his high command,
They stir a finger, or they lift a hand;
They tune our voices, or they move our eyes;
By these we walk, or from the ground arise:
By these we turn, by these the body bend;
Contract a limb at pleasure, or extend.
And though these spirits, which obsequious go,
Know not the paths, through which they ready flow,

Nor can our mind instruct them in their way,
Of all their roads as ignorant as they;
Yet seldom erring they attain their end,
And reach that single part, which we intend.
Unguided they a just distinction make;
This muscle swell, and leave the other slack.
And when their force this limb or that inflects,
Our will the measure of that force directs,
The spirits which distend them, as we please
Exert their power or from their duty cease.
These out-guards of the mind are sent abroad;
And still patroling beat the neighb'ring road:
Or to the parts remote obedient fly,
Keep posts advanc'd, and on the frontier lie;
The watchful centinels at ev'ry gate,
At ev'ry passage to the senses wait.
Still travel to and fro the nervous way,
And their impressions to the brain convey,
Where their report the vital envoys make,
And with new orders are remanded back.
Quick, as a darted beam of light, they go,
Through diff'rent paths to diff'rent organs flow;
Whence they reflect as swiftly to the brain,
To give it pleasure or to give it pain.
Thus has the muse a daring wing display'd,
Through trackless skies ambitious flight essay'd,
To sing the wonders of the human frame;
But oh! bewails her weak unequal flame.
Ye skilful masters of Machaon's race,
Who nature's mazy intricacies trace,
And to sublimer spheres of knowledge rise
By manag'd fire and late-invented eyes;
Tell how your search has here eluded been,
How oft amaz'd and ravish'd you have seen

The conduct, prudence, and stupendous art,
And master-strokes in each mechanic part.
Tell, what delightful mysteries remain
Unsung, which my inferior voice disdain.
  Who can this field of miracles survey,
And not with Galen all in rapture say,
Behold a God, adore him, and obey!

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

The introduction, in imitation of King Solomon's ironical concessions to the libertine. The Creator asserted from the contemplation of animals. Of their sense of hearing, tasting, smelling, and especially of seeing. Of the nobler operations of animals commonly called instincts. The Creator demonstrated farther from the contemplation of human understanding, and the perfections of the mind. The vigour and swiftness of thought. Simple perception. Reflection. Of the mind's power of abstracting, uniting and separating ideas. Of the faculty of reasoning, or deducing one proposition from two others. The power of human understanding in inventing skilful works, and in other instances. The mind's self-determining power, or freedom of choice. Her power of electing an end, and chusing means to attain that end. Of controlling our appetites, rejecting pleasures, and chusing pain, want, and death itself. in hopes of happiness in a distant unknown state of life. The conclusion, being a short recapitulation of the whole; with a hymn to the Creator of the world.

WHILE rosy youth its perfect bloom main-
Thoughtless of age, and ignorant of pains: [tains,
While from the heart rich streams with vigour spring,
Bound thro' their roads, and dance their vital ring,
And spirits, swift as sun-beams thro' the skies,
Dart thro' thy nerves, and sparkle in thy eyes;
While nature with full strength thy sinews arms,
Glows in thy cheeks, and triumphs in her charms,
Indulge thy instincts, and intent on ease
With ravishing delight thy senses please.

Since no black clouds dishonour now the sky,
No winds, but balmy genial zephyrs fly,
Eager embark, and to th' inviting gale
Thy pendants loose, and spread thy silken sail;
Sportive advance on pleasure's wanton tide
Thro' flow'ry scenes, diffus'd on either side.
See how the hours their painted wings display,
And draw, like harness'd doves, the smiling day!
Shall this glad spring, when active ferments climb,
These months, the fairest progeny of time,
The brightest parts in all duration's train,
Ask thee to seize thy bliss, and ask in vain?
To their prevailing smiles thy heart resign,
And wisely make the proffer'd blessings thine.
Near some fair river, on reclining land,
Midst groves and fountains let thy palace stand.
Let Parian walls unrivall'd pomp display,
And gilded tow'rs reflect augmented day.
Let porphyry pillars in high rows uphold
The azure roof enrich'd with veins of gold:
And the fair creatures of the sculptor's art
Part grace thy palace, and thy garden part.
Here let the scentful spoils of opening flow'rs
Breathe from thy citron walks and jessmine bow'rs,
Hesperian blossoms in thy bosom smell;
Let all Arabia in thy garments dwell.
That costly banquets and delicious feasts
May crown thy table to regale thy guests,
Ransack the hills, and ev'ry park and wood,
The lake unpeople, and despoil the flood.
Procure each feather'd luxury, that beats
Its native air, or from its clime retreats,
And by alternate transmigration flies
O'er interposing seas, and changing skies:

BLACKMORE.

'See how the hours their painted wings display,
And draw, like harness'd doves the smiling day.'

Published by R. Johnson.

Let artful cooks to raise their relish strive,
With all the spicy taste the Indies give.
While wreaths of roses round thy temples twine,
Enjoy the sparkling blessings of the vine;
Let the warm nectar all thy veins inspire,
Solace thy heart, and raise the vital fire.
Next let the charms of heavenly music cheer
Thy soul with rapture list'ning in thy ear.
Let tuneful chiefs exert their skill, to show
What artful joys from manag'd sound can flow:
Now hear the melting voice and trembling string,
Let Pepusch touch the lyre, and Margarita sing.
While wanton ferments swell thy glowing veins,
To the warm passion give the slacken'd reins;
Thy gazing eyes with blooming beauty feast,
Receive its dart, and hug it in thy breast,
From fair to fair with gay inconstance rove,
Taste ev'ry sweet, and cloy thy soul with love.
But midst thy boundless joy, unbridled youth,
Remember still this sad, but certain truth,
That thou at last severely must account;
To what will thy congested guilt amount!
Allow a God; he must our deeds regard;
A righteous judge must punish and reward.
Yet that he rears no high tribunal here,
Impartial justice to dispense, is clear.
His sword unpunish'd criminals defy,
Nor by his thunder does the tyrant die:
While Heav'ns adorers, press'd with want and pain,
Their unrewarded innocence maintain.
See his right hand he unextended keeps [sleeps.
Though long provok'd, th' unactive vengeance
Hence we a world succeeding this infer,
Where he his justice will assert; prepare
To stand arraign'd before his awful bar.

Where wilt thou hide thy ignominious head?
Shudd'ring with horror what hast thou to plead?
Despairing wretch, he'll frown thee from his throne,
And by his wrath will make his being known.
Yet more religion's empire to support,
To push the foe, and make our last effort;
Let beings with attention be review'd,
Which, not alone with vital power endu'd,
Can move themselves, can organiz'd perceive
The various strokes, which various objects give.
By laws mechanic can Lucretius tell
How living creatures see, or hear, or smell?
How is the image to the sense convey'd?
On the tun'd organ how the impulse made?
How, and by what more noble part, the brain
Perceives th' idea, can their schools explain?
'Tis clear, in that superior seat alone
The judge of objects has her secret throne;
Since, a limb sever'd by the wounding steel,
We still may pain, as in that member, feel.
Mark how the spirits watchful in the ear
Seize undulating sounds, and catch the vocal air.
Observe how others, that the tongue possess,
Which salts of various shape and size impress,
From their affected fibres upward dart,
And diff'rent taste by diff'rent strokes impart.
Remark, how those, which in the nostril dwell,
That artful organ destin'd for the smell,
By vapours mov'd their passage upward take,
And scents unpleasant or delightful make.
If in the tongue, the nostril, and the ear,
No skill, no wisdom, no design appear,
Lucretians, next regard the curious eye,
Can you no art, no prudence there descry?

By your mechanic principles in vain
The sense of sight you labour to explain.
You say, from all the objects of the eye,
Thin colour'd shapes uninterrupted fly:
As wand'ring ghosts, so ancient poets feign,
Skim thro' the air, and sweep th' infernal plain,
So these light figures roam by day and night,
But undiscover'd, till betray'd by light.
  But can corporeal forms with so much ease
Meet in their flight a thousand images,
And yet no conflict, no collisive force
Break their thin texture, and disturb their course?
What fix'd their parts, and made them so cohere,
That they the picture of the object wear?
What is the shape, that from a body flies?
What moves, what propagates, what multiplies
And paints one image in a thousand eyes?
When to the eye the crowding figures pass,
How in a point can all possess a place,
And lie distinguish'd in such narrow space?
Since all perception in the brain is made,
(Tho' where and how was never yet display'd)
And since so great a distance lies between
The eye-balls and the seat of sense within,
While in the eye th' arrested object stays,
Tell what th' idea to the brain conveys?
  You say, the spirits in the optic nerve,
Mov'd by the intercepted image, serve
To bear th' impression to the brain, and give
The stroke, by which the object we perceive.
  How does the brain touch'd with a diff'rent stroke
The whale distinguish from the marble rock
Pronounce this tree a cedar, that an oak?

Can spirits weak or stronger blows express,
One body greater and another less?
How do they make us space and distance know?
At once distinct a thousand objects show?
  Lucretians, now proceed; contemplate all
The nobler actions of the animal,
Which instinct some, some lower reason call.
Say, what contexture did by chance arrive,
Which to brute creatures did that instinct give
Whence they at sight discern and dread their foe,
Their food distinguish, and their physic know?
By which the lion learns to hunt his prey,
And the weak herd to fear and fly away;
The birds contrive inimitable nests,
And dens are haunted by the forest beasts;
Whence some in subterranean dwellings hide,
These in the rocks, and those in woods abide;
Whence tim'rous beasts thro' hills and lawns pur-
By artful shifts the rav'ning foe elude. [su'd,
  What various wonders may observers see
In a small insect, the sagacious bee!
Mark how the little untaught builders square
Their rooms, and in the dark their lodgings rear!
Nature's mechanics they unwearied strive,
And fill with curious labyrinths the hive.
See, what bright strokes of architecture shine
Thro' the whole frame, what beauty, what design!
Each odoriferous cell, and waxen tow'r,
The yellow pillage of the rifled flow'r.
Has twice three sides, the only figure fit
To which the lab'rers may their stores commit
Without the loss of matter, or of room,
In all the wondrous structure of the comb.
Next view, spectator, with admiring eyes,
In what just order all the apartments rise!

So regular their equal sides cohere,
Th' adapted angles so each other bear,
That by mechanic rules refin'd and bold
They are at once upheld, at once uphold.
Does not this skill ev'n vie with reason's reach?
Can Euclid more, can more Palladin teach?
Each verdant hill th' industrious chymists climb,
Extract the riches of the blooming thyme,
And provident of winter long before, [store.
They stock their caves, and hoard their flow'ry
In peace they rule their state with prudent care,
Wisely defend, or wage offensive war.
Maro, these wonders offer'd to his thought,
Felt his known ardour, and the rapture caught;
Then rais'd his voice, and in immortal lays
Did, high as heaven, the insect nation raise.
If, Epicurus, this whole artful frame
Does not a wise creator's hand proclaim;
To view the intellectual world advance;
Is this the creature too of fate or chance?
Turn on itself thy god-like reason's ray,
Thy mind contemplate, and its powers survey.
What high perfections grace the human mind,
In flesh imprison'd, and to earth confin'd!
What vigour has she? what a piercing sight?
Strong as the winds, and sprightly as the light!
She moves unweary'd, as the active fire,
And like the flame, her flights to heaven aspire.
By day her thoughts in never-ceasing streams
Flow clear, by night they strive in troubled dreams.
She draws ten thousand landscapes in the brain,
Dresses of airy forms an endless train,
Which all her intellectual scenes prepare,
Enter by turns the stage, and disappear.

To the remoter regions of the sky
Her swift-wing'd thought can in a moment fly;
Climb to the heights of heav'n, to be employ'd
In viewing thence th' interminable void.
Can look beyond the stream of time, to see
The stagnant ocean of eternity.
Thoughts in an instant thro' the zodiac run,
A year's long journey for the lab'ring sun:
Then down they shoot, as swift as darting light,
Nor can opposing clouds retard their flight:
Thro' subterranean vaults with ease they sweep,
And search the hidden wonders of the deep.
When man with reason dignify'd is born,
No images his naked mind adorn:
No sciences or arts enrich his brain,
Nor fancy yet displays her pictur'd train.
He no innate ideas can discern
Of knowledge destitute, tho' apt to learn.
Our intellectual, like the body's eye,
Whilst in the womb, no object can descry;
Yet is dispos'd to entertain the light,
And judge of things when offer'd to the sight.
When objects thro' the senses passage gain,
And fill with various imag'ry the brain,
Th' ideas, which the mind does thence perceive,
To think and know the first occasion give.
Did she not use the senses ministry,
Nor ever taste, or smell, or hear, or see,
Could she possest of power perceptive be?
Wretches, who sightless into being came,
Of light or colour no idea frame.
Then grant a man his being did commence,
Deny'd by nature each external sense.
These ports unopen'd, diffident we guess,
Th' unconscious soul no image could possess.

Tho' what in such a state the restless train
Of spirits would produce, we ask in vain.
The mind proceeds, and to reflection goes,
Perceives she does perceive, and knows she knows.
Reviews her acts, and does from thence conclude
She is with reason and with choice endu'd.
From individuals of distinguish'd kind,
By her abstracting faculty, the mind
Precisely general natures can conceive,
And birth to notions universal give.
The various modes of things distinctly shows,
A pure respect, a nice relation knows, [flows.
And sees whence each respect and each relation
By her abstacting pow'r in pieces takes [makes.
The mixt and compound whole, which nature
On objects of the senses she refines,
Beings by nature separated joins,
And severs qualities, which that combines.
The mind from things repugnant, some respects
In which their natures are alike, selects,
And can some difference and unlikeness see,
In things which seem entirely to agree;
She does distinguish here, and there unite,
The mark of judgment that, and this of wit.
As she can reckon, sep'rate, and compare,
Conceive what order, rule, proportion are,
So from one thought she still can more infer.
Maxim from maxim can by force express,
And make discover'd truths associate truths com-
On plain foundations, which our reason lays, [fess,
She can stupendous frames of science raise:
Notion on notion built will tow'ring rise,
Till th' intellectual fabrics reach the skies.
The mathematic axioms, which appear
By scientific demonstration clear,
The master builders on two pillars rest.

From two plain problems by laborious thought
Is all the wondrous superstructure wrought.
  The soul, as mention'd, can herself inspect,
By acts reflex can view her acts direct;
A task too hard for sense; for tho' the eye
Its own reflected image can descry,
Yet it ne'er saw the sight, by which it sees,
Vision affords no colour'd images.
The mind's tribunal can reports reject
Made by the senses, and their faults correct.
The magnitude of distant stars it knows,
Which erring sense, as twinkling tapers shows.
Crooked the shape our cheated eye believes,
Which thro' a double medium it receives;
Superior mind does a right judgment make,
Declares it straight, and mends the eye's mistake.
  Where dwells this sovereign arbitrary soul,
Which does the human animal control,
Inform each part, and agitate the whole?
O'er ministerial senses does preside,
To all their various provinces divide,
Each member move, and ev'ry motion guide.
Which by her secret uncontested nod
Her messengers the spirits sends abroad,
Thro' ev'ry nervous pass, and ev'ry vital road.
To fetch from ev'ry distant part a train,
Of outer objects to enrich the brain.
Where sits this bright intelligence enthron'd,
With numberless ideas pour'd around?
Where wisdom, prudence, contemplation stand,
And busy phantoms watch her high command:
Where sciences and arts in order wait,
And truths divine compose her godlike state.
Can the dissecting steel the brain display,
And the august apartment open lay,

Where this great queen still chuses to reside
In intellectual pomp, and bright ideal pride?
Or can the eye assisted by the glass
Discern the strait but hospitable place,
In which ten thousand images remain,
Without confusion, and their rank maintain?
How does this wondrous principle of thought
Perceive the object by the senses brought?
What philosophic builder will essay
By rules mechanic to unfold the way
How a machine must be dispos'd to think,
Ideas how to frame, and how to link?
Tell us, Lucretius, Epicurus tell,
And you in wit unrivall'd shall excel,
How through the outward sense the object flies,
How in the soul her images arise.
What thinking, what perception is, explain;
What all the airy creatures of the brain;
How to the mind a thought reflected goes,
And how the conscious engine knows it knows.
The mind a thousand skilful works can frame,
Can form deep projects to procure her aim.
Merchants for eastern pearl and golden ore
To cross the main, and reach the Indian shore,
Prepare the floating ship, and spread the sail,
To catch the impulse of the breathing gale.
Warriors in framing schemes their wisdom show,
To disappoint or circumvent the foe.
Th' ambitious statesman labours dark designs,
Now open force employs, now undermines:
By paths direct his end he now pursues,
By side approaches now, and slanting views.
See, how resistless orators persuade,
Draw out their forces, and the heart invade;

Touch ev'ry spring and movement of the soul,
This appetite excite, and that control.
Their powerful voice can flying troops arrest,
Confirm the weak, and melt the obdurate breast;
Chace from the sad their melancholy air,
Sooth discontent, and solace anxious care.
When threat'ning tides of rage and anger rise,
Usurp the throne, and reason's sway despise,
When in the seats of life this tempest reigns,
Beats thro' the heart, and drives along the veins,
See, eloquence with force persuasive binds
The restless waves, and charms the warring winds:
Resistless bids tumultuous uproar cease,
Recalls the calm, and gives the bosom peace.
  Did not the mind, on heavenly joy intent,
The various kinds of harmony invent?
She the theorbo, she the viol found,
And all the moving melody of sound.
She gave to breathing tubes a power unknown,
To speak inspir'd with accents not their own;
Taught tuneful sons of music how to sing,
How by vibrations of th' extended string,
And manag'd impulse on the suff'ring air,
T' extort the rapture, and delight the ear.
  See, how celestial reason does command
The ready pencil in the painter's hand;
Whose strokes affect with nature's self to vie,
And with false life amuse the doubtful eye.
Behold the strong emotions of the mind
Exerted in the eyes, and in the face design'd.
Such is the artist's wondrous power, that we
Ev'n pictur'd souls, and colour'd passions see,
Where without words (peculiar eloquence)
The busy figures speak their various sense.

What living face does more distress or woe,
More finish'd shame, confusion, horror know,
Than what the masters of the pencil show?
  Mean time the chizel with the pencil vies;
The sister arts dispute the doubtful prize.
Are human limbs, ev'n in their vital state,
More just and strong, more free and delicate,
Than Bounorota's curious tools create?
He to the rock can vital instincts give,
Which thus transform'd can rage, rejoice, or grieve.
His skilful hand does marble veins inspire
Now with the lover's, now the hero's fire,
So well the imagin'd actors play their part,
The silent hypocrites such power exert,
That passions, which they feel not they bestow,
Affright us with their fear, and melt us with their woe.
There Niobe leans weeping on her arm,
How her sad looks and beauteous sorrow charm!
See here a Venus soft in Parian stone,
A Pallas there to ancient fables known;
That from the rock arose, not from the main,
This not from Jove's, but from the sculptor's brain.
  Admire the carver's fertile energy,
With ravish'd eyes his happy offspring see.
What beauteous figures by th' unrivall'd art
Of British Gibbons from the cedar start?
He makes that tree unnative charms assume,
Usurp gay honours, and another's bloom.
The various fruits which different climates bear,
And all the pride the fields and gardens wear:
While from unjuicy limbs without a root
New buds devis'd, and leafy branches shoot.
  As human kind can by an act direct
Perceive and know, then reason and reflect:

So the self-moving spring has power to chuse,
These methods to reject, and those to use,
She can design and prosecute an end,
Exert her vigour or her act suspend.
Free from the insults of all foreign power,
She does her godlike liberty secure:
Her right and high prerogative maintains,
Impatient of the yoke, and scorns coercive chains.
She can her airy train of forms disband,
And makes new levies at her own command.
O'er her ideas sovereign she presides,
At pleasure these unites, and those divides.
The ready phantoms at her nod advance,
And form the busy intellectual dance:
While her fair scenes to vary or supply,
She singles out fit images that lie
In memory's records which faithful hold
Objects immense in secret marks enroll'd,
The sleeping forms at her command awake,
And now return, and now their cells forsake;
On active fancy's crowded theatre,
As she directs, they rise or disappear.
Objects, which through the senses make their way,
And just impressions to the soul convey,
Give her occasion first herself to move,
And to exert her hatred or her love.
Ideas, which to some impulsive seem,
Act not upon the mind, but that on them.
When she to foreign objects audience gives,
Their strokes and motions in the brain perceives,
As these perceptions we ideas name,
From her own power and active nature came,
So when discern'd by intellectual light,
Her self her various passions does excite,
To ill her hate, to good her appetite:

To shun the first, the latter to procure,
She chuses means by free elective power.
She can their various habitudes survey,
Debate their fitness and their merit weigh,
And while the means suggested she compares,
She to the rivals this or that prefers.
By her superior power the reas'ning soul
Can each reluctant appetite control:
Can ev'ry passion rule, and ev'ry sense,
Change nature's course, and with her laws dis-
Our breathing to prevent, she can arrest [pense:
Th' extension, or contraction of the breast:
When pain'd with hunger we can food refuse,
And wholesome abstinence, or famine chuse.
Can the wild beast his instinct disobey,
And from his jaws release the captive prey?
Or hungry herds on verdant pastures lie
Mindless to eat, and resolute to die?
With heat expiring, can the panting hart
Patient of thirst from the cool stream depart?
Can brutes at will imprison'd breath detain?
Torment prefer to ease, and life disdain?
From all restraint, from all compulsion free,
Unforc'd, and unnecessitated, we
Uurselves determine, and our freedom prove,
When this we fly, and to that object move.
Had not the mind a power to will and chuse,
One object to embrace, and one refuse?
Could she not act, or not her act suspend,
As it obstructed or advanc'd her end?
Virtue and vice were names without a cause,
This would not hate deserve, nor that applause.
Justice in vain has high tribunals rear'd,
Whom can her sentence punish, whom reward?

If impious children should their father kill,
Can they be wicked, when they cannot will?
When only causes foreign and unseen
Strike with resistless force the springs within,
Whence in the engine man all motion must begin.
Are vapours guilty, which the vintage blast?
Are storms proscrib'd, which lay the forest waste?
Why lies the wretch then tortur'd on the wheel,
If forc'd to treason or compell'd to steal?
Why does the warrior by auspicious fate
With laurels crown'd, and clad in robes of state,
In triumph ride amidst the gazing throng,
Deaf with applauses, and the poet's song;
If the victorious, but the brute machine
Did only wreaths inevitable win;
And no wise choice or vigilance has shown?
Mov'd by a fatal impulse, not his own?
Should trains of atoms human sense impel,
Though not so fierce, so strong, so visible
As soldiers arm'd, and do not men arrest
With clubs upheld and daggers at their breast,
Yet means compulsive are not plainer shown,
When ruffians drive, or conqu'rors drag us on:
As much we're forc'd, when by an atom's sway
Controll'd as when a tyrant we obey:
And by whatever cause constrain'd to act,
We merit no reward, no guilt contract.
Our mind of rulers feels a conscious awe,
Reveres their justice, and regards their law.
She rectitude and deviation knows,
That vice from one, from one that virtue flows.
Of these she feels unlike effects within,
From virtue pleasure, and remorse from sin.
Hopes of a just reward by that are fed,
By this of wrath vindictive secret dread.

The mind which thus can rules of duty learn,
Can right from wrong, and good from ill discern.
Which the sharp stroke of justice to prevent
Can shame express, can grieve, reflect, repent;
From fate or chance her rise can never draw,
Those causes know not virtue, vice, or law.
She can a life succeeding this conceive,
Of bliss or woe an endless state believe.
Dreading the just and universal doom,
And aw'd by fears of punishment to come,
By hopes excited of a glorious crown,
And certain pleasures in a world unknown;
She can the fond desires of sense restrain,
Renounce delight, and chuse distress and pain:
Can rush on danger, can destruction face,
Joyful relinquish life, and death embrace.
She to afflicted virtue can adhere,
And chains and want to prosp'rous guilt prefer;
Unmov'd these wild tempestuous steps survey,
And view serene this restless rolling sea.
In vain the monsters which the coast infest,
Spend all their rage to interrupt her rest:
Her charming song the syren sings in vain,
She can the tuneful hypocrite disdain:
Fix'd and unchang'd the faithless world behold,
Deaf to its threats, and to its favour cold.
Sages remark, we labour not to show
The will is free, but that the man is so.
For what enlighten'd reas'ner can declare
What human will and understanding are?
What science from those objects can we frame
Of which we little know, besides the name?
The learned, who with anatomic art
Dissect the mind, and thinking substance part,
And various powers and faculties assert;

Perhaps by such abstraction of the mind
Divide the things that are in nature join'd,
What masters of the schools can make it clear
Those faculties, which two to them appear,
Are not residing in the soul the same,
And not distinct, but by a diff'rent name?
  Thus has the muse pursu'd her hardy theme,
And sung the wonders of this artful frame.
Ere yet one subterranean arch was made,
One cavern vaulted, or one girder laid:
Ere the high rocks did o'er the shores arise,
Or snowy mountains tower'd amidst the skies;
Before the wat'ry troops fil'd off from land,
And lay amidst the rocks intrench'd in sand;
Before the air its bosom did unfold,
Or burnish'd orbs in blue expansion roll'd;
She sung how nature then in embryo lay,
And did the secrets of her birth display.
  When, after, at th' Almighty's high command,
Obedient waves divided from the land;
And shades and lazy mists were chas'd away,
While rosy light diffus'd the tender day:
When uproar ceas'd, and wild confusion fled,
And new-born nature rais'd her beauteous head,
She sung the frame of this terrestrial pile,
The hills, the rocks, the rivers and the soil.
She view'd the sandy frontiers, which restrain
The noisy insults of th' imprison'd main:
Rang'd o'er the wide diffusion of the waves,
The moist cerulean walks, and search'd the coral
  She then survey'd the fluid fields of air, [waves.
And the crude seeds of meteors fashion'd there.
Then with contin'd flight she sped her way,
Mounted, and bold pursu'd the source of day.

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ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS.

With wonder of celestial motion sung,
How the pois'd orbs are in the vacant hung;
How the bright sluices of etherial light
Now shut, defend the empire of the night,
And now drawn up with wise alternate care, [air.
Let floods of glory out, and spread with day the
Then with a daring wing she soar'd sublime,
From realm to realm, from orb to orb did climb.
Swift through the spacious gulph she urg'd her
At length emerged in empyrean day: [way,
Where far, oh far, beyond what mortals see,
In the void districts of immensity;
The mind new suns, new planets can explore,
And yet beyond can still imagine more.
Thus in bold numbers did th' advent'rous muse
To sing the lifeless parts of nature chuse,
And then advanc'd to wonders yet behind,
Survey'd, and sung the vegetable kind.
Did lofty woods, and humble brakes review,
Along the valley swept and o'er the mountain flew.
Then left the flow'ry field and waving grove,
And unfatigu'd with grateful labour strove
To climb th' amazing heights of sense, and sing
The power preceptive, and the inward spring
Which agitates and guides each living thing.
She next essay'd the embryo's rise to trace
From an unfashion'd, rude, unchannell'd mass;
And sung how spirits waken'd in the brain
Exert their force, and genial toil maintain;
Erect the beating heart, the channels frame,
Unfold entangled limbs, and kindle vital flame.
How the small pipes are in meanders laid,
And bounding life is to and fro convey'd.
How spirits, which for sense and motion serve,
Unguided find the perforated nerve.

Through every dark recess pursue their flight,
Unconscious of the road and void of sight,
Yet certain of the end still guide their motions right.
From thence a nobler flight she did essay,
The mind's extended empire to survey.
She sung the godlike principle of thought,
And how from objects by the senses brought,
The intellectual imag'ry is wrought.
How she the modes of beings can discern,
A nice respect, a mere relation learn:
Can all the thin abstracted notions reach
Which Grecian wits, or, Britain, thine can teach.
Thus has the muse strove to display a part
Of those unnumber'd miracles of art;
Of prudence, conduct, and a wise design,
Which to th' attentive thought conspicuous shine.
Still vanquish'd atheists, will you keep the field,
And hard in error still refuse to yield?
See, all your broken arms lie spread around,
And ignominious rout deforms the ground.
Be wise, and once admonish'd by a foe, [know.
Where lies your strength, and where your weakness
No more at reason's solemn bar appear,
Hardy no more scholastic weapons bear.
Disband your feeble forces, and decline
The war, no more in tinsel armour shine;
Nor shake your bulrush spears, but swift repair
To your strong place of arms, the scoffer's chair;
And thence supported with a mocking ring,
Sarcastic darts and keen invectives fling
Against your foes, and scornful at your feasts
Religion vanquish with decisive jests:
Arm'd with resistless laughter heav'n assail,
Relinquish reason, and let mirth prevail.

Good heav'n! that men, who vaunt discerning
And arrogant from wisdom's distant height[sight,
Look down on vulgar mortals, who revere
A cause supreme, should their proud building rear
Without one prop the pond'rous pile to bear.
How much the judge, who does in heav'n preside,
Re-mocks the scoffer, and contemns his pride!
Behold, the sad unsufferable hour
Advances near, which will his error cure;
When he compell'd shall drink the watchful bowl,
And ruin'd feel immortal vengeance roll
Thro' all his veins, and drench his inmost soul.
O'erwhelm'd with horror, sunk in deep despair,
And lost forever, will the wretch forbear
To curse his madness, and blaspheme the power
Of his just sovereign, which he mock'd before?
Hail king supreme! of pow'r immense abyss!
Father of light! exhaustless source of bliss!
Thou uncreated, self-existent cause,
Controll'd by no superior being's laws;
Ere infant light essay'd to dart the ray,
Smil'd heavenly sweet, and tried to kindle day;
Ere the wide fields of æther were display'd,
Or silver stars, cerulean spheres inlaid;
Ere yet the eldest child of time was born,
Or verdant pride young nature did adorn,
Thou art; and didst eternity employ
In unmolested peace, in plenitude of joy.
In its ideal frame the world design'd
From ages past lay finish'd in thy mind.
Conform to this divine imagin'd plan,
With perfect art th' amazing work began.
Thy glance survey'd the solitary plains,
Where shapeless shade inert and silent reigns;

Then in the dark and undistinguish'd space,
Unfruitful, uninclos'd and wild of face,
Thy compass for the world mark'd out the destin'd [place.
Then didst thou thro' the fields of barren night
Go forth, collected in creating might.
Where thou almighty vigour didst exert,
Which emicant did this and that way dart
Thro' the black bosom of the empty space:
The gulfs confess th' omnipotent embrace,
And pregnant grown with elemental seed,
Unfinish'd orbs, and worlds in embryo breed.
From the crude mass, omniscient architect,
Thou for each part materials didst select,
And with a master-hand thy world erect.
Labour'd by thee, the globes, vast lucid buoys,
By thee uplifted float in liquid skies.
By thy cementing word their parts cohere,
And roll by thy impulsive nod in air.
Thou in the vacant didst the earth suspend,
Advance the mountains, and the vales extend;
People the plains with flocks, with beasts the wood,
And store with scaly colonies the flood.
Next man arose at thy creating word,
Of thy terrestrial realms vicegerent lord.
His soul more artful labour, more refin'd,
And emulous of bright seraphic mind,
Ennobled by thy image spotless shone,
Prais'd thee her author, and ador'd thy throne:
Able to know, admire, enjoy her God,
She did her high felicity applaud.
Since thou didst all the spacious worlds display,
Homage to thee let all obedient pay.
Let glitt'ring stars that dance their destin'd ring
Sublime in sky, with vocal planets sing
Confed'rate praise to thee, O great creator king.

Let the thin districts of the waving air,
Conveyancers of sound, thy skill declare.
Let winds, the breathing creatures of the skies,
Call in each vig'rous gale, that roving flies
By land or sea, then one loud triumph raise,
And all their blasts employ in songs of praise.
While painted herald-birds thy deeds proclaim,
And on their spreading wings convey thy fame:
Let eagles, which in heaven's blue concave soar,
Scornful of earth superior seats explore,
And rise with breasts erect against the sun,
Be ministers to bear thy bright renown,
And carry ardent praises to thy throne.
Ye fish assume a voice, with praises fill
The hollow rock, and loud reactive hill.
Let lions with their roar their thanks express,
With acclamations shake the wilderness.
Let thunder clouds, that float from pole to pole,
With salvos loud salute thee as they roll.
Ye monsters of the sea, ye noisy waves
Strike with applause the repercussive caves.
Let hail and rain, let meteors form'd of fire
And lambent flames in this blest work conspire.
Let the high cedar and the mountain pine
Lowly to thee, great king, their heads incline,
Let ev'ry spicy odoriferous tree
Present its incense, and its balm to thee.
And thou, heav'ns viceroy o'er this world below,
In this blest task superior ardour show:
To view thyself inflect thy reason's ray,
Nature's replenish'd theatre survey;
Then all on fire the author's skill adore,
And in loud songs extol creating pow'r.
Degenerate minds in mazy error lost
May combat heav'n, and impious triumphs boast;

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