
THE PROGRESS OF ERROR.

Si quid loquar audiendum. HOR. LIB. 4. OD. 2.

SING muse (if such a theme, so dark, so long,
May find a muse to grace it with a song)
By what unseen and unsuspected arts
The serpent error twines round human hearts,
Tell where she lurks, beneath what flow'ry shades,
That not a glimpse of genuin light pervades,
The pois'nous, black, insinuating worm,
Successfully conceals her loathsome form.

Take

Take, if ye can, ye careless and supine !
 Counsel and caution from a voice like mine ;
 Truths that the theorist could never reach,
 And observation taught me, I would teach.

Not all whose eloquence the fancy fills,
 Musical as the chime of tinkling rills,
 Weak to perform, though mighty to pretend,
 Can trace her mazy windings to their end,
 Discern the fraud beneath the specious lure,
 Prevent the danger, or prescribe the cure.
 The clear harangue, and cold as it is clear,
 Falls soporific on the listless ear,
 Like quicksilver, the rhet'ric they display,
 Shines as it runs, but grasp'd at slips away.

Plac'd for his trial on this bustling stage,
 From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,
 Free in his will to chuse or to refuse,
 Man may improve the crisis, or abuse.
 Else, on the fatalists unrighteous plan,
 Say, to what bar amenable were man ?

With

With nought in charge, he could betray no trust,
 And if he fell, would fall because he must ;
 If love reward him, or if vengeance strike,
 His recompence in both, unjust alike.
 Divine authority within his breast
 Brings every thought, word, action to the test,
 Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains,
 As reason, or as passion, takes the reins.
 Heav'n from above, and conscience from within,
 Cry in his startled ear, abstain from sin.
 The world around solicits his desire,
 And kindles in his soul a treach'rous fire,
 While all his purposes and steps to guard,
 Peace follows virtue as its sure reward,
 And pleasure brings as surely in her train,
 Remorse and sorrow and vindictive pain.

Man thus endued with an elective voice,
 Must be supplied with objects of his choice.
 Where'er he turns, enjoyment and delight,
 Or present, or in prospect, meet his sight ;

These

These open on the spot their honey'd store,
 Those call him loudly to pursuit of more.
 His unexhausted mine, the fordid vice
 Avarice shows, and virtue is the price.
 Here, various motives his ambition raise,
 Pow'r, pomp, and splendor, and the thirst of praise ;
 There beauty woes him with expanded arms,
 E'en Bacchanalian madness has its charms,

Nor these alone, whose pleasures less refin'd,
 Might well alarm the most unguarded mind,
 Seek to supplant his unexperienced youth,
 Or lead him devious from the path of truth,
 Hourly allurements on his passions press,
 Safe in themselves, but dang'rous in th' excess.

Hark ! how it floats upon the dewy air,
 O what a dying, dying close was there !
 'Tis harmony from yon sequester'd bow'r,
 Sweet harmony that sooths the midnight hour ;
 Long e'er the charioteer of day had run
 His morning course, th' enchantment was begun,

And

And he shall gild yon mountains height again,

E'er yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain.

Is this the rugged path, the steep ascent

That virtue points to ? Can a life thus spent

Lead to the bliss she promises the wise,

Detach the soul from earth, and speed her to the skies ?

Ye devotees to your ador'd employ,

Enthusiasts, drunk with an unreal joy,

Love makes the music of the blest above,

Heav'n's harmony is universal love ;

And earthly sounds, though sweet and well combin'd,

And lenient as soft opiates to the mind,

Leave vice and folly unsubstid behind.

Grey dawn appears, the sportsman and his train

Speckle the bosom of the distant plain,

'Tis he, the Nimrod of the neighb'ring lairs,

Save that his scent is less acute than their's,

For persevering chase, and headlong leaps,

True beagle as the staunchest hound he keeps.

Charg'd with the folly of his life's mad scene,

He takes offence, and wonders what you mean ;

The joy, the danger and the toil o'erpay,
 'Tis exercise, and health and length of days,
 Again impetuous to the field he flies,
 Leaps ev'ry fence but one, there falls and dies ;
 Like a slain deer, the tumbril brings him home,
 Unmiss'd but by his dogs and by his groom.

Ye clergy, while your orbit is your place,
 Lights of the world. and stars of human race—
 But if eccentric ye forsake your sphere,
 Prodigious, ominous, and view'd with fear.
 The comets baneful influence is a dream,
 Your's real, and pernicious in th' extreme.
 What then—are appetites and lusts laid down,
 With the same ease the man puts on his gown ?
 Will av'rice and concupiscence give place,
 Charm'd by the sounds, your rev'rence, or your grace ?
 No. But his own engagement binds him fast,
 Or if it does not, brands him to the last
 What atheists call him, a designing knave,
 A mere church juggler, hypocrite and slave.

Oh

Oh laugh, or mourn with me, the rueful jest,
 A cassock'd huntsman, and a fiddling priest;
 He from Italian songsters takes his cue,
 Set Paul to music, he shall quote him too.
 He takes the field, the master of the pack
 Cries, well done Saint—and claps him on the back.
 Is this the path of sanctity? Is this
 To stand a way-mark in the road to bliss?
 Himself a wand'rer from the narrow way,
 His silly sheep, what wonder if they stray?
 Go, cast your orders at your Bishop's feet,
 Send your dishonour'd gown to Monmouth Street,
 The sacred function, in your hands is made,
 Sad sacrilege! No function but a trade.

Occiduus is a pastor of renown,
 When he has pray'd and preach'd the sabbath down,
 With wire and catgut he concludes the day,
 Quav'ring and semiquav'ring care away.
 The full concerto swells upon your ear;
 All elbows shake. Look in, and you would swear

The

The Babylonian tyrant with a nod
 Had summon'd them to serve his golden God.
 So well that thought th' employment seems to suit,
 salt'ry and sackb ut, dulcimer, and flute,
 Oh fie ! 'Tis evangelical and pure,
 Observe each face, how sober and demure,
 Extasy sets her stamp on ev'ry mien,
 Chins fall'n, and not an eye-ball to be seen,
 Still I insist, though music heretofore
 Has charm'd me much, not ev'n Occiduus more,
 Love, joy and peace make harmony, more meet
 For sabbath evenings, and perhaps as sweet.

Will not the sickliest sheep of ev'ry flock,
 Resort to this example as a rock,
 There stand and justify the foul abuse
 Of sabbath hours, with plausible excuse ?
 If apostolic gravity be free
 To play the fool on Sundays, why not we ?
 If he, the tinkling harpsichord regards
 As inoffensive, what offence in cards ?

Strike

Strike up the fiddles, let us all be gay,
Laymen have leave to dance, if parsons play.

Oh Italy ! Thy sabbaths will be soon
Our sabbaths, clos'd with mumm'ry and buffoon.
Preaching and pranks will share the motley scene, }
Our's parcell'd out, as thine have ever been, }
God's worship and the mountebank between.

What says the prophet ? Let that day be blest
With holiness and consecrated rest.

Pastime and bus'ness both it should exclude,
And bar the door the moment they intrude,
Nobly distinguish'd above all the fix,
By deeds in which the world must never mix.
Hear him again. He calls it a delight,
A day of luxury, observ'd aright,
When the glad soul is made heav'n's welcome guest,
Sits banquetting, and God provides the feast.
But triflers are engag'd and cannot come ;
Their answer to the call is—*Not at home.*

Oh the dear pleasures of the velvet plain,
The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again.

Cards with what rapture, and the polish'd die,
 The yawning chasm of indolence supply !
 Then to the dance, and make the sober moon
 Witness of joys that shun the sight of noon.
 Blame cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,
 The snug close party, or the splendid hall,
 Where night down-stooping from her ebon throne,
 Views constellations brighter than her own.
 'Tis innocent, and harmless and refin'd,
 The balm of care, elysium of the mind.
 Innocent ! Oh if venerable time
 Slain at the foot of pleasure, be no crime,
 Then with his silver beard and magic wand,
 Let Comus rise Archbishop of the land,
 Let him your rubric and your feasts prescribe,
 Grand metropolitan of all the tribe.

Of manners rough, and coarse athletic cast,
 The rank debauch suits Clodio's filthy taste.
 Rufillus, exquisitely form'd by rule,
 Not of the moral, but the dancing school,

Wonders

Wonders at Clodio's follies, in a tone
 As tragical, as others at his own.
 He cannot drink five bottles, bilk the score,
 Then kill a constable, and drink five more ;
 But he can draw a pattern, make a tart,
 And has the ladies etiquette by heart.
 Go fool, and arm in arm with Clodio, plead
 Your cause, before a bar you little dread ;
 But know, the law that bids the drunkard die,
 Is far too just to pass the trifler by.
 Both baby featur'd and of infant size,
 View'd from a distance, and with heedless eyes,
 Folly and innocence are so alike,
 The difference, though essential, fails to strike.
 Yet folly ever has a vacant stare,
 A simp'ring count'nance, and a trifling air ;
 But innocence, sedate, serene, erect,
 Delights us, by engaging our respect.

Man, nature's guest by invitation sweet,
 Receives from her, both appetite and treat,

But if he play the glutton and exceed,
 His benefactress blushes at the deed.
 For nature, nice, as lib'ral to dispense,
 Made nothing but a brute the slave of sense.
 Daniel ate pulse by choice, example rare !
 Heav'n bless'd the youth, and made him fresh and
 fair.

Gorgonius sits abdominous and wan,
 Like a fat squab upon a Chinese fan.
 He snuffs far off th' anticipated joy,
 Turtle and ven'son all his thoughts employ,
 Prepares for meals, as jockeys take a sweat,
 Oh nauseous ! an emetic for a whet—
 Will providence o'erlook the wasted good ?
 Temperance were no virtue if he cou'd.

That pleasures, therefore, or what such we call,
 Are hurtful, is a truth confess'd by all.
 And some that seem to threaten virtue less,
 Still hurtful, in th' abuse, or by th' excess.

Is man then only for his torment plac'd,
 The center of delights he may not taste ?

Like

Like fabled Tantalus condemn'd to hear
 The precious stream still purling in his ear,
 Lip-deep in what he longs for, and yet curst
 With prohibition and perpetual thirst?
 No, wrangler—destitute of shame and sense,
 The precept that enjoins him abstinence,
 Forbids him none but the licentious joy,
 Whose fruit, though fair, tempts only to destroy.
 Remorse, the fatal egg by pleasure laid
 In every bosom where her nest is made,
 Hatch'd by the beams of truth denies him rest,
 And proves a raging scorpion in his breast.
 No pleasure? Are domestic comforts dead?
 Are all the nameless sweets of friendship fled?
 Has time worn out, or fashion put to shame
 Good sense, good health, good conscience, and
 good fame?
 All these belong to virtue, and all prove
 That virtue has a title to your love.
 Have you no touch of pity, that the poor
 Stand starved at your inhospitable door?

Or if yourself too scantily supplied
 Need help, let honest industry provide.
 Earn, if you want, if you abound, impart,
 These both are pleasures to the feeling heart.
 No pleasure ? Has some sickly eastern waste
 Sent us a wind to parch us at a blast ?
 Can British paradise no scenes afford
 To please her fated and indiff'rent lord ?
 Are sweet philosophy's enjoyments run
 Quite to the lees ? And has religion none ?
 Brutes capable, should tell you 'tis a lye,
 And judge you from the kennel and the sty.
 Delights like these, ye sensual and profane,
 Ye are bid, begg'd, besought to entertain ;
 Call'd to these crystal streams, do ye turn off
 Obscene, to swill and swallow at a trough ?
 Envy the beast then, on whom heav'n bestows
 Your pleasures, with no curses in the close.

Pleasure admitted in undue degree,
 Enslaves the will, nor leaves the judgment free.

'Tis

'Tis not alone the grapes enticing juice,
 Unnerves the moral pow'rs, and marrs their use,
 Ambition, av'rice, and the lust of fame,
 And woman, lovely woman, does the same.
 The heart, surrender'd to the ruling pow'r
 Of some ungovern'd passion ev'ry hour,
 Finds by degrees, the truths that once bore sway,
 And all their deep impression wear away.
 So coin grows smooth, in traffic current pass'd,
 'Till Cæsar's image is effac'd at last.

The breach, though small at first, soon op'ning
 wide,

In rushes folly with a full moon tide.
 Then welcome errors of whatever size,
 To justify it by a thousand lies.
 As creeping ivy clings to wood or stone,
 And hides the ruin that it feeds upon,
 So sophistry, cleaves close to, and protects
 Sin's rotten trunk, concealing its defects.
 Mortals whose pleasures are their only care,
 First wish to be impos'd on, and then are.

And lest the fulsome artifice should fail,
 Themselves will hide its coarseness with a veil,
 Not more industrious are the just and true
 To give to virtue what is virtue's due,
 The praise of wisdom, comeliness and worth,
 And call her charms to public notice forth,
 Than vice's mean and disingenuous race,
 To hide the shocking features of her face.
 Her form with dress and lotion they repair,
 Then kiss their idol and pronounce her fair.

The sacred implement I now employ
 Might prove a mischief or at best a toy,
 A trifle if it move but to amuse,
 But if to wrong the judgment and abuse,
 Worse than a poignard in the basest hand,
 It stabs at once the morals of a land.

Ye writers of what none with safety reads,
 Footing it in the dance that fancy leads,
 Ye novellists who marr what ye would mend,
 Sniv'ling and driv'ling folly without end,

Whose

Whose corresponding misses fill the ream
 With sentimental frippery and dream,
 Caught in a delicate soft silken net
 By some lewd Earl, or rake-hell Baronet ;
 Ye pimps, who under virtue's fair pretence,
 Steal to the closet of young innocence,
 And teach her unexperienc'd yet and green,
 To scribble as you scribble at fifteen ;
 Who kindling a combustion of desire,
 With some cold moral think to quench the fire,
 Though all your engineering proves in vain,
 The dribbling stream ne'er puts it out again ;
 Oh that a verse had pow'r, and could command
 Far, far away, these flesh-flies of the land,
 Who fasten without mercy on the fair,
 And suck, and leave a craving maggot there.
 Howe'er disguis'd th' inflammatory tale,
 And covered with a fine-spun specious veil,
 Such writers and such readers owe the gust
 And relish of their pleasure all to lust.

But

But the muse eagle-pinion'd has in view
 A quarry more important still than you,
 Down down the wind she swims and sails away,
 Now stoops upon it and now grasps the prey.

Petronius ! all the muses weep for thee,
 But ev'ry tear shall scald thy memory.
 The graces too, while virtue at their shrine
 Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,
 Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,
 Abhorr'd the sacrifice, and curs'd the priest.
 Thou polish'd and high finish'd foe to truth,
 Gray beard corruptor of our list'ning youth,
 To purge and skim away the filth of vice,
 That so refin'd it might the more entice,
 Then pour it on the morals of thy son
 To taint *his* heart, was worthy of *thine* own.
 Now while the poison all high life pervades,
 Write if thou can'st one letter from the shades,
 One, and one only, charg'd with deep regret,
 That thy worst part, thy principles live yet;

One fad epistle thence, may cure mankind,
Of the plague spread by bundles left behind.

'Tis granted, and no plainer truth appears,
Our most important are our earliest years,
The mind impressible and soft, with ease
Imbibes and copies what she hears and sees,
And through life's labyrinth holds fast the clue
That education gives her, false or true.
Plants rais'd with tendernefs are seldom strong,
Man's coltish disposition asks the thong,
And without discipline the fav'rite child,
Like a neglected forrester runs wild.
But we, as if good qualities would grow
Spontaneous, take but little pains to sow,
We give some latin and a smatch of greek,
Teach him to fence and figure twice a week,
And having done we think, the best we can,
Praise his proficiency and dub him man.

From school to Cam or Isis, and thence home,
And thence with all convenient speed to Rome,

With

With rev'rend tutor clad in habit lay,
 To teaze for cash and quarrel with all day,
 With memorandum-book for ev'ry town,
 And ev'ry post, and where the chaise broke down :
 His stock, a few French phrases got by heart,
 With much to learn, but nothing to impart,
 The youth obedient to his sire's commands,
 Sets off a wand'rer into foreign lands :
 Surpriz'd at all they meet, the goslin pair
 With aukward gait, stretch'd neck, and silly stare,
 Discover huge cathedrals built with stone,
 And steeples tow'ring high much like our own,
 But show peculiar light by many a grin
 At Popish practices observ'd within.

E'er long some bowing, smirking, smart Abbé
 Remarks two loit'ers that have lost their way,
 And being always primed with *politesse*
 For men of their appearance and andrefs,
 With much compassion undertakes the task,
 To tell them more than they have wit to ask.

Points to inscriptions wheresoe'er they tread,
 Such as when legible were never read,
 But being canker'd now, and half worn out,
 Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt :
 Some headless hero or some Cæsar shows,
 Defective only in his Roman nose ;
 Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,
 Models of Herculeanean pots and pans,
 And sells them medals, which if neither rare
 Nor antient, will be so, preserv'd with care.

Strange the recital ! from whatever cause
 His great improvement and new lights he draws,
 The 'Squire once bashful is shame-fac'd no more,
 But teems with pow'rs he never felt before :
 Whether encreas'd momentum, and the force
 With which from clime to clime he sped his course,
 As axles sometimes kindle as they go,
 Chaf'd him and brought dull nature to a glow ;
 Or whether clearer skies and softer air
 That make Italian flow'rs so sweet and fair,

Fresh'ning

Fresh'ning his lazy spirits as he ran,
 Unfolded genially and spread the man,
 Returning he proclaims by many a grace,
 By shrugs and strange contortions of his face,
 How much a dunce that has been sent to roam,
 Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.

Accomplishments have taken virtue's place,
 And wisdom falls before exterior grace ;
 We slight the precious kernel of the stone,
 And toil to polish its rough coat alone.
 A just deportment, manners grac'd with ease,
 Elegant phrase, and figure form'd to please,
 Are qualities that seem to comprehend
 Whatever parents, guardians, schools intend ;
 Hence an unfurnish'd and a listless mind,
 Though busy, trifling ; empty, though refin'd ;
 Hence all that interferes, and dares to clash
 With indolence and luxury, is trash ;
 While learning, once the man's exclusive pride,
 Seems verging fast towards the female side.

Learning

Learning itself receiv'd into a mind
 By nature weak, or viciously inclin'd,
 Serves but to lead philosophers astray
 Where children would with ease discern the way.
 And of all arts sagacious dupes invent
 To cheat themselves and gain the world's assent
 The worst is scripture warp'd from it's intent.

The carriage bowls along and all are pleas'd
 If Tom be sober, and the wheels well greas'd,
 But if the rogue have gone a cup too far,
 Left out his linch-pin or forgot his tar,
 It suffers interruption and delay,
 And meets with hindrance in the smoothest way.
 When some hypothesis absurd and vain
 Has fill'd with all its fumes a critic's brain,
 The text that forts not with his darling whim,
 Though plain to others, is obscure to him.
 The will made subject to a lawless force,
 All is irregular, and out of course,
 And judgment drunk, and bribed to lose his way,
 Winks hard, and talks of darknes at noon day.

A critic on the sacred book, should be
 Candid and learn'd, dispassionate and free ;
 Free from the wayward bias bigots feel,
 From fancy's influence, and intemp'rate zeal.
 But above all (or let the wretch refrain,
 Nor touch the page he cannot but profane)
 Free from the domineering pow'r of lust,
 A lewd interpreter is never just.

How shall I speak thee, or thy pow'r address,
 Thou God of our idolatry, the press?
 By thee, religion, liberty and laws
 Exert their influence, and advance their cause,
 By thee, worse plagues than Pharaoh's land beset,
 Diffus'd, make earth the vestibule of hell :
 Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise,
 Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies,
 Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
 Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

No wild enthusiast ever yet could rest,
 Till half mankind were like himself possess'd.

Philosophers,

Philosophers, who darken and put out
 Eternal truth by everlasting doubt,
 Church quacks, with passions under no command,
 Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
 Discov'ers of they know not what, confin'd
 Within no bounds, the blind that lead the blind,
 To streams of popular opinion drawn,
 Deposit in those shallows, all their spawn.
 The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around,
 Pois'ning the waters where their swarms abound;
 Scorn'd by the nobler tenants of the flood,
 Minnows and gudgeons gorge th' unwholesome food.
 The propagated myriads spread so fast,
 E'en Leuwenhoek himself would stand aghast,
 Employ'd to calculate th' enormous sum,
 And own his crab-computing pow'rs o'ercome.
 Is this Hyperbole? The world well known,
 Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one.

Fresh confidence the speculatist takes
 From ev'ry hare-brain'd proselyte he makes,

And therefore prints. Himself but half-deceiv'd,
'Till others have the soothing tale believ'd.

Hence comment after comment, spun as fine
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line.

Hence the same word that bids our lusts obey,
Is misapplied to sanctify their sway.

If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,

Hebrew or Syriac shall be forc'd to bend ;

If languages and copies all cry, No—

Somebody prov'd it centuries ago.

Like trout pursued, the critic in despair

Darts to the mud and finds his safety there!

Women, whom custom has forbid to fly

The scholar's pitch (the scholar best knows why)

With all the simple and unletter'd poor,

Admire his learning, and almost adore.

Whoever errs, the priest can ne'er be wrong,

With such fine words familiar to his tongue.

Ye ladies ! (for, indiff'rent in your cause,

I should deserve to forfeit all applause)

What-

Whatever shocks, or gives the least offence
 To virtue, delicacy, truth or sense,
 (Try the criterion, 'tis a faithful guide)
 Nor has, nor can have scripture on its side.

None but an author knows an author's cares,
 Or fancy's fondness for the child she bears.
 Committed once into the public arms,
 The baby seems to smile with added charms.
 Like something precious ventur'd far from shore,
 'Tis valued for the dangers sake the more.
 He views it with complacency supreme,
 Solicits kind attention to his dream,
 And daily more enamour'd of the cheat,
 Kneels, and asks heav'n to bless the dear deceit.
 So one, whose story serves at least to show
 Men lov'd their own productions long ago,
 Wooed an unfeeling statue for his wife,
 Nor rested till the Gods had giv'n it life.
 If some mere driv'ler suck the sugar'd fib,
 One that still needs his leading string and bib,

And praise his genius, he is soon repaid
 In praise applied to the same part, his head.
 For 'tis a rule that holds for ever true,
 Grant me discernment, and I grant it you.

Patient of contradiction as a child,
 Affable, humble, diffident and mild,
 Such was Sir Isaac, and such Boyle and Locke,
 Your blund'rer is as sturdy as a rock.
 The creature is so sure to kick and bite,
 A muleteer's the man to set him right.
 First appetite enlists him truth's sworn foe,
 Then obstinate self-will confirms him so.

Tell him he wanders, that his error leads
 To fatal ills, that though the path he treads
 Be flow'ry, and he see no cause of fear,
 Death and the pains of hell attend him there;
 In vain; the slave of arrogance and pride,
 He has no hearing on the prudent side.
 His still refuted quirks he still repeats,
 New rais'd objections with new quibbles meets,

'Till

'Till sinking in the quicksand he defends,
 He dies disputing, and the contest ends ;
 But not the mischiefs : they still left behind,
 Like thistle-seeds are sown by ev'ry wind.

Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill,
 Bend the strait rule to their own crooked will,
 And with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
 First put it out, then take it for a guide.
 Halting on crutches of unequal size,
 One leg by truth supported, one by lies,
 They sidle to the goal with aukward pace,
 Secure of nothing, but to lose the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain,
 And these, reciprocally, those again.
 The mind and conduct mutually imprint
 And stamp their image in each other's mint.
 Each, sire and dam, of an infernal race,
 Begetting and conceiving all that's base.

None sends his arrow to the mark in view,
 Whose hand is feeble, or his aim untrue.

For though e'er yet the shaft is on the wing,
 Or when it first forsakes th' elastic string,
 It err but little from th' intended line,
 It falls at last, far wide of his design.
 So he that seeks a mansion in the sky,
 Must watch his purpose with a stedfast eye,
 That prize belongs to none but the sincere,
 The least obliquity is fatal here.

With caution taste the sweet Circean cup,
 He that sips often, at last drinks it up.
 Habits are soon assum'd, but when we strive
 To strip them off, 'tis being slay'd alive.
 Call'd to the temple of impure delight,
 He that abstains, and he alone does right.
 If a wish wander that way, call it home,
 He cannot long be safe, whose wishes roam.
 But if you pass the threshold, you are caught,
 Die then, if pow'r Almighty save you not.
 There hard'ning by degrees, 'till double steel'd,
 Take leave of nature's God, and God reveal'd,

Then

Then laugh at all you trembl'd at before,
 And joining the free-thinkers brutal roar,
 Swallow the two grand nostrums they dispense,
 That scripture lies, and blasphemy is sense :
 If clemency revolted by abuse
 Be damnable, then, damn'd without excuse.

Some dream that they can silence when they will
 The storm of passion, and say, *Peace, be still* ;
 But “ *Thus far and no farther,*” when address'd
 To the wild wave, or wilder human breast,
 Implies authority that never can,
 That never ought to be the lot of man.

But muse forbear, long flights forebode a fall,
 Strike on the deep-toned chord the sum of all.

Hear the just law, the judgment of the skies !
 He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies.
 And he that *will* be cheated to the last,
 Delusions, strong as hell, shall bind him fast.
 But if the wand'rer his mistake discern,
 Judge his own ways, and sigh for a return,

Bewilder'd once, must he bewail his loss
For ever and for ever ? No—the cross.

There and there only (though the deist rave,
And atheist, if earth bear so base a slave)

There and there only, is the pow'r to save.

There no delusive hope invites despair,

No mock'ry meets you, no deception there.

The spells and charms that blinded you before,

All vanish there, and fascinate no more.

I am no preacher, let this hint suffice,

The cross once seen, is death to ev'ry vice :

Else he that hung there, suffer'd all his pain,

Bled, groan'd and agoniz'd, and died in vain.

H. T. U. R. T. H.