

II.

Ruffians, pittiless as proud,
 Heav'n awards the vengeance due,
 Empire is on us bestow'd,
 Shame and ruin wait for you.

H E R O I S M.

THERE was a time when Ætna's silent fire
 Slept unperceiv'd, the mountain yet entire,
 When conscious of no danger from below,
 She tower'd a cloud-capt pyramid of snow.
 No thunders shook with deep intestine sound
 The blooming groves that girdled her around,
 Her unctuous olives and her purple vines,
 (Unfelt the fury of those bursting mines)
 The peasant's hopes, and not in vain, assur'd,
 In peace upon her sloping sides matur'd.

When on a day, like that of the last doom,
 A conflagration lab'ring in her womb,
 She teem'd and heav'd with an infernal birth,
 That shook the circling seas and solid earth.
 Dark and voluminous the vapours rise,
 And hang their horrors in the neighb'ring skies,
 While through the stygian veil that blots the day,
 In dazzling streaks the vivid light'nings play.
 But oh ! what muse, and in what pow'rs of song,
 Can trace the torrent as it burns along ?
 Havock and devastation in the van,
 It marches o'er the prostrate works of man,
 Vines, olives, herbage, forests disappear,
 And all the charms of a Sicilian year.

Revolving seasons, fruitless as they pass,
 See it an uninform'd and idle mass,
 Without a soil t'invite the tiller's care,
 Or blade that might redeem it from despair.
 Yet time at length (what will not time atchieve ?)
 Cloaths it with earth, and bids the produce live,

Once

Once more the spiry myrtle crowns the glade,
 And ruminating flocks enjoy the shade.
 Oh blifs precarious, and unsafe retreats,
 Oh charming paradise of short liv'd sweets !
 The self-same gale that wafts the fragrance round,
 Brings to the distant ear a fullen sound,
 Again the mountain feels th' imprison'd foe,
 Again pours ruin on the vale below,
 Ten thousand swains the wasted scene deplore,
 That only future ages can restore.

Ye monarchs, whom the lure of honour draws,
 Who write in blood the merits of your cause,
 Who strike the blow, then plead your own defence,
 Glory your aim, but justice your pretence ;
 Behold in Ætna's emblematic fires
 The mischiefs your ambitious pride inspires.

Fast by the stream that bounds your just domain,
 And tells you where ye have a right to reign,

A nation dwells, not envious of your throne,
 Studious of peace, their neighbours and their own.
 Ill-fated race ! how deeply must they rue
 Their only crime, vicinity to you !
 The trumpet sounds, your legions swarm abroad,
 Through the ripe harvest lies their destin'd road,
 At ev'ry step beneath their feet they tread
 The life of multitudes, a nation's bread ;
 Earth seems a garden in its loveliest dress
 Before them, and behind a wilderness ;
 Famine and pestilence, her first-born son,
 Attend to finish what the sword begun,
 And ecchoing praises such as fiends might earn,
 And folly pays, resound at your return.
 A calm succeeds—but plenty with her train
 Of heart-felt joys, succeeds not soon again,
 And years of pining indigence must show
 What scourges are the gods that rule below.
 Yet man, laborious man, by slow degrees,
 (Such is his thirst of opulence and ease)

Plies all the finews of industrious toil,
 Gleans up the refuse of the general spoil,
 Rebuilds the towr's that smok'd upon the plain,
 And the sun gilds the shining spires again.

Increasing commerce and reviving art
 Renew the quarrel on the conqu'rors part,
 And the sad lesson must be learn'd once more,
 That wealth within is ruin at the door.

What are ye monarchs, laurel'd heroes, say,
 But Ætnas of the suff'ring world ye sway?
 Sweet nature stripp'd of her embroider'd robe,
 Deplores the wasted regions of her globe,
 And stands a witness at truth's awful bar,
 To prove you there, destroyers as ye are.

Oh place me in some heav'n-protected isle,
 Where peace and equity and freedom smile,
 Where no Volcano pours his fiery flood,
 No crested warrior dips his plume in blood,
 Where pow'r secures what industry has won,
 Where to succeed is not to be undone,

A land

A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,
In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign.

THE POET, THE OYSTER, AND SENSITIVE PLANT.

AN Oyster cast upon the shore
Was heard, though never heard before;
Complaining in a speech well worded,
And worthy thus to be recorded :

Ah hapless wretch ! condemned to dwell
For ever in my native shell,
Ordain'd to move when others please,
Not for my own content or ease,
But tofs'd and buffeted about,
Now *in* the water, and now *out*.

'Twere better to be born a stone
Of ruder shape and feeling none,

Than