

TO MIRANDA,

ON HER DETERMINING TO ASSUME THE VEIL.

WHY quits Miranda thus life's busy scene?  
Why seeks she now the Convent's gloom serene?  
Can, then, this giddy world no pleasure give,  
That here the fair Miranda scorns to live?  
Why, pensive maid, to routs, to lively balls,  
Prefer the gloomy Convent's hallow'd walls?  
Ah, stay! and let mankind adore these charms,  
That ought to bless some favour'd lover's arms:  
Yet, stop! methinks I hear Miranda say  
(Whilst now she smiling reads my uncouth lay),  
“ Though vulgar souls may wonder at my choice,  
May dare to censure with a common voice;  
Yet I'm resolv'd, since in those shades no fools  
Are led by Fashion's or by Folly's rules.



'Tis only in the dear sequester'd cell  
Where peace is found, and where the virtues dwell;  
Contented there my future days I'll spend,  
There taught, in hope and triumph meet my end:  
Then in some time-worn Cloister's hallow'd gloom  
The sister Nuns will rear Miranda's tomb;  
Whilst some pale trembling lamp shall ever burn,  
To mark the spot where rests my mould'ring urn."  
Thus speaks in accents soft the pensive maid,  
Who to the blaze of day prefers the shade,  
Who wisely shuns what Folly pleasure calls,  
And flies for refuge to a Convent's walls.  
Reluctant, I must own 'tis Nature's voice,  
That calls Miranda to so sad a choice:  
For, oft at eve I've seen the pensive maid  
Reclin'd beneath the yew-tree's mournful shade,  
Hanging enraptur'd o'er some moving tale,  
Whilst pleas'd she heard the plaintive warbler's wail.



If then, Miranda, you the Veil assume;  
If you will seek the Convent's mournful gloom;  
And the sad tale no abler Bard inspire,  
Be mine the task to tune the plaintive lyre,  
If verse like mine eternal fame could give,  
Thy name, Miranda, should for ever live.