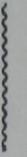


And when the vain shadows of Time are retiring,
When life is fast fleeting, and death is in sight,
The Christian believing, exulting, expiring,
Beholds a to-morrow of endless delight !

The Infidel then sees no joyous to-morrow,
Yet he knows that his moments must hasten away ;
Poor wretch ! can he feel without heart-rending sorrow,
That his joys and his life must expire with to-day !



ADDRESS TO HEALTH.—1784.

O ! Goddess, in whose green retreat
Mirth, youth, and laughter, love to meet,
And round thy flaunting, breezy bowers,
Weave many a knotted fringe of flowers,
Whose sweet heads, nodding, seem to say—
If Health you seek, we show the way !
But not 'midst green retreats alone,
The shrub-built court, or mossy throne,
Where flowers with meek contention vie
To yield perfume, or win the eye,
Inquiring swains the goddess find
On the hoar rock beat by the wind ;
Indifferent though her glossy hair
Trembles at every breath of air—
E'en though her playful curls are flowing
Upon the breeze that's round her blowing.

retiring,
In sight,

POETICAL WORKS.

73

Still she bounds on—the swains pursue—
Through daisied fields and woodlands too ;
And, on the pathless mountain's side,
Take exercise to be their guide ;
For she bestows the well-earn'd wreath—
The generous Almoner of Health ;
Her gifts hands round to those who know
To brush the mead, or climb the brow ;
To rise when ruddy morn bestows

With to-day !

On the pale sky the blushing rose,
While yet the hawthorn hangs with dew,
And spangles bright with every hue ;
While birds yet sing their first good-morrow,
And Nature's smiles bode nought of sorrow :
'Tis then that Health holds forth her hand,
And bids them trip the furrowed land ;
That exercise shall warmly glow
The fair-won treasures to bestow ;
That sleep shall ask no downy bed,
Alike to her where rests her head,
Whether on moss-grown turf reclin'd,
In shady grot, or cooling wind,
On earth's green lap o'erhung with oak,
Or soundly slumbering on the rock ;
For Exercise unerring knows
The varied couch of sweet repose ;
Knows, too, that Health the path shall tread,
And turn to down the rocky bed.
Ah ! Goddess, wilt thou ne'er attend ?
Wilt thou ne'er meet one as a friend ?

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wing.

'Tis not because I have not been
Amidst the nymphs and shepherds seen ;
For, as they frolick'd o'er the mead,
Gay bounding to the oaten reed,
This foot, I ween, as light could pass
As any yet that trod the grass ;
Why then, ah ! why hast thou still been
The saddener of my mirthful scene !
For thee I've sought in every shade,—
To thee I've due oblation paid ;
With waking morn have left my bed,
While the light breeze play'd round my head ;
And cowslips rose beneath my feet,
Aurora's infant rays to meet.
When sober Eve, “the matron gray,”
Was taking leave of sultry Day ;
E'er yet the sun, that scorch'd before,
With beams oblique glanc'd on the shore ;
E'er yet his radiance left the skies,
And dewy damps began to rise ;
E'er the blue mist, at distance seen,
Had furl'd his dark unwholesome screen ;
I eager went with searching eyes
To meet thee, mountain Exercise,
Still trusting thou would'st bring to me
The buskin'd nymph I fear I ne'er again shall see !
But since in vain I search around—
Since Health is nowhere to be found,
To Cheerfulness I bend the knee,
The Goddess next of kin to thee !

And she, so soft, thy form shall wear,
Hang round my bed, and o'er my chair,
That Sickness shall let minutes pass,
Nor see one sand forsake the glass.
Though ever fainting as she moves,
And drooping e'en in fragrant groves;
Whose lifeless frame no art can cheer,
Nor all the changes of the year;
Nor song, nor pipe, can bid her raise
One cheering thought of better days;—
Nor all the flow'rets Nature spreads
On her green lap in leafy beds,
Can o'er her cheek prolong the smile,
Though balmy zephyrs play the while,
Till touch'd by thee, thou goddess dear!
Who'st dried this eye of many a tear.
And oft, when sickness by my side
Has every other joy denied,
With Hope or Fancy in thy train
Thou sooth'd, or seem'd to soothe my pain,
And banish'd every thought of sorrow
By gaily pointing to to-morrow.
Fancy would weave a wreath of flowers,
And dress the nimble-footed hours,
That henceforth ever more should go
“Upon the light fantastic toe;”
Not heavily, as beating time
To every plaintive note of mine;
For Hope, with smiles that might deceive
A heart less willing to believe,

Would wave her hand, and pointing, say,
Health keeps for thee yon coming day.

Again deceiv'd ; the flatterer sends
Her second self, and best of friends ;
She, who her cup so oft has brought,
Not fill'd with the enlivening draught,
Yet tastes so like, you scarce can tell,—
Content can imitate so well ;
So well can counterfeit her air,
So well can chant her notes that cheer,
That ever, when she meets mine eye,
Methinks the rosy Goddess by.

Hygēa, then, bound through the vale,
And listen to each shepherd's tale,
And let the nymphs around thee throng,
Enraptur'd with thy matin song ;
And on the heart feel every word
Strike the soft, sweet, harmonic chord,
Which thrilling through the frame shall rise,
And sparkle in the telltale eyes.

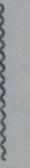
But what have I of comfort lost,
That healthier, stouter frames can boast !
Have I not sisters, ever near,
O ever kind ! O ever dear !
Who suffer not the winds to wave
O'er the bent shrub they prop and save.
From Autumn's faded form they hide,
And Winter's stripping hand they guide ;
And even midst the Summer's heat
An equal watchfulness I meet.

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POETICAL WORKS.

77

Away then, Health ! thy frowns are vain,
Thou canst not touch my soul with pain !



THE NUN'S RETURN TO THE WORLD,

BY THE DECREE OF THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF FRANCE,

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at

FEBRUARY, 1790.

FAREWELL ye walls where solitude has thrown
Her long dark shadow on each silent stone,
Where the slow pulse but feebly dares to creep,
Or give the wretched the sad leave to weep ;
Where struggling sighs break forth from every breast,
And wasting sorrow wears a holy vest ;
Where pure religion seldom ventures nigh,
Or owns the tear that hangs within the eye,
Which trembling long, at last in secret falls,
The heart-wrought offering to relentless walls.
But nought avails the heart-wrought offering here,
Nor aught avails the earth-unhallow'd prayer ;
Sighs, that so oft for worldly cares are given,
No listening seraph fondly bears to heaven,
But through the cloister's corridors are borne,
Heard oft at eve and at return of morn.
Some sisters may revere the cloister's gloom,
And, warm with life, yet hover o'er the tomb ;
May wing their souls to the supreme abode,
And, quitting earth, place every thought with God.