



O D E II.

ON the WINTER-SOLSTICE,

M. D. CC. XL.

TH E radiant ruler of the year
At length his wintry goal attains,

Soon to reverse the long career,
And Northward bend his golden reins.

Prone on P O T O S I ' s haughty brow

His fiery streams incessant flow,

Ripening the silver's ductile stores ;

While, in the cavern's horrid shade,

The panting Indian hides his head,

And oft th' approach of eve explores.

B

But

But lo, on this deserted coast
How faint the light! how thick the air!
Lo, arm'd with whirlwind, hail and frost,
Fierce winter defolates the year.
The fields resign their chearful bloom;
No more the breezes waft perfume,
No more the warbling waters roll:
Defarts of snow fatigue the eye,
Black storms involve the louring sky,
And gloomy damps oppress the soul.

Now thro' the town promiscuous throngs
Urge the warm bowl and ruddy fire;
Harmonious dances, festive songs,
To charm the midnight hours conspire.
While mute and shrinking with her fears,
Each blast the cottage-matron hears
As o'er the hearth she sits alone:
At morn her bridegroom went abroad,
The night is dark and deep the road;
She sighs and wishes him at home.

But

But thou, my lyre, awake, arise,
 And hail the sun's remotest ray ;
 Now, now he climbs the Northern skies,
 To-morrow nearer than to-day.
 Then louder howl the stormy waste,
 Be land and ocean worse defac'd,
 Yet brighter hours are on the wing ;
 And fancy thro' the wintry glooms,
 All fresh with dews and opening blooms,
 Already hails th' emerging spring.

O fountain of the golden day !
 Could mortal vows but urge thy speed,
 How soon before thy vernal ray
 Should each unkindly damp recede !
 How soon each hov'ring tempest fly,
 That now fermenting loads the sky,
 Prompt on our heads to burst amain,
 To rend the forest from the steep,
 Or thund'ring o'er the Baltic deep
 To whelm the merchant's hopes of gain !

But let not man's unequal views
 Presume on nature and her laws ;
 'Tis his with grateful joy to use
 Th' indulgence of the sov'reign cause ;
 Secure that health and beauty springs
 Thro' this majestic frame of things
 Beyond what he can reach to know,
 And that heav'n's all-subduing will,
 With good the progeny of ill,
 Attempts every state below.

How pleasing wears the wintry night,
 Spent with the old illustrious dead !
 While, by the taper's trembling light,
 I seem those awful courts to tread
 Where chiefs and legislators lie,
 Whose triumphs move before my eye
 With every laurel fresh-display'd ;
 While charm'd I taste th' Ionian song,
 Or bend to PLATO'S godlike tongue
 Resounding thro' the olive shade.

But if the gay, well-natur'd friend
Bids leave the studious page awhile,
Then easier joys the soul unbend
And teach the brow a softer smile;
Then while the genial glass is paid
By each to her, that fairest maid,
Whose radiant eyes his hopes obey,
What lucky vows his bosom warm!
While absence heightens every charm,
And love invokes returning MAY.

MAY! thou delight of heav'n and earth,
When will thy happy morn arise?
When the dear place which gave her birth
Restore LUCINDA to my eyes?
There while she walks the wonted grove,
The seat of music and of love,
Bright as the ONE primæval fair,
Thither, ye silver-sounding lyres,
Thither, gay smiles and young desires,
Chast hope and mutual faith repair.

And

And if believing love can read
 The wonted softness in her eye,
 Then shall my fears, O charming maid,
 And every pain of absence die :
 Then offer to thy name attun'd,
 And rising to diviner sound,
 I'll wake the free HORATIAN song :
 Old TYNE shall listen to my tale,
 And ECHO, down the bord'ring vale,
 The liquid melody prolong.

