



INSCRIPTION ON A SUMMER-HOUSE
BELONGING TO GILBERT WEST, ESQ. AT WICKHAM,
IN KENT.

BY THE SAME.

NOT wrapt in smoky London's sulphurous clouds,
And not far distant, stands my rural cot:
Neither obnoxious to intruding crowds,
Nor for the good and friendly too remote.

And when too much repose brings on the spleen,
Or the gay city's idle pleasure's cloy;
Swift as my changing wish I shift the scene,
And now the country, now the town enjoy.



THE HOUSE OF SUPERSTITION.

A VISION.

BY MR. DENTON.

I.

WHEN Sleep's all-soothing hand with fetters soft
Ties down each sense, and lulls to balmy rest;
The internal power, creative Fancy oft
Broods o'er her treasures in the formful breast.

Thus

Thus when no longer daily cares engage,
 The busy mind pursues the darling theme;
 Hence angels whisper'd to the slumbering sage,
 And gods of old inspir'd the hero's dream;
 Hence as I slept, these images arose,
 To Fancy's eye, and join'd this fairy scene compose.

II.

As when fair morning dries her pearly tears,
 The mountain lifts o'er mists its lofty head;
 Thus new to sight a gothic dome appears
 With the grey rust of rolling years o'erspread,
 Here Superstition holds her dreary reign,
 And her lip-labour'd orisons she plies
 In tongue unknown, when morn bedews the plain,
 Or evening skirts with gold the western skies;
 To the dumb stock she bends, or sculptur'd wall,
 And many a cross she makes, and many a bead lets fall.

III.

Near to the dome a magic pair reside
 Prompt to deceive, and practis'd to confound;
 Here hood-winkt Ignorance is seen to bide
 Stretching in darksome cave along the ground.
 No object e'er awakes his stupid eyes,
 Nor voice articulate arrests his ears,
 Save when beneath the moon pale spectres rise,
 And haunt his soul with visionary fears:
 Or when hoarse winds incavern'd murmur round,
 And babbling echo wakes, and iterates the sound.

IV. Where

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Where boughs entwining form an artful shade,
 And in faint glimmerings just admit the light,
 There Error sits in borrow'd white array'd,
 And in Truth's form deceives the transient fight.
 A thousand glories wait her opening day,
 Her beaming lustre when fair Truth imparts;
 Thus Error would pour forth a spurious ray,
 And cheat th' unpractis'd mind with mimic arts;
 She cleaves with magic wand the liquid skies,
 Bids airy forms appear, and scenes fantastick rise.

V.

A porter deaf, decrepid, old, and blind
 Sits at the gate, and lifts a liberal bowl
 With wine of wondrous power to lull the mind,
 And check each vigorous effort of the soul:
 Whoe'er un'wares shall ply his thirsty lip,
 And drink in gulps the luscious liquor down,
 Shall hapless from the cup delusion sip,
 And objects see in features not their own;
 Each way-worn traveller that hither came,
 He lav'd with copious draughts, and Prejudice his name.

VI.

Within a various race are seen to wonne,
 Props of her age, and pillars of her state,
 Which erst were nurtur'd by the wither'd crone,
 And born to Tyranny, her griesly mate:
 The first appear'd in pomp of purple pride,
 With triple crown erect, and throned high;
 Two golden keys hang dangling by his side
 To lock or ope the portals of the sky;

Crouching

Crouching and prostrate there (ah! fight unmeet!)
The crowned head would bow, and lick his dusty feet.

VII.

With bended arm he on a book reclin'd
Fast lock'd with iron clasps from vulgar eyes;
Heaven's gracious gift to light the wandering mind,
To lift fall'n man, and guide him to the skies!
A man no more, a god he would be thought,
And 'mazed mortals blindly must obey:
With slight of hand he lying wonders wrought,
And near him loathsome heaps of reliques lay;
Strange legends would he read, and figments dire
Of Limbus' prison'd shades, and purgatory fire.

VIII.

There meagre Penance sat, in sackcloth clad,
And to his breast close hugg'd the viper, Sin,
Yet oft with brandish'd whip would gaul, as mad,
With voluntary stripes his shrivel'd skin.
Counting large heaps of o'er-abounding good
Of faints that dy'd within the church's pale,
With gentler aspect there Indulgence stood,
And to the needy culprit would retail;
There too, strange merchandize! he pardons sold,
And treason would absolve, and murder purge with gold.

IX.

With shaven crown in a sequester'd cell
A lazy lubbard there was seen to lay;
No work had he, save some few beads to tell,
And indolently snore the hours away.

The nameless joys that bless the nuptial bed,
 The mystic rites of Hymen's hallow'd tye
 Impure he deems, and from them starts with dread,
 As crimes of foulest stain, and deepest dye:
 No social hopes hath he, no social fears,
 But spends in lethargy devout the lingering years.

X.

Gnashing his teeth in mood of furious ire
 Fierce Persecution sat, and with strong breath
 Wakes into living flame large heaps of fire,
 And feasts on murders, massacres, and death.
 Near him was plac'd Procrustes' iron bed
 To stretch or mangle to a certain size;
 To see their writhing pains each heart must bleed,
 To hear their doleful shrieks and piercing cries;
 Yet he beholds them with unmoistened eye,
 Their writhing pains his sport, their moans his melody.

XI.

A gradual light diffusing o'er the gloom,
 And slow approaching with majestic pace;
 A lovely maid appears in beauty's bloom,
 With native charms, and unaffected grace:
 Her hand a clear reflecting mirror shows,
 In which all objects their true features wear,
 And on her cheek a blush indignant glows
 To see the horrid sorceries practis'd there;
 She snatch'd the volume from the tyrant's rage,
 Unlock'd its iron clasps, and ope'd the heavenly page.

XII. " My

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" My name is Truth, and you, each holy feer,
 " That all my steps with ardent gaze pursue,
 " Unveil, she said, the sacred mysteries here,
 " Give the celestial boon to public view,
 " Tho' blatant Obloquy with leprous mouth
 " Shall blot your fame, and blast the generous deed,
 " Yet in revolving years some liberal youth
 " Shall crown your virtuous act with glory's meed,
 " Your names adorn'd in ¹ Gilpin's polish'd page,
 " With each historic grace, shall shine thro' every age.

XIII.

" With furious hate tho' fierce relentless power
 " Exert of torment all her horrid skill;
 " Tho' your lives meet too soon the fatal hour
 " Scorching in flames, or writhing on the wheel;
 " Yet when the ^m dragon in the deep abyfs
 " Shall lie, fast bound in adamantine chain,
 " Ye with the Lamb shall rise to ceaseless blifs,
 " First-fruits of death, and partners of his reign;
 " Then shall repay the momentary tear
 " The great sabbatic rest, the millenary year."

¹ The Reverend Mr. William Gilpin, author of the lives of Bernard Gilpin, Bishop Latimer, Wickliff, and the principal of his followers.

^m See Revel. chap. 20. and the learned and ingenious Bishop of Bristol's comment upon it, in the 3d vol. of his dissertation on the prophecies.