



The S P L E E N.

An EPISTLE to Mr. C—— J——.

By Mr. MATTHEW GREEN of the Custom-house.

THIS motly piece to you I send,
 Who always were a faithful friend ;
 Who, if disputes should happen hence,
 Can best explain the author's sense ;
 And, anxious for the public weal,
 Do, what I sing, so often feel.

The want of method pray excuse,
 Allowing for a vapour'd Muse ;
 Nor to a narrow path confin'd,
 Hedge in by rules a roving mind.

The child is genuine, you may trace
 Throughout the fire's transmitted face.
 Nothing is stol'n : my Muse, tho' mean,
 Draws from the spring she finds within ;
 Nor vainly buys what Gildon sells,
 Poetick buckets for dry wells.

School-helps I want, to climb on high,
 Where all the ancient treasures lie,

And

And there unseen commit a theft
 On wealth in Greek exchequers left.
 Then where? from whom? what can I steal,
 Who only with the moderns deal?
 This were attempting to put on
 Raiment from naked bodies won:
 They safely sing before a thief,
 They cannot give who want relief;
 Some few excepted, names well known,
 And justly laurel'd with renown,
 Whose stamp of genius marks their ware,
 And theft detects: of theft beware;
 From Moore so lash'd, example fit,
 Shan petty larceny in wit.

First know, my friend, I do not mean
 To write a treatise on the Spleen;
 Nor to prescribe when nerves convulse;
 Nor mend th' alarum watch, you pulse.
 If I am right, your question lay,
 What course I take to drive away
 The day-mare Spleen, by whose false pleas
 Men prove mere suicides in ease;
 And how I do myself demean
 In stormy world to live serene.

When by its magick lantern Spleen
 With frightful figures spreads life's scene,
 And threat'ning prospects urg'd my fears,
 A stranger to the luck of heirs;

Reason, some quiet to restore,
 Shew'd part was substance, shadow more ;
 With Spleen's dead weight tho' heavy grown,
 In life's rough tide I sunk not down,
 But swam, till Fortune threw a rope,
 Buoyant on bladders fill'd with hope.

I always choose the plainest food
 To mend viscosity of blood.
 Hail ! water-gruel, healing power,
 Of easy access to the poor ;
 Thy help love's confessors implore,
 And doctors secretly adore ;
 To thee I fly, by thee dilute —
 Thro' veins my blood doth quicker shoot,
 And by swift current throws off clean
 Prolifick particles of Spleen.

I never sick by drinking grow,
 Nor keep myself a cup too low,
 And seldom Cloe's lodgings haunt,
 Thrifty of spirits, which I want.

Hunting I reckon very good
 To brace the nerves, and stir the blood ;
 But after no field-honours itch,
 Atchiev'd by leaping hedge and ditch.
 While Spleen lies soft relax'd in bed,
 Or o'er coal fires inclines the head,
 Hygeia's sons with hound and horn,
 And jovial cry awake the morn.

These

These see her from the dusky plight,
 Smear'd by th' embraces of the night,
 With rosal wash redeem her face,
 And prove herself of Titan's race,
 And, mounting in loose robes the skies,
 Shed light and fragrance as she flies.
 Then horse and hound fierce joy display,
 Exulting at the Hark-away,
 And in pursuit o'er tainted ground
 From lungs robust field-notes resound.
 Then, as St. George the dragon flew,
 Spleen pierc'd, trod down, and dying view ;
 While all their spirits are on wing,
 And woods, and hills, and vallies ring.

To cure the mind's wrong biases, Spleen ;
 Some recommend the bowling-green ;
 Some, hilly walks ; all, exercise ;
 Fling but a stone, the giant dies ;
 Laugh and be well. Monkeys have been
 Extreme good doctors for the Spleen ;
 And kitten, if the humour hit,
 Has harlequin'd away the fit.

Since mirth is good in this behalf,
 At some partic'lars let us laugh.
 Witlings, brisk fools, curs'd with half sense,
 That stimulates their impotence ;
 Who buz in rhyme, and, like blind flies,
 Err with their wings for want of eyes.

Poor authors worshipping a calf ;
 Deep tragedies that make us laugh,
 A strict dissenter saying grace,
 A lect'rer preaching for a place ;
 Folks, things prophetick to dispense,
 Making the past the future tense,
 The popish dubbing of a priest,
 Fine epitaphs on knaves deceas'd,
 Green-apron'd Pythonissa's rage,
 Great Æsculapius on his stage,
 A miser starving to be rich,
 The prior of Newgate's dying speech,
 A jointur'd widow's ritual state,
 Two Jews disputing tête à tête,
 New almanacks compos'd by seers,
 Experiments on felons ears,
 Disdainful prudes, who ceaseless ply
 The superb muscle of the eye,
 A coquet's April-weather face,
 A Queenb'rough mare behind his mace,
 And fops in military show,
 Are so'verein for the case in view.

If Spleen-fogs rise at close of day,
 I clear my ev'ning with a play,
 Or to some concert take my way.
 The company, the shine of lights,
 The scenes of humour, musick's flights,
 Adjust and set the soul to rights.

Life's moving pictures, well-wrought plays,
 To others' griefs attention raise:
 Here, while the tragick fictions glow,
 We borrow joy by pitying woe;
 There gaily comick scenes delight,
 And hold true mirrors to our sight.
 Virtue in charming drefs array'd,
 Calling the passions to her aid,
 When moral scenes just actions join,
 Takes shape, and shews her face divine.

Musick has charms, we all may find,
 Ingratiate deeply with the mind.
 When art does sound's high pow'r advance,
 To musick's pipe the passions dance;
 Motions unwill'd its pow'rs have shewn,
 Tarantulated by a tune.
 Many have held the soul to be
 Nearly ally'd to harmony.
 Her have I known indulging grief,
 And shunning company's relief,
 Unveil her face, and looking round,
 Own, by neglecting sorrow's wound,
 The confanguinity of sound.

In rainy days keep double guard,
 Or Spleen will surely be too hard;
 Which, like those fish by failors met,
 Fly highest, while their wings are wet.

In such dull weather, so unfit
 To enterprize a work of wit,
 When clouds one yard of azure sky,
 That's fit for simile, deny,
 I dress my face with studious looks,
 And shorten tedious hours with books.
 But if dull fogs invade the head,
 That mem'ry minds not what is read,
 I sit in window dry as ark,
 And on the drowning world remark :
 Or to some coffee-house I stray
 For news, the manna of a day,
 And from the hipp'd discourses gather,
 That politicks go by the weather :
 Then seek good-humour'd tavern chums,
 And play at cards, but for small sums ;
 Or with the merry fellows quaff,
 And laugh aloud with them that laugh ;
 Or drink a joco-ferious cup
 With souls who've took their freedom up,
 And let my mind, beguil'd by talk,
 In Epicurus' garden walk,
 Who thought it heav'n to be serene,
 Pain hell ; and purgatory spleen.

Sometimes I dress, with women fit,
 And chat away the gloomy fit ;
 Quit the stiff garb of serious sense,
 And wear a gay impertinence,

Nor think, nor speak with any pains,
 But lay on fancy's neck the reins ;
 Talk of unusual swell of waist
 In maid of honour loosely lac'd,
 And beauty borring Spanish red,
 And loving pair with sep'rate bed,
 And jewels pawn'd for los of game,
 And then redeem'd by los of fame ;
 Of Kitty (aunt left in the lurch
 By grave pretence to go to church)
 Perceiv'd in hack with lover fine,
 Like Will and Mary on the coin :
 And thus in modish manner we,
 In aid of sugar, sweeten tea.

Permit, ye fair, your idol form
 Which e'en the coldest heart can warm,
 May with its beauties grace my line,
 While I bow down before its shrine,
 And your throng'd altars with my lays
 Perfume, and get by giving praise.
 With speech so sweet, so sweet a mien
 You excommunicate the Spleen,
 Which, fiend-like, flies the magick ring
 You form with sound, when pleas'd to sing ;
 Whate'er you say, howe'er you move,
 We look, we listen, and approve.
 Your touch, which gives to feeling blifs,
 Our nerves officious throng to kifs ;

By Celia's pat, on their report,
 The grave-air'd foul, inclin'd to sport,
 Renounces wisdom's fullen pomp,
 And loves the floral game, to romp.
 But who can view the pointed rays,
 That from black eyes scintillant blaze?
 Love on his throne of glory seems
 Encompass'd with Satellite beams.
 But when blue eyes, more softly bright,
 Diffuse benignly humid light,
 We gaze, and see the smiling loves,
 And Cytherea's gentle doves,
 And raptur'd fix in such a face,
 Love's mercy-feat, and throne of grace.
 Shine but on age, you melt its snow;
 Again fires long-extinguish'd glow,
 And, charm'd by witchery of eyes,
 Blood long congealed liquifies:
 True miracle, and fairly done
 By heads which are ador'd while on.

But oh, what pity 'tis to find
 Such beauties both of form and mind,
 By modern breeding much debas'd,
 In half the female world at least!
 Hence I with care such lott'ries shun,
 Where, a priz'd mis'd, I'm quite undone;
 And han't, by vent'ring on a wife,
 Yet run the greatest risk in life.

Mothers,

Mothers, and guardian aunts, forbear
 Your impious pains to form the fair,
 Nor lay out so much cost and art,
 But to deflow'r the virgin heart;
 Of ev'ry folly-fost'ring bed
 By quick'ning heat of custom bred.
 Rather than by your culture spoil'd,
 Desist, and give us nature wild,
 Delighted with a hoyden soul,
 Which truth and innocence controul.
 Coquets, leave off affected arts,
 Gay fowlers at a flock of hearts;
 Woodcocks to shun your snares have skill,
 You shew so plain, you strive to kill.
 In love the artless catch the game,
 And they scarce miss who never aim.

The world's great Author did create
 The sex to fit the nuptial state,
 And meant a blessing in a wife
 To solace the fatigues of life;
 And old inspired times display,
 How wives could love, and yet obey.
 Then truth and patience of controul,
 And house-wife arts adorn'd the soul;
 And charms, the gift of nature, shone;
 And jealousy, a thing unknown:
 Veils were the only masks they wore;
 Novels (receipts to make a whore)

Nor

Nor ombre, nor quadrille they knew;
 Nor Pam's puissance felt at loo.
 Wise men did not, to be thought gay,
 Then compliment their pow'r away :
 But left, by frail desires misled,
 The girls forbidden paths should tread,
 Of ign'rance rais'd the safe high wall ;
 We sink haw-haws, that shew them all.
 Thus we at once solicit sense,
 And charge them not to break the fence.

Now, if untir'd, consider friend,
 What I avoid to gain my end.

I never am at Meeting seen,
 Meeting, that region of the Spleen ;
 The broken heart, the busy fiend,
 The inward call, on Spleen depend.

Law, licens'd breaking of the peace,
 To which vacation is disease ;
 A gypfy diction scarce known well
 By th' magi, who law-fortunes tell
 I shun ; nor let it breed within
 Anxiety, and that the Spleen ;
 Law, grown a forest, where perplex
 The mazes, and the brambles vex ;
 Where its twelve verd'ers every day
 Are changing still the publick way ;
 Yet if we miss our path and err,
 We grievous penalties incur ;

And

And wand'ers tire, and tear their skin,
And then get out where they went in.

I never game, and rarely bet,
Am loth to lend, or run in debt.
No compter-writs me agitate;
Who moralizing pass the gate,
And there mine eyes on spendthrifts turn,
Who vainly o'er their bondage mourn.
Wisdom, before beneath their care,
Pays her upbraiding visits there,
And forces folly thro' the grate
Her panegyrick to repeat.
This view, profusely when inclin'd,
Enters a caveat in the mind:
Experience join'd with common sense,
To mortals is a providence.

Passion, as frequently is seen,
Subsiding settles into Spleen.
Hence, as the plague of happy life,
I run away from party-strife.
A prince's cause, a church's claim,
I've known to raise a mighty flame,
And priest, as stoker, very free
To throw in peace and charity.

That tribe, whose practicals decree
Small-beer the deadliest heresy;
Who, fond of pedigree, derive
From the most noted whore alive;

Who

Who own wine's old prophetick aid,
 And love the mitre Bacchus made,
 Forbid the faithful to depend
 On half-pint drinkers for a friend,
 And in whose gay red-letter'd face
 We read good-living more than grace :
 Nor they so pure, and so precise,
 Immac'late as their white of eyes,
 Who for the spirit hug the Spleen,
 Phylacter'd throughout all their mien,
 Who their ill-tasted home-brew'd pray'r
 To the state's mellow forms prefer ;
 Who doctrines, as infectious, fear,
 Which are not steep'd in vinegar,
 And samples of heart-chested grace
 Expose in shew-glass of the face,
 Did never me as yet provoke,
 Either to honour band and cloak,
 Or deck my hat with leaves of oak.

I rail not with mock-patriot grace
 At folks, because they are in place ;
 Nor, hir'd to praise with stallion pen,
 Serve the ear-lechery of men ;
 But to avoid religious jars
 The laws are my expositors,
 Which in my doubting mind create
 Conformity to church and state.
 I go, pursuant to my plan,
 To Mecca with the caravan,

And think it right in common sense
Both for diversion and defence.

Reforming schemes are none of mine ;
To mend the world's a vast design :
Like theirs, who tug in little boat,
To pull to them the ship afloat,
While to defeat their labour'd end,
At once both wind and stream contend :
Success herein is seldom seen,
And zeal, when baffled, turns to Spleen.

Happy the man, who, innocent,
Grieves not at ills he can't prevent ;
His skiff does with the current glide,
Not puffing pull'd against the tide.
He, paddling by the scuffling crowd,
Sees unconcern'd life's wager row'd,
And when he can't prevent foul play,
Enjoys the folly of the fray.

By these reflections I repeal
Each hasty promise made in zeal.
When g ——— I P ——— s say,
Were bound our great light to display,
And Indian darkness drive away,
Yet none but drunken watchmen send,
And scoundrel link-boys for that end ;
When they cry up this holy war,
Which ev'ry christian should be for,

}

Yet such as owe the law their ears,
 We find employ'd as engineers :
 This view my forward zeal so shocks,
 In vain they hold the money-box.
 At such a conduct which intends
 By vicious means such virtuous ends,
 I laugh off Spleen, and keep my pence
 From spoiling Indian innocence.

Yet philosophic love of ease
 I suffer not to prove disease,
 But rise up in the virtuous cause
 Of a free press, and equal laws.
 The press restrain'd ! nefarious thought !
 In vain our fires have nobly fought :
 While free from force the press remains,
 Virtue and Freedom cheer our plains,
 And Learning largesses bestows,
 And keeps uncensur'd open house.
 We to the nation's publick mart
 Our works of wit, and schemes of art
 And philosophic goods this way,
 Like water carriage cheap convey.
 This tree, which knowledge so affords,
 Inquisitors with flaming swords
 From lay-approach with zeal defend,
 Lest their own paradise should end.
 The press from her fecundous womb
 Brought forth the arts of Greece and Rome ;

Her

Her offspring, skill'd in logic war,
 Truth's banner wav'd in open air ;
 The monster Superstition fled,
 And hid in shades its Gorgon head ;
 And lawless pow'r, the long-kept field,
 By reason quell'd, was forc'd to yield.
 This nurse of arts, and freedom's fence
 To chain, is treason against sense ;
 And, Liberty, thy thousand tongues
 None silence, who design no wrongs ;
 For those, that use the gag's restraint,
 First rob, before they stop complaint.

Since disappointment galls within,
 And subjugates the soul to Spleen,
 Most schemes, as money-snares, I hate,
 And bite not at projector's bait.
 Sufficient wrecks appear each day,
 And yet fresh fools are cast away.
 Ere well the bubbled can turn round,
 Their painted vessel runs aground ;
 Or in deep seas it oversets
 By a fierce hurricane of debts ;
 Or helm-directors in one trip,
 Freight first embezzled, sink the ship.
 Such was of late a corporation,
 The brazen serpent of the nation,
 Which when hard accidents distress'd,
 The poor must look at to be blest,

And thence expect, with paper seal'd
By fraud and us'ry, to be heal'd.

I in no soul-consumption wait
Whole years at levees of the great,
And hungry hopes regale the while
On the spare diet of a smile.

There you may see the idol stand
With mirror in his wanton hand ;
Above, below, now here, now there
He throws about the funny glare :
Crowds pant, and press to seize the prize,
The gay delusion of their eyes.

When Fancy tries her limning skill
To draw and colour at her will,
And raise and round the figures well,
And shew her talent to excel,
I guard my heart, lest it should woo
Unreal beauties Fancy drew,
And disappointed, feel despair
At loss of things, that never were.

When I lean politicians mark
Grazing on æther in the park ;
Who e'er on wing with open throats
Fly at debates, expresses, votes,
Just in the manner swallows use,
Catching their airy food of news ;
Whose latrant stomachs oft molest
The deep-laid plans their dreams suggest ;

Or see some poet penfive fit,
 Fondly mistaking Spleen for Wit ;
 Who, tho' short-winded, still will aim
 To sound the epick triumph of Fame ;
 Who still on Phcebus' smiles will doat,
 Nor learn conviction from his coat ;
 I bless my stars, I never knew
 Whimfies, which close pursu'd, undo,
 And have from old experience been
 Both parent and the child of Spleen.
 These subjects of Apollo's state,
 Who from false fire derive their fate,
 With airy purchases undone
 Of lands, which none lend money on,
 Born dull, had follow'd thriving ways,
 Nor lost one hour to gather bays.
 Their fancies first delirious grew,
 And scenes ideal took for true.
 Fine to the sight Parnassus lies,
 And with false prospects cheats their eyes ;
 The fabled gods the poets sing,
 A season of perpetual spring,
 Brooks, flow'ry fields, and groves of trees,
 Affording sweets and similes,
 Gay dreams inspir'd in myrtle bow'rs,
 And wreaths of undecaying flow'rs,
 Apollo's harp with airs divine,
 The sacred musick of the Nine,

Views of the temple rais'd to Fame,
 And for a vacant nitch proud aim,
 Ravish their souls, and plainly shew
 What Fancy's sketching power can do.
 They will attempt the mountain steep,
 Where on the top, like dreams in sleep,
 The Muses revelation shew,
 That find men crack'd, or make them so.

You friend, like me, the trade of rhyme
 Avoid, elab'rate waste of time,
 Nor are content to be undone,
 To pass for Phœbus' crazy son.
 Poems, the hop-grounds of the brain,
 Afford the most uncertain gain ;
 And lott'ries never tempt the wise
 With blanks so many to a prize.
 I only transient visits pay,
 Meeting the Muses in my way,
 Scarce known to the fastidious dames,
 Nor skill'd to call them by their names.
 Nor can their passports in these days,
 Your profit warrant, or your praise.
 On poems by their dictates writ,
 Criticks, as sworn appraisers, fit,
 And mere uphold'ers in a trice
 On gems and painting set a price.
 These tayl'ring artists for our lays
 Invent cramp'd rules, and with strait stays

Striving

Striving free Nature's shape to hit,
Emaciate sense, before they fit.

A common place, and many friends,
Can serve the plagiary's ends.

Whose easy vamping talent lies,
First wit to pilfer, then disguise.

Thus some devoid of art and skill
To search the mine on Pindus' hill,
Proud to aspire and workmen grow,
By genius doom'd to stay below,
For their own digging shew the town
Wit's treasure brought by others down.

Some wanting, if they find a mine,

An artist's judgment to refine,

On fame precipitately fix'd,

The ore with baser metals mix'd

Melt down, impatient of delay,

And call the vicious mass a play.

All these engage to serve their ends,

A band select of trusty friends,

Who, lesson'd right, extol the thing,

As Psapho taught his birds to sing ;

Then to the ladies they submit,

Returning officers on wit ;

A crowded house their presence draws,

And on the beaux imposes laws,

A judgment in its favour ends,

When all the pannel are its friends :

Their natures merciful and mild
 Have from mere pity sav'd the child ;
 In bulrush ark the bantling found
 Helpless and ready to be drown'd,
 They have preserv'd by kind support,
 And brought the baby-muse to court.

But there's a youth that you can name,
 Who needs no leading strings to fame,
 Whose quick maturity of brain
 The birth of Pallas may explain :
 Dreaming of whose depending fate,
 I heard Melpomene debate,
 This, this is he, that was foretold
 Should emulate our Greeks of old.
 Inspir'd by me with sacred art,
 He sings, and rules the varied heart ;
 If Jove's dread anger he rehearse,
 We hear the thunder in his verse ;
 If he describes love turn'd to rage,
 The furies riot in his page.
 If he fair liberty and law
 By ruffian power expiring draw,
 The keener passions then engage
 Aright, and sanctify their rage ;
 If he attempt disastrous love,
 We hear those plaints that wound the grove,
 Within the kinder passions glow,
 And tears distill'd from pity flow.

From

From the bright vision I descend,
And my deserted theme attend.

Me never did ambition seize,
Strange fever most inflam'd by ease!
The active lunacy of pride,
That courts jilt Fortune for a bride.
This par'dise-tree, so fair and high,
I view with no aspiring eye:
Like aspine shake the restless leaves,
And Sodom-fruit our pains deceives,
Whence frequent falls give no surprize,
But fits of Spleen, call'd *growing wise*.
Greatness in glitt'ring forms display'd
Affects weak eyes much us'd to shade,
And by its falsly-envy'd scene
Gives self-debasing fits of Spleen.
We should be pleas'd that things are so,
Who do for nothing see the show,
And, middle-fiz'd, can pass between
Life's hubbub safe, because unseen,
And 'midst the glare of greatness trace
A watry sun-shine in the face,
And pleasures fled to, to redress
The sad fatigue of idleness.

Contentment, parent of delight,
So much a stranger to our sight,
Say, goddess, in what happy place
Mortals behold thy blooming face;

Thy

Thy gracious auspices impart,
 And for thy temple chuse my heart.
 They, whom thou deignest to inspire,
 Thy science learn, to bound desire ;
 By happy alchymy of mind
 They turn to pleasure all they find ;
 They both disdain an outward mien
 The grave and solemn garb of Spleen,
 And meretricious arts of drefs,
 To feign a joy, and hide distress ;
 Unmov'd when the rude tempest blows ;
 Without an opiate they repose ;
 And cover'd by your shield, defy
 The whizzing shafts, that round them fly :
 Nor meddling with the gods' affairs,
 Concern themselves with distant cares ;
 But place their blifs in mental rest,
 And feast upon the good possess'd.
 Forc'd by soft violence of pray'r,
 The blythfome goddess sooths my care,
 I feel the deity inspire,
 And thus she models my desire.
 Two hundred pounds half-yearly paid,
 Annuity securely made,
 A farm some twenty miles from town,
 Small, tight, salubrious, and my own ;
 Two maids, that never saw the town,
 A serving-man not quite a clown,

A boy to help to tread the mow,
 And drive, while t'other holds the plough;
 A chief of temper form'd to please,
 Fit to converse, and keep the keys;
 And better to preserve the peace,
 Commission'd by the name of niece:
 With understandings of a size
 To think their master very wise,
 May heav'n (it's all I wish for) send
 One genial room to treat a friend,
 Where decent cup-board, little plate,
 Display benevolence, not state.
 And may my humble dwelling stand
 Upon some chosen spot of land:
 A pond before full to the brim,
 Where cows may cool, and geese may swim,
 Behind, a green like velvet neat,
 Soft to the eye, and to the feet;
 Where od'rous plants in evening fair
 Breathe all around ambrosial air;
 From Eurus, foe to kitchen-ground,
 Fenc'd by a slope with bushes crown'd,
 Fit dwelling for the feather'd throng,
 Who pay their quit-rents with a song;
 With op'ning views of hill and dale,
 Which sense and fancy too regale,
 Where the half-cirque, which vision bounds,
 Like amphitheatre surrounds:

And

And woods impervious to the breeze,
 Thick phalanx of embodied trees,
 From hills thro' plains in dusk array
 Extended far, repel the day.
 Here stillness, height, and solemn shade
 Invite, and contemplation aid :
 Here nymphs from hollow oaks relate
 The dark decrees and will of fate,
 And dreams beneath the spreading beech
 Inspire, and docile fancy teach,
 While soft as breezy breath of wind,
 Impulses rustle thro' the mind :
 Here Dryads, scorning Phœbus' ray,
 While Pan melodious pipes away,
 In measur'd motions frisk about,
 'Till old Silenus puts them out.
 There see the clover, pea, and bean,
 Vie in variety of green ;
 Fresh pastures speckled o'er with sheep,
 Brown fields their fallow sabbaths keep,
 Plump Ceres golden tresses wear,
 And poppy-top-knots deck her hair,
 And silver-streams through meadows stray,
 And Naiads on the margin play,
 And lesser nymphs on side of hills
 From play-thing urns pour down the rills.
 Thus shelter'd, free from care and strife,
 May I enjoy a calm thro' life ;

See faction, safe in low degree,
 As men at land see storms at sea,
 And laugh at miserable elves,
 Not kind, so much as to themselves,
 Curs'd with such souls of base alloy,
 As can possess, but not enjoy;
 Debar'd the pleasure to impart
 By avarice, sphincter of the heart,
 Who wealth, hard earn'd by guilty cares,
 Bequeath untouch'd to thankless heirs.
 May I, with look unglom'd by guile,
 And wearing Virtue's liv'ry-smile,
 Prone the distressed to relieve,
 And little trespasses forgive,
 With income not in Fortune's pow'r,
 And skill to make a busy hour,
 With trips to town life to amuse,
 To purchase books, and hear the news,
 To see old friends, brush off the clown,
 And quicken taste at coming down,
 Unhurt by sickness' blasting rage,
 And slowly mellowing in age,
 When Fate extends its gathering gripe,
 Fall off like fruit grown fully ripe,
 Quit a worn being without pain,
 Perhaps to blossom soon again.

But now more serious see me grow,
 And what I think, my Memmius, know.

Th'

Th' enthusiast's hopes, and raptures wild
 Have never yet my reason foil'd.
 His springy soul dilates like air,
 When free from weight of ambient care,
 And, hush'd in meditation deep,
 Slides into dreams, as when asleep ;
 Then, fond of new discoveries grown,
 Proves a Columbus of her own,
 Disdains the narrow bounds of place,
 And thro' the wilds of endless space,
 Borne up on metaphysick wings,
 Chases light forms, and shadowy things,
 And in the vague excursion caught,
 Brings home some rare exotick thought.
 The melancholy man such dreams,
 As brightest evidence, esteems ;
 Fain would he see some distant scene
 Suggested by his restless Spleen,
 And Fancy's telescope applies
 With tinctur'd glass to cheat his eyes.
 Such thoughts, as love the gloom of night,
 I close examine by the light ;
 For who, tho' brib'd by gain to lie,
 Dare sun-beam-written truths deny,
 And execute plain common sense
 On faith's mere hearsay evidence ?
 That superstition mayn't create,
 And club its ill with those of fate,

I many a notion take to task,
 Made dreadful by its visor-mask.
 Thus scruple, spasm of the mind,
 Is cur'd, and certainty I find,
 Since optick reason shews me plain,
 I dreaded spectres of the brain,
 And legendary fears are gone,
 Tho' in tenacious childhood sown.
 Thus in opinions I commence
 Freeholder in the proper sense,
 And neither suit nor service do,
 Nor homage to pretenders shew,
 Who boast themselves by spurious roll
 Lords of the manor of the soul;
 Preferring sense, from chin that's bare,
 To nonsense thron'd in whisker'd hair.

To thee, Creator uncreate,
 O Entium Ens! divinely great! —
 Hold, Muse, nor melting pinions try,
 Nor near the blazing glory fly,
 Nor straining break thy feeble bow,
 Unfeather'd arrows far to throw:
 Thro' fields unknown nor madly stray,
 Where no ideas mark the way.
 With tender eyes, and colours faint,
 And trembling hands forbear to paint.
 Who features veil'd by light can hit?
 Where can, what has no outline, fit?

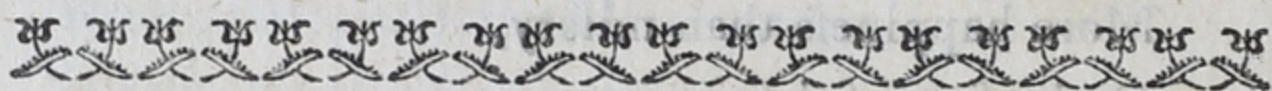
My soul, the vain attempt forego,
 Thyself, the fitter subject, know.
 He wisely shuns the bold extreme,
 Who soon lays by th' unequal theme,
 Nor runs, with wisdom's Sirens caught,
 On quicksands swall'ring shipwreck'd thought ;
 But, conscious of his distance, gives
 Mute praise, and humble negatives.
 In one, no object of our fight,
 Immutable and infinite,
 Who can't be cruel, or unjust,
 Calm and resign'd, I fix my trust ;
 To him my past and present state
 I owe, and must my future fate.
 A stranger into life I'm come,
 Dying may be our going home,
 Transported here by angry Fate,
 The convicts of a prior state.
 Hence I no anxious thoughts bestow
 On matters, I can never know ;
 Thro' life's foul way, like vagrant pass'd,
 He'll grant a settlement at last,
 And with sweet ease the wearied crown,
 By leave to lay his being down.
 If doom'd to dance th' eternal round
 Of life no sooner lost but found,
 And dissolution soon to come,
 Like sponge, wipes out life's present sum,

But

But can't our state of pow'r bereave
 An endless series to receive ;
 Then, if hard dealt with here by fate,
 We ballance in another state,
 And conscioufness must go along,
 And sign th' acquittance for the wrong.
 He for his creatures must decree
 More happiness than misery,
 Or be supposed to create,
 Curious to try, what 'tis to hate :
 And do an act, which rage infers,
 'Cause lameness halts, or blindness errs.

Thus, thus I steer my bark, and sail
 On even keel with gentle gale ;
 At helm I make my reason fit,
 My crew of passions all submit.
 If dark and blust'ring prove some nights,
 Philosophy puts forth her lights ;
 Experience holds the cautious glass,
 To shun the breakers, as I pass,
 And frequent throws the wary lead,
 To see what dangers may be hid :
 And once in seven years I'm seen
 At Bath or Tunbridge, to careen.
 Tho' pleas'd to see the dolphins play,
 I mind my compass and my way,
 With store sufficient for relief,
 And wisely still prepar'd to reef,

Nor wanting the disperfive bowl
 Of cloudy weather in the foul,
 I make (may heav'n propitious fend
 Such wind and weather to the end)
 Neither becalm'd, nor over-blown,
 Life's voyage to the world unknown.



An EPIGRAM.

On the Reverend Mr. LAURENCE ECHARD's, and
 Bishop GILBERT BURNET's Histories.

By the Same.

GIL's history appears to me
 Political anatomy,
 A case of skeletons well done,
 And malefactors every one.
 His sharp and strong incision pen
 Historically cuts up men,
 And does with lucid skill impart
 Their inward ails of head and heart.
 LAURENCE proceeds another way,
 And well-dress'd figures doth display:
 His characters are all in flesh,
 Their hands are fair, their faces fresh;

And