
CHRISTOPHER SMART.

BORN 1722.—DIED 1771.

*Next Shipbourne, though her precincts are confin'd
To narrow limits, yet can shew a train
Of village beauties pastorally sweet
And rurally magnificent. Fairlawn
Opes her delightful prospect; dear Fairlawn!
There where at once at variance and agreed,
Nature and art hold dalliance; there, where rills
Kiss the green drooping herbage; there, where trees,
The tall trees tremble at the approach of heaven,
And bow their salutation to the sun,
Who fosters all their foliage;—these are thine!
Yes, little Shipbourne, boast that these are thine!
And if,—but oh!—and if 'tis no disgrace,—
The birth of him who now records thy praise.
(HOP GARDEN.)*

The village of Shipbourne in Kent, was then the birth place of Christopher Smart, who was born April 11th, 1722. His father possessed an estate of some value in the neighbourhood, and was steward to the Kentish property of Lord Barnard, afterwards Earl of Darlington. He had been originally destined for the church, and had acquired in consequence a taste for literature, which induced him to give his son a learned education.

Christopher Smart, suffered from his birth, which was premature, under a feeble constitution of body, which was not improved by his subsequent habits, but he displayed we are informed, at a very early period of his life, a taste and a talent for poetry. He lisped in

verse; and composed a poem when only four years old; another in his thirteenth year, he deemed worthy a place in the collection he afterwards offered to the public; and he was capable of latin metrical composition when only sixteen years old.

He was educated first at Maidstone, and afterwards at Durham, from whence he was removed in his seventeenth year, and placed at Pembroke Hall, Cambridge, where he acquired a fellowship, and remained many years. He appears to have led a life of dissipation and extravagance during his residence at Cambridge, neither creditable to himself nor to the university of which he was a member. He was the wit and poet laureate of the place; his company was courted by strangers and residents, and like a poet of superior order in later times, he became a frequenter of taverns, and was weak enough to afford to every idle inviter "a slice of his constitution." By these practices he contracted debts, involved himself in difficulties and disgrace, and acquired habits which in the end deprived him of reason, and every enjoyment of life.

While at Cambridge he wrote and published several poems on various subjects; among others a latin version of Pope's Ode on St. Cecilia's Day, and by that poet's particular recommendation, another of the "Essay on Criticism."

In the year 1750 he became a candidate for the Seatonian prize for the best poem on the subject of the Supreme Being, and was successful in that and four succeeding years.

In 1752 he married the daughter of Mrs. Newbery, wife of the bookseller of that name, by a former husband, and lost his fellowship in consequence;

immediately after which he removed to London, and commenced the life of an author by profession. In this pursuit he might have been successful, as he possessed by nature and cultivation many of the most essential requisites for an author, but unfortunately he also derived partly from nature, but principally from habit, a more than equal number of counteracting propensities. He was not deficient in learning nor in genius; but he was indolent, profuse, and drunken.*

In 1753 he published a collection of his poems in one volume quarto, which he dedicated to the Earl of Middlesex, as a "Man of Kent." He engaged subsequently in a great variety of literary undertakings, none of which appear to have been in any eminent degree successful.

His bad habits during this interval ruined his health, involved his affairs in frequent embarrassment, and finally deprived him of his reason. He was in consequence of this calamity confined for two years in a receptacle for mad patients, after which he regained his liberty, and returned to his former literary habits; but he never seems to have recovered the entire possession of his mental powers.

The following letter, written by Dr. Hawkesworth to his sister Mrs. Hunter, is strikingly characteristic of his habits, at this period of his life:—

"I have, since my being in town, called on my old friend, and seen him. He received me with an ardour of kindness natural to the sensibility of his temper;

* "Indeed before his confinement," says Dr. Johnson, "he used to walk for exercise to the alehouse; but he was carried back again!"

and all were soon seated together by his fire-side. I perceived on his table a quarto book in which he had been writing, a prayer-book, and a Horace. After the first compliments, I said I had been at Margate, had seen his mother and his sister, who expressed great kindness for him, and made me promise to come and see him. To this he made no reply, nor did he make any enquiry after those I mentioned. He did not even mention the place, nor ask me any question about it, or what carried me thither. After some pause, and some indifferent chat, I returned to the subject, and said that Mr. Hunter and you would be very glad to see him in Kent. To this he replied very quick, "I cannot afford to be idle." I said he might employ his mind as well in the country as in town; at which he only shook his head, and I entirely changed the subject. Upon my asking him when we should see the Psalms, he said they were going to press immediately: as to his other undertakings, I found he had completed a translation of Phædrus, in verse, for Dodsley, at a certain price; and that he is now busy in translating all Horace into verse; which he sometimes thinks of publishing on his own account, and sometimes of contracting for it with a bookseller. I advised him to the latter; and he then told me he was in treaty about it, and believed it would be a bargain. He told me his principal motive for translating Horace into verse, was to supersede the prose translation which he did for Newbery, which he said would hurt his memory. He intends, however, to review that translation, and print it at the foot of the page in his poetical version; which he proposes to print in quarto, with the latin, both in verse and prose, on the opposite page. He told me he

once had thoughts of publishing it by subscription; but as he had troubled his friends already, he was unwilling to do it again, and had been persuaded to publish it in numbers; which, though I rather dissuaded him, seemed at last to be the prevailing bent of his mind. He read me some of it: it is very clever; and his own poetical fire sparkles in it very frequently; yet upon the whole, it will scarcely take place of Francis's; and therefore, if it is not adopted as a school book, which perhaps may be the case, it will turn to little account. Upon mentioning his prose translation, I saw his countenance kindle; and snatching up the book, "what," says he, "do you think I had for this?" I said I could not tell. "Why," says he, with great indignation, "thirteen pounds!" I expressed very great astonishment, which he seemed to think he should increase, by adding—"but I gave a receipt for a hundred." My astonishment was now over; and I found that he received only thirteen pounds because the rest had been advanced for his family. This was a tender point; and I found means immediately to divert him from it. He is with very decent people, in a house most delightfully situated, with a terrace that overlooks St. James's Park, and a door into it. He was going to dine with an old friend of my own, Mr. Richard Dalton, who has an appointment in the King's library; and if I had not been particularly engaged I would have dined with him. He had lately received a very genteel letter from Dr. Lowth, and it is by no means considered in any light, that his company as a gentleman, a scholar, and a genius, is less desirable."

After his release from the mad-house, he applied himself for some time with apparent diligence to various

literary tasks, but we are informed that he subsisted partly by private benefactions, and partly by a payment of fifty pounds a year out of the treasury. His bad habits were however inveterately fixed; he contracted debts for which he suffered an arrest, became a prisoner in the King's Bench, and afterwards obtained what is called the rules of that prison. Here he endured the utmost distress, amounting even to the occasional want of common necessities, and finally died of a liver complaint, May 22d, 1771 in the 49th year of his age. He left a widow and two children, who were provided for by the care of their relation Mr. Newbery.

We have passed hastily over the life and misfortunes of poor Smart, there being no one circumstance in his history upon which the mind can rest with satisfaction. He was a strong instance of the too common faults and failings of men of genius. His talents however were not of the first order, and though he has published on almost every subject, and in every kind of metre and style, it would be difficult to make a pleasing selection from the mass of his productions. One poem, the Hop Garden, is in a peculiar manner Kentish, and on that account we cannot pass it by, though it is entitled to very little praise as a composition in any sense of the word. The best of his pieces are perhaps those to which the university prizes were adjudged; on these probably he bestowed most pains, for negligence and want of correction are too apparent in all that he has written. One or two of his fables are elegant, and an occasional vein of humour displays itself in his minor pieces, which is perhaps his most distinguishing characteristic.

THE HOP GARDEN,

A Georgic, in Two Books.

"Me quoque Parnassi per lubrica culmina raptat
 Laudis amor: studium sequor insanabile vatis,
 Ausus non operam, non formidare poetæ
 Nomen, adoratum quondam, nunc pæne procaci
 Monstratum digito."—*Van. Præd. Rust.*

BOOK I.

The land that answers best the farmer's care,
 And silvers to maturity the hop;
 When to inhume the plants, to turn the glebe,
 And wed the tendrils to th' aspiring poles;
 Under what sign to pluck the crop, and how
 To cure, and in capacious sacks infold,
 I teach in verse Miltonian—smile the muse,—
 And meditate an honor to that land
 Where first I breath'd, and struggled into life,
 Impatient, Cantium, to be call'd thy son.

Oh! could I emulate skill'd Sidney's muse,
 Thy Sidney, Cantium!—he, from court retir'd,
 In Penshurst's sweet elysium sung delight—
 Sung transport—to the soft-responding streams
 Of Medway, and enliven'd all her groves;
 While ever near him, goddess of the green,
 Fair Pembroke sat, and smil'd immense applause:—
 With vocal fascination charm'd, the hours
 Unguarded left heav'n's adamant gate,
 And to his lyre, swift as the winged sounds
 That skim the air, danc'd unperceiv'd away.
 Had I such pow'r, no peasant's humble toil
 Should e'er debase my lay; far nobler themes,
 The high achievements of thy warrior kings
 Should raise my thoughts, and dignify my song.

But I, young rustic, dare not leave my cot,
 For so enlarg'd a sphere—ah! muse beware
 Lest the loud 'larums of the braving trump,
 Lest the deep drum should drown thy tender reed,
 And mar its puny joints: me, lowly swain,
 Ev'ry unshaven arboret, me the lawns,
 Me the voluminous Medway's silver wave,
 Content inglorious, and the hopland shades!

Yeomen and countrymen, attend my song:—
 Whether you shiver in the marshy Weald,*
 Egregious shepherds of unnumber'd flocks,
 Whose fleeces, poison'd into purple, deck
 All Europe's kings; or in fair Madum's † vale
 Imparadis'd, blest denizons! ye dwell;
 Or Dorovernia's ‡ awful tow'rs ye love;
 Or plough Tunbridgia's salutiferous hills
 Industrious, and with draughts chalybeate heal'd,
 Confess divine Hygeia's blissful seat;
 The muse demands your presence e'er she tune
 Her monitory voice; observe her well,
 And catch the wholesome dictates as they fall.

'Midst thy paternal acres, farmer, say,
 Has gracious heav'n bestow'd one field, that basks
 Its loamy bosom in the mid-day sun,
 Emerging gently from the abject vale,
 Nor yet obnoxious to the wind?—secure
 There shalt thou plant thy hop. This soil, perhaps,
 Thou'lt say, will fill my garners. Be it so.—
 But Ceres, rural goddess, at the best
 Meanly supports her vot'ry; enough for her
 If ill-persuading hunger she repel,

* Commonly, but improperly called the Wild. † Maidstone.
 ‡ Canterbury.

And keep the soul from fainting: to enlarge,
To glad the heart, to sublimate the mind,
And wing the flagging spirits to the sky,
Require th' united influence and aid
Of Bacchus, god of hops, with Ceres join'd :
'Tis he shall generate the buxom beer :
Then on one pedestal, and hand in hand,
Sculptur'd in Parian stone,—so gratitude
Indites,—let the divine co-partners rise.
Stands eastward in thy field a wood ? 'tis well—
Esteem it as a bulwark of thy wealth,
And cherish all its branches; though we'll grant,
Its leaves umbrageous may intercept
The morning rays, and envy some small share
Of Sol's beneficence to th' infant germ.
Yet grudge not that : when whistling Eurus comes,
With all his worlds of insects, in thy lands
To hyemate, and monarchise o'er all
Thy vegetable riches, then thy wood
Shall ope its arms expulsive, and embrace
The storm reluctant, and divert its rage.
Armies of animalcules urge their way
In vain ; the ventilating trees oppose
Their airy march :—they blacken distant plains.
This site for thy young nursery obtain'd,
Thou hast begun auspicious, if the soil,
As sung before, be loamy ; this the hop
Loves above others ; this is rich, is deep,
Is viscous, and tenacious of the pole.
Yet, maugre all its native worth, it may
Be meliorated with warmth compost, See,
Yon craggy mountain*, whose fastidious head

* Boxley-Hill, which extends through great part of Kent.

Divides the star-set hemisphere above,
And Cantium's plains beneath ; the Apennine
Of a free Italy, whose chalky sides,
With verdant shrubs dissimilarly gay,
Still captivate the eye, while at his feet
The silver Medway glides, and in her breast
Views the reflecting landscape, charm'd she views,
And murmurs louder ecstasy below :
Here let us rest a while, pleas'd to behold
Th' all beautiful horizon's wide expanse,
Far as the eagle's ken. Here tow'ring spires
First catch the eye, and turn the thoughts to heav'n ;
The lofty elms in humble majesty
Bend with the breeze to shade the solemn grove,
And spread a holy darkness ; Ceres there
Shines in her golden vesture : here the meads,
Enrich'd by Flora's dedal hand, with pride
Expose their spotted verdure. Nor are you,
Pomona ! absent ; you 'midst hoary leaves,
Swell the vermillion cherry ; and on yon trees
Suspend the pippin's palatable gold.
There old Sylvanus, in that moss-grown grot,
Dwells with his wood-nymphs : they with chaplets green,
And russet mantles oft bedight, aloft
• From yon bent oaks, in Medway's bosom fair,
Wonder at silver bleak, and prickly perch,
That swiftly through their floating forests glide.
Yet not ev'n these—these ever-varied scenes
Of wealth and pleasure can engage my eyes
T' oerlook the lowly hawthorn, if from thence
The thrush, sweet warbler, chants th' unstudied lays,
Which Phœbus' self, vaulting from yonder cloud,
Refulgent, with enliv'ning rays inspires.

But neither tow'ring spires, nor lofty elms,
Nor golden Ceres, nor the meadows green,
Nor orchards, nor the russet-mantled nymphs,
Which to the murmurs of the Medway dance,
Nor sweetly warbling thrush, with half those charms
Attract my eyes, as yonder hop-land close;
Joint work of art and nature, which reminds
The muse, and to her theme the wanderer calls.

Here, then, with pond'rous vehicles and teams
Thy rustics send, and from the caverns deep
Command them bring the chalk; thence to the kiln
Convey, and temper with Vulcanian fires.
Soon as 'tis form'd, thy lime with bounteous hand
O'er all thy lands disseminate; thy lands
Which first have felt the soft'ning spade, and drank
The strength'ning vapours from nutritious marl.

This done, select the choicest hop, t' insert
Fresh in the opening glebe. Say then, my muse,
Its various kinds, and from the effete and vile,
The eligible separate with care.

The noblest species is by Kentish wights
The master-hop y'clep'd. Nature to him
Has given a stouter stalk; patient of cold,
Or Phœbus ev'n in youth, his verdant blood
In brisk saltation circulates and flows
Indefinitely vigorous: the next
Is arid, fetid, infecund, and gross,
Significantly styl'd the Friar: the last
Is call'd the Savage, who in ev'ry wood,
And ev'ry hedge, un introduc'd, intrudes.
When such the merit of the candidates,
Easy is the election; but my friend,
Would'st thou ne'er fail, to Kent direct thy way,
Where no one shall be frustrated that seeks

Ought that is great or good.—Hail, Cantium, hail !
Illustrious parent of the finest fruits !
Illustrious parent of the best of men !
For thee antiquity's thrice sacred springs,
Placidly stagnant, at their fountain-head
I rashly dare to trouble, if from thence
I ought for thy utility can drain,
And in thy towns adopt the Ascræan muse.
Hail heroes ! hail invaluable gems !
Fav'rites of Heav'n, to whom the general doom
Is all remitted, who alone possess
Of Adam's sons fair Eden—rest ye here,
Nor seek an earthly good above the hop ;
A good untasted by your ancient kings,
And to your very sires almost unknown.

In those blest days when great Eliza reign'd
O'er the adoring nation, when fair peace
O'erspread an unstain'd olive round the land,
Or laurell'd war did teach our winged fleets
To lord it o'er the world ; when our brave sires
Drank valour from uncauponated beer ;
The hop, before an interdicted plant,
Shunn'd like fell aconite, began to hang
Its folded floscles from the golden vine,
And bloom'd a shade to Cantium's sunny shores
Delightsome, and in cheerful goblets laught
Potent, what time Aquarius' urn impends,
To kill the dulsome day ; potent to quench
The Sirian ardour, and autumnal ills
To heal with mild potations, sweeter far
Than those which erst the subtile Hengist mix'd
T' enthrall voluptuous Vortigern. He, with love
Emasculate, and wine, the toils of war

Neglected; and to dalliance vile and sloth
Emancipated, saw th' encroaching Saxons
With unaffected eyes; his hand which ought
T' have shook the spear of justice, soft and smooth
Play'd ravishing divisions on the lyre:
This Hengist mark'd, and,—for curs'd insolence
Soon fattens on impunity, and rises
Briareus from a dwarf,—fair Thanet gain'd.
Nor stopt he here: but to immense attempts
Ambition, sky-aspiring, led him on
Advent'rous. He an only daughter rear'd,
Roxena, matchless maid! nor rear'd in vain.
Her, eagle-ey'd callidity, deceit,
And fairy fiction, rais'd above her sex,
And furnish'd with a thousand various wiles,
Prepost'rous, more than female—wond'rous fair
She was, and docile, which her pious nurse
Observ'd, and early in each female fraud
Her 'gan initiate: well she knew to smile
Whene'er vexation gall'd her; did she weep?
T'was not sincere, the fountains of her eyes
Play'd artificial streams, yet so well forc'd,
They look'd like nature; for ev'n art to her
Was nat'ral, and contrarieties
Seem'd in Roxena congruous and allied.
Such was she when brisk Vortigern beheld,
Ill-fated prince! and lov'd her. She perceiv'd,
Soon she perceiv'd her conquest: soon she told,
With hasty joy transported, her old sire.
The Saxon inly smil'd, and to his isle
The willing youth invited: but first bade
The nymph prepare the potions; such as fire
The blood's meand'ring rivulets, and depress

To love the soul. Lo ! at the noon of night,
 Thrice Hecate invok'd the maid—and thrice
 The goddess stoop'd assent; forth from a cloud
 She stoop'd, and gave the philters pow'r to charm.
 These in a splendid cup of burnish'd gold
 The lovely sorceress mix'd, and to the prince
 Health, peace, and joy propin'd; but to herself
 Mutter'd dire exorcisms, and wish'd effect
 To the love-creating draught; lowly she bow'd
 Fawning insinuation bland, that might
 Deceive Laertes' son; her lucid orbs
 Shed copiously the oblique rays; her face
 Like modest Luna's shone, but not so pale,
 And with no borrow'd lustre; on her brow
 Smil'd fallacy, while summoning each grace
 Kneeling she gave the cup. The prince,—for who,
 Who could have spurn'd a suppliant so divine?—
 Drank eager, and in ecstasy devour'd
 Th' ambrosial perturbation; mad with love
 He clasp'd her, and in hymeneal bands
 At once the nymph demanded and obtain'd.
 Now Hengist, all his ample wish fulfill'd,
 Exulted, and from Kent the uxorious prince
 Exterminated, and usurp'd his seat.
 Long did he reign; but all-devouring time
 Has raz'd his palace walls—perchance on them
 Grows the green hop, and o'er his crumbled bust
 In spiral twines ascends the scantile pole.—
 But how to plant, to dig, to dung, to weed;—
 Tasks humble but important, ask the muse.

Come, fair magician! sportive fancy, come!
 With wildest imag'ry, thou child of thought,
 From thy ærial citadel descend,

And, for thou canst, assist me. Bring with thee
Thy all-creative talisman; with thee
The active spir'ts ideal, tow'ring flights,
That hover o'er the muse-resounding groves,
And all thy colourings, all thy shapes display.
Thou, too, be here, experience! so shall I
My rules, nor in low prose jejunely say,
Nor in smoth numbers musically err :
But vain is fancy, and experience vain,
If thou, O Hesiod, Virgil, of our land,
Or hear'st thou rather, Milton, bard divine,
Whose greatness who shall imitate, save thee?
If thou, O Philips! fav'ring deigu'st to hear
Me, inexpert of verse; with gentle hand
Uprear th' unpinion'd muse, high on the top
Of that immeasurable mount, that far
Exceeds thine own Plinlimmon, where thou tun'st
With Phoebus' self thy lyre. Give me to turn
Th' unwieldy subject with thy graceful ease,
Extol its baseness with thy art; but chief
Illumine, and invigorate with thy fire.

When Phoebus' looks through Aries on the spring,
And vernal flow'rs teem with the dulcet fruit,
Autumnal pride! delay not then thy sets
In Tellus' facile bosom to depose
Timely; if thou art wise the bulkiest choose;
To every root three joints indulge, and form
The quincunx with well-regulated hills.
Soon from the dung-enriched earth, their heads
The young plants will uplift, their virgin arms
They'll stretch, and marriageable claim the pole.
Nor frustrate thou their wishes, so thou may'st
Expect a hopeful issue, jolly mirth,

Sister of taleful Momus, tuneful song,
And fat good-nature with her honest face.
But yet in the novitiate of their love,
And tenderness of youth, suffice small shoots
Cut from the widow'd willow, nor provide
Poles insurmountable as yet. 'Tis then,
When twice bright Phœbus' vivifying ray,
Twice the cold touch of winter's icy hand,
They've felt; 'tis then we fell sublimer props;
'Tis then the sturdy woodman's axe from far
Resounds, resounds, and hark! with hollow groans
Down tumble the big trees, and rushing roll
O'er the crush'd crackling brake, while in his cave
Forlorn, dejected, midst the weeping Dryads
Laments Sylvanus for his verdant care.
The ash or willow for thy use select,
Or storm-enduring chesnut; but the oak
Unfit for this employ, for nobler ends
Reserve untouch'd. She, when by time matur'd,
Capacious of some British demigod,
Vernon or Warren, shall with rapid wing
Infuriate, like Jove's armour-bearing bird,
Fly on thy foes; they, like the parted waves,
Which to the brazen beak murmuring give way
Amaz'd and roaring from the fight recede.—
In that sweet month, when to the list'ning swains
Fair Philomel sings love, and every cot
With garlands blooms bedight, with bandage meet
The tendrils bind, and to the tall pole tie,
Else soon, too soon, their meretricious arms
Round each ignoble clod they'll fold, and leave
Averse the lordly prop. Thus, have I heard,
Where there's no mutual tie, no strong connection

Of love-conspiring hearts, oft the young bride
Has prostituted to her slaves her charms,
While the infatuated lord admires
Fresh-butting sprouts, and issue not his own,
Now turn the glebe : soon, with correcting hand,
When smiling June in jocund dance leads on
Long days and happy hours, from every vine
Dock the redundant branches, and once more
With the sharp spade thy numerous acres till.
The shovel next must lend its aid, enlarge
The little hillocks, and erase the weeds.
This in that month its title which derives
From great Augustus' ever sacred name !
Sov'reign of science ! master of the muse !
Neglected genius' firm ally ! of worth
Best judge and best rewarder, whose applause
To bards was fame and fortune. O ! 'twas well ;—
Well did you too in this, all glorious heroes !
Ye Romans !—on time's wing you've stamp'd his praise,
And time shall bear it to eternity.

Now are our labours crown'd with their reward,
Now bloom the florid hops, and in the stream
Shine in their floating silver, while above
Th' embow'ring branches culminate, and form
A walk impervious to the sun ; the poles
In comely order stand ; and while you cleave
With the small skiff the Medway's lucid wave,
In comely order still their ranks preserve,
And seem to march along th' extensive plain.
In neat arrangement thus the Men of Kent,
With native oak at once adorn'd and arm'd,
Intrepid march'd ; for well they knew the cries
Of dying freedom, and Astræa's voice,

Who as she fled, to echoing woods complain'd
Of tyranny and William ; like a God,
Refulgent stood the conqueror, on his troops
He sent his looks enliv'ning as the sun's,
But on his foes frown'd agony and death.
On his left side in bright emblazonry
His falchion burn'd ; forth from his sev'n-fold shield
A basilisk shot adamant ; his brow
Wore clouds of fury :—there, with plumage crown'd,
Of various hue sat a tremendous cone :
Thus sits high canopied above the clouds,—
Terrific beauty of nocturnal skies,—
Northern Aurora ; she through the azure air
Shoots, shoots her trem'lous rays in painted streaks
Continual, while waving to the wind
O'er night's dark veil her lucid tresses flow :
The trav'ler views th' unseasonable day
Astound, the proud bend lowly to the earth,
The pious matrons tremble for the world !
But what can daunt th' insuperable souls
Of Cantium's matchless sons ? on they proceed,
All innocent of fear ; each face express'd
Contemptuous admiration, while they view'd
The well-fed brigades of embroider'd slaves
That drew the sword for gain. First of the van
With an enormous bough, a shepherd swain
Whistl'd with rustic notes ; but such as show'd
A heart magnanimous : the Men of Kent
Follow the tuneful swain, while o'er their heads
The green leaves whisper, and the big boughs bend.
'Twas thus the Thracian, whose all-quick'ning lyre
The floods inspir'd, and taught the rocks to feel,
Enchanted dancing Hæmus ; to the tune

The lute's soft tune,—the flutt'ring branches wave,
The rocks enjoy it, and the rivulets hear,
The hillocks skip, emerge the humble vales,
And all the mighty mountain nods applause.
The conqueror view'd them, and as one that sees
The vast abrupt of Scylla, or as one
That from the oblivious streams of Lethe's pool
Has drank eternal apathy, he stood.
His host an universal panic seiz'd
Prodigious, inopine; their armour shook,
And clatter'd to the trembling of their limbs;
Some to the walking wildernes 'gan run
Confus'd, and in th' inhospitable shade
For shelter sought—wretches they shelter find,—
Eternal shelter in the arms of death!
Thus when Aquarius pours out all his urn
Down on some lonesome heath, the traveller
That wanders o'er the wintry waste, accepts
The invitation of some spreading beech
Joyous; but soon the treach'rous gloom betrays
Th' unwary visitor, while on his head
Th' enlarging drops in double showers descend.

And now no longer in disguise the men
Of Kent appear; down they all drop their boughs,
And shine in brazen panoply divine.
Enough!—great William,—for full well he knew
How vain would be the contest,—to the sons
Of glorious Cantium, gave their lives, and laws,
And liberties secure, and to the prowess
Of Cantium's sons, like Cæsar deign'd to yield.
Cæsar and William! hail immortal worthies!
Illustrious vanquish'd! Cantium, if to them
Posterity, with all her chiefs unborn,

Ought similar, ought second has to boast,
 Once more,—so prophecies the muse,—thy sons
 Shall triumph, emulous of their sires:—till then
 With olive, and with hop-land garlands crown'd,
 O'er all thy land reign plenty, reign fair peace.

BOOK II.

“Omnia quæ multo ante memor provisæ repones,
 Si te digna manet divini gloria raris.”

Virg. Geor. lib. 2.

At length the muse her destin'd task resumes
 With joy; again o'er all her hop-land groves
 She seeks t' expatiate free of wing. Long while
 For a much-loving, much-lov'd youth she wept,
 Sorrowing in silence o'er th' untimely urn.
 Hush then, effeminate sobs; and thou, my heart,
 Rebel to grief no more—and yet a while,
 A little while, indulge the friendly tears.
 O'er the wild world, like Noah's dove in vain
 I seek the olive peace, around me wide
 See! see! the wa'try waste—in vain forlorn
 I call the Phoenix fair sincerity;
 Alas!—extinguish'd to the skies she fled,
 And left no heir behind her. Where is now
 Th' eternal smile of goodness? where is now
 That all-extensive charity of soul,
 So rich in sweetness that the classic sounds
 In elegance Augustan cloth'd, the wit
 That flow'd perennial, hardly were observ'd,
 Or, if observ'd, set off that brighter gem.
 How oft,—and yet how seldom did it seem!—
 Have I enjoy'd his converse! when we met,
 The hours how swift they sweetly fled, and 'till

Again I saw him, how they loiter'd. Oh!
Theophilus thou dear departed soul,
What flattering tales thou told'st me? how thou'dst hail
My muse, and took'st imaginary walks
All in my hop-land groves; stay yet, oh stay!
Thou dear deluder, thou hast seen but half—
He's gone! and ought that's equal to his praise
Fame has not for me, though she prove most kind;
Howe'er—this verse be sacred to thy name,
These tears, the last sad duty of a friend.
Oft I'll indulge the pleasureable pain
Of recollection; oft on Medway's banks
I'll muse on thee full pensive; while her streams
Regardful ever of my grief, shall flow
In sullen silence silverly along
The weeping shores—or else accordant with
My loud laments, shall ever and anon
Make melancholy music to the shades,
The hop-land shades, that on her banks expose
Serpentine vines and flowing locks of gold.

Ye smiling nymphs th' inseparable train
Of saffron Ceres; ye, that gamesome dance,
And sing to jolly Autumn, while he stands
With his right hand poising the scales of heav'n,
And while his left grasps Amalthea's horn:
Young chorus of fair bacchanals, descend,
And leave awhile the sickle; yonder hill,
Where stand the loaded hop-poles, claims your care.
There mighty Bacchus seated 'cross the bin,
Waits your attendance;—there he glad reviews
His paunch approaching to immensity
Still nearer, and with pride of heart surveys
Obedient mortals, and the world his own.

See from the great metropolis they rush,
Th' industrious vulgar: they, like prudent bees,
In Kent's wide garden roam, expert to crop
The flow'ry hop, and provident to work,
Ere winter numb their sunburnt hands, and winds
Engoal them, murmuring in their gloomy cells.
From these, such as appear the rest t' excel
In strength and young agility, select.
These shall support with vigour and address
The bin-man's weighty office; now extract
From the sequacious earth the pole, and now
Unmarry from the closely clinging vine.
O'er twice three pickers, and no more, extend
The bin-man's sway; unless thy ears can bear
The crack of poles continual, and thine eyes
Behold unmov'd the hurrying peasant tear
Thy wealth, and throw it on the thankless ground.
But first the careful planter will consult
His quantity of acres, and his crop,
How many and how large his kilns; and then
Proportion'd to his wants the hands provide.
But yet of greater consequence and cost,
One thing remains unsung, a man of faith
And long experience, in whose thund'ring voice
Lives hoarse authority, potent to quell
The frequent frays of the tumultuous crew.
He shall preside o'er all thy hop-land store,
Severe dictator! his unerring hand,
And eye inquisitive, in heedful guise,
Shall to the brink the measure fill, und fair
On the twin registers the work record.
And yet I've known them own a female reign,

And gentle Marianne's * soft Orphean voice
Has hymn'd sweet lessons of humanity
To the wild brutal crew. Oft her command
Has sav'd the pillars of the hop-land state,
The lofty poles from ruin, and sustain'd
Like Anna, or Eliza, her domain,
With more than manly dignity. Oft I've seen,
E'en at her frown the boist'rous uproar cease,
And the mad pickers, tam'd to diligence,
Cull from the bin the sprawling sprigs, and leaves
That stain the sample, and its worth debase.

All things thus settled and prepar'd, what now
Can stop the planter's purposes? unless
The heav'n's frown dissent, and ominous winds
Howl through the concave of the troubled sky;
And oft, alas! the long-experienc'd wights,—
Oh! could they too prevent them,—storms foresee,
For, as the storm rides on the rising clouds,
Fly the fleet wild-geese far away, or else
The heifer towards the zenith rears her head,
And with expanded nostrils snuffs the air:
The swallows too their airy circuits weave,
And screaming skim the brook: and fen-bred frogs
Forth from their hoarse throats their old grudge recite:
Or from her earthly coverlets the ant
Heaves her huge eggs along the narrow way:
Or bends *Thaumantia's* variegated bow
Athwart the cope of heav'n: or sable crows
Obstreperous of wing, in clouds combine:
Besides, unnumber'd troops of birds marine,
And Asia's feather'd flocks, that in the muds

* The author's youngest sister.

Of flow'ry edged Cayster went to prey,
Now in the shallows duck their speckled heads,
And lust to lave in vain ; their unctious plumes
Repulsive balk their efforts : hearken next
How the curs'd raven, with her harmful voice,
Invokes the rain, and croaking to herself,
Struts on some spacious solitary shore.
Nor want thy servants and thy wife at home
Signs to presage the show'r ; for in the hall
Sheds Niobe her prescient tears, and warns
Beneath the leaden tubes to fix the vase,
And catch the falling dew-drops, which supply
Soft water and salubrious, far the best
To soak thy hops, and brew thy generous beer.
But though bright Phœbus smile, and in the skies
The purple-rob'd serenity appear ;
Though every cloud be fled, yet if the rage
Of Boreas, or the blasting east prevail,
The planter has enough to check his hopes,
And in due bonds confine his joys ; for see
The ruffian winds in their abrupt career,
Leave not a hope behind, or at the best
Mangle the circl'ing vine, and intercept
The juice nutritious : fatal means, alas !
Their colour and condition to destroy.
Haste then, ye peasants ; pull the poles, the hops :
Where are the bins ? run, run, ye nimble maids,
Move ev'ry muscle, ev'ry nerve extend,
To save our crop from ruin, and ourselves.
Soon as bright chanticleer explodes the night
With flutt'ring wings, and hymns the new-born day,
The bugle-horn inspire, whose clam'rous bray
Shall rouse from sleep the rebel rout, and tune

To temper for the labours of the day.
Wisely the several stations of the bins
By lot determine; justice this, and this
Fair prudence does demand; for not without
A certain method could'st thou rule the mob
Irrational, nor every where alike
Fair hangs the hop to tempt the picker's hand.

Now see the crew mechanic might and main
Labour with lively diligence, inspir'd
By appetite of gain and lust of praise :--
What mind so petty, servile, so debas'd,
As not to know ambition? Her great sway
From Colin Clout to Emp'rors she exerts.
To err is human, human to be vain;
'Tis vanity and mock desire of fame,
That prompts the rustic on the steeple top
Sublime, to mark the area of his shoe,
And in the outline to engrave his name.
With pride of heart the churchwarden surveys,
High o'er the bellfry, girt with birds and flow'rs,
His story wrote in capitals :-- "'Twas I
That bought the font, and I repair'd the pews."
With pride like this, the emulating mob
Strive for the mastery—who first may fill
The bellying bin, and cleanest cull the hops;
Nor ought retards, unless invited out
By Sol's declining, and the evening's calm,
Leander leads Letitia to the scene
Of shade and fragrance—then th' exulting band
Of pickers male and female, seize the fair
Reluctant, and with boistr'ous force and brute,
By cries unmov'd, they bury her i' th' bin :
Nor does the youth escape—him too they seize,

And in such posture place as best may serve
To hide his charmer's blushes; Then with shouts
They rend the echoing air, and from them both,—
So custom has ordain'd,—a largess claim.

Thus much be sung of picking;—next succeeds
The important care of curing:—quit the field,
And at the kiln th' instructive muse attend.

On your hair-cloth, eight inches deep, nor more,
Let the green hops lie lightly; next expand
The smoothest surface with the toothy rake.
Thus far is just above; but more it boots
That charcoal flames burn equally below;
The charcoal flames, which from thy corded wood,
Or antiquated poles, with wond'rous skill,
The sable priests of Vulcan shall prepare.
Constant and moderate let the heat ascend;
Which to effect, there are who with success
Place in the kiln the ventilating fan.
Hail, learned, useful man! * whose head and heart
Conspire to make us happy; deign t' accept
One honest versc; and if thy industry
Has serv'd the hop-land cause, the muse forebodes
This sole invention both in use and fame,
The mystic fan of Bacchus shall exceed.

When the fourth hour expires, with careful hand
The half-bak'd hops turn over. Soon as time
Has well exhausted twice two glasses more,
They'll leap and crackle with their bursting seeds,
For use domestic, or for sale mature.

There are, who in the choice of cloth t' enfold
Their wealthy crop, the viler, coarser sort,

Dr. Hales,

With prodigal economy prefer :
 All that is good is cheap, all dear that's base.
 Besides, the planter should a bait prepare,
 T' entrap the chapman's notice, and divert
 Shrewd observation from her busy pry.

When in the bag thy hops the rustic treads,
 Let him wear heelless sandals; nor presume
 Their fragranciness barefooted to defile :
 Such filthy ways for slaves in Malaga
 Leave we to practice—whence I've often seen
 When beautiful Dorinda's iv'ry hands
 Have built the pastry-fabric,—food divine
 For Christmas gambols and the hour of mirth !—
 As the dry'd foreign fruit, with piercing eye
 She culls suspicious—lo ! she starts, she frowns
 With indignation at—a negro's nail.

Shouldst thou thy harvest for the mart design,
 Be thine own factor; nor employ those drones
 Who've stings, but make no honey, selfish slaves !
 That thrive and fatten on the planter's toil.

What then remains unsung? Unless the care
 To stock thy poles oblique in comely cones,
 Lest rot or rain destroy them—'tis a sight
 Most seemly to behold, and gives, O winter !
 A landscape not displeasing, e'en to thee.

And now, ye rivals of the hop-land state,
 Madum and Dorovernia, now rejoice,
 How great amidst such rivals to excel !
 Let Grenovicum* boast, for boast she may
 The birth of great Eliza.—Hail my queen !
 And yet I'll call thee by a dearer name ;

* Greenwich, where Queen Elizabeth was born.

My countrywoman hail ! thy worth alone
Gives fame to worlds, and makes whole ages glorious !
Let Se'noaks vaunt the hospitable seat
Of Knoll * most ancient ; awfully my muse
These social scenes of grandeur and delight,
Of love and veneration let me tread.
How oft beneath yon oak has am'rous Prior
Awaken'd echo with sweet Cloe's name !
While noble Sackville heard, hearing approv'd,
Approving greatly recompens'd. But he,
Alas ! is number'd with th' illustrious dead,
And orphan merit has no guardian now !

Nor shalt thou, Mereworth, remain unsung,
Where noble Westmoreland, his country's friend,
Bids British greatness love the silent shade ;
Where piles superb, in classic elegance,
Arise, and all is Roman, like his heart.
Nor Chatham, though it is not thine to show
The lofty forest, or the verdant lawns,
Yet niggard silence shall not grudge thee praise !
The lofty forests, by thy sons prepar'd,
Become the warlike navy, brave the floods,
And give Sylvanus empire in the main.
Oh. that Britannia, in the day of war,
Would not alone Minerva's valour trust,
But also hear her wisdom ! Then her oaks,
Shap'd by her own mechanics, would alone
Her island fortify, and fix her fame ;
Nor would she weep like Rachel, for her sons,
Whose glorious blood, in mad profusion,
In foreign lands is shed—and shed in vain !

* The seat of the Duke of Dorset.