

As a reed is shaken by the breath of the air, so the shadow of evil maketh him tremble.

In the hour of danger he is embarrassed and confounded; in the day of misfortune he sinketh, and despair overwhelmeth his soul.

CHAP. VII.—CONTENTMENT.

Forget not, O man! that thy station on earth is appointed by the wisdom of the Eternal, who knoweth thy heart, who seeth the vanity of all thy wishes, and who often in mercy denieth thy requests.

Yet for all reasonable desires, for all honest endeavours, his benevolence hath established, in the nature of things, a probability of success.

The uneasiness thou feelest, the misfortune thou bewailest—behold the root from whence they spring! even thine own folly, thine own pride, thine own dis-tempered fancy.

Murmur not therefore at these dispensations of God, but correct thine own heart; neither say within thyself, if I had wealth, or power, or leisure I should be happy; for know they all bring to their several possessors their peculiar inconveniences.

The poor man seeth not the vexations and anxieties of the rich, he feeleth not the difficulties and perplexities of power, neither knoweth he the wearisomeness of leisure; and therefore it is that he repineth at his own lot.

Envy not therefore the appearance of happiness in any man, for thou knowest not his secret griefs.