

Horror of horrors!—can the Muse portray
The matchless anguish of the dreadful day?
Can the tongue utter—can the pen relate,
In language adequate, the horrid fate
Of the devoted towns?—With wild amaze
Through the black smoke they see the flick'ring blaze;
Its pitchy fumes corrupt the ambient air,—
A moment's left them—left them—to despair!
Hark! hark! those loud, those agonizing cries!
A mother's voice!—her stifled infant dies!
She clasps its corse, repeats its darling name,
Reckless she hears approach the crackling flame;
Her husband rushes to their aid too late,—
He cannot save them—but he shares their fate!
Lo! midst the fires, one darting in despair!—
His only child, dear pledge of Love, is there!
Nature impels him with resistless force,
In vain the flames oppose his frantic course—
He gains his threshold!—for a moment blest,
He clasps his son, exulting, to his breast;
He flies again across the torrid plains,—
His vig'rous arm the precious charge sustains;—