

cessaries but delicacies for man. Warmed by the genial rays of the sun, the earth renews its annual crops for your nourishment. The mountains rise above the valleys and receive the dews of heaven in great abundance, in order to collect and disperse them on the inferior plains. The ocean receives the tributary rivers from every country, to return them again in refreshing vapours, and recruit the fountains that support its greatness.

Carry your views, in the same manner, through the tribes of vegetable and animal life, and you will find the same order and connexion. Ask the beasts, and they will instruct thee; ask the birds, and they will teach thee; speak to the earth, and it will answer thee. In a word, all creatures contribute to the general happiness, and obey the will of the Almighty, while the sordid miser alone counteracts it.

Above all, attend to the steps of the blessed Jesus:—consider his descent on earth;—his cloathing himself in our flesh;—his fasting in the wilderness;—his preaching;—his miracles;—his watchings;—his meekness under injuries;—his sufferings on the cross. Whether you take the whole of his portraiture, or only a single feature, you still behold a subject for admiration, and are lost in gratitude, love, and praise. And are you not to imitate his illustrious example? If you believe it to be your duty to do so, with what appetite can you daily sit down to your abundance, and behold famine in the abodes of your neighbours? In vain will be your prayers, in vain too your attention to the externals of religion, if you treat with indifference the miseries of the poor.

Allow me to recommend to you, who are in easy circumstances, to look forward to the severities of the weather, which may probably be realized before the termination of the present winter. Severities, which, in some degree, will penetrate into the glowing apartments of your comfortable abodes, and make warm luxury itself to shudder. How must these severities pour in, with all their desolation, on the defenceless heads of the poor, in their garrets which are deluged with rain, invaded by snow, and their cellars dropping with unwholesome damps? How must these shoot their bolts of ice through the very bones of the poor, scarcely defended by a spark of fire? Powerful indeed must the language of that man be whose description can equal the picture itself. If instead of residing in your comfortable dwellings, you were to witness these scenes, the only danger then would be an excess of liberality beyond your circumstances; you then would feel a spirit of holy emulation, which should be first to give, and which should give most largely.

The charity of which I am speaking, consists not in speculative ideas of general benevolence, floating in the head, and leaving the heart untouched and cold; neither is it confined to that indolent good nature, which makes us rest satisfied with being free from inveterate malice, to our fellow creatures, without prompting us to