

to avenge the wrong, and free the slaves of indolence from their bondage. Born of Dame Poverty and nurtured by the sinewy hand of labor, he rises to fame and eminence through the accomplishment of great deeds. His self-appointed mission is to uplift the human race, which until his advent is little more than barbarous. He is travelling the world o'er establishing industries and arts in every clime, when there comes to his ear the rumor that the wizard Indolence threatens the overthrow of mankind. The great Knight hastens to set out for the doomed Castle. Indolence advances to meet his enemy and darts toward him, but the Knight eludes the fatal touch and throws over the enchanter the Net of Woe, woven by the Fates, and within its strong meshes he struggles vainly for freedom.

An effort now is put forth to arouse the wretched victims from their lethargy. A strenuous appeal is made to what spark of manliness may yet remain. Some shake off their chains of vice and sloth, and the band of charities minister tenderly to their ills of mind and body. But for others it is alas too late—they are too deep in the mire of degradation—they are beyond rescue. The Knight of Arts and Industry sadly leaves them in their hopeless thralldom.

Thus runs the slight thread upon which the poem is strung. The allegorical outline is strong, but not so unduly prominent as to offend our poetic taste. In literary finish the poem is open to little criticism. It is the poet's chastest if not his most enduring work. The versification is throughout exceptionally free from faults—scarcely a limping line or irregular rhyme. Thomson has employed the spenserian stanza here with much dexterity. There is evident a careful selection in the choice of words which well exhibit the power of sound to enforce the sentiment. There is, too, harmony in the arrangement of the words. Alliteration abounds, and brings its subtle influence to bear upon the whole. "A sable, silent, solemn forest stood," "The minstrels of the morn," "The murmuring main," "When this the watchful, wicked, wizard saw," "Such sweet, such sad, such solemn airs divine." These instances illustrating the alliteration in the poem might be multiplied a hundred-fold, but sufficient have been given to suggest the rich harmonious language employed by the poet.

In some respects this poem recalls to mind Spencer's "Fairy Queen," and it is not improbable that Thomson had before him the "Fairy Queen" as a model, but at least there is no servility in his imitation.