

Myself in him, in light ineffable !
Come then, expressive silence, muse his praise.

THOMSON.

SECTION XXIII.

On solitude.

O SOLITUDE, romantic maid !
Whether by nodding towers you tread,
Or haunt the desert's trackless gloom,
Or hover o'er the yawning tomb,
Or climb the Andes' clefted side,
Or by the Nile's coy source abide,
Or, starting from your half-year's sleep,
From Hecla view the thawing deep,
Or, at the purple dawn of day,
Tadmor's marble waste survey ;
You, recluse, again I woo,
And again your steps pursue.

- 2 Plum'd conceit himself surveying,
Folly with her shadow playing,
Purse-proud elbowing insolence,
Bloated empiric, puff'd pretence,
Noise that through a trumpet speaks,
Laughter in loud peals that breaks,
Intrusion, with a sopping's face,
(Ignorant of time and place.)
Sparks of fire dissension blowing,
Ductile, court-bred flattery bowing,
Restraint's stiff neck, grimace's leer,
Squint-ey'd censure's artful sneer,
Ambition's buskins, steep'd in blood,
Fly thy presence, Solitude !
- 3 Sage reflection, bent with years,
Conscious virtue, void of fears,
Muffled silence, wood-nymph shy,
Meditation's piercing eye,
Halcyon peace on moss reclin'd,
Retrospect that scans the mind,
Rapt earth-gazing revery,
Blushing artless modesty,
Health that snuffs the morning air,
Full-ey'd truth with bosom bare,
Inspiration, nature's child,
Seek the solitary wild.
- 4 When all nature's hush'd asleep,
Nor love, nor guilt, their vigils keep,