

destruction of mankind, betrayed * their country, or violated its religion and laws. There he excruciates them, in company with

† "Gorgons and Hydras and Chimeras dire—"
Vultures prey upon their vitals, or they are whirled eternally round with *Ixion* upon his wheel, or bound down with *Tantalus*, ‡ whose burning lip hangs quivering over the elusive waters it cannot touch; or the fury *Tisiphone*, her hair entwin'd with serpents, her garments red with human gore, urges on their tortures with unrelenting hand!

THE Poet having thus exhausted imagination as well as mythology, in the description of punishments for the disturbers of mankind and foes to their country, raises his conclusion to a height of horror beyond the reach of expression—

"Had I a hundred mouths, a hundred tongues,

"A voice of brass, and adamantine lungs;

"Not half the mighty scene could I disclose;

"Repeat their crimes or count their dreadful woes.* §

Nor has Virgil strayed any further through the fields of fancy or fable in this place, than to borrow strength of colouring for the garb of truth; and, I suspect, that he drank from a purer fountain than that of *HELICON*,
when

* "This wretch his country to a tyrant sold,

"And barter'd *glorious Liberty* for gold:

"Laws for a bribe he pass'd—but pass'd in vain:

"For these same laws a bribe repeal'd again."

† Milton here borrows his monsters from Virgil

———" *flammisque armata Chimæra*;

" *Gorgones, Harpieque*."—&c.

See Virgil, B. VI. from line 288, to line 627; or Pitt's excellent Translation.

‡ *Tantalus a labris, sitiens, fugientia captat Flumina.*———

Hor.

§ Milton has taken the same method of raising his description, by leaving something to be conceived beyond the power of words to express——

"Abominable, unutterable, and worse

"Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd.—"