

A Rural Summer Eve

Approach! ye length'ning shades that streak the green,
 To cool the breeze, and ease the torrid scene.
 Let Phoebus now with ruddy beams retire,
 Whilst purple hills conceal the sinking fire.
 The painted west a gorgeous glow displays, 5
 As kindly clouds set off the evening rays;
 O'er field and wood the pleasing veil descends,
 And day with dusk in one calm twilight blends.
 The glen behind, where dreamy dryads dance,
 Feels first the shadow of the night's advance: 10
 Black are its depths, where placid pools before
 Reflect the sunset from the western shore.
 Save Philomel alone, the feather'd train
 Cease their sweet songs, nor cheer the homeward swain;
 But in the pool the green Hypsiboas leads 15
 His deeper choir amongst the bending reeds:
 Perch'd on the lily-pads the frogs entune
 Their raucous lay, and hail the rising moon.
 Unnumber'd insects lend their supple throats,
 And with soft chords supply orchestral notes. 20
 High o'er the noblest of the circling pines,
 The night's first star in single splendour shines;

Each shade successive still another brings,
 Till Heaven's bright sphere a silent paean sings. 25
 Low o'er the south the dread Antares crawls;
 While northward from the heights Callisto falls.
 Altair and Vega o'er the meadows glow,
 And bright Arcturus swells the spangled show.
 Far as the vision grasps, thro' vale and field,
 The folding flow'rs to dewy portions yield; 30
 Whilst all the land an alter'd aspect gains,
 As mounting moonbeams gild the grassy plains.
 Wak'd by the rays, bewitch'd by gentle gleams,
 In tones responsive sing the sparkling streams. 35
 From out the waters rise a naiad throng
 That view the scene, and join the sacred song.
 As now reflected stars adorn the lake,
 So wink the fireflies in the humid brake;
 While Fancy traces in the fitful light
 The torches of the fauns that dance by night. 40
 Hark! from the oak the waking Nocturne cries,
 And wings his hooting course across the skies.
 With strident voice he swells the vesper tune,
 And darkly flits against the soaring moon.
 Benignant Night! whose gentle joys allay 45
 The carking cares that fill the dazzling day:
 Whose milder scenes the weary mortal bless,
 And sordid Truth in sweet Illusion dress.
 All sight and sounds of Nature, here combin'd,
 Enchant the soul, and rouse the thoughtful mind; 50
 Calm the sad spirit, and with Peace invest
 The troubled heart that seeks relief and rest.
 Here as in nobler days we freely scan
 The sacred universe, unspoil'd by Man.
 With rev'rent eye the wondrous whole we see, 55
 For all contains, and forms, Divinity!