

through the soul. A distinguished writer of fiction and false philosophy, in chagrin and disgust, expressed a regret that he had ever been born. But leaving every thing else out of the account, I can bless the day in which I was born, because I have enjoyed so much in studying the works of nature. And when I see so many noble-minded youth placing all their hopes of earthly happiness, some in the hot strife after political distinction, some in the possession of wealth, equipage, and power, some in following the tasteless round of fashionable amusements, and above all, when I see some whose chief source of happiness lies in a devoted attachment to fictitious literature, how gladly would I win them into those fields of science, at which we have this evening glanced, and thus save them from the disappointment and disgust which I know they will ere long experience, and which may lead them also to lament that they were ever born!

Many, many are the bright eyes that are turned upon me at this moment; eyes sparkling with health and hope. Must any of these be palsied by the withering touch of such disappointment? O, if their possessors will not place their hopes of happiness in factitious and unnatural pursuits, but in a knowledge and a love of nature, they will have a refuge amid all the storms and fluctuations of life, and those eyes may be bright and sparkling even amid the frosts of age.

“O, how canst thou renounce the boundless store
Of charms which Nature to her votary yields?—
The warbling woodland, the resounding shore,
The pomp of groves, and garniture of fields;
All that the genial ray of morning gilds,
And all that echoes to the song of even;
All that the mountain’s sheltering bosom shields,
And all the dread magnificence of heaven:—
O, how canst thou renounce and hope to be forgiven!”