

***JAMES
THOMSON***



***THE SEASONS
- AUTUMN***

James Thomson

The Seasons — Autumn

EAN 8596547315506

DigiCat, 2022

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The Argument

THE subject proposed. Addressed to Mr. Onslow. A prospect of the fields ready for harvest.

Reflections in praise of industry raised by that view. Reaping. A tale relative to it. A harvest storm. Shooting and hunting; their barbarity. A ludicrous account of foxhunting. A view of an orchard. Wall fruit. A vineyard. A description of fogs, frequent in the latter part of Autumn; whence a digression, inquiring into the rise of fountains and rivers. Birds of season considered, that now shift their habitation. The prodigious number of them that cover the northern and western isles of Scotland. Hence a view of the country. A prospect of the discoloured, fading woods. After a gentle dusky day, moonlight. Autumnal meteors. Morning; to which succeeds a calm, pure, sunshiny day, such as usually shuts up the season. The harvest being gathered in, the country dissolved in joy. The whole concludes with a panegyric on a philosophical country life.

Crowned with the sickle and the wheaten sheaf
While Autumn nodding o'er the yellow plain
Comes jovial on, the Doric reed once more
Well-pleas'd I tune. Whate'er the Wintry frost
Nitrous prepared, the various-blossomed Spring
Put in white promise forth, and Summer-suns
Concocted strong, rush boundless now to view,
Full, perfect all, and swell my glorious theme.

Onslow! the muse, ambitious of thy name
To grace, inspire, and dignify her song,
Would from the public voice thy gentle ear
A while engage. Thy noble cares she knows,
The patriot-virtues that distend thy thought,
Spread on thy front, and in thy bosom glow;
While listening senates hang upon thy tongue,
Devolving through the maze of eloquence
A roll of periods, sweeter than her song.
But she too pants for public virtue; she,
Though weak of power, yet strong in ardent will,
Whene'er her country rushes on her heart,
Assumes a bolder note, and fondly tries
To mix the patriot's with the poet's flame.

When the bright Virgin gives the beauteous days,
And Libra weighs in equal scales the year,
From heaven's high cope the fierce effulgence shook
Of parting Summer, a serener blue,
With golden light enlivened, wide invests
The happy world. Attempered suns arise
Sweet-beamed, and shedding oft through lucid
clouds
A pleasing calm; while broad and brown, below,
Extensive harvests hang the heavy head.
Rich, silent, deep they stand; for not a gale
Rolls its light billows o'er the bending plain;
A calm of plenty! till the ruffled air
Falls from its poise, and gives the breeze to blow.
Rent is the fleecy mantle of the sky;