

**MISCELLANEOUS  
PIECES IN PROSE**

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Miscellaneous pieces in prose by John Aikin & Anna Laetitia Barbauld

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**JOHN AIKIN & ANNA LAETITIA BARBAULD**

**MISCELLANEOUS  
PIECES IN PROSE**



MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

IN

P R O S E,

BY

JOHN AIKIN, M.D.

AND

ANNA LÆTITIA BARBAULD.

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THE THIRD EDITION.

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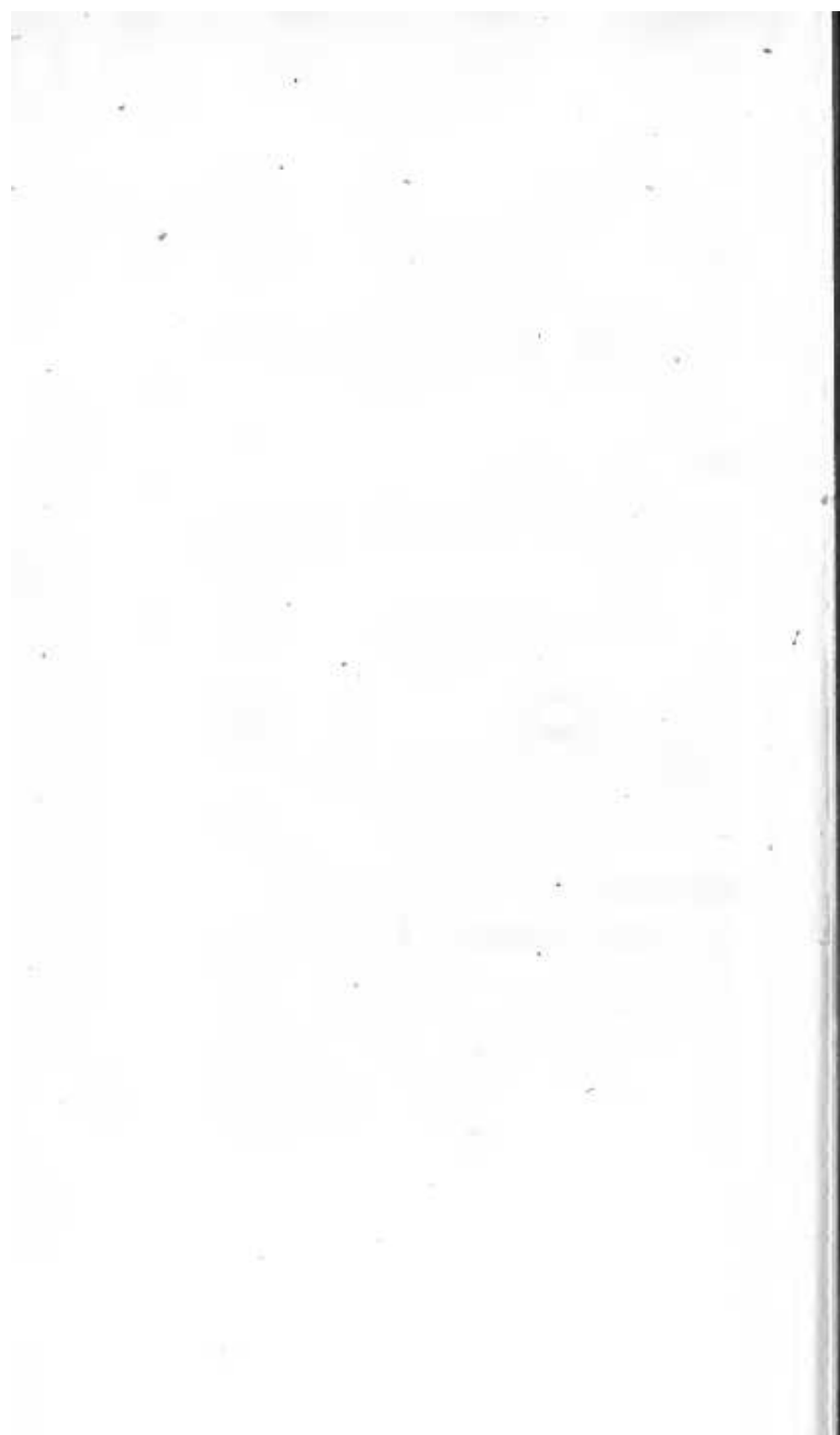
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ON THE  
P R O V I N C E  
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VARIOUS are the methods which art and ingenuity have invented to exhibit a picture of human life and manners. These have differed from each other, both in the mode of representation, and in the particular view of the subject which has been taken. With respect to the first, it is universally allowed that the dramatic form is by far the most perfect. The circumstance of

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leaving

leaving every character to display itself in its own proper language, with all the variations of tone and gesture which distinguish it from others, and which mark every emotion of the mind; and the scenic delusions of dress, painting, and machinery, contribute to stamp such an appearance of reality upon dramatic representations as no other of the imitative arts can attain. Indeed, when in their perfection, they can scarcely be called imitations, but the very things themselves; and real nature would perhaps appear less perfect than her counterfeit.

THE DRAMA has from early antiquity been distinguished into the two grand divisions of Tragedy and Comedy. It would seem that the general character of these was universally understood and agreed on, by the adoption of the terms

*tragic*

*tragic* and *comic*, derived from them, into the language of every civilized people. The former of these is, we know, constantly applied to objects of terror and distress; the latter, to those of mirth and pleasantry. There is, however, a more comprehensive distinction of our feelings, which it is proper first to consider.

WHEN we examine the emotions produced in our minds by the view of human actions, we shall observe a division into the *serious*, and the *ludicrous*. I do not think it necessary to define or analyse feelings with which all are well acquainted. It is enough to observe that serious emotions are produced by the display of all the great passions which agitate the soul, and by all those actions which are under the jurisdiction of the grand rules of religion and morality;

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