

**THE PLEASURES OF  
IMAGINATION,  
PP. 1-156**

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The Pleasures of Imagination, pp. 1-156 by Mark Akenside

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**MARK AKENSIDE**

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*That's what I like, all the world's a stage,  
And all the men and women merely players;  
They have their exits and their entrances,  
And one man's just another man's rascal.*

*Ben Jonson*

*London, Published, Four & a halfp. by E. Collett R. W. Thomas in the Strand*



THE PLEASURES  
of  
Imagination,  
BY  
Mark Akenside.



And leave the wretched Pilgrim all forlorn  
To muse at last, amid the ghastly gloom,  
Of green and hoary mould, and dimly cells;  
Book 1 Verse 31.

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY T. CAPELL & W. DAVIES, STRAND.

1814



THE  
PLEASURES  
OF  
IMAGINATION.

BY  
MARK AKENSIDE, M. D.

*A NEW EDITION.*

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TO WHICH IS PREFIXED  
A CRITICAL ESSAY ON THE POEM,  
BY MRS. BARBAULD.

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR T. CADELL AND W. DAVIES,  
IN THE STRAND,

*By J. M'Creevy, Black Horse Court.*

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1818.

THE  
PLEASURES  
OF  
IMAGINATION.





English  
Blackwell  
11-26-40  
41760

ESSAY  
ON  
AKENSIDE'S POEM  
ON THE  
PLEASURES OF IMAGINATION.

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**D**IDACTIC, or preceptive Poetry, seems to include a solecism, for the end of Poetry is to please, and of Didactic precept the object is instruction. It is, however, a species of Poetry which has been cultivated from the earliest stages of society; at first, probably, for the simple purpose of retaining, by means of the regularity of measure, and the charms of harmony, the precepts of agricultural wisdom, and the aphorisms of economical experience. When Poetry came to be cultivated for its

own sake, it was natural to esteem the Didactic, as in that view it certainly is, as a species of inferior merit compared with those which are more peculiarly the work of the imagination; and accordingly in the more splendid era of our own Poetry it has been much less cultivated than many others. Afterwards, when Poetry was become an art, and the more obvious sources of description and adventure were in some measure exhausted, the Didactic was resorted to, as affording that novelty and variety which began to be the great desideratum in works of fancy. This species of writing is likewise favoured by the diffusion of knowledge, by which many subjects become proper for general reading, which in a less informed state of society would have savoured of pedantry and abstruse speculation. For Poetry cannot descend to teach the elements of any art or science, or confine itself to that regular arrangement and clear brevity which suits the communication of unknown truths. In fact, the Muse would