

Of the Seasons,

Spring speaks of her birds and flowers, and pleasant days :

“ The pleiades their influence now give,
And all, that seemed as dead, afresh doth live;
All flowers the sun now, with his beams, discloses,
Except the double pinks and matchless roses.
When spring had done, the summer did begin
With melted, tawny face, and garments thin.”

Her longest poem, “ The Four Monarchies,” is a metrical history of Assyria, Persia, Greece and Rome. The rhymes are very good, and much learning is displayed, for a woman of that day. At the end of the Grecian Monarchy she says :—

“ And how, from small beginnings, Greece did grow,
To fill the world with terror and with woe,
My tired brain leaves some better pen;
This task befits not woman like to men,
For what is past, I blush excuse to make,
But humbly stand, some grave reproof to take.
Pardon to crave for errors is but vain—
The subject was too high, beyond my strain!
This my presumption, some, now to requite,
Ne autor ultra crepidam, may write.”

After she had spent much time and labor upon this long poem, she says she was—

“ At length resolved, when many years had passed,
To prosecute my story to the last;
But, ere I could accomplish my desire,
My papers fell a prey to the raging fire.”

Her house, at Andover, was burned to the ground July 10th, 1666, and many of her books and manuscripts, with much other valuable property, were thus destroyed. This misfortune was so discouraging, that she had no heart to proceed further with her monarchies, and, therefore, she left them forever unfinished.

In the “ Elegy on Queen Elizabeth,” her Majesty’s abilities and virtues are highly extolled ; and it is said,—

“ Her personal perfections, who would tell,
Must dip his pen in the Heliconian well;
Let such, as say our sex is void of reason,
Know ’tis a slander now, but once ’twas treason.”

By such fragmentary quotations, our author’s cast of intellect, habits of thought and poetical expression are indicated ; but the “ Contemplations,” which have often been republished in collections of our early poetry, most clearly display her powers of imagination and fancy, and prove her well worthy of the appellation of *poetess*.