

SCENE IX.

Enter Protheus solus.

Pro. To leave my *Julia*, shall I be forsworn :
 To love fair *Silvia*, shall I be forsworn :
 To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn :
 And ev'n that pow'r which gave me first my oath,
 Provokes me to this threefold perjury.
 Love bad me swear, and love bids me forswear :
 O sweet suggesting love, if thou hast sinn'd,
 Teach me, thy tempted subject, to excuse it.
 At first I did adore a twinkling star,
 But now I worship a celestial sun.
 Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken ;
 And he wants wit that wants resolved will
 To learn his wit t'exchange the bad for better.
 Fie, fie, unreverend tongue ! to call her bad,
 Whose sov'reignty so oft thou hast preferr'd
 With twenty thousand soul-confirmed oaths.
 I cannot leave to love, and yet I do :
 But there I leave to love where I should love :
Julia I lose, and *Valentine* I lose :
 If I keep them, I needs must lose myself :
 If I lose them, this find I by their loss,
 For *Valentine*, myself ; for *Julia*, *Silvia* :
 I to myself am dearer than a friend ;
 For love is still most precious in itself :
 And *Silvia* (witness heav'n, that made her fair !)
 Shows *Julia* but a swarthy *Ethiope*.
 I will forget that *Julia* is alive,
 Remembring that my love to her is dead :
 And *Valentine* I'll hold an enemy,
 Aiming at *Silvia* as a sweeter friend.
 I cannot now prove constant to myself,
 Without some treachery us'd to *Valentine* :

This